

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: INSTRUCTORS' BELIEFS ABOUT THE INTEGRATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN STARTALK TEACHER PROGRAMS: A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY.

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The purpose of this collective case study was to explore four instructors' beliefs and actual teaching practice of social media in their STARTALK teacher programs. Based on individual case and cross-case analysis, overall, all participants identified many affordances and challenges regarding the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Moreover, a majority of participants' beliefs aligned well with their practices about integrating social media and foreign language teacher education while one participant's beliefs conflicted with her teaching practices. The mixed findings regarding the beliefs and practices of using social media in STARTALK teacher programs suggest that teacher beliefs needs further exploration as a construct. Future research is needed in identifying best practices of various social media in foreign language teacher education and explaining complicated teacher beliefs about the effectiveness of social media in foreign

language teaching and teacher education. Regarding implications for practice, foreign language teacher educators may consider more explicit approach and step-by-step guidance when introducing and integrating social media in preparing foreign language teachers. This study is significant for not only filling in the gap in the literature by connecting teacher beliefs, social media, and foreign language teacher education, but also show-casing a great deal of ways for foreign language teacher educators to incorporate social media in their training programs.

*Keywords: teacher belief, social media, foreign language teacher education*

INSTRUCTORS' BELIEFS ABOUT THE INTEGRATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN  
STARTALK TEACHER PROGRAMS: A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY.

By

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

During the past few years, the term *social media* has emerged and been widely used in many areas including education. *Social media*, a term often used interchangeably with *Web 2.0*, refers to online applications which promote users, their interconnections, and user-generated content (Cormode & Krishnamurthy 2008). In this study, the term social media refers to online applications which promote users, their interconnections, and user-generated content (Cormode & Krishnamurthy 2008), which includes *social network sites* (SNS) like Facebook and MySpace; video-sharing sites like YouTube; image-sharing sites like Flickr, Tumblr and Pinterest; collaborative knowledge development through wikis; and microblogging sites like Twitter (Greenhow & Gleason, 2012). The term *social network site* (SNS) is defined as a web-enabled service through which individuals can maintain existing ties and develop new social ties with people outside their network (Greenhow & Robelia, 2009b). This definition emphasizes that it is a site to connect with people that an individual already knows. It is different from the term *social networking site* (e.g., [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)) because the purpose is less for traditional “networking” or building one’s list of personal contacts (boyd & Ellison, 2007).

According to Pew Research Center (2012), *social media* usage in the United States has increased noticeably: 65% of adult internet users claim they use social media like MySpace, Facebook or LinkedIn. The social media adoption rate has increased 4% from 2011 (61%) and more than doubled comparing with the results reported in 2008 (29%). Moreover, major social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) have gained increase in the number of active users. For instance, Facebook, at the end of

2011, had 133 million users in the United States and 845 million active users globally — about 54% of the world’s online population; Twitter, with over 24 million active users in the United States, has also increased over 30% from 2011. All these increasing numbers suggest that social media becomes more and more popular and even a part of people’s lives globally, which, in turn, calls for attention from educators and researchers to begin explore the affordances and challenges of using social media in- and outside of classroom settings.

In the field of education, many researchers have started to explore how to incorporate social media with teaching and learning. In terms of students’ learning, many scholars argue that social media practices can facilitate new forms of collaborative knowledge construction (Cress & Kimmerle, 2008; Greenhow, 2011; Greenhow & Li, 2012; Larusson & Alterman, 2009), communication (Greenhow & Robelia, 2009a), identity work (Greenhow & Robelia, 2009b), social capital (Greenhow & Burton, 2011; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009), and civic participation in the online-offline community (Greenhow, 2011; Robelia, Greenhow & Burton, 2011). Moreover, faculty members are adopting social media increasingly for both their personal and professional purposes. Based on a large survey conducted by Moran, Seaman, and Tinti-Kane (2011), over 90% of faculty members were aware of social media, such as Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blogs, and over 90% of all higher education teaching faculty members are using social media in courses they’re teaching or for their professional careers outside the classroom.

However, just as any other technology that has newly emerged, widespread acceptance and use of social media does not necessarily point to effectiveness or value in the educational domain. According to Levy (2009), “effective transfer depends, to a large degree, on the affordances of the particular technology and the ways its strengths and limitations may be coordinated and managed as a pedagogical tool (p. 778).” The term affordance is defined as the mutuality of actor intentions and technology capabilities that provide the potential for a particular action (Faraj & Azad, 2012), which can be traced back to the affordance theory proposed by Gibson (1979). Taking the affordance perspective allows me to examine the symbiotic relationship between the action to be taken in the context and the capability of the technology (Lee, 2010; Maier & Fadel, 2009; Majchrzak, Faraj, Kane, & Azad, 2013). Therefore, due to the evolution of technology and the increasing need for preparing teachers with a better understanding of how to use technology in their classrooms, educational researchers have been exploring the integration of social media and what affordances and challenges can be identified in teaching and learning. Amongst various areas of interests in education, language teacher education has been thoroughly researched in the relationship between technology and pedagogy, especially for foreign language teachers who teach language other than English (Garrett, 2009). In this study, foreign language refers to a language that is “not widely used in the learners’ immediate social context which might be used for future travel or other cross-cultural communication situations, or studied as a curricular requirement or elective in school, but with no immediate or necessary practical

application” (Saville-Troike, 2012, p.4). In other words, foreign language means all languages except for English in the context of the United States.

Learning a foreign language and achieving certain proficiency level are becoming more and more important for every individual who wants to be competitive in today’s world (NEA, 2010). Linguistic and cultural needs for learning foreign languages are also justified by many government agencies and organizations in the United States, such as Department of Education (DOE, 2009), Committee for Economic Development (CED, 2006), and The American Councils on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). A recent survey of Internet use conducted by Internet World Stats supports the argument that the use of other languages globally is quickly surpassing the use of English (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2010). The survey results also demonstrated that approximately 73 percent of the world’s (nearly 2 billion) Internet users do not use English. Based on the data from 2000 to 2010, while English language use on the internet increased 281 percent, Arabic, Russian, and Chinese language use on the Internet has increased 2501, 1826, and 1277 percent respectively. Furthermore, learning a foreign language is beneficial in improving students’ academic progress in other subject areas, such as English language (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004); reading, social studies and math (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997; Saunders, 1998; Saville-Troike, 1984). Empirical studies also proved that learning a foreign language can: 1) narrow achievement gaps (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004; Dumas, 1999); 2) benefit higher order, abstract and creative thinking (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1991; Hakuta, 1986); 3) enhance skill development (Dumas, 1999); 4) enrich cognitive development (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004); 5) score higher on

standardized tests (College Board, 2003, 2004); and 6) promote cultural awareness and competency (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004). These empirical study results indicate that individuals need to grasp more languages in order to effectively communicate and culturally competitive in today's global society.

However, foreign language education in the United States is far behind what needs to be accomplished. For example, in 2005, 82 percent of the United States residents are monolingual, and the United States is the only industrialized country where language study is, for the most part, optional rather than mandatory and where second language (L2) study begins, in most cases, at age fourteen. L2 refers to a language that is typically an official or dominant language in a society, which is often acquired by minority group members or immigrants who speak the language natively, whereas first language (L1), also used as native or primary language, is usually acquired during early childhood (before the age of three) and learned while an individual grows up in a context where people speak the same language (Saville-Troike, 2012). In fact, in the 2008–2009 academic year, only eleven states—Delaware, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, and Wyoming—and the District of Columbia required language study at any point in a student's K–12 education (Wang, Evans, & Liao, 2009). More surprisingly, the Center for Applied Linguistics (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2009) reported that 1) from 1997 to 2008 the percentage of the United States elementary schools (both public and private) offering foreign language courses declined from 31 to 25 percent; and 2) 88 percent of the elementary schools and 93

percent of secondary schools who claimed to provide foreign language instruction in 2008 offer Spanish.

It is clear that a huge gap exists in the United States' foreign language education, which calls for immediate attention and possible solutions. Providing more effective foreign language teachers is one of the ways that could reduce the gap in foreign language education in the United States (Ingold & Wang, 2010).

Unfortunately, the current foreign language teacher supply system in the United States is outdated and designed for mostly European languages, which doesn't match with the demand for more effective foreign language teachers in this globalized world (Ingold & Wang, 2010). Moreover, thirty-six states and the District of Columbia have identified foreign languages or languages other than English as teacher shortage areas (DOE, 2009). Considering the mismatch between the demand for and the shortage of foreign language teachers in the United States, it is imperative to increase the capacity and quality of foreign language teacher preparation programs. Therefore, Ingold and Wang (2010) suggested that foreign language teacher education needed to aim at the following goals in order to thrive: 1) producing teachers in a wide variety of emerging important foreign languages, 2) collaborating with language departments and state certification agencies to set up requirements for future foreign language teachers, and 3) preparing teacher for a wide variety of innovative ways of teaching and learning with the integration of technology and pedagogy. Based on these goals, it is clear that the integration of technology and pedagogy plays a vital role in foreign language teacher education.

A large amount of current research in language teacher education has focused on one side of the story, pre-service teachers' beliefs, attitudes, technological knowledge construct, and learning outcomes, including: 1) evaluating programs for integrating technology within training (Mayo, Kajs, & Tanguma 2005); 2) audits of pre-service teachers' technological skill (Banister & Vannatta, 2005); 3) assessing the awareness of the complex interplay between pedagogy, technology and discipline specific content knowledge (Mishra & Koehler, 2005, 2006; Rienties, Brouwer, & Lygo-Baker, 2012); and 4) surveys of pre-service teachers' confidence (Topper, 2004). Only a few studies (Georgina & Hosford, 2009; Spotts, 1999) explore the other side of the story, how instructors integrate technology in preparing foreign language teachers regardless of pre-service or in-service, let alone the integration of social media. Admittedly, some researchers have begun to use social media tools, such as Blogs, Wikis, to cultivate language teachers' writing skills in various languages with a focus on self-expression, creativity, ownership, and community building (Ducate & Lomicka, 2008; Kessler, 2009; Fellner & Apple, 2006). However, these studies, although promising in showing indirect evidence of instructors' use of social media, do not provide enough information for foreign language teacher educators to identify what beliefs these instructors held about the integration of social media and language teacher education, let alone identifying the pedagogical implications for the affordances and challenges in using social media during the preparation of foreign language teachers.

Moreover, teacher beliefs, including language teachers and instructors who teach language teachers, is a messy construct that needs further exploration and

clarification (Parajes, 1992). In this study, teachers beliefs is defined as “an integrated system of personalized assumptions about teaching and learning” (Artzt & Armour-Thomas, 1998, p. 8) which shape the way teachers perceive and interpret classroom interaction and influence their construction of intentions in response to those interaction. Because of the complex relationship between teachers’ beliefs about their teaching and what their teaching practice really is, researchers have provided different opinions about teacher beliefs. While some argued that teacher beliefs can guide teacher decisions (Smith, 2005) and help further develop teachers’ repertoire after being aware of their beliefs (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Shulman, 1996), others found inconsistency between teacher beliefs and their actual teaching practices (Ertmer, Gopalakrishnan, & Ross, 2001; Fang, 1996; Kane, Sandetto, & Heath, 2002). Nonetheless, despite the difficulty in exploring teacher beliefs, it is worthwhile to examine language instructors’ beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education because of the lack research in such area. Social media provides a wealth of information and materials as well as opportunities to engage in meaningful communication with members of the community (through Facebook, Blogs, etc.). Therefore, it is important to examine how instructors who are preparing foreign language teachers, both pre-service and in-service, integrate social media in their teaching practices to gain more insights on what beliefs these instructors hold and what differences and similarities between their beliefs and actual teaching practices about social media integration in foreign language teacher education.

*Foreign Language Teacher Education Programs: STARTALK*

According to National Center of Education Statistics (Aud et al., 2012), in the 2007–08 school year, there were 3.5 million full-time K-12 teachers in the United States, among which only 2.4 percent were foreign language teachers. At present, there are many different models of foreign language teacher preparation programs in the United States. First, most of foreign language teachers attend formal teacher education programs housed in institutions of higher education including undergraduate and graduate studies (Ingold & Wang, 2010). After completing certain requirements (e.g. state requirements), these foreign language teachers will obtain certificate or licensure to be qualified to teach in K-12 settings. However, most of the existing language teacher education programs still focus on recruiting university language majors and prepare foreign language teachers to teach European languages such as French, German, and Spanish in a high school environment (Ingold & Wang, 2010). This supply system does not meet the need for foreign language teachers who can teach less commonly taught languages (e.g. Arabic, Chinese). Second, guest teacher programs are a popular model for foreign language teachers to have the opportunity of professional development and practice teaching in the United States. For example, the Chinese Guest Teacher Program is a successful model created by the College Board and Hanban (Confucius Institute Headquarters in China). In the last six years, the College Board has brought over 700 Chinese guest teachers to teach Chinese language and culture in schools across the United States. The Embassies of Spain and France are other important sponsors of guest teacher programs. The United States Department of State and a small number of private sector recruiting agencies

bring in guest teachers as well. Third, foreign language teacher education programs are already in place in many states to recruit heritage language speakers, a term that refers to a language student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English (Valdés, 2000). According to survey data gathered by the National Foreign Language Center (cited in Ingold & Wang, 2010), while the United States has 451 teacher preparation programs for Spanish, 373 programs for French, 235 programs for German, and 77 programs for Latin, there are only 50 such programs for Chinese and 8 for Arabic. Only a handful of programs exist nationwide for many other less commonly taught languages, including Farsi, Hindi, and Korean (Ingold & Wang, 2010). In fact, heritage language teachers who live in our local communities are the single largest source of teachers of less commonly taught languages (Ingold & Wang, 2010). Data collected from STARTALK programs revealed that STARTALK teacher candidates in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Persian, Swahili, Turkish, and Urdu were predominantly native and heritage speakers of the language and mostly college-educated, though not necessarily in disciplines related to language teaching (cited in Ingold & Wang, 2010). Some have had prior language teaching experience in a range of contexts. As heritage language communities and the organizations that serve them will be an important source of new world language teachers, states and districts will need to consider ways to reach out to these communities and build partnerships with them. Last but not least, programs are already in place in twenty-six states to recruit individuals making mid-career changes for positions as foreign language teachers,

because that there are a large number of highly educated mid-career professionals who are proficient speakers of foreign languages want to become a foreign language teacher.

Besides the foreign language preparation programs described above, STARTALK is also a widely known foreign language teacher preparation program. Starting in 2006 as a component of the 2006 National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), the STARTALK program has its unique focus on promoting the teaching and learning of Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs). The STARTALK program provides professional development opportunities for over 1400 language teachers across the United States in 2012 (see Table 1.1 *STARTALK 2012 Enrollment*). The format of STARTALK teacher programs range from basic professional development courses to credit-bearing method courses for teachers from novice to veteran levels. Currently STARTALK programs are offered in 10 languages: Chinese, Arabic, Hindi, Russian, Urdu, Persian, Portuguese, Swahili, Turkish, and Dari. STARTALK ran programs in 48 states and District of Columbia, missing Louisiana and North Dakota, but have participants from all 50 states. In the summer of 2012, there were 6239 students and 1433 teacher participants enrolled in STARTALK programs nationwide.

Table 1 *STARTALK 2012 Enrollment*

<b>Language</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Total</b>
Chinese	4,099	912	5,011
Arabic	905	248	1,153
Hindi	489	38	527
Russian	190	104	294

Portuguese	215	47	262
Persian	122	38	160
Urdu	134	19	153
Turkish	48	11	59
Swahili	32	14	46
Dari	5	2	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,239</b>	<b>1,433</b>	<b>7,672</b>

STARTALK’s long-term goals are to initiate and sustain interest and to foster proficiency in strategically important languages. The mission of the STARTALK program initiative is to increase the number of Americans learning, speaking, and teaching LCTLs by offering students (K–16) and teachers of these languages creative and engaging summer experiences that strive to exemplify best practices in language education and in language teacher development, forming an extensive community of practice that seeks continuous improvement through outcomes-driven program design; standards-based curriculum planning; learner-centered approaches; excellence in selection and development of materials; and meaningful assessment of outcomes (STARTALK website, [startalk.umd.edu](http://startalk.umd.edu), 2013). Many STARTALK instructors in teacher programs have integrated technology component into teaching practices. Based on the survey report provided by Center for Applied Linguistics (Sugarman, Di Silvio, & Malone, 2012), over 56 percent of instructors who participated (N=73) in STARTALK summer teacher training programs claimed that they used websites designed for language learning, nearly 33 percent used computer software designed for language learning, almost 18 percent used video conference (e.g. Skype), and

almost 25 percent used virtual learning environment such as Moodle or Blackboard in their programs. Although statistics can't be found about how many STARTALK instructors in teacher programs have used social media in their teaching, it is clear that these instructors are integrating technology into language teacher preparation practices and certain social media (e.g. Skype, Blog) are identified as useful tools in preparing teachers. With the widely adoption of social media, many instructors of these teacher training programs have started either using social media (formally or informally) as a pedagogical tool to teach or introducing social media as a theme in their curricula.

Admittedly, researchers have discovered some potential benefits of using social media for academic purposes and found that: the use of social media in teaching could 1) possibly connect informal learning to the formal learning environment (Greenhow & Li, 2012); 2) provide engaging channels to facilitate student-student, student instructor, and student-content interactions in multimedia formats (Hughes, 2009; Nellison, 2007). However, current research tends to pay more attention on the learners' rather than the instructors' perspectives. Although some researchers (Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2007, 2009) have noticed the gap and conducted studies on how instructors use social media in teaching, little empirical research can be found explain the beliefs and use of social media in teaching by instructors, especially for instructors that teach language teachers. Moreover, a number of researchers (Chapelle, 2003, 2009; Garrett, 2009; Hubbard, 2009; Warschauer, 2004) have explored the relationship between technology and language teaching and learning in the field of Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL).

Although some may include social media as a major component of technology, little empirical studies can be found discussing about instructors' beliefs about using social media in preparing foreign language teachers. This trend in practice calls for the attention of more research on why and how these instructors use social media in their language teaching training programs.

To summarize, there is a huge gap between the increasing adoption of social media in foreign language teacher program like STARTALK, and the lack of empirical research on what beliefs instructors have about using social media and how they actually use social media in training foreign language teachers. Furthermore, the urgent need for preparing more foreign language teachers in the United States calls for more theoretical as well as practical research in language teacher education. Based on a national survey conducted by Center for Applied Linguistics, 25% of elementary schools and 30% of secondary schools offering languages reported being affected by a shortage of qualified language teachers. The shortage of language teachers was so severe that some schools were seeking alternative sources of teachers, such as agencies that provide teachers from other countries, commercial language schools, and foreign governments that send teachers to the United States (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2009). Under the current situation, it is imperative to identify useful strategies to prepare the already limited amount of foreign language teachers in the United States. The integration of social media and foreign language teacher education requires more research to explore the benefits as well as challenges. As one of the nationwide intensive teacher training programs, STARTALK provides many foreign language teachers, both in-service and pre-service, with opportunities of professional

development. With the increasing trend of using social media in these programs, it is necessary to explore how instructors in these teacher training programs integrate social media in their teaching practice.

### Research Questions

Based on the discussion of the practical need and the lack of existing research, the purpose of this qualitative collective case study is to investigate how four instructors in STARTALK teacher programs integrate social media and identify differences and similarities between instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education. Thus, three main research questions are proposed in order to examine how the STARTALK instructors use social media to prepare language teachers:

1. What beliefs do four STARTALK instructors have about social media and foreign language teacher education?
2. How do four STARTALK instructors integrate social media in their teacher programs?
3. What differences and similarities can be identified between four STARTALK instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education?

### Definition of Major Terms

In order to clarify major concepts in this proposed study, a list of operational definitions is provided in the following table.

Table 2 *Operational Definitions of Major Terms*

Terms	Definitions
<b>Social Media</b>	<p>In this study, social media refers to online applications which promote users, their interconnections, and user-generated content (Cormode &amp; Krishnamurthy 2008), which includes <i>social network sites</i> (SNS) like Facebook and MySpace; video-sharing sites like YouTube; image-sharing sites like Flickr, Tumblr and Pinterest; collaborative knowledge development through wikis; and microblogging sites like Twitter (Greenhow &amp; Gleason, 2012).</p>
<b>Social Network Site</b>	<p>The term <i>social network site</i> (SNS) is defined as a web-enabled service through which individuals can maintain existing ties and develop new social ties with people outside their network (Greenhow &amp; Robelia, 2009b).</p>
<b>Language Teachers</b>	<p>Language teachers in this study refers to both pre-service and in-service teachers who are enrolled in one of STARTALK 2013 summer teacher training programs. These teachers are either going to or already teach a language class in K-12 settings in the United States.</p>

<b>Instructors</b>	Refers to instructors and faculty members who taught in STARTALK teacher programs in the summer of 2013.
<b>Teacher Participants</b>	Refers to teacher trainees who attended 2013 STARTALK teacher programs at various locations.
<b>Foreign Language</b>	Refers to a language that is “not widely used in the learners’ immediate social context which might be used for future travel or other cross-cultural communication situations, or studied as a curricular requirement or elective in school, but with no immediate or necessary practical application” (Saville-Troike, 2012, p.4).
<b>Heritage Language Speakers</b>	Refers to a language student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English (Valdés, 2000)
<b>First (L1) and Second (L2) Language</b>	L2 refers to a language that is typically an official or dominant language in a society, which is often acquired by minority group members or immigrants who speak the language natively, whereas first language (L1), also used as native or primary language, is usually acquired during early childhood (before the age of three) and learned while an individual grows up in a context where

people speak the same language (Saville-Troike, 2012).

**Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTLs)** Refers to all of the world's languages that are currently taught in the United States, except for English, French, German, and Spanish (Janus, 1998).

**Teacher Beliefs** The term “teacher beliefs” is defined as “an integrated system of personalized assumptions about teaching and learning” (Artzt & Armour-Thomas, 1998, p. 8) which shape the way teachers perceive and interpret classroom interaction and influence their construction of intentions in response to those interaction.

**Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL)** CALL includes learners learning language in any context with, through, and around computer technologies (Egbert, 2005). More specifically, CALL needs to include not only desktop and laptop computers, but also the internet that connecting computers, and other devices associated with them such as tablets (e.g., iPad, Microsoft Surface), mp3 players (e.g., iPod touch), mobile phones, and electronic whiteboards (Levy & Hubbard, 2005).

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

As described in Chapter One, the purpose of this study is to investigate how four instructors in STARTALK teacher programs integrate social media and identify differences and similarities between instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education. More specifically, I explore 1) what kinds of social media the four instructors believe are useful in preparing language teachers in STARTALK summer teacher training programs; 2) what beliefs the four instructors have about the benefits and challenges of integrating social media in preparing language teachers in an online environment; 3) how the four instructors integrate social media in preparing language teachers in their teacher programs, and 4) what differences and similarities can be identified between instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education.

In this chapter, I first describe knowledge and learning with the development of technology and the needs for the integration of technology (including social media) and education. Next, I explain the trend in foreign language teaching and learning, proposing my theoretical framework, sociocultural theory of learning, in connection with social media, language teaching and learning, and teacher beliefs. Following that, I review the literature related to the general beliefs and practices teachers have about social media. Last, I review the literature of language instructors' beliefs about foreign language teaching and learning, language teacher education and CALL, and language instructors' practices of implementing social media in language teaching and learning.

## *The Integration of Technology and Education*

The importance of integrating technology into education has been explored for many years. With the rapidly evolving technology, it is noticeable that how people conceptualize knowledge and learning has been changed. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the rational and requirements for the integration of technology and education and what impact this integration has on individuals and the society.

Technology can refer to material objects of use to humanity, such as machines or hardware, but it can also encompass broader themes, including systems, methods of organization, and techniques. In the context of education, technology includes, but is not limited to, software (e.g., Microsoft Office, Adobe), hardware (overhead projectors, laptop computers, and calculators), as well as Internet applications, such as Wikis and Blogs. Technology is now viewed by researchers like Culp, Honey, and Mandinach (2005) as a change agent that could be integrated into formal as well as informal school teaching and learning practices. They reviewed 20 years of seminal reports regarding understandings and recommendations of the integration of technology and education in the United States. By analyzing 28 reports, Culp et al. (2005) argued that technology played an important role in changing and transforming the process of teaching and learning as well as reshaping educational system. Moreover, they emphasized the need for both researchers and policymakers to better understand the nature of the integration of technology and education. Being a tool and resource to assist teaching and learning, technology nowadays (e.g. online courses, e-learning) can be viewed as a vital part in education, which constantly calls for changes in theory and pedagogy. For any improvement and development of a society,

it is necessary to have a change agent. This argument justifies the proposed study in that technology is the change agent of for educational transformation. Moreover, technology is also a change agent for researchers to shift their thinking about knowledge, teaching, and learning, through which useful ways of the integration of technology and education can occur.

In order to integrate technology with education, it is necessary do discuss the epistemological changes first. As Dede (2008a) argued, from a philosophical point of view, the conceptualization of knowledge needs to be changed from a classical perspective to a new perspective. More importantly, Dede explained the different implications the two perspective of knowledge had on education. While the classical view emphasized the power of curriculum standards and disciplinary expertise in guiding instruction and assessment, the one-way presentational learning pedagogy, and the mastering of facts and skills, the new perspective articulated a collaborative approach in forming curriculum, the active learning pedagogy, and the performance assessments. Dede also suggested that, similar to the representative democracy, a neutral perspective which combined the classical and new perspectives might be a smooth transition in the epistemological change. Other scholars also called for the agenda for shifting epistemological beliefs under the impact of the increasingly developed technology. Lankshear (1999) argued that the new definition of knowing for this information age viewed knowing as an ability to perform, which, in other words, was based on a performance epistemology focusing more than propositional knowledge of what already existed, but also the possibilities of creation and construction in various spaces in information and communication process. This is

contrary to the traditional view of knowing, which emphasized that truth pertained to what already existed. Similar to Dede's (2008a) arguments, Lankshear also posited that educators needed to redefine roles and purposes of education to acknowledge and reflect the radical epistemological changes that new technology brought to the world.

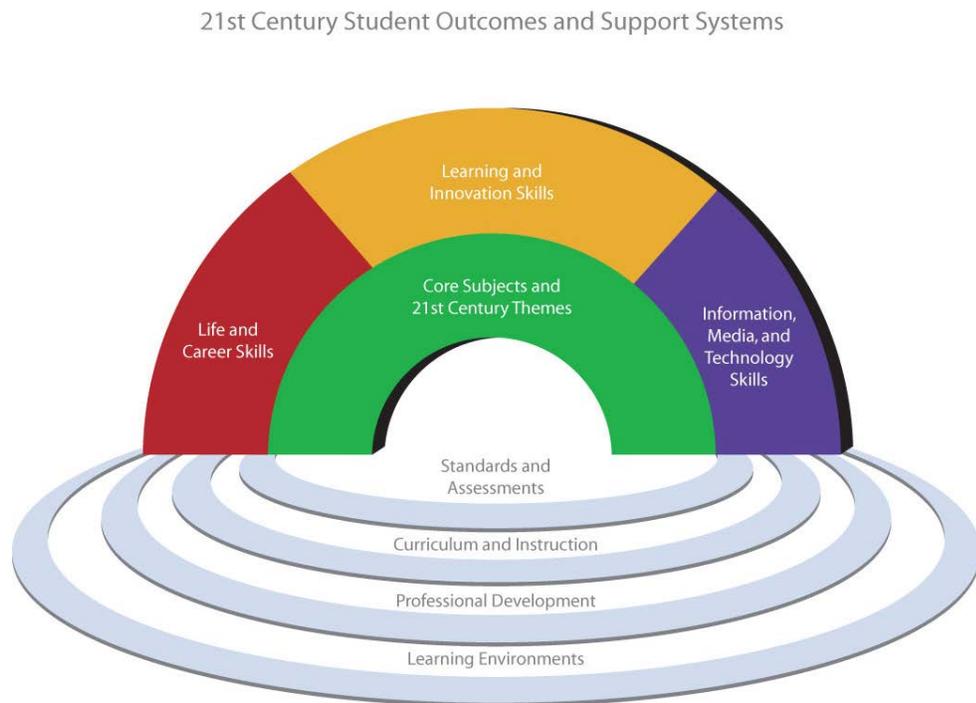
Technology is changing the way people think, teach, and learn. Based on the arguments from Dede (2008a) and Lankshear (1999), teachers and teacher educators need to reconceptualize teaching practice in a broader context formed and surrounded by technology. As a major and popular component of technology, social media plays an important role in revolutionizing ways of teaching and learning. Thus, it is helpful to consider what possible ways that social media can be integrated in teaching and learning.

#### National Call for Technology Integration and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Competencies

Not only is the epistemological changes required from individual micro level, but also from the society macro level. By presenting a learning model powered by technology, the National Educational Technology Plan 2010 (NETP, U.S. DOE, 2010) identified goals and recommendations regarding the transformation of American education in five areas: learning, assessment, teaching, infrastructure, and productivity. With concrete examples and clear goals and recommendations, this plan is persuasive in addressing the importance of technology in the process of educational transformation in the United States. Instead of viewing technology from an individual perspective, NETP took the lead to advocate for a reform in the current educational system based on the development of technology. The world becomes smaller and smaller because of the technological advances, thus requires teachers, teacher

educators, policy makers rethink what needs to be considered in teaching when the context for learning changes.

Based on these changes that technology brings, a specific set of skills are discussed and developed in order for students to be knowledgeable and competent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). The 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning framework (see *Figure 2.1* below) categorized teaching and learning as student outcomes and support systems, combining a variety of skills and knowledge with support systems that could help students master the multi-dimensional abilities required in the 21st century.



*Figure 1* 21st Century student outcomes and support systems (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009, p.1)

In terms of student outcomes, the Framework suggests that all students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should learn various skills in four different areas: core subjects and 21<sup>st</sup> century themes, learning and innovation skills, information, media and technology

skills, and life and career skills. For core subjects and 21st century themes, the Framework suggests that core subjects include English, reading or language arts, world languages, arts, mathematics, economics, science, geography, history, government and civics. In addition, schools must promote an understanding of academic content at much higher levels by weaving 21st century interdisciplinary themes into core subjects: global awareness; financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; civic literacy; health literacy; environmental literacy. Learning and innovation skills include: creativity and innovation; critical thinking and problem solving; communication and collaboration. The framework also claims that effective citizens and workers must be able to exhibit a range of functional and critical thinking skills, such as: information literacy; media literacy; ICT (Information and Communications Technology) literacy. For life and career skills, the Framework suggests that students to pay rigorous attention to skills, such as: flexibility and adaptability; initiative and self-direction; social and cross-cultural skills; productivity and accountability; leadership and responsibility.

Besides 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, researchers have also focused on competencies required for using different technology tools in specific situations and for various purposes in the future (e.g., Anderson, 2008; Dede, 2008b). Many reviews have explored different frameworks describing the knowledge, skills and the individual attitudes and attributes of learners needed in the 21st century and agreed upon a list of competencies that are important (Binkley *et al.*, 2012; Mishra & Kereluik, 2011; Voogt & Pareja Roblin, 2012; Voogt, Erstad, Dede, & Mishra, 2013). Voogt, Erstan, Dede, and Mishra (2013) synthesized across different frameworks and concluded that

*“collaboration, communication, digital literacy, citizenship, problem solving, critical thinking, creativity and productivity* are essential for living in and contributing to our present societies” (p. 404). More specifically, 21<sup>st</sup> century learners need to know and be competent in a number of aspects including: 1) new industry, commerce, technology and economic structures (e.g., EU, 2007; OECD, 2005); 2) new social interaction and communication skills (e.g., Binkley *et al.*, 2012); 3) maintain national and cultural values (e.g., OECD, 2005); and 4) operate in an increasingly international and global environment (e.g., EU, 2007). All these skills and competencies call for more educational reforms in teaching and learning in relation to rapidly changing technology and ICT.

Because of the development of new digital tools and collaborative environments, changes in teaching and learning are increasingly happening on a daily base. Different from the traditional foci on the information and content creation, new literacies pay more attention on learner-generated content and sharing in virtual environments (Voogt, Erstad, Dede, & Mishra, 2013). These changes also stimulates reconceptualization of literacy and have encouraged the different approaches in defining new literacies, such as a sociocultural understanding of literacy (Barton, 2007), media literacy, and digital literacy (Buckingham, 2003). These new literacies are in close relation to skills and knowledge that are necessary for technology and ICT use (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006). Based on the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and competencies described earlier, specific skills requirements have been identified and implemented in curriculums and school settings especially for ICT literacy and information literacy by Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills (AT21CS).

Information literacy refers to abilities in accessing, evaluating, using, managing and applying information and different sources provided by digital technologies, while ICT literacy involves operating and reflecting on the use of ICT in different contexts (Binkley *et al.*, 2012). Admittedly, definitions of new literacies varies among researchers. Mioduser, Nachmias and Forkosh-Baruch (2008) describe seven new literacies ranging from multimodal information processing to visual literacy; from interpersonal skills to coping with complexity. Jenkins, Clinton, Puroshotma, Robinson and Weigel (2006) provide a set of media skills including performance, distributed cognition, multitasking. Despite the difference in conceptualizing new literacies, technology, as a catalyst, plays an important role in reforming many aspects in the society including education.

#### Technology and Social Media

From individual to society, from personal epistemology to collective intelligence, from traditional literacy to 21<sup>st</sup> century new literacy, all of the above factors call for urgent technology integration with education encompassing various areas such as learning, teaching, instruction, and teacher professional development. Many researchers from different fields start to explore the basic what and how questions regarding social media. Within the interdisciplinary fields of learning sciences and digital media and learning, a handful of researchers try to determine whether and how peer feedback, collaboration and civic engagement are manifested within social media spaces as well as what possibilities these social media technologies offer learning, teaching, and educational designs for learning (Cress & Kimmerle, 2008; Greenhow, 2011; Greenhow & Burton, in press; Greenhow &

Robelia, 2009a; 2009b; Greenhow, 2009; Hakkarainen, 2009; Larusson & Alterman, 2009; Laurillard, 2009; Richard & Gomez, 2010; Zhang, Scardamalia, Reeve & Messina, 2009). As Greenhow and Robelia (2009 a, b) argued, social networking sites, an important component of social media, can facilitate new forms of inquiry, communication, collaboration, identity work, knowledge development, peer support and review, and participation in the online-offline community.

The affordances that social media contributes to the field of education may be helpful in overcoming the challenges that the current education systems face, such as sociocultural way of learning, requirements in learning and literacy due to technology development (Hull & Schultz, 2002; Lai, Khaddage, & Knezek, 2013). Social media, or Web 2.0 tools, allows learners to: 1) generate more self-created-content (Lessig, 2008); 2) access information resources in virtual community regardless of distance and time; 3) engage in activities not possible in the real world; and 4) involve in collaborative inquiry mediated through technology (Dede, 2010). These potential benefits, if embedded in teaching and learning process, can enhance learning outcome by providing more participatory and collaborative way of learning, which are well aligned with sociocultural theory of learning.

Although the literature demonstrated many benefits and learning outcomes using social media to facilitate students' learning, the practice of using social media in teaching and instructors' beliefs about using social media remain underexplored. Just as the paradigm shift in knowledge and learning with the development of technology, the fields of foreign language learning and teacher education are also experiencing a paradigmatic change. In the following section, I describe paradigmatic

shifts in foreign language teacher education based on sociocultural theory of learning, my theoretical framework as a unique perspective.

*Foreign Language Teacher Education: A Sociocultural Perspective*

According to Hulstijn (2007), the study of second language acquisition (SLA) has experienced many different approaches regarding theory as well as pedagogy. Emerging from psycholinguistics, the discipline of SLA was a collaborative product that psychologists and linguistics developed jointly during the cognitive revolution in 1960s (Miller & Chomsky, 1963), in which researchers began to investigate the acquisition of L2 teaching and learning. Second language acquisition is a body of research that describes the diverse conditions that facilitate or impede language acquisition (Chapelle, 2003; Doughty & Long, 2003). SLA research includes topics such as the acquisition of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics, syntax and the development of language skills, in which researchers can improve L2 teaching by examining all aspects of language learning (Young, Ducate, & Arnold, 2011).

Hulstijn (2007) summarized that the recent SLA research focused on two trends: 1) representation and processing, and 2) communicative interaction, learner attributes, and social context. In the first category, many researchers adopted a cognitive approach to describe the linguistic knowledge of L2 learners at different stages of L2 development (White, 2003) in relation to implicit and explicit learning (Hulstijn, 2005) and skill acquisition (Segalowitz & Hulstijn, 2005). Researchers from this approach viewed the term cognition as a general terms which is the “representation and processing of any information in mind” (Hulstijn, 2007, p. 197).

In the second category, many researchers emphasized the importance of communicative interaction, learner attributes, and social factors that are influencing L2 teaching and learning (Dornyei, 2005; Ellis, 2005; Siegel, 2003). Researchers interested in communicative interaction tried to investigate how L2 learners process linguistic information with the communicative interaction between learners and their environment; researchers interested in learner attributes focused on issues such as learner's age, sex, motivation to learn L2, and personality; researchers interested in social context of SLA often explored the social status of the learner's L1 and L2 (language dominance), the learner's linguistic environment at home or in the school situation (monolingual, bilingual), and the difference between L2 learning and foreign language learning (Hulstijn, 2007).

Connecting to the focus on this study, sociocultural theory of learning provides a solid theoretical base for the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. It promotes a collaborative learning model through social interaction, which is not only a major advantage that social media embraces, but a practical and theoretical source for the field of language teacher education. In the following section, a brief review of my theoretical framework, sociocultural theory of learning, is presented, following with the educational implications of sociocultural theory and the connections between sociocultural theory of learning, foreign language teacher education, and social media.

#### Sociocultural Theory of Learning and Foreign Language Teacher Education

Sociocultural theory can be traced back to the work of Vygotsky (1986), as well as later theoreticians (Wertsch, 1991, 1998), who defined learning as being

“embedded within social events and occurring as a child interacts with people, objects, and events in the environment” (Kublin, Wetherby, Crais, & Prizant, 1998, p. 287). The most important argument of Vygotsky’s theory was that social interaction played a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky (1978) argued that a child’s development cannot be understood by a study of the individual alone, but needed an examination of the external social world in which that individual life had developed. He also concluded that every function in a child’s cultural development appeared both on the social (between people) and individual (inside the child) level (Vygotsky, 1978). Through participation in activities that require cognitive and communicative functions, children are drawn into the use of these functions in ways that nurture and scaffold them (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988, pp. 6-7).

Another contribution of Vygotsky’s theory (1978) was the concept of the “zone of proximal development” (ZPD): a level of development attained when children engaged in social behavior that could lead to potential developmental change. Full development of the ZPD depends upon full social interaction. The range of behavior (e.g., a smile, or a visually directed reach) that can be developed with adult guidance or peer collaboration exceeds what can be attained alone. The adult’s reaction and interpretations transform the child’s emerging behavior into a social act. After many experiences of supported expression, the child gradually masters an action that is qualified with cultural meaning. The act has passed through the zone of proximal development during which the adult has educated the child in its use. Language learning is a socially constructed process where individuals learn the language and approach their ZPD through the interaction, negotiation, meditation

with others within the community of practices (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). In terms of foreign language teacher education, the ZPD can also be established between teacher trainees who scaffold one another to develop the skills to eventually move from being dependent to independent. Therefore, foreign language teachers are also learning through the historically situated and socially constructed context where they can collaboratively learn through scaffolding.

Given the major themes of sociocultural theory, many implications can be drawn in connection with education. For example, sociocultural theory is beneficial in informing instructions because sociocultural theorists viewed learning as a process occurred through interaction, negotiation, and collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). In most inquiry-based approach in educational practices (e.g., history, math, science), teachers who stand for a sociocultural perspective, can maximize students' learning by designing their instructions to mediate students' personal meanings shaped by the collective thinking and talk of the students and the society. A number of research studies can be found in literary studies (Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 2000; Lee, 2007) and language education (Duff, 2007; Lantolf, 2006).

Sociocultural theory is beneficial for literacy instruction which helps educators understand the situational specificity of literacy practice (Lee, 2007). From this perspective, educators would consider literacy as a tool for use in specific contexts; thus, children would be taught how to negotiate multiple literacies for use in multiple contexts. Some researchers (Bhaba, 1994; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-Lopez, & Tejeda, 1999; Moje et al., 2004; Soja, 1996) have suggested that educators need to create opportunities for students to connect their formal (school) and informal (home)

learning environments by incorporating students' prior knowledge and experience, as well as current literacy practices in the school curriculum. Varellas and Pappas (2006) conducted a study of primary-grade students in an urban school. Teachers in this study encouraged their students to draw upon: 1) their own explorations of scientific phenomena (such as the water cycle) in classroom, home, and community settings; 2) prior conversations, and 3) other books read in and out of school in the course of read-aloud sessions. Varellas and Pappas found that by bringing students' own funds of knowledge to the classroom, teachers could use these already existing knowledge to make connections and promoted the children's learning of scientific language and concepts.

Sociocultural theory of learning also influences foreign language teacher education. One of the approaches of foreign language teacher education was in favor of positivism in which teachers attend formal training programs to learn the content knowledge and best practices (Geyer, 2008). Another foreign language teacher education approach focused more on a sociocultural way of developing teachers' expertise, which views teachers' learning process happens through a constant negotiation and interaction with various experiences in different social contexts (Borg, 2003; Freeman, 2002; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Johnson & Golombek, 2003; Johnson, 2006). This particular approach of foreign language teacher education coincides with sociocultural theory of learning in that they both consider human cognition and learning are socially situated activities in which participation and context play a critical role (Johnson, 2006). Many researchers have studied different aspects of foreign language teacher education including: teacher beliefs (e.g., Breen,

Hird, Milton, Oliver, & Thwaite, 2001; Crookes, 1997), teachers' practical knowledge (e.g., Johnson & Goettsch, 2000), and teachers' decision-making processes (e.g. Smith, 1996; Woods, 1996). Under the sociocultural approach, foreign language teachers' self-reflection study becomes the focal point of foreign language teacher education (Geyer, 2008), which aims at improving teaching practice by helping teachers gain a better understanding of their own approach (Burns, 1999). This approach provides legitimate reasons for my study to explore instructors' beliefs and practices about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

#### Sociocultural Theory of Learning and Social Media

Besides language learning field, sociocultural theory of learning also connects with social media. Theoretically, social media seem to embody sociocultural views of knowledge as decentralized, accessible, and co-constructed by and among a broad base of users (Dede, 2007). Sociocultural theories of learning value the communication of knowledge through social practices and the opportunity to engage in various communities to learn with and from others (Vygotsky, 1978). Moreover, individuals engaged in and became active members of "communities of practice" (Lave & Wenger 1991), where they learned behaviors and formed belief systems of their social groups and eventually started acting in accordance with their norms (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Learning occurred as a result of participation in real-life contexts and so, engagement in authentic activity is heralded as a fundamental component in any investigation of human experience (Bannon 1997; Brown et al., 1989; Herrington & Oliver 2000). Since social media provides an ideal

context for learning where individuals actively engages in the practices of a collaborative global online community, learning from this community can be explored in a sociocultural perspective. Many studies strongly suggest that collaborative learning has benefits in contributing to motivation, in raising achievement, and in producing positive social outcomes (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000; Slavin, 1995; Snowman, McCown, & Biehler, 2009).

Social media not only provides an online network environment for learning, but also allows learners to gather information from connecting to others' knowledge and generate content using tools, such as Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter, and Blog. Mason and Renniet (2008) argued for four major benefits of learner-generated content that social media provide: 1) the learners are able to actively participate in the construction of their experience, rather than passively absorbing content; 2) the content can be continually refreshed by the learners rather than requiring expert input; 3) many of the social media are collaborative in nature, thus the learners develop team skills; 4) shared community space and inter-group communications help motivate learners to learn. For instance, Wikipedia is an online place where any individual can contribute to the co-construction of knowledge, rather than passively reading and learning from others, an individual can participate in the process of defining a specific term, providing reference to a certain event, or even correcting another individual's mistake. In addition, each individual can update and change the content without the permission of an expert or authority. By participating in Wikipedia, individuals are working collaboratively in groups to focus on the tasks that group members share the same interests. Therefore, the individuals not only are

motivated, but required to develop team skills for cooperation. In so doing, social media serves as a bridge in a virtual space and allows learners to interact with each other just as they would in a face-to-face setting. Therefore the learners are virtually able to observe and learn from others, which, in turn, provides evidence to support the investigation of social media through a sociocultural point of view.

Social media also changes the ways individuals behave in a society and the relationships among different individuals, including “toppling governments (Moldova), unleashing mass mobilizations (protest in Iran, humanitarian aid in Haiti), uplifting individual artists from constraints of social class (the UK’s singer Susan Boyle)” (Lewis, Pea, & Rosen, 2010, p. 2). These phenomena that happened in the world of social media provide possible ways for individuals and communities to connect to a broader, even global, audience for various purposes. By using social media, individuals in a society can cross the boundaries set by space and time to build a one to one, or one to thousands communication. These outcomes and benefits that social media brings also reinforced the social learning theory in promoting a collaborative learning approach by enabling individuals to work beyond simply participation, but rather co-creation (Lewis, Pea, & Rosen, 2010).

As the Internet becomes more and more accessible for people all around the world, many transformations have taken place in the nature of the Web, the contexts for learning, the constructs of knowledge, and the desired competencies for learners and teachers for 21<sup>st</sup> century (Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, 2009a, 2009b). Internet-connectivity in schools, homes, neighborhoods, and communities has become increasingly pervasive, facilitating expanded sites for formal and informal learning.

Cultural and technological trends have contributed to young people's broad adoption of *social media*. Ninety percent of school-aged youth now use the Internet regularly, with over 75% of adolescents aged 12 to 17 using social media (DeBell & Chapman, 2006; Lenhart, Arafeh, Smith, & Macgill, 2008). Considering the widely adoption of social media among youth, it is important to explore how to integrate social media into teaching K-12 students. It is more urgent to think about how to prepare teachers with a better understanding about how to incorporate these already existing social media with their teaching. Sociocultural theory of learning provides insights on rethinking the roles of teachers and teacher educators in the social media environment. It enables researchers to explore the social media environment from a collaborative approach. It also has the potential to allow researchers to better understand the complicated interaction between instructors and students within a social media environment. Moreover, sociocultural theory of learning is a bridge to connect language learning and social media, which are the two major topics of the proposed study.

#### Sociocultural Theory of Learning and Teacher Beliefs

It is also helpful to take a sociocultural perspective when examining teacher beliefs about their teaching practices. Vygotsky (1978) argued that human beings' biologically determined mental systems (memory, attention, and reflexes) are organized into a uniquely human psychological system once humans encounter cultural artifacts, activities, and concepts. More specifically, activities include but not limited to play, education, work; artifacts include but not limited to physical tools such as books, computers, and related technology, and symbolic tools such as

language, numeric systems, diagrams, charts; concepts refers to but not limited to the understandings that communities construct of the personal, the physical, the social and mental worlds, religion (Ratner, 2002). These cultural artifacts, activities, and concepts enable humans to mediate and thus intentionally control their biologically mental functions (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987), therefore, biological and cultural factors form a dialectically organized mental system in which biology provides the necessary functions and culture empowers humans to intentionally regulate these functions externally (Vygotsky, 1997). For example, when a decision has to be made regarding an action, an individual first develop a reasoned plan for the action, and then construct the plan through the use of cultural artifacts, activities, and concepts with the consideration of what consequences their actions may cause. Individual beliefs play a vital role in the process described above especially in allowing human to intentionally mediate and control mental decisions.

Considering the context of teaching, a teacher has to make many important decisions everyday (e.g., instructional strategies, assessments, and classroom management) by considering possible consequences based on teachers' beliefs and knowledge. Since teacher beliefs "influence their perceptions and judgments", "affect their behavior in the classroom" (Pajares, 1992, p. 307), are formed through interactions within the community of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991), and shaped by many contextual factors (e.g., school context, educational policies, high stake testing), it is valuable to examine teachers' beliefs in the context of teaching. By taking a sociocultural perspective, it also enables me to examine teachers' beliefs through various interactions and mediations teachers made before they come up with any

decision or action in teaching. Therefore, grounded on sociocultural theory of learning, I discuss teachers' beliefs and integration of social media in general teaching practices in the following session.

### *Teacher Beliefs and Integration of Social Media*

Understanding teacher beliefs has been a focus in teacher education for many years (Kagan, 1992; Norton, 2005; Pajares, 1992, Raths & McAninch, 2003). Teacher beliefs have been defined as “suppositions or commitments and are based on evaluation and judgment” (Meirink, Meijer, Verloop, & Bergen, 2009b, p. 90). In this study, teachers beliefs is defined as “an integrated system of personalized assumptions about teaching and learning” (Artzt & Armour-Thomas, 1998, p. 8) which shape the way teachers perceive and interpret classroom interaction and influence their construction of intentions in response to those interaction. Teacher beliefs are assumptions that often held unconsciously about students and classrooms (Kagan, 1992). Beliefs about teaching and learning have the potential to guide teacher decisions made about the teaching and learning process, along with selection of specific content (Smith, 2005). Because of the complex relationship between teachers' beliefs about their teaching and what their teaching practice really is, it is generally assumed that teachers can further develop their repertoire after being aware of their beliefs (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Shulman, 1996). Moreover, Saroyan and Amundsen (2001) even argued that if teachers conscientiously tried to align their beliefs about teaching with their actual teaching practice, instructional goals were more likely to be accomplished.

## Teacher Beliefs and Teaching

Teacher beliefs is a “messy construct” (Pajares, 1992) that is associated with many terms researchers have defined, such as teacher cognition (Woods, 1996), teacher goals (Aguirre & Speer, 2000), teacher intentions (Artzt & Armour-Thomas, 1998), and teacher approaches (Kember & Gow, 1994). Research related to teachers’ beliefs also revealed complicated relationships between teacher beliefs and their teaching practice (Norton et al., 2005; Pajares, 1992). On one hand, it is generally agreed that it is important to encourage teachers to compare their beliefs about teaching and their actual practice of teaching (Trigwell & Prosser, 2004). Norton et al. (2005) argued that teachers can benefit from reflecting on their beliefs and underlying conceptions of teaching and learning. On the other hand, teachers’ beliefs towards teaching, might be held as both “ideal” conceptions and “working” conceptions of teaching, were not necessarily the same as their intentions (Norton et al., 2005). Other researchers, such as Rienties, Brouwer, and Lygo-Baker (2012), also found that teachers had significantly different beliefs and intentions, indicating that their own ideal conceptions of teaching differed from those in practice. Some even argued that not all teachers’ beliefs would play a role in their actual behavior and only the most salient beliefs would influence the actual teaching (Aguirre & Speer, 2000; Ajzen, 2002).

Ertmer, Gopalakrishnan, and Ross (2001) reported that teachers’ beliefs about classroom technology use did not always match their classroom practices. Despite the fact that most of the teachers described themselves as having constructivist philosophies, they implemented technology in ways that might best be described as

representing a mixed approach, at times engaging their students in authentic, project-based work, but at other times asking them to complete tutorials, practice skills, and learn isolated facts. Teachers' explanations for these inconsistencies often included references to contextual constraints, such as curricular requirements or social pressure exerted by parents, peers, or administrators. Based on the inconsistent results that were found between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices, it is worthwhile to explore why such discrepancies exist. One possible reason might be teachers' beliefs are difficult to understand because beliefs exist primarily in tacit form (Kagan, 1992; Kane et al., 2002), thus it requires others to make inferences based on what teachers say, intend, and do. For example, although teachers may express the belief that social media is helpful in teaching language in a participatory approach (e.g., practice reading and listening comprehension with people who speak the language via Skype), their daily teaching practice may not include any social media, because they hold another belief that using Skype might be a distraction for students in the process of learning the language. The key problem then becomes how to determine which beliefs are influencing which actions. Since "all teachers hold beliefs, however defined and labeled, about their work, their students, their subject matter, and their roles and responsibilities" (Pajares, 1992, p. 314), language teachers have different beliefs about teaching, learning, social media, and many other things. Even though researchers have different opinions about teachers' beliefs, these beliefs may guide teachers' behavior, just as Pajares (1992) noted that "teachers' beliefs can and should become an important focus of educational inquiry" (p. 307).

## Instructors' General Beliefs about Social Media

Instructors, in general, have mixed feelings about using social media for various purposes. While agreeing the benefits of using social media for personal uses, faculty members have different perceptions about the value of using social media as a professional tool for both in and outside of classroom.

Moran, Seaman, & Tinti-Kane (2011, 2012) conducted a series of surveys to examine both the personal and professional impacts of social media on teaching faculty. The samples for these studies include teaching faculty from all disciplines in higher education and were selected to be representative of the overall range of faculty teaching in U.S. higher education. Moran et al. adopted a multiple-stage selection process to select a stratified sample of all teaching faculty. The process began by obtaining data from a commercial source, Market Data Retrieval, which claims that its records represent 93% of all teaching faculty. Via information from the Carnegie Classification for each institution, faculty members were then randomly selected from the master list in proportion to the number contained in each Carnegie Classification to produce a second-stage selection of teaching faculty members. By further eliminating the samples by verifying the email address, a finalized list of email addresses was created to send out the survey invitation messages. In the 2011 study, a total of 1,920 responses that answered sufficient number of questions were included as participants whereas a total of 3,875 responses were included in the 2012 study. In both 2011 and 2012, three-quarters of the respondents report that they are full-time faculty members. Just under one-quarter teach online, slightly over one-half are female, and over one-third have been teaching for 20 years or more. In both surveys,

Moran et al. differentiated various purposes of using social media by faculty members: for personal use only, with no relationship to professional and/or teaching responsibilities; for professional (nonteaching) use; and for use in the classes they teach.

In a 2011 survey, Moran et al. report that 38% faculty members agreed with the argument that educators should use social media to reach students where they are, while 24% disagreed and 39% kept neutral. When participants were asked whether or not they agree with the statement of “social networks take more time than they are worth”, 19% disagreed, 38% chose neutral, and 43% agreed. Faculty members were concerned about using social media in the survey, including concerns such as “lack of integrity of online submissions”, “privacy concerns”, “takes too much faculty time”, “lack of faculty training, faculty not confident with social media”, “lack of integration with schools’ learning management system”, “lack of support at my institution”. Among these concerns, on a scale of “somewhat important”, “important”, and “very important”, 43% of faculty members believed that the lack of integrity of online submissions and privacy were “very important” issues that need to be considered when using social media in class; 27% of faculty member believed that the lack of training for faculty members to use social media in class was a “very important” barrier in preventing the integration of social media and classroom teaching; 20% of faculty members concurred that the “very important” barrier was “faculty not confident with social media”; almost 40% of faculty members claimed that the lack of support from their institutions or schools was a “very important” issue in preventing faculty members from using social media. In the 2012 survey, Moran et al. reported

that faculty continued to consider a number of issues to be serious barriers. However, they also showed a noticeable change in the overall pattern of faculty perceptions of the barriers to the use of social media for their teaching. Every factor measured in both 2011 and 2012 showed a decline in the level of faculty concern for 2012 as compared to the previous year. The results for 2012 showed the same two concerns topping the list as were noted for 2011—privacy and the integrity of student submissions. Over 70 percent report that “lack of integrity of student submissions” is an “important” or “very important” barrier, and over 60 percent say privacy concerns are an “important” or “very important” barrier. The faculty concern with the integrity of student submissions was seen as the most serious barrier in both 2011 and 2012. Older faculty members held a greater level of concern with the issue of integrity of student submissions than did younger faculty. Virtually the same pattern of level of concern by age is seen when privacy issue was examined. Those aged 45 to 55 that had the greatest level of concern, and again they are the most likely to rate that level as “very important.”

#### Instructors' General Integration of Social Media

Instructors' use of social media changed dramatically over time. In 2009, the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE, 2010) conducted a national survey over 4,600 faculty members from 50 United States colleges and universities. Results showed that over 80% of the surveyed faculty members did not know or never used social media technologies such as blogs, wikis, Google docs, and video conferencing tools. However, Moran et al. (2011) found that almost all higher education teaching faculty are aware of the major social media sites; more than 75% visited a social

media site within the past month for their personal use; and nearly 50% posted content. More importantly, over 90% of all faculty members are using social media in courses they're teaching or for their professional careers outside the classroom. Nearly 65% of all faculty members have used social media during a class session, and 30% have posted content for students to view or read outside class. Over 40% of faculty members have required students to read or view social media as part of a course assignment, and 20% have assigned students to comment on or post to social media sites. Online video is by far the most common type of social media used in class, posted outside class, or assigned to students to view, with 80% of faculty reporting some form of class use of online video. Based on the results describe above (Moran et al., 2011), faculty members already integrated social media into teaching in classroom settings. It is worth, then, raising the question of what beliefs instructors have about the integration of social media and how they actually use social media in their teaching.

By analyzing both Moran et al.'s 2011 and 2012 survey results, it is safe to argue that social media has already been used in faculty members and instructors' teaching practices. However, the percentage for both faculty members' personal use of and professional use of social media varied by discipline. Faculty members in Humanities and Arts and Social Sciences had the highest percentage of using social media across all purposes. Over 70% faculty members in Humanities and Arts and 66% in Social Sciences claimed they used social media for personal use; for professional use, the percentage changed to 50% for Humanities and Arts and 48% for Social Sciences; for teaching use, the percentage further reduced to 39% for

Humanities and Arts and 37% for Social Sciences. Based on these numbers, it is worth raising the question of whether using social media is more beneficial for certain disciplines such as Humanities and Arts.

At least two major implications can be drawn from both Moran et al.'s survey results: first, faculty members are not familiar with social media and how to use it in classroom teaching. They did not receive enough training on how to use social media in classroom teaching, nor did they receive sufficient support from their institutions or schools, which may be part of the reason why they claimed that they were not confident enough to use social media. The unfamiliarity of using social media requires an urgent need for teacher educators to explore best practices and effective ways to better prepare teachers using social media in their classrooms considering the benefits that social media offers. Second, some faculty members were concerned about too much personal (students and/or faculty members) information exposed using social media in classroom teaching. Admittedly, using social media does involve personal information sharing when subscribing. However, all social media tools allow users to control how their information will be shared and viewed publicly. Some faculty members may not know the appropriate functions or features that all social media provided for user control and setting. This, again, points to the need for training and professional development opportunities for teachers specifically focusing on how to integrate social media in teaching.

Instructors may use social media in many different ways to better prepare language teachers (Levy, 2009). Instructors can use Skype to pair language teachers with native speakers to study a specific issue about the grammar of the language or to

discuss an effective way of teaching a certain aspect of the language. Instructors can also empower their students (future teachers) by using YouTube to encourage them create and upload videos of teaching for feedback from their peers. Instructors can use Facebook to set up a group to create a community of practice for language teachers to share and collaborate in assignments and projects. Although many possible benefits are identified in using social media to prepare language teachers, empirical studies and practical examples are really scarce in the literature when the integration of social media and language teacher education is considered.

Kabilan, Ahmad, and Abidin (2010) investigated whether university students consider Facebook as a useful and meaningful learning environment that could support, enhance and/or strengthen their learning of the English language. The authors conducted a survey with 300 undergraduate students at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang. Students were randomly chosen to participate in the survey using convenience sampling where they were selected based on researchers' convenience of access to students. Students who visited the university's main library were approached and given the questionnaire, which was immediately returned upon completion. The questionnaire was developed by the authors and contained two sections which aimed at collecting both students' demographic information and response to a 5-level likert scales items as well as open-ended items. In terms of analysis, the authors used mainly percentages, mean scores, and frequency to analyze the demographic data and description of close-ended items. As for the open-ended item, the students' views were categorized into situation and activity codes. The situation codes were used to identify the situations in which English language

learning utilizing Facebook would be important and meaningful for the students, whereas the activity codes were used to describe the students' regularly occurring behavior, such as writing (posting messages) and reading (messages posted by friends) that occurred as a consequence of their activities in Facebook. The qualitative data were used to support and give meaning to the quantitative data analysis, and for systematic analysis and presentation of each student's excerpts. The comments from the respondents were cited as they were expressed or stated by the students and identified by their respective codes.

The authors found that, of all the 300 participants, 137 (45.7%) had a Facebook account, among which 47 were males (28.8%) and 116 females (71.2%). The majority of the students (55.2%) who had a Facebook account claimed that they joined Facebook in the last six months while only 6.7% of the students had been with the Facebook community for more than two years. In terms of language use, Bahasa Malaysia (the national language of Malaysia), English and a mix of English and Bahasa Malaysia were frequently used by the students to interact in Facebook. Students in this study were active users of Facebook, with 54 students (33%) who login their Facebook account at least once a day; 84 students (51.5%) login at least once a week and 25 students (15.3%) only login at least once a month. The results also revealed that the students believed that Facebook could be useful to support/enhance the learning of English as an online environment if the teachers/instructors had designed and set up learning objectives and outcomes for the learning experience within Facebook. Based on both quantitative and qualitative analyses, most of the students agreed that Facebook was beneficial for their

confidence, motivation and attitudes of learning English and for their improvement and practice of their language skills (e.g., communication skills, writing in English, making learning English more fun). In terms of enhancing confidence, 69.2% of the students said that Facebook could enhance their confidence to write in English, 71.0% of the respondents believed that Facebook could improve their confidence in reading materials, 67.9% of the students agreed that their confidence level of using English to communicate had increased. Over 72% of the students agreed that Facebook could be an environment for enhancing students' motivation to communicate in English.

Almost three fourth of the students concur that their participation in Facebook has inculcated a more positive attitude towards learning English as second language.

Besides positive responses, 8.1% of the students believed that Facebook could not be an effective online environment to facilitate their practice of writing in English. In terms of practicing their reading in English, 7.5% of the students claimed that Facebook was not a suitable environment. A majority of the students answered in the open-ended item that Facebook had contributed positively to their confidence, motivation and attitudes of learning English and to their improvement and practice of their language skills. However, eight students differed that Facebook was not an appropriate online environment to learn the English language.

In terms of future research direction, the authors suggested that more emphasis should be put on how to make the integration of Facebook and language learning meaningful for students. This study provided evidence from students' perspective for the argument that Facebook could be useful to support the learning of English as an online environment. Although the results from this study were limited

because not all participants were future language teachers, it is reasonable to argue that Facebook can be useful for students in learning English, which at least provides evidence for the positive impact of using social media in language learning.

Besides its usefulness in enhancing foreign language learning, Facebook is identified to be useful in building a community to support learning. For example, Haverback (2009) reported a good example of how Facebook was used among pre-service teachers in her reading methods class. One of the students had created the “Ladies of 324 Reading Methods Group” on Facebook and had invited students in the class to become members. Haverback (the instructor) found that 75% of the students claimed they spent an hour or more on Facebook in a week compared with 21% who said they had read a book for pleasure for the same amount of time. She also noticed that students used the Facebook group as a tool to facilitate learning mostly outside of classroom, including discussing assignments, asking and answering questions, exchanging ideas, posting information, and providing support for each other. For instance, she quoted one of her students’ comments about the benefit Facebook offered, “When writing the paper for the class, we were all talking about the meaning of the (reading theoretical) principles on the Facebook page, and it really helped me sort it out” (p. 34). The students thought that Facebook was timely because they could present their questions or concerns to the group and expect a reply sooner than with email since there would be at least one member of “Ladies of 324” on Facebook almost all the time because of its diverse and entertaining functionality. Based on these experiences, Haverback suggested that teacher educators should embrace Facebook to promote student reading through book clubs, book discussions, and

shared readings, because such websites not only allowed professors to stay in contact with their students, but could lead to reading opportunities within the class. This article provides promising evidence for supporting the argument that Facebook as a social media, if used properly, can be beneficial to preparing language teachers in forming a small online collaborative community. As another student claimed, “When we all get our minds together, we come up with better ideas than we would on our own” (p. 34). Although it is difficult to find existing literature that specifically focusing on how to use social media to prepare language teachers, the wide adoption of various social media is evident in language teaching and learning. With this in mind, next, I further discuss language instructors’ beliefs and integration of social media in the following session.

#### *Language Instructors’ Beliefs and Integration of Social Media*

Although it is difficult to find empirical studies exploring instructors’ beliefs about using social media in language teacher education, many researchers have examined teachers’ beliefs with a broader term “technology” (Kim, Kim, Lee, Spector, & Demeester, 2013). Ertmer (2005) argued that for lasting successful integration of technology in education, it is necessary to change teachers’ beliefs about the implementation of technology in education towards a more student-centered orientation. Because technology, especially social media, provides ample opportunities for students to learn in a collaborative and participatory way, it is important for teachers, then, to be aware of the learning environment and style is leaning towards a student-centered approach rather than a traditional teacher-centered knowledge transmission approach. In a meta-review of the effects of 21 training

programs, Lawless and Pellegrino (2007) found that effective training programs provide teachers with support for a substantial period of time, in order to allow teachers to reflect on their practice and allow them to implement the inputs from the training in their teaching and learning strategies. By developing opportunities for conceptual change through reflective practice (Young, 2008), teachers have the opportunities to consider how and why they acted as they had. In so doing, teachers need to consider the intentions implied or enacted as they occurred in practice, therefore, examine how their own beliefs were adapted or not in practice and what impact this had on the learning they were hoping to achieve.

Oda (2011) conducted a multiple case study to explore how postsecondary foreign language teachers' beliefs about teaching, learning, and technology were interrelated and how these relationships impact their practice with technology. Using Green's (1971) framework on teachers' belief system, Oda addressed four research questions: 1) What are post-secondary foreign language teachers' beliefs about language teaching and learning (BTL)? 2) What are post-secondary foreign language teachers' beliefs about technology and teaching with technology (BTT)?; and 3) How do the relationships between post-secondary foreign language teachers' beliefs about teaching/learning (BTL) and technology/teaching with technology (BTT) inform the way technology is used in their instructional practices?, and 4) How does the teaching context influence post-secondary foreign language teachers' beliefs about how technology should be used, and how it is actually used? Borrowed from Green (1971), Oda agreed upon the belief system and identified three dimensions: 1) a *quasi-logical relationship* between beliefs. Some beliefs are more primarily held than

others and that beliefs can be either *primary* or *derivative* (stemming out from primary). In one's belief system, s/he may believe that A (primary belief) is true and that B (derivative belief) is also true and connected to A regardless of the presence of universally accepted logic. In other words, whether or not A actually leads to B is beside the point. The point is that this person believes A implies B in her/his personally held belief system; 2) the psychological strengths of beliefs within the system or, in other words, the way an individual attributes relative importance to a certain belief. In this dimension, beliefs are either psychologically *central* or *peripheral*. Psychologically *central* beliefs are *core* beliefs; they are strongly held beliefs, while *peripheral* beliefs are less strongly held than central ones and, therefore, more open to alteration; and 3) conflicting sets of beliefs within the system, which describes our capability to strongly hold beliefs even when they are incompatible with each other.

Based on Green's (1971) framework, Oda recruited three teachers who were teaching the second year Spanish course at Central University (pseudonym). The data sources included face-to-face interviews, class observations, and questionnaires. Oda conducted three interviews and three observations for each of the three participants. In addition, each participant was required to complete the questionnaire before the first interview. Analyzing both within and cross-cases, Oda adopted five categories of beliefs (beliefs about the target language, beliefs about learning, beliefs about teaching, beliefs about the program and curriculum, and beliefs about themselves as teachers) and found that: 1) most important and influential belief in teachers' belief system was the central belief, which was closely connected with their experiences as

learners; 2) teachers' beliefs were indeed consistent with their teaching practice, which included their instructional use of technology; 3) teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning foreign language had a stronger impact than beliefs about technology and technology use when it came to teachers' decision making on what/how technology should be used in their instruction; 4) teachers' previous experiences as learners greatly influenced their beliefs about how language should be taught and learned, which, in turn, colored their beliefs about how technology should be used in teaching; 5) the meaning of technology and the role of technology in foreign language classroom represented different things to different teachers even when developing in the same/similar instructional environment; 6) teachers' teaching context had an impact on their use of technology as well as on their beliefs regarding how technology should be used for instructional practice. Oda, based on the findings, suggested that in order for technology to be integrated effectively in foreign language classrooms, professional development programs needed to focus on teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning and beliefs about teaching and technology and be sensitive to issues that may arise when attempting to transform them (2011). This study, although focused on foreign language teachers' beliefs about technology integration, provided evidence for the argument that foreign language teachers' beliefs needed further exploration.

#### Language Instructors' Beliefs about Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

Although language instructors' beliefs about social media is scarce in the literature, many researchers have studied the relationship between language teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices (Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver & Thwaite, 2001;

Gatbonton, 1999; Golombek, 1998; Lam, 2000; Woods, 1996). Overall, these studies demonstrated that language teachers' classroom practices are shaped by a wide range of interacting and often conflicting factors, such as teacher cognition, teacher beliefs, teacher knowledge, prior experience in language learning and teacher training, and contextual factors (Borg, 2003). More specifically, researchers have explored language teachers' instructional practices through the following areas: *teachers' personal practical knowledge* (Golombek 1998), *beliefs* (Smith 1996; Woods 1996), and use of technology Lam's (2000).

Peacock (2001) conducted a longitudinal study with a focus on the changes in the beliefs about L2 learning of 146 pre-service English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers (all full-time undergraduates, 98% Hong Kong Chinese, 2% Westerners; 22% male, 78% female) over their 3-year Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) program. The beliefs of first year pre-service teachers were collected using Horwitz (1985)'s Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), and then were compared with the beliefs of experienced ESL teachers. The BALLI is a quantitative self-report questionnaire (Likert-scale format) that examine learner beliefs in five areas: the nature of language learning, the difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, pronunciation, and language learning strategies. Three major differences between pre-service teachers' beliefs and those of experienced teachers were identified: 1) learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words; 2) learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules; 3) people who speak more than one language well are very intelligent. In all three differences, the percentage of pre-

service teachers agreeing with these statements was much higher than that for experienced teachers. For instance, 18% experienced ESL teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the first statement while 43% of first-year, 47% of second-year, and 46% of third-year pre-service teachers agreed or strongly agreed; only 7% of experienced teachers agreed with the second statement, compared to 52% of first-year, 43% of second-year, and 42% of third year pre-service teachers; 18% experienced ESL teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the third statement compared to 64% of first-year, 56% of second-year, and 56% of third-year pre-service teachers. Peacock argued that these three major beliefs would negatively influence pre-service teachers own language learning or their future students learning. It is not surprising to notice that language instructors' beliefs, similar to general teachers' beliefs, is a construct that interrelated with many factors. The literature regarding language instructors' beliefs about foreign language teaching and learning reinforced the argument that these beliefs, though might differ from real teaching practices, play an important role in shaping the ways language instructors will perform in their teaching practices. With this in mind, next, I describe language instructors teaching practices with the integration of social media.

#### CALL: Definiton, Development, and Trends

Just like other disciplines, language instructors have adopted social media as a teaching tool in various ways (Garnett, 2009). Internet resources provide a wealth of authentic materials as well as opportunities to engage in meaningful communication with members of the discourse community (through forums, blogs, etc.). The idea of empowerment for language learners is of particular importance, given that students

can publish and disseminate their own texts—even more so today with social media. Similarly, because of the presence of internet in our everyday life, language instructors need to consider computer-mediated communication skills in addition to traditional writing and speaking skills (e.g., Chapelle, 2003, 2009; Garrett, 2009). Thus, expanded notions of literacy and communicative competence need to include online communication, collaborative writing, and dealing with hypertext and multimedia (Shetzer & Warschauer, 2000; Kern, 2000, 2006). However, a large amount of literature that describes the use of social media in language teaching is associated with a broader term: Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL) (Arno-Macia, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to review relevant literature about CALL first in order to better understand how language instructors use social media in their teaching within the larger context of CALL.

The definition of CALL has been changed from the narrowly defined one which refers only to “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning.” (Levy, 1997, p. 1) to a more broadened one that includes learners learning language in any context with, through, and around computer technologies (Egbert, 2005). While the first definition only focused on computer applications, the second one emphasized learners learning perspective which enabled more possibilities for ways of learning between computer technologies and language learning. More specifically, CALL needs to include not only desktop and laptop computers, but also the internet that connecting computers, and other devices associated with them such as tablets (e.g., iPad, Microsoft Surface), mp3 players (e.g., iPod touch), mobile phones, and electronic whiteboards (Levy &

Hubbard, 2005). With the rapid evolution of digital technology all around the world, CALL alone can not account for the learning experiences happened through all online communication across various digital devices (e.g., smartphone, tablet) that becomes a normal part of daily life.

CALL history can be tracked back to the early 1980s when the first large-scale project was done with the PLATO system developed at the University of Illinois (Levy, 1997). The project, developed for a number of languages (e.g. French), used a programmed instruction approach that provided students with practice material targeted at their language proficiency level along with necessary feedback. The system was designed to maintain detailed records of value not only for the teachers and students but also for researchers. Other early works in CALL also included academic projects conducted by designers, programmers and language teachers, typically using the computer programming language (e.g., BASIC) to create activities for their own students (Hubbard, 2009). With the arrival of new technology (e.g., videodisc) in the 1980s, many large-scale projects in language learning were created, including Montevideo, a simulation for learning Spanish (Gale, 1989); and Athena Language Learning Project, conducted by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to incorporate interactive videodisc and artificial intelligence (AI) to change language learning (Murray, Morgenstern and Furstenberg, 1989). Besides research projects, many commercial software were developed such as the Tell Me More series and the Rosetta Stone (Hubbard, 2009). In this period of time, the pedagogical implications of CALL were demonstrated in a more communicative way of teaching language, which focusing less on drill practice and more on encouraging students to

generate original utterances by using computers to stimulate discussion, writing or critical thinking (Warschauer, 2004). After 1990s, with the emphasis on sociocultural aspect of language learning, CALL shifted its pedagogical focus towards creating a more authentic learning environment using different media where language learners had a high degree of control over their language learning through multimedia (Warschauer, 2004). For instance, language learners could use web-based media (e.g., Skype) to communicate directly and conveniently with other learners or native speakers of the target language at any time and in any place. This authentic experience, whether synchronous or asynchronous, helped language learners locate and access information and materials based on their personal interests.

Now, with the continuing development of technology, researchers in CALL have begun to explore other possible directions, including online learning, assessment, and intelligent CALL (Hubbard, 2009). Online learning can be varied in terms of format, includes but not limited to independent learning through the Internet, recorded or programmed materials delivered online with or without computer linkage to instructional assistance, hybrid or blended learning where classes were taught partly face-to-face and partly online, classes taught synchronously to a group entirely online (Hubbard, 2009). Studies in this area have recognized that online learning requires more than simply presenting the same curriculum in the same way over the new medium. In many cases, there is an initial need to develop a community, train instructors appropriately (Hampel & Hauck, 2004; Jones & Youngs, 2006) and be prepared to handle technical issues, both expected and unforeseen. Computer assisted language testing (CALT) is another popular trend in current CALL research.

Basically, CALT refers to a test that is administered in a classroom by computer, allowing for control of time, potentially greater security and automatic scoring and reporting (Hubbard, 2009). The computer has also made possible types of automatic scoring that were previously impossible. For instance, Educational Testing Service (ETS) has developed a system called Criterion to automatically rate texts produced on a predetermined set of topics and provide holistic scores as well as error analysis and comments on organization and style (see <http://www.ets.org/criterion>). This system is used for both native writers and English language learners. Intelligent CALL, another promising subfield where the computer would take on more of the role of the teacher. Research showed that Intelligent Call could: 1) identify errors in student input and provide feedback so that the student can address them (Heift, 2002); 2) manage a student's learning based on building a model of the student's achieved proficiency and providing materials and tasks appropriate for further development at that level (Bernstein, Najmi, & Ehsani, 1999); and 3) interact with the student through conversational agents, programmed entities that simulate the linguistic facility of a human interlocutor, reacting and responding appropriately to student input (Coniam, 2008).

In addition, Hubbard (2009) summarized that social media (e.g., Facebook, Wikipedia), mobile learning (e.g., iPad, smart phone), and virtual learning (e.g., Second Life) are the future directions for CALL research. In other words, more research is needed in 1) exploring how social media can be used for various purposes in language teaching and learning; 2) identifying what mobile devices can be integrated into language teaching and learning; and 3) examining how learners learn

language skills and knowledge through a virtual space, such as Massively Multiplayer Online (MMO) game (e.g. Warcraft, Second Life). Based on the brief review of CALL development and research trend, it seemed that CALL covered many areas such as pedagogy and technology. Thus, challenges can not be ignored when CALL is integrated fully into language education, especially for language teacher education (Garrett, 2009; Hubbard, 2009).

#### CALL and Language Teacher Education: Connections and Challenges

Given the complexity and diversity of goals, contexts, and problems in CALL, many challenges have been identified in preparing language teachers with the skills and knowledge they need in order for them to integrate technology and language teaching. First, language teachers, especially pre-service teachers, have limited access to technology education (Kessler, 2006; Peters, 2006). For example, Kessler (2006) argued that technology courses were not sufficiently integrated into teacher preparation programs, therefore they failed to equip pre-service teachers with the related knowledge and skills they need to enter today's technologically advanced language classroom. Kessler, based on surveys and interviews results with teachers, also claimed that pre-service teachers were general dissatisfied with their lack of training on how to use technology in future teaching. Even within the already limited language teacher preparation with CALL, pre-service teachers complained about not learning how to use technology in different context. In other words, pre-service teachers felt that much of what occurs in the CALL training is not reinforced with pedagogical and linguistic support (Kessler, 2006). Similar to Kessler's argument, Peters (2006) conducted a survey exploring pre-service teachers' attitude about the

integration of technology and teacher education. The results showed that after four years of teacher education, most pre-service teachers said that they did not feel ready to integrate technology in their language classrooms. Peters (2006) also found that “many pre-service teachers questioned the purpose of using technology, not completely convinced that technology would be used to learn a language rather than solely for learning about technology” (p. 163). The results of these studies reinforced the argument that pre-service teachers were not well prepared with how to use technology in the language classroom. Just as Garnett (2009) articulated, given the instructors or faculty members who still lack sufficient skills and knowledge about the integration of technology and language teaching pedagogy, and with only a few graduate programs in the country that provide substantive training in CALL, language teacher education is still in the very early stages of preparing language teachers with necessary CALL knowledge and skills (Hubbard & Levy, 2006; Kassen, Lavine, Murphy-Judy, & Peter, 2007).

Second, different models for the delivery of CALL in language teacher preparation programs including distance learning, online learning, and blended learning models. The variety of learning models also increased the complexity of the language teacher education. Thus, it is necessary to define the terms associated with the learning models, namely: *distance learning*, *online learning*, and *blended learning*.

Distance learning, or distance education, is a broad category that includes several arrangements between the learner and instructor as part of the course: traditional non-electronic correspondence, telephone or videoconferencing, or

computer-delivered learning mediated through various Internet options (Means et al., 2009). Distance learning is commonly cited as having benefits in providing access to learning for an increased number of learners since geographical and time constraints can be overcome. Additionally, resources such as teachers, learning materials, native speakers, and so on, can be pooled and used more effectively.

Online learning, or e-learning, is distance learning via the Internet. In online learning, the Internet is most frequently used to access learning materials to interact with the content, instructor, and other learners and to obtain support and guidance (Ally, 2004). Communication tools used in an online setting are often categorized as either *synchronous* or *asynchronous*. Synchronous tools such as VoIP, chat rooms, or videoconferencing facilitate real-time communication among all parties, while asynchronous tools such as e-mail, discussion boards, or wikis do not allow for real-time communication and instead allow learners to access materials or interact with others at a time of their choice.

Blended learning, or hybrid learning, is generally considered to be online learning components combined with traditional face-to-face instruction. While this definition reflects the most common usage of the term, for the purposes of this report, the definition has been expanded to include distance learning delivery systems that may not necessarily require a computer. However, there are definitions of the term that can be so broad as to include any learning experience that uses some sort of technology for educational purposes, such as an incidental use of e-mail to communicate with the instructor or the presentation of a PowerPoint slide. Other definitions are more specific and specify that, in order for a program to be considered

blended learning, a certain percentage of time must be dedicated to using a distance component. Based on the definition of STARTALK report (Abadir, Mana, Pien, & Hu, 2012), blended learning is an instructional approach that combines the facilitation of learning in classroom-based instructional activities with distance learning experiences, which may take place before, during, or after class instruction. The distance learning component, where the instructor and participants are in different physical settings, represents a significant portion of overall learning time. Overall, blended learning is a broader term that combines distance learning and face-to-face learning components. Online learning is generally believed to be included, as well as video conferencing and traditional correspondence courses, in distance learning.

Third, language teacher training is problematic without the help of a trained CALL specialist as language center director. Workshops developed by general IT support units that are designed to help teachers of any discipline learn to use materials development tools or course management systems, for example, are often not very useful to language teachers, especially those who are not native speakers of English. As a consequence, many language teachers have little support for developing their use of CALL for any purposes that cannot be carried out with widely adopted technologies such as communication tools and popular video-editing programs (Garnett, 2009). In other words, many language teachers lack the support of a dedicated person who can provide feedback and suggestion about how to specifically use certain technology in the context of language teaching and learning.

With these existing challenges, it is difficult to fulfill the goal of integration of technology and language teacher education. Just as teacher preparation in every

discipline, language teacher training needs to be more purposeful in considering the integration of technology, instruction, curriculum, and assessment. A simple way of offering one course that teaches technology separately without the potential connection to language teaching will not work. Without substantive grounding in the pedagogical context and rationale for technology use, familiarity with technology will allow only superficial application and no real integration. In the following section, concrete examples are provided to illustrate how instructors and faculty members use social media in preparing language teachers.

#### Language Instructors' Integration of Social Media

Social media are being used increasingly in language teaching and learning, such as using text chat and voice chat (Jepson, 2005; Okuyama, 2005), a podcast and an audioblog (Hsu, Wang, & Comac, 2008), or a Blog and Wiki (Ducate & Lomicka, 2008; Fellner & Apple, 2006; Murray & Hourigan, 2006). Empirical examples are provided regarding the use of various social media tools in language teaching and learning. It must be noted that some of the studies included instructors and students that were not language-oriented, which provided more supporting evidence for the social media integration in educational field.

A podcast is a series of regularly updated media files that can be played on a number of devices (portable and static) and are distributed over the internet via a subscription service (Rosell-Aguilar, 2009). For instance, Belanger (2005) provided 1,600 first-year college students with iPods at Duke University. Foreign language courses were among the subjects which offered podcasts in the study. The instructors of the Spanish courses provided audio recordings of texts, oral quizzes, pronunciation

samples, oral feedback, audio exercises, songs (with copyright clearance), and audio flashcards with key vocabulary items. The students who took part in these classes were surveyed, and 75% of the respondents said they used their iPod for academic purposes. For the courses that disseminated digital content, students with listening comprehension requirements (e.g., music and languages) found access to the resources “particularly valuable” (Belanger, p. 6).

A Blog is a Web page with regular diary or journal entries, using text, audio, or video. Blog is widely used to teach writing, particular areas of focus have been self-expression, creativity, ownership, and community building. For example, Ducate and Lomicka (2008) conducted an action research study over two semesters. During the first semester, 20 third semester German and 9 fourth semester French students read native speaker blogs weekly, guided by a blog worksheet. Over the course of the semester, students engaged in a research-based project: their goals were to get to know the Blogger, to better understand the target culture, and to collect a variety of information about the target language, the target culture and the Blogger. At the end of the semester, students compiled their research and information in a PowerPoint presentation and produced a short written report. These end-of-semester projects encouraged students to present the Blogger to their peers and to discuss a specific topic (related to the target culture) mentioned on the blog that they chose to explore further. During the second semester of the study, 10 fourth semester German and 11 fifth semester French students maintained their own blogs where they posted weekly entries to their personal blogs and commented on classmates’ blogs. The topics were related to their class readings and the blog postings served either as pre- or post-

reading tasks. For each post, students were required to post a picture or a link to support their argument. After posting, students commented on a least two other students' postings and were asked to practice discourse strategies such as agreeing or disagreeing in their comments.

Ducate and Lomicka (2008) collected a variety of data, including pre- and post-semester questionnaires, worksheets the blog readers completed each week after they read the blog, and a presentation each student gave on the Blogger s/he followed and a written report to accompany the presentation. By analyzing the data, Ducate and Lomicka found that students became fully immersed into the culture of blogging in the foreign language during the process of the reading and writing the Blog. By reading the blogs first, students were able to become comfortable and familiar with the art of blogging before writing their own. Overall, the blogs promoted ownership and creativity, allowed students to experiment with the foreign language and express themselves in a relaxed environment, and provided students with a window into the target culture that they would never get from their textbook alone. Students enjoyed the project and felt that it aided in their learning of the target language both in terms of reading, writing, vocabulary, and cultural knowledge. Ducate and Lomicka also suggested that Blogs should be used as they are outside of the classroom: a forum for expressing oneself and one's opinions, similar to a diary, where the topics are mostly self-selected.

Wiki, "a page or a collection of web pages designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content" (<http://www.wikipedia.org>), is also adopted by many language teachers for language development and the enhancement

of writing skills. For instance, the teenage learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Lund's (2008) study used a wiki to construct their collective and multiple perceptions of the United States, one of the main topics of their curriculum. Students' responses on a questionnaire about the wiki project revealed that learners appreciated the sharing, cooperation, and multiplicity of opinions that working with a wiki afforded them. Lund's interaction analysis of videotaped lab sessions in which the learners worked in dyads on their wiki pages showed that learners were engaged in a collective Zone of Proximal Development and transitioned "from local collaboration to collective and networked production" (Lund, 2008, p. 50).

Mak and Coniam (2008) also used Wiki to investigate the development of secondary school students' writing skills. Seventh year EFL learners used a wiki to create a printed brochure about their new school for their parents. Students were able to be creative and experienced a boost of confidence in their writing skills when the final product, the brochure, was sent out. This project also had a positive effect on their interest and attentiveness during regular English lessons. Results of the study indicated that students produced larger amounts of text than what was expected of them and also increased the complexity of their writing by expanding and reorganizing their texts. However, correcting other students' mistakes was rather infrequent, perhaps due to the fact that their educational system does not emphasize correction of others and that students do not want classmates to lose face. Revising and changing another person's text can be met with apprehension, even in less traditional educational environments. Creating a wiki collaboratively not only allows but encourages its members to change, edit, and add to its content.

Twitter, the microblogging service founded in 2006, is one of the most popular social media with over 200 million active users (Bennett, 2012). Many researchers have studied Twitter and identified its benefits in developing and maintaining relationships (Marwick & boyd, 2010; Smith & Rainie, 2010); gathering and sharing information (Lotan et al., 2011; Namaan, Boase, & Lui, 2010). Moreover, because of its distinguishing features such as follower structure, link-sharing, use of hashtags and real-time searching, Twitter is also valuable in literacy and language learning, where using the language for real communication was crucial (Antenos-Conforti, 2009). For instance, Waller (2010) used Twitter to engage a group of struggling writers in authentic literacy practices. Students who were encouraged to use Twitter to communicate their thinking with the class received replies from not only their classmates but also followers from outside of the class. Waller reported that students enjoyed writing for real audience and were excited about publishing their thoughts for others to read.

Borau, Ullrich, Feng and Shen (2009) conducted a study using Twitter for learners to practice the target language in authentic environments. In their study, nearly half of the students reported that they had communicated with native speakers on Twitter, whom they may not have access to otherwise. Borau and colleagues concluded that the activity helped learners develop communicative and cultural competences in language learning but not strategic competence. Wright (2010) further illustrated Twitter's benefits in documenting ongoing processes and real-time ideas. In his study, eight graduate students in teacher education were asked to tweet three times each workday in response to their experiences of teaching and a list of

questions such as “what do my students say about their learning right now?” and “what do I need to overcome or solve?” This activity encouraged students to share and reflect upon their teaching experiences. According to Wright (2010), because Twitter was accessible via mobile phones, tweets could be sent immediately without the space and time limitation.

Besides the above benefits that Twitter could contribute to language teaching and learning, researchers have listed other affordances of using Twitter, including: extending communication beyond the classroom (Lowe & Laffey, 2011; Perifanou, 2009; Rinaldo et al, 2011); facilitating both online and offline communication (Antenos-Conforti, 2009); enhancing social learning opportunities and improving interactions by forming a learning community (Borau et al, 2009; Ebner, Lienhardt, Rohs, & Meyer, 2010); increasing student–instructor and student–student communication and reducing the sense of isolation among student groups (Dunlap & Lowenthal, 2009; Ebner & Maurer, 2009; Wright, 2010); increasing participation and engagement (Ebner et al., 2010; Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2011; Kop, 2011).

In conclusion, based on various uses of social media in language teaching and learning described above, it is clear that using social media is becoming a trend in this technology driven era. However, the widespread and use of social media does not necessarily lead to effectiveness or value in the language teacher education. Only when the particular social media and its strengths and limitations can be coordinated and managed as a pedagogical tool, the effectiveness of using social media in language teacher education can be found. Furthermore, today’s language teachers, pre-service or in-service, are introduced but not necessarily familiarized with social

media. Thus, how to use certain social media (e.g., set up account, change settings, control and share information) as well as pedagogical training on how to integrate social media in language teaching are essential because language teachers may need both. When technologies that language teachers already use for social purposes are introduced for learning, language teacher educators will need to be sensitive to adjust social media usage from leisure activities to educational purposes (Kennedy & Levy, 2008; Murray, Hourigan, & Jeanneau, 2008). Considering the fact that many language classrooms are already filled with various social media, it is ironic that there is little empirical research focusing on how to prepare language teachers using social media. Increasingly, language teachers will need to know the difference between technologies in relation to their optimal use in language learning (Hubbard, 2004; Hubbard & Levy, 2006; Kassen, Lavine, Murphy-Judy, & Peters, 2007), therefore, it is imperative to explore what possible ways that instructors can integrate social media with language teacher education.

### Summary of Chapter 2

In this Chapter, I first described the paradigm shift of knowledge and learning with the development of technology and the needs for the integration of technology (including social media) and education. Next, I explained the different approaches in foreign language teaching and learning and proposed my theoretical framework, sociocultural theory of learning, in connection with social media, foreign language teacher education, and teacher beliefs. Following that, I reviewed the literature related to the general beliefs and practices teachers have about social media. Last, I reviewed the literature of language instructors' beliefs about foreign language teaching and

learning, foreign language teacher education and CALL, and language instructors' practices of implementing social media in language teaching and learning. Based on the literature review, several major points can be summarized:

- 1) From individual to society, from personal epistemology to collective intelligence, from traditional literacy to 21<sup>st</sup> century new literacy, all factors call for urgent technology integration with education encompassing various areas such as learning, teaching, and teacher education.
- 2) Social media, a new trend in technology development, has been studied by many scholars and found useful in facilitating new forms of collaborative knowledge construction, communication, identity work, social capital, and civic participation in the online-offline community (Cress & Kimmerle, 2008; Ellison et al., 2007; Greenhow, 2011; Greenhow & Li, 2012; Larusson & Alterman, 2009; Robelia, Greenhow & Burton, 2011; Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009).
- 3) Teacher beliefs, including language instructors' beliefs, though may not align to their actual teaching practices, is worth exploration because of its important role in shaping the way teachers perceive and interpret classroom interaction and influence their construction of intentions in response to those interaction.
- 4) Although the literature demonstrated many benefits and learning outcomes using social media to facilitate students' learning, the practice of using social media in teaching and instructors' beliefs about using social media remain underexplored.

- 5) Language instructors have already incorporated social media in language teaching and learning and language teacher education, as demonstrated in the CALL literature. However, research studying language instructors' beliefs about the integration of social media is scarce. More research is needed in identifying what differences and similarities between language instructors' beliefs about social media and their actual teaching practices.

Considering the context of foreign language teacher education in the United States and the background of STARTALK program described in Chapter One, it is worth noticing that STARTALK program provides ample professional development opportunities for both in-service and pre-service language teachers. The lack of research in exploring language instructors' beliefs and practices of integrating social media in preparing language teachers calls for immediate attention in the field of foreign language teacher education. Combining all these facts, it is reasonable to argue that a research study focusing on what beliefs STARTALK teacher program instructors have and how they actually implement social media in their programs is valuable in providing more information and clarification, thus contributing to the field of foreign language teacher education.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

In this Chapter, I describe the collective case study design of the study, the settings and participants, data sources and collection, data analysis, and trustworthiness of data. The study addressed the following research questions: 1) What beliefs do four STARTALK instructors have about social media and foreign language teacher education? 2) How do four STARTALK instructors integrate social media in their teacher programs? 3) What differences and similarities can be identified between four STARTALK instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education?

### *Rational for Collective Case Study*

Qualitative case study has been adopted in social science research for many years because of its usefulness in, according to Yin (2009), answering “how” and “why” types of research questions and investigating real-life contexts, phenomena, and situations where the researcher has little or no control. Many scholars have described the benefits of case study as a method in social science research (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994, 1995; Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) also argued that case studies can be beneficial in expanding our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena, especially for fields such as psychology, political science, anthropology, social work, and education. Merriam (1998) defined the case study as a record or product that documents the “intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit” (p. 21), which can

thoroughly document and understand the particular phenomenon for its own uniqueness.

Case studies can be divided into many sub-categories, such as explanatory, exploratory, descriptive, multiple-case studies (Yin, 2003); intrinsic, instrumental, and collective (Stake, 1995). For multiple case studies, Stake (1994) used the term collective case studies, which was designed to provide a general understanding using a number of instrumental case studies that either occur on the same site or come from multiple sites. Yin (2003) argued that multiple case study could enable the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. The goal is to compare findings across cases to find either similar or contrasting results. Yin (2003) also indicated that multiple case studies was not aiming at statistical generalization but rather analytical generalization. When multiple cases are used, a typical format is to provide detailed description of each case and then present the themes within the case (within case analysis) followed by thematic analysis across cases (cross-case analysis).

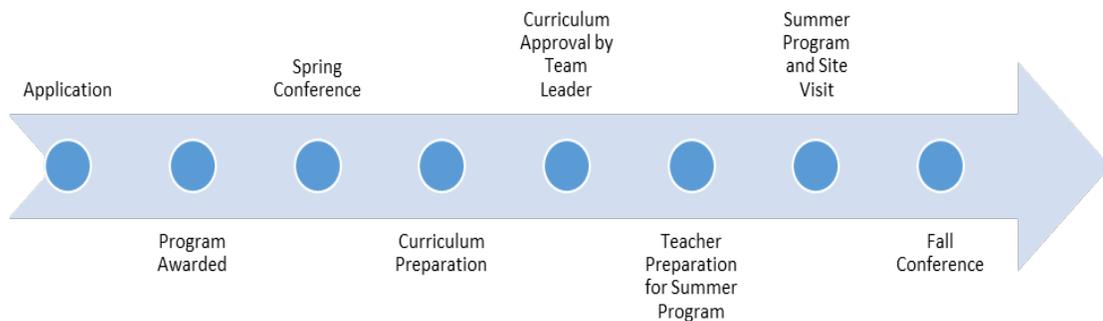
A qualitative case study design allowed me to, according to Yin (2003), answer “how” questions without manipulating participants’ behavior and explore the contextual conditions that are relevant to the phenomenon. Based on the discussion of my theoretical framework in Chapter Two, sociocultural theory of learning not only guided this case study inquiry, but as both Yin (1994) and Stake (1994, 1995) suggested, this inquiry was informed and enlightened within the context of STARTALK instructors’ beliefs and practices about the integration of social media and language teacher education. Since the proposed study is focusing on what beliefs the four STARTALK language instructors have and how they implement social

media in their summer teacher training programs, each instructor was chosen as a single case to better understand the phenomenon and answer my research questions. Yin (1994) and Merriam (1998), referring to this practice as multiple case study, had similar ideas about the value and utility of these designs. Merriam (1998) posited that “the more cases included in a study, and the greater variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be” (p. 41). Yin (2009) considered each individual an actual experiment, and believed that multiple experiments could yield great enlightenment and phenomenological understandings. For this purpose, this qualitative case study employed a multiple (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009) or collective case study design (Stake 1994, 1995).

#### Site and Participants

Beginning in 2007, STARTALK Central, an operating agency in National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland College Park, recruits both student and teacher programs around October every year. Programs that are interested in applying for funding need to submit a proposal online which includes basic description, rationale, budget, and sample curriculum and lesson plan for carrying out the program in the summer. After the submission period, STARTALK central collects all proposals and assign three external reviewers to evaluate each proposal based on a self-developed checklist. Each reviewer rates “highly recommend”, “recommend with revision” and “not recommend” for each proposal. After that, STARTALK central conducts an internal review process to finalize the awardee list for the following year. Each STARTALK program, both student and teacher programs, must have one program director and one lead instructor. Usually program

director is in charge of overall administration of the program while lead instructor is responsible for developing the curriculum and lesson plan, observing and providing feedback for other instructors, and controlling the pedagogical aspect of the program. After the program is awarded, one team leader recruited from external consultant team that STARTALK central has developed is assigned to the program. Depending on availability and geographic location, one team leader may have 5-10 programs that he or she supervises. The team leader works closely with the program director and the lead instructor to finalize the curriculum, less plan, and site visit date. Site visits are conducted by a team nominated by STARTALK Central which typically includes the team leader of the program that is visited, one content expert that knows the languages that the program is using, and one STARTALK central staff member. The purpose of the site visit is to help program directors and instructors to identify successful components as well as possible areas that need further improvements. The site visit date is usually decided based on the team leader and program director's availability and the timing of the program. After the site visit, team leader works with other site visit team members to construct a report using a STARTALK developed template. The team leader uploads the site visit report to STARTALK Central website, where the program director has the opportunity to answer questions. After the program ends, the program director is required to submit a final report using a template and upload it to STARTALK Central website (see *Figure 3.1*).



*Figure 2* STARTALK Program Cycle

For 2013 STARTALK programs, all awardees were finalized in January, 2013 and notified by mail and email before March, 2013. Based on the selection process described above, there are 71 teacher programs were awarded for 2013. I created an email list including all instructors that were written on the proposals that were submitted by all STARTALK teacher programs awardees. Each of the awarded programs had at least one lead instructor who was responsible for developing the curriculum, teaching one or more sessions, and coordinating other instructors' teaching. To address my research questions regarding instructor's beliefs about the integration of social media and language teacher education, all instructors from the awarded STARTALK teacher programs were considered as sample participants for the study and received an email invitation to participate in my study. Based on the previous discussion, a collective case study design is better in understanding the phenomenon of foreign language instructors' beliefs and practices of social media integration.

Four instructors from three STARTALK teacher programs were recruited based on their willingness and availability to participate in the study. All participants were female. To protect the participants, pseudonym were created for each of the programs and participants selected. The three programs were named as 1) Program A (PA), 2) Program B (PB), and 3) Program C (PC). The four instructors were Catherine from PA, Dawn and Emily from PB, and Hong from PC (see Table 3.1 below for participants' information). In terms of race and ethnicity, Catherine, Dawn, and Emily are all White while Hong is Asian (Online Questionnaire).

Table 3 *Participants Information*

<b>Instructors (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>STARTALK Program</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Race</b>
<b>Catherine</b>	Program A (PA)	Female	White
<b>Dawn</b>	Program B (PB)	Female	White
<b>Emily</b>	Program B (PB)	Female	White
<b>Hong</b>	Program C (PC)	Female	Asian

Data Collection

Erickson (1986) argued that in qualitative research data collection, researchers needed to: 1) “identify the full range of variation in modes of formal and informal social organization and meaning-perspectives; 2) collecting recurrent instances of events across a wide range of events in the setting, so that the typicality or atypicality of certain event types with their attendant characteristic social organization can later be established; and 3) look at events occurring at any system level in the context of events occurring at the next higher and next lower system levels” (p. 143).

Connecting to the current study, it is reasonable to label STARTALK teacher training program as atypical program comparing to other commonly taught language teacher training program. However, due to the lack of teacher training for teachers who teach LCTLs, it is also logic to argue that STARTALK is typical for foreign language teacher training programs with a focus on LCTLs. Therefore, by exploring STARTALK instructors' beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education both represented the typicality in LCTLs and atypicality in commonly taught languages.

As recommended by Yin (2009), a convergence of evidence in data collection required researchers to draw on multiple data sources to triangulate analysis in order to gain a thorough understanding of phenomenon. Yin (2009) advocated three main principles of data collection to help ensure the rigor and empiricism of case study research: 1) use multiple sources of evidence; 2) create a case study database, and 3) maintain a chain of evidence. Based on these recommendations, this study included data collected from online questionnaire, interviews, online observations of instructors teaching practices, member check records, instructor self-developed documents (curriculum, lesson plan, assignments), and other program related documents (program proposal, site visit report, program final report) after the approval of the full research protocol by University of Maryland College Park's IRB.

After the study was approved by IRB, I sent out an email invitation (see Appendix A) to all instructors in STARTALK teacher programs (N=133) using the mail list that I created from the 2013 STARTALK teacher program awardees' proposals by the end of June, 2013. The email invitation provided information about

the purpose and design of the study, the duration and timing of the study in addition to the mechanisms to ensure participant confidentiality was outlined. I provided my contact information (email, phone number, various social media accounts) and encouraged potential participants to ask any question they might have regarding the proposed study. I also asked the participants whether they agreed to join the study by clicking the “Yes” button on the online questionnaire which included the consent information. The informed consent form in the online questionnaire specifically stated what would be expected of the participants in the study and informed participants they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Any subsequent questions or concerns relating to the form, the content, or the study, could be directed to me.

#### Participant Questionnaire

All participants in this study were asked to complete a Participant Questionnaire (see Appendix B). From the 133 emails recipients that I sent out, a total of 13 people answered the Participant Questionnaire with 10 agreed and 3 refused to participate in the study. After examining the 10 potential participants, 6 of them already started or even finished their STARTALK teacher program, and were excluded from the study since all participants were required to finish their first interview before their STARTALK teacher program started. Therefore, 4 participants were recruited and were agreed to join the study. The Participant Questionnaire was a self-report instrument designed to collect information about participants’ demographics, educational background, and their usage of social media. The questionnaire would take approximately 20 minutes. The questionnaire was created

and delivered online using SurveyMonkey, an online survey tool. All participants were given a direct link to the Questionnaire and completed individually based on their choice of time before their STARTALK teacher program started. All the data were stored online and secured under my SurveyMonkey account.

#### Interviews

I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews three times for each of the participants from July 2013 to April 2014. The first interview was conducted before each participant's program started (see Appendix C for interview questions), the second interview was conducted after the program ended (see Appendix D for interview questions), and the third interview was carried out as a follow-up to clarify concerns and questions with participants after the initial coding and analysis was done (see Appendix E for interview questions). The participants' interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Each interview was scheduled at the convenience of the participants, based on their choices of time and contacting method (e.g., Skype, phone). The duration of the interviews varied from 45 to 60 minutes depending on individual situation. I hired professional transcriber to transcribe all interview data and conducted member checks with each of the four participants.

#### Online Observations

I conducted two to three online observations for each of the four participants based on their availability. I adopted a self-designed observation protocol (see Appendix F) to record and document the issues I noticed regarding the discussion and actual use of social media in language teaching and learning. Detailed time, duration, and frequency of observations were discussed with individual instructor based on

their availability. Generally, each online observation covered a class period ranging from 50 to 60 minutes. All interviews and observations were carried out over the internet through video conferencing tools (i.e., Skype, Google Hangout) and telephone. This mode of qualitative data collection was based on the physical distance between me and the participants in the study.

#### Member Checks

As advocated by Lincoln and Guba (1985), member checking can be crucial for establishing the credibility of one's findings and can also serve to alleviate researchers' anxieties about their capacity to comprehend the social worlds of others, which can be employed in connection with most forms of qualitative research. I conducted member checks after each interview so that participants could review interview transcripts and make corrections, deletions, and/or elaborations. However, all participants didn't make any significant changes to the transcripts. All participants were encouraged to ask the researcher questions throughout the duration of the study and were informed that they may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I also conducted follow up interviews for all participants to present my analysis and ask for their feedback. No major changes were made after the follow up interviews.

#### Primary and Secondary Documents

As part of the requirements by STARTALK Central, each STARTALK teacher program has an instructional lead who is in charge of designing the curriculum and instructions for all teacher participants using a curriculum template developed by STARTALK Central. This template consisted of three major questions

that applicants needed to complete: 1) What will participants be able to do with what they know by the end of the program? 2) How will participants demonstrate what they can do with what they know by the end of the program? 3) What will prepare participants to demonstrate what they can do with what they know? In the first part of the template, applicants were asked to provide a paragraph of overview and theme of the proposed program. In the second part of the template, applicants needed to provide evidence to demonstrate how they can meet the goals set up in the first part for participants (e.g., assessments, products, activities). In the last part of the template, applicants had to describe the learning experience of the participants by listing first the Can-Do statements for teacher participants, the key concepts that teacher participants would learn, and the experiences and evidence that participants would have to support their learning. In addition, applicants had to provide program timeline, schedule, materials, and resources they would use in the third part of the template. As described earlier, each STARTALK program has an assigned team leader who would review and approve the curriculum template. The curriculum template was required to be approved by the team leader at least one week before the program start date.

Because all participants were instructors in their STARTALK teacher programs, they all developed their curriculum and lesson plans for each program. All these instructors' developed primary materials, including curriculum, syllabi, lesson plans, assessments, and assignments, were collected for the purpose of comparing if there is any discrepancies between participants' beliefs and the documents they developed for their teaching practices. Secondary documents include each program's

proposal, site visit report, and final report that were created by program directors and external consultants. Both primary documents developed by the instructors and secondary documents created by others were collected as evidence to compare with instructors beliefs and actual teaching practices.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis plays a fundamental role in qualitative case study design, as Yin (2009) argued, four analytic strategies are particularly important: 1) relying on theoretical propositions, 2) developing case description, 3) using both qualitative and quantitative data, and 4) examining rival explanations. While admitting the usefulness of software tools (e.g., NVIVO), Yin (2009) emphasized the importance of choosing and employing a general analytic strategy in the data analysis process. A general analytic strategy enables qualitative researchers to “treat the evidence fairly, produce compelling analytic conclusions, and rule out alternative interpretations” (Yin, 2009, p. 130). The study particularly employed the first strategy- relying on theoretical propositions-due to its focus on language instructors’ beliefs and practices in implementing social media and the sociocultural theory of learning described as my theoretical framework in Chapter Two. The study relied on sociocultural theory of learning which provides major theoretical propositions to understand the STARTALK language instructors’ beliefs and practices of social media. By taking a sociocultural proposition, I was able to analyze the instructors’ beliefs in connection with many important aspects such as instructors’ teaching experiences and educational background, instructors’ experiences in learning foreign languages, and instructors’ teaching within STARTALK context. Using the first strategy in data

analysis would be useful “to focus attention on certain data and to ignore other data” (Yin, 2009, p. 130). In other words, relying on theoretical propositions allowed me to create an in-depth understanding of STARTALK language instructors’ beliefs and experiences with social media by triangulating various data sources.

The constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was adopted for data analysis, which enabled me to look for similarities and differences within each case and across the four cases while continuously applying previously analyzed data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Because this study was a qualitative collective case study and a total of four instructors from three different sites were recruited, constant comparative method “allows the researcher to differentiate one category/theme from another and to identify properties and dimensions specific to that category or theme” (p. 73). The constant comparative method involves breaking down the data into “units” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and coding them to categories. Categories arising from this method generally take two forms: those that are derived from the participants’ customs and language, and those that the researcher identifies as significant to the project’s focus-of-inquiry; the goal of the former was to reconstruct the categories used by subjects to conceptualize their own experiences and world view, the goal of the latter is to assist the researcher in developing theoretical insights into the social processes operative in the site under study; thus: “the process of constant comparison stimulates thought that leads to both descriptive and explanatory categories” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp 334-341). Categories will change based on constant comparison of the understandings of categories and the relationships between categories during analysis (Boeije, 2002). Moreover, Yin (2009) also

advocated two analytical methods: pattern-matching and cross-case synthesis, which are, in nature, quite similar with the constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Pattern-matching is to compare “an empirically based pattern with a predicted one” (p. 136) while cross-case synthesis is to establish a more thorough understanding by considering each case an individual experiment and examining multiple cases through cross-case synthesis.

As described in Chapter Two, Oda’s (2011) study proposed a framework about foreign language teachers’ beliefs, based on Richards and Lockhart’s (1994) framework, arguing that foreign language teacher beliefs can be divided into the following five categories: 1) beliefs about the target language; 2) beliefs about learning, 3) beliefs about teaching, 4) beliefs about the program and curriculum, 5) beliefs about themselves as teachers. Because Oda’s dissertation focused on foreign language teacher beliefs about technology and the fact that social media is closely related to technology, it was reasonable to adopt Oda’s framework with a focus on STARTALK instructors’ beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Therefore, I revised the above five categories and developed four categories based on my research questions: 1) beliefs about foreign language learning (BFL), 2) beliefs about foreign language teaching (BFLT), 3) beliefs about foreign language teacher education (BFLTE), 4) beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language education (BSMFLTE). All four participants’ interview data were collected and analyzed based on these four categories of beliefs adapted from Oda’s framework (see Appendix G).

Using Corbin and Strauss's (2008) constant comparative methods and Yin's (2009) cross-case synthesis method, I was able to better understand STARTALK instructors' beliefs and practices of the integration of social media and language teacher education. Each unit of analysis, the individual instructor's beliefs and practices, was analyzed using the aforementioned methods and techniques to uncover patterns across each instructor's experiences. More specifically, I developed a two-step analysis procedure:

- 1) comparison within a single case
- 2) comparison across multiple cases

In the first step, data collected from four instructors' questionnaires and interviews were analyzed for each individual case (each instructor). Open coding was used in this step, where every passage of the interview was studied and every open-ended question in the questionnaire to determine what exactly had been said and to label each passage with an adequate code (see Appendix G). By comparing different parts of the interview, the consistency of the interview as a whole was examined.

Categories of coding or general themes emerged based on the analysis for each of the four cases. By summarizing categories and finding consensus on interpretation of different fragments, I was able to develop initial codes and achieve a basic understanding of each individual case (see Appendix G).

In the second step, axial coding was used to compare fragments from different cases focusing on the same theme or the same code. In so doing, some codes were combined and refined with other codes and formed a pattern. The goal of this step was to further develop the conceptualization of each instructor's beliefs and practices

and produce a typology of categorizing codes. In both steps, data from multiple sources, including data collected from online observations, primary and secondary documents, member checks, were triangulated. It is important to put data triangulation in a central place in qualitative analysis (Kimchi, Polivka, & Stevenson, 1991). The goal of this step was to gain a thorough understanding of all four instructors' beliefs and practices of the integration of social media and language teacher education. By triangulating data from various sources, I further refined the categories of coding and found similarities and differences among instructors' interview, questionnaire, my observation notes, and member checks (see Appendix G). Triangulating with other data sources (observation notes, primary and secondary documents, online questionnaire), an overarching theme was then synthesized from the data based on each individual case (see Appendix G).

In summary, I discussed, in this Chapter, the rationale for choosing a collective case study design; the selection process including sites and participants; the data sources and the collection process, including the questionnaire, interview, online observation, member check, and primary and secondary documents; and data analysis methods including constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) and cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2009). Table 3.2 shows how I used different data sources and analytical methods to answer each of the three research questions proposed for this study.

Table 4 *Research Questions, Data Sources and Analysis*

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Data Sources</b>	<b>Data Analysis Procedure</b>
<b>1) What beliefs do four STARTALK instructors have about social media and language teacher education?</b>	Participant	Open coding
	Questionnaire	Single-case analysis
	Interviews	Cross-case analysis
<b>2) How do four STARTALK instructors integrate social media in preparing language teachers?</b>	Online Observations	Axial coding
	Interviews	Single-case analysis
	Primary and secondary documents	Cross-case analysis
		Category refinement
<b>3) What differences and similarities can be identified between instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education?</b>	Participant	Data triangulation
	Questionnaire	Axial coding
	Online Observations	Cross-case analysis
	Interviews	Category refinement
	Primary and secondary documents	Data triangulation
	Member checks	

*Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations*

Trustworthiness is a term used by qualitative behavioral and social scientists as a substitute for the quantitative interpretation of validity (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). It is important to raise the trustworthiness concern because the focus of this study is instructors' beliefs, which is a difficult construct to measure accurately. By

employing member checks, I tried to confirm with all participants that the analysis I created, to the most possible extent, aligns with what the participants really believe.

Given the nature of this collective case study, it is also important to raise ethical concerns. Since human participants were involved (four instructors), I applied for the required Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to the commencement of the study. All required applications and forms were submitted to the IRB, assuring that human subjects were protected to the utmost capacity of the researcher's capabilities. An informed consent form was also generated which was included in the online Questionnaire for all participants to agree and keep their own copy. The consent form included information regarding the purpose of the study and the potential risks to those who participated in the study; participants were able to opt out if they prefer not to participate. All participants voluntarily joined the study and were free to withdraw at any time without any negative impacts. All data were collected and stored securely and available only to me. More specially, all interview records, online observations notes, and member checks notes were stored on my personal laptop. All Questionnaire data were stored on SurveyMonkey under my personal account. Interviewees were given pseudonym during their audio-recorded interviews. All pseudonyms were also used in the data analysis process.

In the next four Chapters, from Chapter Four to Chapter Seven, I analyze all the data collected from four individual participants based on the methodology described in Chapter Three. Further, I discuss each of the four individual cases in one Chapter. Chapter Four focused on Catherine's case, Chapter Five on Dawn's case, Chapter Six on Emily's case, and Chapter Seven on Hong's case.

## Chapter 4: Catherine's Case

In this Chapter, I introduce the individual case of Catherine. First, I provide background information about her STARTALK teacher program (Program A) with detailed program goals and components. Second, I present Catherine's educational background and teaching experiences. Third, I analyze and triangulate all the data collected from Catherine and explain the emerging themes. Last, I compare Catherine's beliefs with her teaching practices and draw conclusion and implication on Catherine's case.

### *Background Information of Program A (PA)*

Catherine worked as a lead instructor for PA since 2009. Because of the local demand for professional development among teachers of Chinese language, PA offered professional development opportunities to teachers of Chinese language from public, independent, and heritage schools, along with local college students training as language teachers. The main participants were K-12 school teachers, heritage language school teachers and other future Chinese teachers. PA focused on second language teaching theories, integration of culture (e.g. Chinese geography, food) into Chinese curriculum, and observations of classroom teaching. Participants engaged in review of basic Chinese grammar and learning practical Chinese teaching skills and strategies through critical reading of course materials, accessing resources online, classroom activities such as teaching demos, discussions, classroom teaching observations (observing the student program that was held in the same institution, where students have a wide range of proficiency levels), and paper presentations.

In the summer of 2013, PA offered three Summer Institutes (SI) Courses. They were all held on a northeastern university campus that the program rented in the second half of July 2013. The brief descriptions of these three SI courses are listed below. Catherine was involved in SI-I and SI-II.

- SI-I: Teaching Mandarin as a Foreign Language: Strategy and Methodology
- SI-II: Integrating Culture into the Mandarin Language Curriculum
- SI-III: Field Experience for Mandarin Teachers

#### Introduction of SI-I

SI-I was held from July 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013. It was an introduction to second language acquisition theories with an emphasis on their application in teaching Chinese language. As demonstrated in SI-I's curriculum (see *Figure 4.1*), it was a six-day (36 contact hours) residential teacher program aiming at the basic strategies and methodologies of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. It also offered three university credits for all participants who completed the program. As described in the curriculum template, PA's target participants included K-12 in-service teachers, heritage school teachers, and pre-service teachers. The goal of SI-I was to equip participants with basic knowledge of teaching Chinese as a second language, practical teaching skills and strategies through critical reading of course materials, classroom discussion, teaching demonstrations, and lesson planning and projects.

Basic Program Information			
Host Institution:	[REDACTED]		
Program Title:	Summer Institute I: Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language Strategies and Methodology		
Language(s):	Mandarin Chinese	University Credit:	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Program Setting:	Residential:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Distance/Online Component:
	Other (please specify):		
Duration:	Weeks/Days:	6 days	Contact Hours:
			36 Hrs
Curriculum Designed By:	[REDACTED]		
E-mail:	[REDACTED]		

**Program Overview and Theme**

In a paragraph, provide a brief overview of your program. Who will your participants be? What will participants experience during the program? What do you hope your participants will be able to do after the program ends?

The program is a six day summer institute. The main participants are k-12 school teachers, heritage language school teachers and other future Chinese teachers. The course will focus on second language teaching theories with an emphasis on their application to Chinese language teaching. Participants will acquire/review the basic knowledge of Chinese language, teaching Chinese as a foreign language and practical teaching skills and strategies through critical reading of course materials, accessing resources online ([www.startalk.umd.edu](http://www.startalk.umd.edu)), classroom activities such as teaching demos, discussions, classroom teaching observations (in the [REDACTED] Mandarin Summer Camp, where students have a wide range of proficiency levels), and paper presentations. This course takes into account that some teachers will be at beginning, emerging and advanced levels according to STELLA (<https://startalk.umd.edu/STELLA/>). Participants have the option to receive 40 Professional Development Points or to earn 3 graduate credits from the College of [REDACTED].

Figure 3 SI-I Curriculum Template

Introduction of SI-II

SI-II was a nine-day residential program with 45 contact hours (see Figure 4.2). It was a theme-based course that employed Chinese geography to illustrate its impact on Chinese culture and society, modern Chinese history, philosophy, literature/arts, the political system, and culture of family. This institute also had teachers with various experiences in teaching Chinese, such as K-12 school teachers,

heritage school teachers, and pre-service teachers. Centering on the theme of Chinese culture, this institute aimed at enriching participants' knowledge of Chinese culture and helping them design meaningful, interesting, and effective language curriculum.



## 2013 Teacher Program Curriculum Template

For step-by-step help in completing this document, please see the accompanying guide.

Basic Program Information			
Host Institution:	[REDACTED]		
Program Title:	Integrating Culture into the Language Curriculum –Mandarin: Highlights of Chinese Culture		
Language(s):	Mandarin	University Credit:	<input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Program Setting:	Residential:	<input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Distance/Online Component:
	Other (please specify):		
Duration:	Weeks/Days:	9 days	Contact Hours: 45
Curriculum Designed By:	[REDACTED]		
E-mail:	[REDACTED]		

## Program Overview and Theme

In a paragraph, provide a brief overview of your program. Who will your participants be? What will participants experience during the program? What do you hope your participants will be able to do after the program ends?

The target audience for this program is practicing teachers of Mandarin as well as pre-service teachers of Mandarin for the most part to children at novice, intermediate and advanced levels of Chinese. Occasionally we have had participants from higher-ed, but usually their students are at the novice and intermediate proficiency levels. We have had teachers in the public and private K-12 systems of education as well as teachers working in heritage schools.

The main focus of this program is on culture. How best to integrate culture into the language curriculum and language classroom. Helping the teachers adjust to the cultures of American schools is also part of this. We explore essential questions such as, 1) Why should we learn about China, 2) What are the key elements in Chinese civilization?, 3) How have China and the West been linked over thousands of years?, and 4) How as Chinese civilization contributed to the world in the past and how is Chinese civilization contributing to the world today? Each morning following some Chinese morning exercise (Taiji) participants will attend lectures and presentations, participate in group discussions and co-operative activities. They will make some visits to the student language program to do some student and teacher observations. Teachers view videos and teaching materials.

By attending this program, they will understand essential elements of Chinese culture and learn how to design a curriculum project based on the National Standards with rich content of Chinese culture. In the fall at the follow-up day the teachers will share their lesson plans with the larger group.

This course will use a combination of TELL and independently developed goals.

Figure 4 SI-II Curriculum Template

During SI-II, a group made up of K-12 school teachers, heritage language school teachers, and future Chinese teachers, participated in this nine-day course, from July 14<sup>th</sup> to July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013. SI-II's target audience was in-service teachers and pre-service teachers of Mandarin for K-12 students at novice, intermediate and advanced levels of Chinese. Teacher participants came from various schools including public, private, and heritage schools. The main focus of SI-II was about how to integrate culture into the language curriculum and language classroom. In order to fulfill that goal, the SI-II covered various aspects of cultural integration, such as 1) the cultural benefits of learning about China, 2) the key elements in Chinese civilization, 3) the relationship between China and the West in history, and 4) the contributions that Chinese civilization has made to the world in the past and present. By attending this Institute, teacher participants were expected to understand essential elements of Chinese culture and learn how to design a curriculum project with rich content of Chinese culture based on the National Standards. Participants were also required to share their lesson plans with the larger group in the follow-up session in the fall.

#### Introduction of SI-III

SI-III was a three-week residential program with a total of 60 contact hours. Based on the curriculum, this Institute provided an opportunity for the participants to practice teaching in the concurrent STARTALK student program held in the same hosting institution for students in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. The participants for this Institute were only beginning teachers who just started teaching Chinese in K-12 schools. The curriculum also claimed that, supervised by the instructional lead of the student

program, participants worked closely with classroom instructors to build teaching experience, skills and confidence through teaching practice. This Institute was to prepare the participants with the knowledge about National Standards and the three modes of communication (interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational). Participants were expected to be able to create thematic, standards-based curriculum by following the STARTALK template and backward design.

### Catherine's Role in SI-I and SI-II

Catherine was one of the two instructional leads for PA and responsible for two of the three Summer Institutes that PA proposed: SI-I and SI-II. For both SI-I and SI-II, Catherine worked with another teacher/program instructor to design the curriculum. Catherine and the other instructor used the template for teacher programs that was developed by STARTALK Central. Following the standard procedures of writing and revising curriculums described in Chapter Three, Catherine and her colleagues worked collaboratively to finish the templates for the two SIs for which she took the lead.

Since the focus for SI-I was strategies and methodologies to teach Chinese as a foreign language, Catherine and the other instructor adopted several chapters related to their topic from three books: *Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language: Theories and Applications* (Everson & Xiao, 2008), *Teaching Language in Context* (Hadley, 2001), and *Chinese: An Essential Grammar* (Po-Ching & Rimmington, 2006). The key concepts that were incorporated into SI-I included: lesson plan using backward design; comprehensible input, output, and production; authentic materials; culture appropriateness; meaningful context; feedback; error analysis, and correction (see SI-

I Curriculum Template). Catherine and her co-designer also adopted many activities to provide opportunities for teacher participants to understand the theoretical concepts. For example, in order for teacher participants to understand and use backward design in lesson planning, Catherine and her co-designer used a group activity to ask each small group (3-4 teacher participants) to design learning tasks within a lesson and a complete lesson as a part of a unit using the backward design process (SI-I Curriculum Template).

The main focus of SI-II was integrating culture into Chinese language teaching (see SI-II Curriculum Template). Catherine and the other program instructor aimed at preparing all participants with the relevant knowledge of how to integrate culture into the language curriculum and classroom. They tried to achieve their goal by introducing the culture of American schools to the participants first and then connected Chinese culture. They explored Chinese civilization history and the interaction and conflict between Western and Chinese culture by watching videos, learning from textbooks, inviting scholars to present on cultural topics, and observing the STARTALK student program classroom that PA held in the same time and place. After understanding the essential elements of Chinese culture, participants were expected to be able to use backward design to create mini lesson plans based on the American Council on The Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities). They were required to choose three out of the five standards with a focus on two different proficiency levels of students. At the end of the program, each teacher participants conducted micro-teaching using her/his own lesson plan. Unlike SI-I and III, there

was a follow-up day for all the participants in Fall 2013 for the purpose of sharing the lesson plans they designed and used after attending PA (SI-II Curriculum Template). With the background information about PA described above, next, I introduce Catherine by explaining her educational background and teaching experiences before moving into her beliefs.

### *Catherine's Educational Background and Teaching Experiences*

Catherine was the Instructional Lead for PA in 2013. Catherine, in her early 50's, is a White female who was born in a metropolitan city in the northeastern United States (Online Questionnaire, 7/10/2013). Based on her resume, Catherine earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Fine Arts in the College of Art at a liberal arts college in the northeastern United States in 1983 with a double major in Fibers and Metals. She then went to a major city in northeastern China and earned a graduate certificate in Traditional Chinese painting in 1987. Interested in learning Japanese, she went to Tokyo Japanese Language School in 1989 and passed Level Two of the Japanese Language Proficiency Exam in 1991. Following that, Catherine went to a university in the north United States and continued her education by pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Cross-Cultural, Multicultural and Global Education from 1991 to 1993. During this period, she became interested in teaching and obtained a teaching license for grades K-6 in the state where she studied. After eight years of teaching in K-12 settings in the United States, she decided to continue her journey in education and got her graduate certificate of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) from a college in London, England in 2001. Last but not least, she finished an Administrative Licensure Preparation Program for educational

leadership training in a major northeastern state university in the United States from 2008 to 2009 (Catherine's Resume, p. 1).

In her resume, her teaching experience as an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher stands out significantly. She began to teach ESL courses in 1991 when she was in Japan. From 1991 to 1994, she worked for an international school in Tokyo, Japan with a student population coming from over 62 nationalities. She also worked as an ESL teacher in a college in Australia from 1998 to 2000. From 2001 to 2002, she switched to a secondary school to teach students English in Australia. From 2003 until the present, she has mainly worked as an ESL teacher in a northeastern state in the United States (Catherine's Resume, p. 1). Catherine also personally stressed the fact that "I am an ESL teacher, that's my job" (Interview, 7/7/2013). As evidenced in both her interviews and resume, Catherine has a great deal of experience in teaching various age groups of students as an ESL teacher both in the United States and abroad.

Catherine is also a teacher educator. In terms of getting involved in teacher education, Catherine mentioned that:

My path to being involved with teacher education is I guess my becoming a type of like master teacher or lead teacher and I've done a lot of teacher training for ESL teachers as well as for teachers of Mandarin. I'm part of the [the institution's title] teacher training courses (Interview, 7/7/2013).

With her growing interest in teaching language, she began to study and obtain more and more knowledge and pedagogical skills through continuous professional

development opportunities. She further explained that “I’m a licensed ESL teacher so I’ve had language acquisition courses and linguistics courses and methodology courses specifically for teaching foreign language or language, second language acquisition, language” (Interview, 7/7/2013). In addition, she went to the Department of Education Training for ESL teachers in the state where she works. These trainings included *Enhancing English Language Learning in Elementary Classrooms*, *Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *Reading and Writing Instructions*, and *Administrator Training* (Catherine’s resume). As a teacher trainer since 2008 in an urban area in a university in the northeastern United States, she taught graduate courses including *Globalizing Curriculum* and *Enhancing English Language Learning in Elementary and Secondary Classrooms*. Since 2009, Catherine had been involved in the STARTALK teacher and student programs held by the same institution for five consecutive years.

Because promoting a residential model and training Chinese teachers became two unique features of PA in the past five years, PA always had two lead instructors: one was Catherine and the other was a native Chinese teacher educator. For the 2013 STARTALK teacher program, Catherine co-designed and co-taught SI-I: Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language: Strategy and Methodology and SI-II: Integrating Culture into the Language Curriculum-Mandarin. The other lead instructor for SI-II was also the program director of PA. Due to the scheduling conflicts and changes, I was only able to conduct two online observations (one on July 17<sup>th</sup>, the other on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013) for two class periods in SI-II when Catherine led the session. As the chapter continues, I draw an overall picture of Catherine’s beliefs system using the

four categories of beliefs described in Chapter Three, providing a brief introduction of Catherine's beliefs about foreign language teaching and learning, foreign language teacher education, and the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

### *Catherine's Belief System about Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher*

#### *Education*

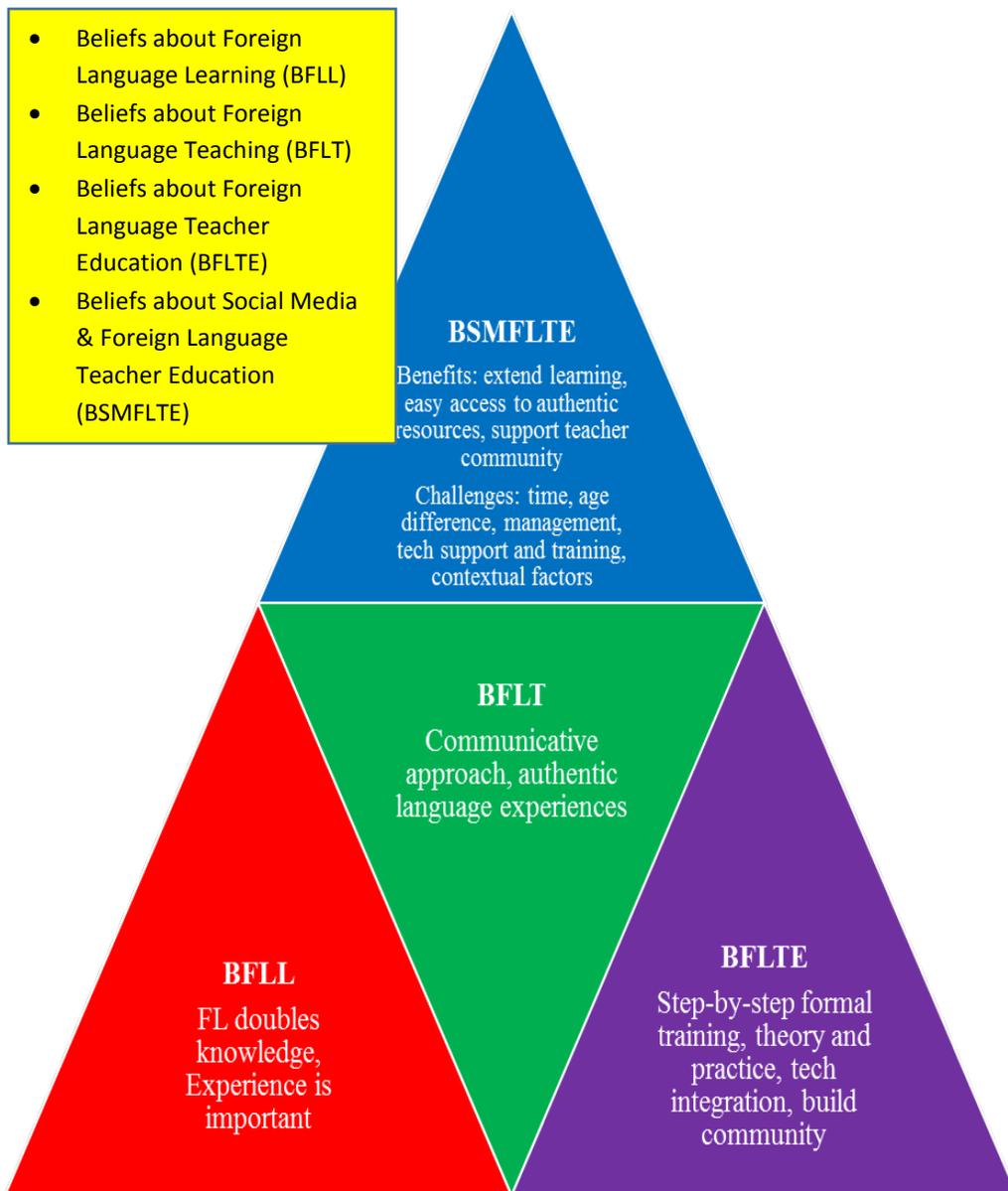
*Figure 4.3* (Catherine's belief system about social media and foreign language teacher education) below explained the relationship between Catherine's four different categories of beliefs about foreign language learning, foreign language teaching, foreign language teacher education, and the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Her beliefs about foreign language learning, teaching, and teacher education influenced her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

Regarding the beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, Catherine thought that although social media was a useful tool to facilitate foreign language teaching and learning and building the teacher support "community", foreign language teachers and teacher educators must be aware of the challenges that could impact the integration and the "community of practice". These challenges include limited time and technical support, classroom management, and other contextual factors (see *Figure 3*). Catherine's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were closely influenced by her beliefs about foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education. Catherine believed that learning a foreign language played an important

role in expanding one's view of the world; therefore, teaching a foreign language was also vital for the purpose of communication and better understanding of other people's cultures. Along with these beliefs about foreign language learning, Catherine advocated a communicative approach of teaching a foreign language. For foreign language teacher education, she agreed that a traditional step-by-step approach needed to be established, in which teacher trainees received training in systematically organized courses and opportunities for observation and practice. She clarified that:

Effective teacher education, it does need to have some theoretical, research based grounding...But I think that there needs to be an observation part, there needs to be a student teaching, sort of mentoring part and I think that especially with the foreign language, some authentic experience with the places where whatever, wherever the language is spoken (Interview, 7/7/2013).

Catherine's beliefs about foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education were intertwined with her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, which was evident in both her beliefs and practice about building a teacher support "community".



*Figure 5* Catherine’s belief system about social media and foreign language teacher education.

In the following sections, I first discuss the major theme, which emerged from Catherine’s data in connection with my research questions with detailed analysis of the connections among the four different categories of beliefs. Next, I compare the differences between Catherine’s beliefs and practice about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

*Social Media is “Beneficial” yet “Challenging” in Foreign Language Teacher Education*

Catherine claimed that she was interested in social media. She conceptualized the term *social media* in a broad way that could include all of the things that one can charge and plug in and connect to using a wireless internet connection, such as texting, Facebook and Twitter, and also reported her observations regarding the prevalent use of social media among her students:

I think social media involves all of the things that you can charge and plug in and use wireless for. And it seems like there’s something new every day. I know that like texting can be a wonderful authentic way of communicating and using apps and things that happen with apps. I know my students [middle school students] use like all of the things, like Twitter and Facebook, all of those. They’re constantly using all of those things and I mean, I don’t really wanna go down the laundry list but, but they’re, there are so many ways of accessing technology and communicating through using technology, not just the telephone (Interview, 7/7/2013).

It is interesting to note from the above excerpt, that Catherine reported that her students in K-12 settings were using social media (Facebook and Twitter) constantly, which aligns with the research results (Pew Research Center, 2012) that the social media adoption rate had increased in the United States from 29% in 2008 to 65% in 2012. The increasing usage of social media called for more research exploring effective ways of integrating social media in foreign language teaching and learning

(Hulstijn, 2007). Catherine's definition of social media includes everything that can be used with a wireless Internet connection. It seems that Catherine didn't have a clear boundary when differentiating the terms technology and social media. She sometimes used the two terms, social media and technology, interchangeably without making a distinction. Ultimately speaking, social media is a subcategory of technology because every social media relies heavily on technical devices (e.g. laptop, mobile phone, and tablet) and Internet access to fulfill its full function. However, social media has its own features with which other technology can't compete, such as the collaborative and communicative nature of accessing the content synchronously and asynchronously. Without a profound understanding of the unique features and definition, it might be difficult for teacher educators to integrate social media in foreign language teacher education.

Based on her observation of social media's wide use by her students, Catherine explored the possibility of using social media in teaching a language. She elaborated an example of using social media and iPad to teach tone and pronunciation of Chinese language and specifically pointed out that the multimedia feature of social media could be helpful in teaching Chinese:

Easy access...With pronunciation and things like reading, it does help to have some additional outside help...it's giving you this indicator of how close are you matching to what's considered the standard...it takes the bad guy side of it out of the teacher, away from the teacher and onto the computer that is like engaging for the kids. And they hear the evidence themselves, what they're saying isn't sounding like the

same as what the model is. So I feel like the technology can really be useful in that way... I feel as though for pronunciation, no matter how many times you say no, no, it's the third tone or whatever, if the students don't internalize that, I see technology as a way of having that happen. And then with, with the kind of apps that you can speak and then it will print it, send it, you know, it'll type it, send it to someone, how fun would that be, to have some sort of dialogue that you do with your classmates or pen pal or whatever, using social media (Interview, 7/29/2013).

In the above excerpt, Catherine showed a good example of integrating social media in foreign language teaching. As mentioned earlier, Catherine had a broad definition of social media and frequently used social media and technology interchangeably. Nevertheless, she specifically claimed it was the frequent, authentic, and fun interaction or "dialogue" with "someone" that made a difference in students' learning tones in Chinese. Because Mandarin has four different tones in the pronunciation system, the tones are usually considered a difficult component for beginning Mandarin learners (Gandour, 2006). Clearly, in Catherine's experience, classroom teacher's direct teaching of tones was much less engaging and effective than students' dialogue with their peers or pen pals using social media. She declared that this kind of use provided opportunity for students to practice the pronunciation by easily interacting with the apps or a real person. Therefore, Catherine believed that social media and other technology could play a positive role in foreign language teaching.

Catherine's beliefs about the usefulness of social media and other technology were also evident in the online questionnaire. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 being "not at all proficient", 2 being "not very proficient", 3 being "very basic proficiency", 4 being "somewhat proficient", and 5 being "highly proficient") she self-identified as "highly proficient" when answering the question of how proficient she was in using social media. In the meantime, she also thought that she was at least proficient in using social media for personal and teaching purposes in the questionnaire. For personal uses, Catherine perceived herself "highly proficient" in using email and internet research, "somewhat proficient" in using social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), digital media (e.g., You Tube) and Blog; "very basic proficiency" in web design and development (e.g., HTML), and "not very proficient" in graphic design (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013). In addition, she claimed that she used Facebook and LinkedIn "about once a day" (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013), which was the second highest frequency in the choices of this question (choices from high to low frequency are "several times a day", "about once a day", "3-5 days a week", "every few weeks", "less often", and "never"). Besides personal uses, she also claimed to use social media for professional and educational purposes (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013). With regard to the integration of social media and the STARTALK teacher program, she stated that she was "highly proficient" in using internet research and email, "somewhat proficient" in using social networking sites and digital media, "not very proficient" in using Blog, and "not at all proficient" in using web design and graphic design (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013). This coincided with her previous answers about her proficiency level of using social media for personal purposes. With

the frequency of accessing different social media for both personal and professional purposes, the online questionnaire data may strengthen the argument that Catherine held strong beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education.

Catherine's strong support of the integration of social media and foreign language teaching was more revealed when she systematically listed a number of benefits that social media had in foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education. The benefits she perceived could be summarized into: 1) social media could be used as a "back channel option of communicating" in teacher or teacher educators' professional discussions, especially in "a panel discussion or something and you've got these sort of multiple conversations going on" (Interview, 7/7/2013); 2) sharing knowledge and information using "Wiki pages" and "Google Doc" (Interview, 7/29/2013); 3) extending the learning "outside of classroom" (Interview, 7/29/2013); 4) social media could contribute to a more "enriched discussion because they [students] were bringing up authentic materials" (Interview, 7/7/2013); and 5) help teachers build a "support network" (Interview, 2/27/2014). Among all these benefits, Catherine emphasized the potential that social media had when used for the purpose of building a support network for foreign language teachers.

#### Building a "Teacher Support Network"

In Catherine's opinion, a community must be established virtually to support teachers and encourage their knowledge co-construction, and sharing among each other. She actively advocated the use of social media as a helpful tool to build this community. She noted in the follow-up interview:

I think that one place that really needs to be [in foreign language teacher education], or is an area for development is the teacher support network. I think that a lot of teachers are by themselves and using social media to share, to support one another, to show what is something that worked well. I think that's something, it's behind the scenes as far as the students are concerned but I think that making use of that. So as you do, as you teach, as you teach the teachers, having them interact online, virtually, whatever, and then you have that, and you have, I think face to face is good, too, but if that community that's built can be extended over space and time, through the use of social media, I think that's wonderful. (2/27/2014).

Relevant to her strong beliefs in the integration of foreign language teacher education and social media, Catherine evidently believed that a face-to-face interaction was not enough for teachers to support each other and teachers' interactions were significantly limited by "space and time". However this limitation could be easily overcome by social media, as it could be used to build a virtual community in which all the teachers could share what they learned from their teaching experiences and training, demonstrate what was working well in their teaching, and support each other in challenging situations. Teachers' frequent use of social media, as Catherine supported, would help them to share their beliefs, influence each other's practice positively, and eventually build a support community in foreign language teaching. Catherine's close attention to the use of social media in building professional relationships among teachers also revealed her sociocultural approach in the

integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. She believed that individuals engaged in and became active members of “communities of practice” (Lave & Wenger 1991), where they learned behaviors and formed belief systems through their social groups and eventually started acting in accordance with their norms (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989).

It is worth mentioning that Catherine tried to demonstrate how to build a learners’ community in her teaching, which confirmed how much she valued the community in her teaching. Catherine’s beliefs of building a community were vividly presented in the online observations. Below is an excerpt summarized from my observation notes:

It was a hot summer afternoon on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013. I was observing Catherine’s SI-II’s class through Skype. Catherine set up the computer at the back of the classroom so that I had a better view of her teaching and the front part of the classroom. Every participant went back to the classroom after lunch feeling a little bit sleepy; some participants were walking very slowly towards their seats while some of them were yawning. Catherine came into the classroom with a slight smile on her face, “So we want to begin. It is after lunch. I want to talk about rubrics...I want to have you create a rubric”. On the blackboard, she wrote down the agenda for the class and drew a 4x5 table. The agenda included: “1. 10 minutes introduction of rubric; 2. 10 minutes group work; 3. 15 minutes whole class sharing; 4. 10 minutes debriefing”. She then began to explain the agenda items one by one by stating the

expectations and tasks that participants needed to finish. While she explained everything step-by-step in the agenda, she thought aloud and informed the participants her own thinking behind each step.

She prepared some jelly beans, markers, and colored papers for the upcoming activity. She walked around the classroom distributing the materials, while explaining what she wanted each individual group to do. Catherine explained the detailed schedule of this class to the participants; 5 minutes for introduction, 10 minutes for each group to work on the creation of the rubric, 3 minutes for each group to share, and in the end, 10 minutes to reflect what had been done. After the introduction, she asked the very first question “Do you have any questions, so far?” It was all silent in the classroom. Catherine then explained that the goal of the task was to discuss within each group some features of the jelly beans.

Each group only had one minute to chat. “Color, flavor, size”, I heard many words spreading from the participants. Some participants were writing down the list of features they discussed. When the time was up, Catherine went back to the front of the room and asked the participants to share the results. While listening to the answers, she wrote down each word the participants came up with (color, price, size, flavor, calorie, shape, texture, ingredients, appearance, and pattern). Using all the words, she began to think aloud and tell the participants what words she could evaluate and what words she needed

to delete because of lack information, such as ingredients and calories. Finally, she chose size, flavor, shape, appearance, and eating experience. She then asked the five individual groups to choose one word from the list.

All participants were discussing while one group was picking up the word. Each group was required to write down, based on the feature word they chose, a detailed description from 1 to 4 (4 being the highest). She then emphasized that this was an authentic assessment because each group had a plate of jelly beans to evaluate. With the detailed instruction, each group discussed the features and the descriptions that they wanted to write. All participants were engaged in conversations about jelly beans. I could hear all sorts of words describing the different features of jelly beans; “blue,” “oval,” “sweet,” and “soft”. Some participants put the jelly beans into their mouths and tasted different flavors. Some participants wrote down the words they discussed on the paper that Catherine had given each group.

Catherine walked from one group to another, checking the progress and making sure everyone was on task. She also distributed colored papers and tape to each group. Each group had a different colored paper with tape on it. Participants wrote their descriptions on the colored paper and taped it in the 4x5 table on the blackboard. Catherine communicated with each group, discussing their

descriptions and encouraging conversations among group members. After about ten minutes, all groups finished writing their descriptions and taped them on the blackboard. The first group presented their results of the feature “size” and provided concrete sizes of the jelly beans that they measured. Based on their results, Catherine elaborated on what connections and application could be made in the context of assessing language learning. She suggested that language teachers could make the content of the rubric measurable. She then gave an example about how language teachers could use a rubric to assess students’ learning. She said “In a writing rubric, a teacher could say if a student used fewer than (ok) new vocabulary words in the writing, then it would be 1 point; 4-6 new words, 2 points; 7-9 new words, 3 points; and more than 10 new words, 4 points” (Observation note, 7/19/2013).

With an authentic rubric that was developed by all participants and the connection between the task and language learning, Catherine really made the task meaningful and interactive while achieving the instructional goals of the class. By asking the participants to experience the creation of rubric, Catherine provided authentic learning purposes and experiences for all participants to understand the abstract concept of rubric. Moreover, Catherine facilitated participants to discuss the features of real jelly beans and finish small group activity to build the connection between individual members within the same small group and the whole class as a big group. Catherine walked around the room and made sure each group was on task. She

constantly motivated teacher participants by asking questions, providing comments and suggestions. By engaging each individual participant in the class, Catherine successfully built a small “community” of teacher participants focusing on the “practice” of making rubrics. Although no social media was used, this meaningful task clearly reflected Catherine’s beliefs about the importance of creating a supporting network for teachers in foreign language teacher education.

Connections with Catherine’s Beliefs about Foreign Language Teaching, Learning, and Teacher Education

Catherine’s beliefs regarding the benefits that social media has in building the “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger 1991) were well contextualized in her beliefs about foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education. Being a foreign language learner in many countries, Catherine’s beliefs about foreign language learning and teaching influenced her beliefs about foreign language teacher education in many aspects. Catherine held strong beliefs in the importance of learning a foreign language, as she said in the first interview:

When you learn a language, it’s like the language kind of doubles your knowledge. And it also doubles, more than doubles the number of sort of people you can speak with...that you can access to see different perspectives on things (7/7/2013).

From her point of view, language study was so important that it could broaden one’s view of the world and enhance one’s understanding of other people’s cultures. Furthermore, she claimed that “being able to understand other perspectives is really important in, in having a better life in our world right now...I think language study

helps to broaden one's view of the world" (Interview, 7/7/2013). She conceptualized that learning a foreign language could widen one's view of the world and others, which was a better way to understand other people's cultures. This view of foreign language helped shape Catherine's beliefs about the importance of building the "community of practice" for teachers. The essence of language learning, in Catherine's opinion, was to communicate and gain better understanding of other people and culture, which could be enhanced by using social media and other technology tools. Building the support network for foreign language teachers required many interactions and communications between teacher educator and the teacher participants, who were also essential in building a "community of practice".

Catherine's strong beliefs in foreign language teaching and learning also influenced her beliefs about the "community of practice" as it could naturally lead to meaningful interaction and effective learning in foreign language. Catherine preferred a communicative approach to teach a language where the instruction needed to be student-centered with meaningful interaction for real life purposes. For example, Catherine believed that communication was the goal of teaching K-12 students foreign language. In a classroom setting, foreign language teacher needed to design task-based instructions that focusing on students' communication in an authentic context that the target language would be used. Students needed more time to communicate in the target language in activities that they would experience in their personal lives. This was partly because Catherine, as a foreign language learner herself, also felt that learning a foreign language was more effective when using the above described communicative method. Catherine particularly compared the

communicative approach of foreign language learning with other approaches in the first interview and gave maximum support to the former one:

Because I began studying a foreign, my first foreign language was French and because I was learning French in the United States, in like the 1970s, it was very much, the school I was at was very progressive so we did a lot of experiential learning. So I think that makes my own teaching of language...but I feel as though, you know, a lot of the textbooks I think that we used were, you know, the kind of they're not as popular now, those methods, grammar translation methods. I know from my own learning style, the communicative method is the way that I'm very, that's my best way to begin and to pursue language learning. And in, I went to Middlebury twice, the summer program and once was in 1983 or 1984, and then 1988. So and it's interesting because the languages I studied, I still have. Like I've maintained those because of, I think partly because of the methods that were used, how I began language study. But I feel as though making it experiential, and all of the things that STARTALK promotes and, you know, it's research based and student centered, you know, a lot of interaction, making it authentic, I mean, those, those sort of basic, basic places to start from in learning language and studying is just so important and I've lived it and I see it and I love promoting it in others. (7/7/2013).

From Catherine's experience of learning foreign languages, it was easy to understand why she believed the experiential and communicative models of learning a foreign language were successful. She further declared her belief that making language learning as authentic and interactive as possible was an effective method when teaching a language. Because Catherine studied Japanese in Japan and Chinese in China, she truly attributed her success in learning different foreign languages to her living abroad experiences. The excerpt below is an example to demonstrate her belief in the importance of living abroad, and immersing in a language and culture while in the process of learning a foreign language.

Because just living in Japan and being involved in the life there and knowing what people are talking about, what's in the news, how do you say all sorts of things like the noises for things that happen, like knock knock and ring ring or, you know, bark bark. You know, there are all these words like that in Japanese. I knew that learning those things, just by living there, I would learn so much more than explicitly studying it. And I think that that's what, what, like a native speaker of the language, when they become a foreign language teacher, they've grown up in that place. They know, you know, how children are spoken to, little rhymes and songs. It's really hard if you're a nonnative speaker of the language to develop all of that (Interview, 7/7/2013).

Every small piece in a certain kind of social life, sometimes ignored by the native language speaker, could carry meaningful details and stimulate implicit but effective

learning of that language and culture. When learning a foreign language, getting to know the social aspect of a language usually stands out and is hard to learn. The real difficulty in learning a foreign language lies in understanding the subtle and implicit part of social life in that particular language. Catherine clearly described how she learned certain Japanese words (e.g. knock) through daily living experiences in Japan instead of explicit and direct teaching. This also explained why she believed that it was crucial to have authentic living experiences for foreign language teachers. In other words, Catherine believed that formal foreign language teaching, to a certain degree, had its limitations in the content that was covered; a Chinese nursery rhyme or focal lyrics were most likely not being taught through a foreign language class.

Although Catherine didn't speak or teach any foreign language in PA, her beliefs about the communicative approach to language teaching were also manifested in the online observations. For example, in the same scenario when Catherine was teaching the concept of rubric, "her instructions emphasized on the communication within small groups and whole class" while "providing a meaningful purpose (how to create a rubric) with authentic materials (jelly beans)" (Observation notes, 7/19/2013). Nunan (1991) summarized the principles of communicative language teaching as: 1) emphasize communication through interaction in the target language; 2) provide authentic texts into the learning situation; 3) encourage learners to focus on language and the learning process; 4) enhance learner's personal experiences beyond classroom learning; 5) link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom. Catherine's instructions not only linked the rubric creating process to real life learning experiences outside of the classroom, but also

provided opportunities for participants to bring their personal experiences into the learning process. Therefore, her beliefs about the communicative approach of teaching foreign language were evident in both interviews and online observations. Because Catherine valued the importance of foreign language learning and the fact that it could help one understand other perspectives, there was no doubt that Catherine embraced a communicative approach for foreign language teaching. It was clear that Catherine's beliefs about foreign language learning and teaching were aligned together and reinforced by each other, which, in turn, laid a solid foundation for her beliefs about the importance of building a support community for foreign language teachers.

Moving forward to foreign language teacher education, Catherine strongly believed that an effective program needed to include both theoretical and practical parts of teaching practice. Furthermore, Catherine emphasized not only the importance of the student teaching component in a teacher education program, but an authentic experience in places where the target language was spoken. She thought that especially with the foreign language teacher education, teachers needed "some authentic experience with the places where whatever, wherever the language is spoken." (Interview, 7/7/2013). Besides the authentic living experience, Catherine also agreed that a step-by-step mentoring process towards the teacher licensure played a vital role in training foreign language teachers, especially for beginning teachers. She further explained that, "I feel things do evolve and teachers shouldn't expect to do the same thing today as they're gonna do five years from now today (Interview, 7/29/2013)." This statement also reflected Catherine's beliefs about the

necessity of continuing professional development for foreign language teachers. Catherine's beliefs about foreign language learning, teaching, and teacher education showed an emphasis on providing authentic language learning experiences and following step-by-step formal teacher education approach with both theoretical and practical components. These beliefs also reinforced Catherine's beliefs about using social media in foreign language teacher education because social media could provide teachers with more authentic "experiences" and help them as a community to work collaboratively.

#### Challenges to the "Support Community" and Integration of Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education

Whereas Catherine believed in the importance of social media in building a "support community", it must be pointed out, as a foreign language teacher educator, Catherine also posited that many challenges could negatively influence the building of the teacher "support community" and the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. As many other people believed, she thought that no technology was perfect for language teaching and language teacher education. Catherine specifically called upon the consideration by language teachers and language teacher educators regarding how and in what way they would use social media in their teaching:

I know my students use like all of the things, like Twitter and Facebook, all of those. They're constantly using all of those things and I mean, I don't really wanna go down the laundry list but, but they're, there are so many ways of accessing technology and communicating

through using technology, not just the telephone. I think if they can be integrated into the, into language acquisition and learning, that's wonderful. But it's a classroom management and responsibly using that technology that I think is one reason why it's a challenge or some schools won't, won't promote it. (Interview, 7/7/2013).

Catherine clearly stated her concerns about the responsible use of social media and how the presence of social media could affect classroom management. She then questioned implicitly whether the integration of social media in language learning could really be successful and lead to effective teaching and learning. Apparently, she showed some understanding for schools that were hesitant to use social media. In her opinion, since social media had already been used by students, language teachers “need guidance and help with” how to incorporate these social media tools into their teaching (Interview, 7/29/2013). However, this integration couldn't be easily accomplished due to many challenges, and in her interviews, Catherine elaborated how she conceptualized all these challenges.

According to Catherine, “classroom management and responsibly using that technology” was the reason “why it [social media]’s a challenge or some schools won't promote it (Interview, 7/7/2013). In her opinion, social media, like other technology, was just a tool to facilitate language teaching and learning. Only through classroom management and the teacher's meaningful use of these tools could they make learning and teaching different and purposeful. In her interviews, Catherine, more than once pointed out that K-12 schools wouldn't promote the use of social media because it was a potential challenge for the school to provide technical support

and necessary equipment to fulfill the integration of social media and language teaching and learning.

Catherine indicated that technical support was one of the challenges of integrating social media into language teacher education by discussing her own experience in teaching for the PA programs. Because the program was not held in her home institution, many technical supports were not provided. Even worse, there was no Wi-Fi in the classrooms where Catherine taught. Without internet access, most of the instruction was done using a traditional “blackboard” and “chalk” way, which she didn't favor.

We did not set up a group, like a Moodle group or a Blackboard group. We didn't use that feature but part of it is that we weren't at our home institution and I think that it would've been easier. You know, if you're, if you're part of a university, the university has great tech support and, you know, setting up the templates and all of that and for us to be working across multiple universities, that made it a little bit... well, I'm not a tech, I'm not a tech native but, you know, just even... I just think that would make it easier (Interview, 7/29/2013).

The online observation also reinforced the technical support issues. In the first online observation, “there was no technical support person in the classroom for the whole class period” (Observation notes, 7/17/2013). In the second observation, “no technical support person found in the classroom” (Observation notes, 7/19/2013). Furthermore, Catherine also mentioned that the lack of access to computers and other technology tools became an “equity” issue. Using her own words, it would be impossible to make

use of technology in teaching “while they don’t have access at home” (Interview, 2/27/2014). From Catherine’s point of view, although social media technology could be beneficial when integrated into teaching and learning, it would be useless until teachers and students both had access to internet and technical equipment.

Along with the access issue, Catherine also worried about the barriers in front of teachers when they tried to use social media technology in their teaching. She pointed out that “teachers, even if they go outside of school and access these things or those things, sometimes they’re not able to share them within the class community because of the firewall at the school” (Interview, 2/27/2014). These technical difficulties could even get worse and more complicated when the schools set certain restrictions on how teachers could use social media. For example, most of the schools would have firewalls and wouldn’t allow students and teachers to access website like YouTube and Facebook. Catherine believed that these contextual restrains often hindered the integration of social media with foreign language teaching and foreign language teacher education. Using the example of Catherine’s teaching in PA, she claimed in the second interview that the classroom didn’t have Wi-Fi for internet connection (7/29/2013). This technical problem deterred the instructors from using many technology tools that only used Wi-Fi to connect to the Internet, thus seriously affecting the adoption of social media and the communication and interaction within the “community”. Under this situation, technical and physical difficulties had a noticeable impact on Catherine’s practice of building the teacher support “community”.

Another challenge of integrating social media into language teacher education, especially for programs like STARTALK, was classroom time. Catherine expressed this point in her second interview:

I think that the time is very short. So there's really no time for glitches and things to be worked out, whereas in a longer course, like semester course, there would be time. You know, if things weren't working well or whatever for a few days or even a week, you could still catch up, whereas a few days or a week, you're already beyond the halfway point of our institutes (7/29/2013).

This short duration was also observed in the two online observations. Teacher participants were busy learning new knowledge and applying it to their own situation and assignments in the residential PA (Observation notes, 7/12/2013). If social media or other technology tools were integrated into the curriculum, the instructors of PA would have to spend much more time explaining each tool first. This would further affect the time management of PA including its flow, the duration, and possibly effectiveness. Building a support "community" required a great deal of effort and time from the members of the "community". Without an adequate amount of time, social media couldn't be integrated to its full potential, let alone the formation of a teacher support "community".

In addition to the challenging factors mentioned above, Catherine named age difference as a challenge to integrating any new technology, like social media, into language teacher education. Catherine noticed a significant difference in an individual's willingness to learn social media and integrate it into language teaching

among her teacher participants. She described her concerns in regard to teachers in different age groups especially those who had less experience with social media:

The younger teachers...were ready to take on and try whatever was seen to be effective and whatever was new. They were not feeling like, oh, no, this is how I teach that, this is how I teach that. I don't need to know a new way. And some of the older ones just, they really, I wanna just say one thing about the videos. There was one woman and you'll hear her like challenging me a few times, so she was a very poor listener...she was asking questions and she really irritated a lot of the people I found out later at the end of the institute...I don't think she's gonna do anything different... This teacher who's probably in her 60s doesn't know how to do anything on Facebook. Doesn't have a Facebook account, doesn't know how to like upload photos, doesn't know... you know, and it's like I don't think she's gonna get one (Interview, 7/29/2013).

Age differences, to some degree, are individual differences that foreign language teacher educators will encounter frequently in their training, which can really affect the use of social media. It is generally believed from the literature that the older the age, the less social media one would use (Pew Research Center, 2012). Individual differences, such as age difference, certainly play an important role in the process of instructional decision-making. If mishandled, those individuals might lose their motivation to learn, which would be detrimental to the process of building the support “community”.

Beyond the age differences, Catherine believed that contextual factors such as school policies and restrictions also were challenging when integrating social media. Catherine talked about her facilitating role of introducing relevant information about technology policies in school settings.

I did have, facilitate conversations about their use of technology, about policies, about things that they need to know as a public school teacher around permissions, around communication with parents, how to communicate with the students, things to do and things not to do, that sort of thing. 'Cause many of them aren't aware of some of the protocols. How they can, I shared stories and experiences of other teachers that weren't, stories didn't come up so I brought them up as the facilitator as about sort of using different media, like Voice Thread. Some schools, you can't get to Voice Thread because of firewalls, so how do you negotiate with the tech department and advocate for yourself to get the things that you need. So I think that that's, that was a big part of it. Like how do you, how do you set up being involved with it (Interview, 7/29/2013).

Although it didn't appear in any of the online observations, the above excerpt from Catherine's second interview demonstrated Catherine's beliefs in integrating technology (including social media) into language teaching and language teacher education. In addition, she was also aware of the potential problems that they might encounter when integrating technology into language teaching in K-12 schools. Using

Voice Thread as a personal example, she reported that she reminded the teacher participants about the negotiation and management issues that exist behind the scenes.

Voice Thread is an online tool for teachers and students to record text and audio comments about uploaded images. Catherine shared her experiences about the difficulty of accessing certain online tools like Voice Thread in a school setting to express the concern about using social media. Language teacher educators who are willing to integrate social media into language teacher education need to understand the affordances as well as the challenges of the integration first before actually applying them into practice. Providing support to the teacher “community” meant that Catherine needed to provide not only the academic support, such as supervising and mentoring, teaching the content and pedagogical knowledge, but also the necessary support for “community” members to negotiate with school administrators and solve real life problems. Those supports were meaningful to the “community” members and would be helpful in strengthening the connections within the “community”.

As far as the future trend in teacher education and teacher demographics were concerned, Catherine also predicted in her second interview that

I feel as though, especially in the future, I think people are gonna be modeling really effective ways of making use of it [social media] and it will seem less arduous to be setting up and facilitating than it seems for some people now. As I said, I really see a big difference with the younger teachers, you know, the under 30 teachers versus the ones who are like 50 and 60. Their energy level, their creativity, all of that comes into play (7/29/2013).

Catherine clearly believed that social media and other technology would be integrated into language teaching and language teacher education, because the population of younger generation teachers who are more tech savvy would increase in the future. Furthermore, she believed that the integration needed to reach a maximum degree so that “we can really exploit what they have [technology] to offer” and “use it maximum” (Interview, 2/27/2014). Although many challenges could be identified based on Catherine’s thoughts, she still believed that social media would be integrated as much as possible with foreign language teacher education in the future, which would ultimately be beneficial for the growth of the teacher support “community”.

*Comparing Catherine’s Beliefs and Practices of Integrating Social Media in Foreign Language Teacher Education*

After discussing Catherine’s beliefs about foreign language teaching and learning, foreign language teacher education, and the integration of social media into her own foreign language teacher education, it is interesting to notice the discrepancies between her beliefs and her actual teaching practices. The conflicting nature of Catherine’s beliefs and practices about integrating social media in foreign language teacher education program coincides with the literature where researchers (Rienties, Brouwer, & Lygo-Baker, 2012) found that teachers had significantly different beliefs and intentions and that their own ideal conceptions of teaching differed from those in practice. Thus, I further present Catherine’s beliefs compared to her actual practice to illustrate the inconsistency by demonstrating Catherine’s social media usage in PA and comparing that usage with her beliefs.

## Catherine's Social Media Usage in PA

Catherine mentioned the distinction between her beliefs and practices and explained that she didn't recommend any specific social media due to the focus of her STARTALK teacher program. When she was asked to give an estimate of the percentage (0% to 100%) that she used the social media in PA, Catherine answered that

This past year [2013], we didn't use it very much...because the focus was on, grammar was one of the focuses and the other was, we have three different teacher institutes. One was grammar, one was like a practicum [SI-III] where they [teacher participants] were really in the classroom all the time which I wasn't involved with so much. And then the third one was about culture and language in the classroom, how to teach culture and language. So for the grammar one, I was co-teaching it with another, with another man and he only used PowerPoint. He didn't do any going online. And I had to show how to kind of put what he was doing into practice. And I tended to use, I followed his lead and I tended to do classroom activities. So we did, we spent maybe half of a day so that would be what? Maybe 8% in a computer lab (Interview, 2/27/2014).

She stated in the follow-up interview that "8%" was the rate that she used technology in the PA. This 8% didn't include social media. Participants were in the computer lab using computers to finish their assignments. Since the focus of PA was not social media and other technology that could improve the effectiveness of foreign language

teacher education, Catherine wasn't required or expected to integrate much social media into the curriculum (see SI-I and SI-II Curriculum Template). Although Catherine claimed that she had discussed the usefulness of social media technologies that could be used in teaching foreign language (Chinese in this case) with the teacher participants, I didn't observe any discussion or instruction related to the integration of social media into foreign language teaching and learning in the two online observations. Based on the interviews and online observations data, Catherine didn't use any social media in the two SIs that she taught at her STARTALK teacher program. In the second interview, Catherine concluded, "unfortunately, I don't think we made good of social media [in this program]" (7/29/2013). Based on the field notes from the online observations, it was confirmed that Catherine didn't introduce any social media for foreign language teaching and learning in the two online observations. She didn't use any social media in teaching or facilitating in her classroom sessions that I observed, let alone did she use social media to interact or communicate with students either synchronously or asynchronously. Further, the discrepancy between Catherine's beliefs and practices about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education was evident through her answers to the online questionnaire that she completed before the program started. After identifying herself as a highly proficient social media user, she answered the question "how often do you access/use social media in teaching your language courses in the STARTALK program" with "never" used social media (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013).

Although I didn't observe any social media that Catherine used or mentioned in the two online observations I conducted, there was some indirect evidence in the

SI-II curriculum that indicated Catherine viewed technology as a useful tool that foreign language teachers needed to integrate in their classrooms. In the curriculum, many activities and discussions were focused on the use of technology in language classrooms.

<p>Wed. July 17, 2013 Day 4</p> <p>8:00-9:00 am Morning exercises (variation on Taichi)</p> <p>9:00-10:00 am The American Classroom – Teaching in American Schools</p> <p>10:10 am – 12:00pm Lecture / Presentation / Discussion (Dr. Wanli Hu) “The Mandate of Heaven and the Civil Service System”.</p> <p>1:00-3:00 pm Classroom visits (30 minutes actually in the classrooms)</p> <p>3:15-3:45 pm Making connections to prior learning (and connections to the maps)</p> <p>3:45- 4:00 pm exit ticket/assessment/evaluation</p> <p>Assignments for today include:</p> <p><u>Enduring Legacy of Ancient China</u>: Lessons 3, 16 &amp; 17</p> <p><u>Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language</u>, Chapters 1 &amp; 2 (pp. 3-33)</p> <p>Binder/Reader: Article to be provided by Wanli Hu</p> <p>Videos at the websites:</p> <p>天命论 Mandate of Heaven, 2000 Years of Chinese History – Dynasty  <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIWORYToT04">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIWORYToT04</a></p> <p>Chinese Dynasties (“Vogue” by Madonna)  <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIC4zom3wOg">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIC4zom3wOg</a></p> <p>中国科举制度探幽 China’s Civil Service Examination  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eu3YFnh3X7U">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eu3YFnh3X7U</a></p>	<p>Theme: China’s political system and the institutions: the Mandate of Heaven &amp; the Civil Service Examination ( 科举制度)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing Culture into the Chinese Language Classroom through Contextualized Performance.</li> <li>• Using film, video and other media in the classroom.</li> <li>• Comparison between the Mandate of Heaven and John Lock’s Natural Rights</li> <li>• Classroom observations- What to look for and debrief of what was seen. Making connections with Can Do Statements as one thinks about planning.</li> </ul>
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Figure 6 SI-II Agenda 7-17-2013

For example, on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013, one of the topics in the curriculum was the use of film, video, and other media in the classroom (see Figure 4.4). On July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013, one of the topics was making use of technology—opportunities to explore and to skip (see Figure 4.5). Almost every day of SI-II involved a homework assignment of watching online video clips of other teachers teaching foreign languages and writing reflections (see Figure 4.4 & 4.5). This indirect evidence suggested that Catherine at least designed topics and discussions around the theme of technology in the curriculum. Thus, the importance of technology integration into foreign language teacher education was not completely neglected at the curriculum level.

<p>Thursday, July 18, Day 5</p> <p>8:00-9:00 am Morning exercises (variation on Taichi)</p> <p>9:00-10:00 am The American Classroom – Teaching in American Schools</p> <p>10:10 am-12:00 pm Lecture / Presentation / Discussion (Dr. James Koder) “Chinese Philosophies/Great Teachings”</p> <p>1:00-3:00 Role-play and readers’ theater workshop and discussion (The Monkey King Story as Reader’s Theater)</p> <p>3:15-3:45 revisiting the maps and making connections to the four main philosophies (Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and Legalism)</p> <p>3:45-4:00 exit ticket/assessment/evaluation</p> <p>Assignments for today include:</p> <p><u>Enduring Legacy of Ancient China</u> Lessons 7 &amp; 8</p> <p><u>Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language</u>, Chapters 9 &amp; 10 (pp. 176-201)</p> <p>Binder/Reader: Article to be provided by James Koder and Readers’ Theater 1) a play that takes place in Qin and Han Dynasties, 2) The Story of the Monkey King, and 3) Quianlong Meets Macartney: Collision of Two World Views.</p> <p>Video Segment/Connection: Video Segment/Connection: Go to the STARTALK Videos and Workshops site at <a href="https://startalk.umb.edu/teacher-development/workshops">https://startalk.umb.edu/teacher-development/workshops</a> and view a video of classroom practice. Write a half page reflection on what you learned.</p>	<p>Theme: Chinese philosophies: Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism and Legalism</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teaching Listening and Speaking, an interactive approach.</li> <li>2. Making use of Technology- opportunities to explore and to skip.</li> <li>3. Comparing and contrasting beliefs across places and times</li> <li>4. Role play and readers’ theater in the language classroom and beyond</li> </ol>
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Figure 7 SI-II Agenda 7-18-2013

Whereas Catherine didn’t seem to integrate social media in the formal classroom instruction, it did show up in the program informally, like it does in many other school settings. Catherine did mention that she heard some of the teacher participants were talking about using Facebook to connect with each other in their spare time. Nevertheless, Catherine didn’t specifically use Facebook or any other social media in her STARTALK teacher program, even though she could have used the discussion feature of social media. Catherine mentioned that she used the “flipped classroom” concept, which referred to a new model of teaching where reading materials were provided prior to the class and classroom activities were designed to scaffold the learning around the pre-loaded materials. Learners would get familiar with the materials and be prepared for the class. Catherine first videotaped teacher participants’ mini teaching sessions and then uploaded these videos online. She then

asked the teacher participants to review the mini session videos and be prepared for discussion in class, as she said in the second interview:

We [instructors] did have them [teacher participants] view some of the teacher videos... And we did ask them to respond. We did not set up a group, like a Moodle group or a Blackboard group. We didn't use that feature but part of it is that we weren't at our home institution and I think that it would've been easier...if you have a longer time period (7/29/2013).

Despite the fact that there was no social media used in “flipped classroom”, Catherine did indicate that the videos of mini lessons were uploaded for the participants to review. She and other co-instructors made the decision that they wouldn't integrate any social media that could facilitate the discussion and learning outside of the classroom due to the limited Internet access at the hosting building. Since PA was held in a university building that the program director rented, the internet access was not strong, especially for Wi-Fi connection. This was one of the major reasons that Catherine and co-instructors didn't include much social media integration in the curriculum and actual teaching. Based on Catherine's case, it is important to note that technology, like social media, requires certain preconditions (e.g., internet connection) to bring out its full benefits.

Conflicting Beliefs and Practices and the Integration of Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education

Catherine had strong beliefs in the usefulness of social media and other technology in teaching foreign language and foreign language teacher education. She

also self-identified as “proficient” in using social media. Although the social media integration in Catherine’s STARTALK instruction was scarce, her beliefs in using social media and other technology in language teaching and language teacher education were both evident and consistent in the two interviews. Catherine held strong beliefs in the integration of social media and language teacher education. In the first interview, she defined the term social media as all things that one can “charge and plug in and use wireless for (7/21/2013)”. She also indicated that she constantly seeks opportunities to integrate social media and other technology into her teaching, including teaching foreign language teachers. She thought, “if they [social media] can be integrated into language acquisition and learning, that’s wonderful” (Interview, 7/7/2013). In both interviews, Catherine summarized potential benefits of using social media in language teaching and language teacher education, including: reinforcing collaboration, enriching language learning experience, providing access to authentic materials, and extending learning beyond the classroom. However, Catherine demonstrated an unclear understanding of what the differences are between technology and social media. She used the two terms, social media and technology, interchangeably many times in the interviews. The blurry definition of social media and technology may influence her beliefs about the benefits and challenges of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education.

The conflicting nature of Catherine’s beliefs and practices about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education also echoes the argument that teachers’ beliefs often differ with their classroom practices about technology use (Ertmer et al., 2001). Ertmer (1999) categorized and distinguished

between two types of barriers that impacted teachers' use of technology in the classroom. First-order barriers were defined as those that were external to the teacher and included resources (both hardware and software), training, and support. Second-order barriers comprised those that were internal to the teacher and included teachers' confidence, beliefs about how students learned, as well as the perceived value of technology to the teaching/learning process. Although first-order barriers had been documented as posing significant obstacles to achieving technology integration, underlying second-order barriers were thought to pose the greater challenge (Ertmer, 1999). In Catherine's case, these two types of barriers were jointly impeding her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. The first-order barriers such as support from colleagues and program, and hardware (Wi-Fi) connection played an important role in affecting her usage of social media and other technology in the two SIs in which she was involved. The second-order barriers were complicated: on one hand, Catherine held strong internal beliefs about using social media and other technology in foreign language teacher education; on the other hand, she had a vague conceptualization of social media and technology which might have an impact on what she believed social media could contribute to foreign language teacher education. These two internal beliefs woven together make it difficult to determine why Catherine didn't integrate any social media in PA. One possible reason why Catherine didn't utilize social media in PA could be that she didn't fully understand the potential use and special features of social media. She might not know that there are ways to integrate social media even under the specific situation of PA, during which little technical support and limited access to the Internet

were provided. Admittedly, due to the nature of the short duration of all STARTALK teacher programs, it was difficult to overcome the challenges caused by contextual factors, including the length of the program, the collaboration with colleagues, and the lack of access to internet. Nevertheless, the two types of barriers in Catherine's case clearly hindered her acting on her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education

Another possible explanation for the inconsistency between Catherine's beliefs and practices is the conflicting nature of teachers' beliefs (Kane et al., 2002). Because the beliefs sometimes conflict with each other, it is difficult to determine which belief was dominant in influencing decisions. For example, although Catherine expressed clearly that she believed that social media was helpful in foreign language teaching and foreign language teacher education, the two observations and interview data both showed that the integration of social media in PA was not found. This might indicate that Catherine held another belief that using social media might be a distraction for teacher participants in PA. Under the specific situation of PA, it might be the case that the counter-beliefs about the social media integration defeated the belief about the benefits of using social media in determining Catherine's decisions in her teaching practice. Also, due to the limited online observations, it may be possible that Catherine didn't describe her teaching practice accurately.

Triangulating the interview data with the online observation data, Catherine reported that she didn't incorporate any social media and only used a small amount of technology (8%) in PA. The strongly held beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education didn't emerge in her practice in the

STARTALK teacher program. However, it was evident that her beliefs about foreign language teaching and teacher education were aligned with each other consistently throughout the program. More specifically, Catherine's beliefs about building the "community of practice" to support teacher participants were clearly reflected in her teaching practice. Data collected from primary (curriculum template) and secondary reports (Final Report, Site Visit Report) also provided indirect evidence of Catherine's beliefs and practices in building the "community". In the site visit report for PA, the teacher participants reported that the program had met beyond their expectations and appreciated the opportunities to learn from both the instructors as well as their peers. In the PA director's final report, it was also mentioned that the goals of teaching Language Acquisition strategies and a range of culturally rich topics (Geography, Philosophy, Poetry, etc.) were met. In addition, teacher participants felt prepared to take new topics into the language curriculum and plan theme-based lessons for American classrooms. All these supplemental reports supported the argument that Catherine enacted her beliefs about "community of practice" in teaching all participants throughout the entire program. Nonetheless, she didn't integrate any social media or facilitate discussion about social media based on the online observations and interview data.

#### Summary of Chapter 4

The overarching theme for Catherine is the belief that social media is beneficial yet challenging when integrated into foreign language teacher education. Under this belief, Catherine perceived that social media is particularly helpful in building a support community for foreign language teachers and identified many

challenges that could hinder the process, such as program duration, age difference among participants, lack of technical support and access, and school policy and restrictions. Although she held strong beliefs in the integration of social media, Catherine didn't actually use any social media in PA.

Catherine's case was unique because of the conflicting facts that she claimed that she didn't use any social media in her STARTALK teacher program while she held strong beliefs in the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. From this case, it is worth noticing that contextual factors, such as peer collaboration and pressure, limited access to internet, and specific program requirements needing to be fulfilled in a relatively short period of time, had huge impact on how an experienced teacher educator, like Catherine, made her instructional decisions about whether or not to integrate social media. Moreover, the fact that Catherine didn't have a clear distinction between social media and technology in general might have influence on her beliefs about the integration of social media and her teaching practice in PA. This particular aspect also calls for attention on exploring the impact that first-order (external) barriers and second-order (internal) barriers have on instructors' beliefs (Ertmer et al., 2001). Catherine was passionate and enthusiastic about trying new technology in foreign language teaching and foreign language teacher education. However, due to the fact that she had to work with colleagues to co-design the curriculum and followed the required STARTALK procedure, and the unclear conceptualizations of social media and technology, she was unable to adopt social media as much as she wanted to. This dilemma also indicates that the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education

depends on many factors, some of which may be outside of the instructor's control. Therefore, even if instructors have strong beliefs in using social media in foreign language teacher education, they need to overcome many obstacles beyond the pedagogical level of how to use social media, such as lack of tech support and lack of internet access, individual differences among participants, school policies and rules, and program length.

## Chapter 5: Dawn's Case

In this Chapter, I introduce Dawn, who served as lead instructor in Program B (PB). First, I provide background information about her STARTALK teacher program (PB) with detailed program goals and components. Second, I present Dawn's educational background and teaching experiences. Third, I analyze and triangulate all the data collected from Dawn and describe the emerging themes. Last, I compare Dawn's beliefs with her teaching practices and draw conclusion and implication on her case.

### *Background Information of Program B (PB)*

There were a total of four instructors who taught in PB in the summer of 2013. Among these four instructors, two of them were my participants: Dawn and Emily. Although Dawn was one of the two instructional leads in PB, the four instructors almost shared the same teaching responsibilities during the entire PB (PB Curriculum Template & Agenda). A veteran program, PB was designed to provide a professional development program for cooperating/master teachers and world language teacher educators. There were three reasons why PB set up these particular goals: 1) the successful experience acquired from previous STARTALK programs organized and held by the same institution; 2) the realization of the tremendous influence that cooperating/master teachers had on student teachers and the future of the profession; and 3) the fact that no professional development existed in the western United States which prepared these cooperating/master teachers to more effectively play the key role in teacher education programs. The program planned to recruit 24 participants

divided into 8 teams that each would ideally include an instructional supervisor, a methods instructor and existing or potential cooperating/master teachers (See *Figure 5.1 PB Curriculum Template*). However, only 12 participants applied and completed PB, and they were teachers, administrators, and teacher educators from Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and Turkish languages (Program Final Report, 9/24/2013).



## 2013 Teacher Program Curriculum Template

*For step-by-step help in completing this document, please see the accompanying guide.*

Basic Program Information				
Host Institution:	[REDACTED]			
Program Title:	Professional Development for Cooperating/Master Teachers of World Languages and Cultures			
Language(s):	Any STARTALK World Language	University Credit:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Program Setting:	Residential:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Distance/Online Component:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
	Other (please specify):			
Duration:	Weeks/Days:	6 days	Contact Hours:	40
Curriculum Designed By:	[REDACTED]			
E-mail:	[REDACTED]			

Program Overview and Theme
<p>In a paragraph, provide a brief overview of your program. Who will your participants be? What will participants experience during the program? What do you hope your participants can do after the program ends?</p> <p>This program is designed to support Cooperating Teachers, Methods Instructors and University Supervisors in planning an integrated teacher preparation experience for future World Language educators. The overall goal is to prepare a cadre of educators capable of increasing the competence of language learners who are able to speak and interact in culturally appropriate ways with native speakers of the critical languages supported by STARTALK. During the program, teachers will engage in research-based activities that are currently known to best prepare teachers to teach 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. The program parallels on a smaller scale, a teacher preparation program and what each of the stakeholders in such a teacher preparation program need to know and be able to do in order to prepare and support teacher candidates to meet the current goals of the World Language teaching profession. At the end of the program, the expectation is that each team or individual will have a roadmap informed by what they have learned that will either create or transform their teacher preparation program. Due to the fact that the participants come from different states and teacher learning/preparation contexts and language communities, the goals for each group vary, but the program is designed to have each group leave with the knowledge, skills and concrete plans to either reinvigorate their existing teacher preparation programs or to create new pathways for teacher certification that will increase the number of certified teachers in the STARTALK priority languages.</p>

*Figure 8 PB Curriculum Template*

PB was a six-day/40-instructional hour residential program held from July 19<sup>th</sup> to July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013. This professional development program focused on: 1) Acquiring knowledge on such topics as teacher preparation standards, certification requirements, Second Language Acquisition theory, performance-based assessment, cultural backgrounds and differences, and coaching techniques 2) Discussing best practices for teaching languages and cultures, and how to best impart these to new teachers in the field; 3) Role playing and modeling best practices in both teaching and supporting student teachers, including peer and cognitive coaching and framing and providing effective feedback; 4) Analyzing effective teaching strategies in video and other multimedia segments such as those developed by STARTALK; 5) Networking and exploring different dimensions of professional learning communities; 6) Preparing model lessons to share with their student teachers that exemplify best practices in all three communicative modes: interpretive, interpersonal and presentational, 7) Reflecting on their roles as teachers of language and culture as well as cooperating/master teachers.

PB was unique in that it was an intensive residential program embedded in the local Annual Summer Seminar for Language Teachers in a major state in the western United States. The Seminar had eight strands of participants in which PB was one of the strands. Participants in PB also joined general sessions in the seminar while attending the STARTALK strand events. This thoughtful collaboration made all participants in PB an opportunity to communicate and interact with other local foreign language teachers. Moreover, the instructional team employed the Wiki as an online platform for lesson and project development, communication and

collaboration, to create a professional learning community where participants could continue to share and support each other after the summer program ended (See Figure 5.1 PB Curriculum Template). When Dawn led the 2012 STARTALK teacher program, it was her idea to adopt the Wiki as a resource center to share program related materials (Interview, 4/9/2014). In planning the 2013 STARTALK teacher program, Dawn claimed that the instructional team wanted to set up the Wiki and added the discussion and edit functions to encourage teacher participants to share their opinions (Interview, 4/9/2014). In 2013, all four instructors contributed to selecting resources and upload them onto the Wiki. There were no requirements about accessing the Wiki, however, all teacher participants needed to use the Wiki to download the materials and check daily agenda. Teacher participants were encouraged but not required to share their reading responses or comments using the discussion tab on the Wiki. However, no comments were found on the Wiki. Basically, the Wiki was used as a virtual space to share program related materials between instructors and teacher participants. Later in this Chapter, I discuss the use of the Wiki and Dawn's beliefs and practices about the Wiki in further detail when introducing the emerging theme.

#### *Dawn's Educational Background and Teaching Experiences*

Dawn is a White female in her 60s who was born in California in the western United States (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). She received her Associate in Arts degree in foreign language at a middle-west college in the United States in 1964. She then got her Bachelor of Arts degree in French at a major university in the western United States in 1967. Three years later, she received her first teaching credential in

the same state where she got her Bachelor of Arts degree. With the motivation to keep learning, Dawn obtained her Master of Arts degree in French in 1980 at another university in the western United States. Dawn had 41 years of experience in teaching grades 7-12 Spanish and French in public schools since she started her teaching career as a high school teacher in 1967. Until 2008, she had been a classroom teacher, Department Coordinator, mentor teacher, member of the Site Council, and Technology Coordinator in nine different high schools in the same state in the western part of the United States.

In addition to classroom teaching, Dawn was also involved in many professional organizations related to foreign language teaching since 1996. From 1996 to 2008, she was selected to be a member of the Leadership Cadre of the local Area Foreign Language Program. The purpose of the program was to provide professional development to language teachers in a western region in the United States. During these 12 years, Dawn's responsibilities as the member of the program included planning and presenting in a number of five-day seminar series about lesson design, effective teaching strategies for the local language teachers, thematic unit design, leadership development, and using technology to deliver standards-based curriculum. Since 2008, she has been the Site Director of the program and was in charge of coordinating and promoting the program locally and nationally. From 1990 to 2012, Dawn had been affiliated with the local county Foreign Language Association and worked as a secretary, vice-president, president, state board representative, newsletter editor and membership chair. She also worked as co-chair in the State Conference Program Committee of the Language Teachers' Association

in the state in 1998, and as the Publicity Chair of the same committee in 2007 and 2011. With her dedication to the foreign language teaching and teacher education, she gained many awards from the local Foreign Language Association and Language Teachers' Association including the Lifetime Achievement Award, Outstanding Teacher Award, and Outstanding Service Award. Currently, as the Director of the World Language Project at a major University, she was responsible for conceptualizing, promoting and implementing a variety of professional development programs for World Language educators, including those who teach Mandarin language and culture. With many years of teacher training experiences, Dawn was dedicated to sharing her teaching experience with foreign language teachers so that students would be able to enjoy a quality foreign language education:

As I have progressed in my career my second major goal has been to return to the profession a portion of what I have received. Over the years I have been instructed, inspired, encouraged and mentored by many fine and talented teachers, and I feel a very strong obligation to share with others. My roles in the language teachers associations and as a member and later Site Director of the [name] Area Foreign Language Program have given me many opportunities to do so. It is both a responsibility and pleasure to support my teaching colleagues, both new and experienced, as we try to become the proficient teachers our students deserve (Dawn's Resume, p.1).

Dawn's passion toward her career in training foreign language teachers and sharing with other foreign language teachers was evident in the above excerpt. As a

foreign language teacher for many years, her teaching philosophy also influenced her attitude toward foreign language teacher education. Dawn believed in teaching the necessary knowledge about foreign language while providing an enjoyable learning experience for students, as she explained her primary goal as a teacher “has been to share with students the joy and excitement of speaking another language and to help them develop the skills to do so competently” (Dawn’s Resume, p. 1). She particularly stressed how important it was for students to achieve their competency in learning a foreign language. Being inspired by many teachers and mentors that she worked with, Dawn was longing to share her knowledge and experience to other foreign language teachers.

Dawn had been an active leader in STARTALK programs for the past five years, assisting in the development and presentation of both the Leadership Program for Mandarin teachers in 2009 and the Cooperating/Master Teacher Program in 2010 to 2012 (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). As one of the two proposed Instructional Leads, she was responsible for collaborating with the other Instructional Lead, and the Project Director, to complete the curriculum template, as well as for the planning of the overall content, process and evaluation activities for the proposed professional learning program.

I conducted two online observations when Dawn was leading the class. One was on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 and the other was on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013. The two online observations were conducted through Skype using Emily’s laptop (the other participant from PB). Since the four instructors in PB worked collaboratively, they all stayed in the same classroom even when they were not leading the class. Next, an

overview of Dawn's belief system is presented to show her beliefs about foreign language teaching, learning, teacher education, and the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

*Dawn's Belief System about Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education*

In general, Dawn believed that the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education was a "ramping up" process, which would happen gradually by overcoming many challenges (Interview, 7/12/2013). She held a relatively indifferent attitude about social media and considered it as "another thing" among various technology tools that foreign language teacher could use in their teaching (Interview, 7/12/2013). Although she indicated positive feelings about the use of social media (the Wiki and Twitter) in PB, Dawn insisted that social media had a long way to go before fully integrated into foreign language teacher education. *Figure 5.2* below demonstrates the relationship between the four categories of her beliefs.

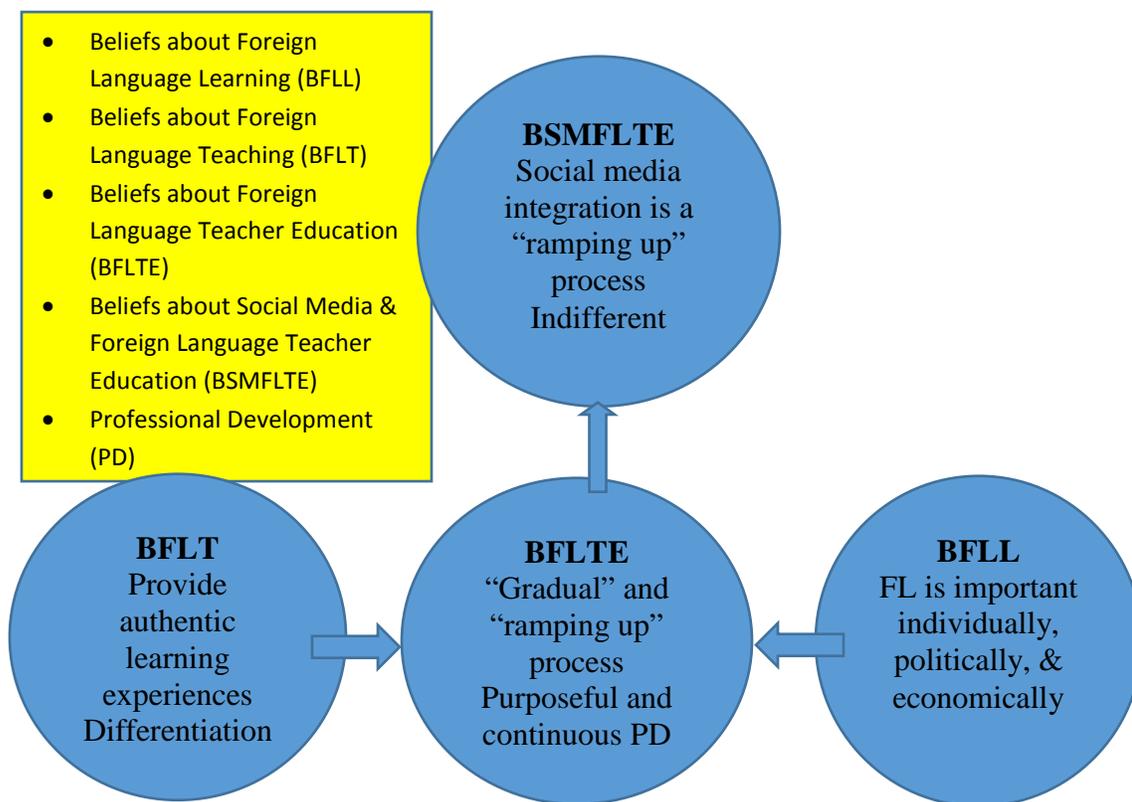


Figure 9 Dawn’s belief system about social media and foreign language teacher education

Dawn’s beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were closely related to her beliefs about foreign language teacher education. Based on her own teaching experiences, Dawn believed in the power of a continuous professional development and a “gradual” process of training foreign language teacher. Adopting a rather indifferent way of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education, she also believed that the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education was a “gradual” process. Whereas she thought social media could be helpful to some degree, she claimed that social media and foreign language education could not be fully integrated without a “ramping up” process.

Dawn's beliefs about foreign language learning and teaching seems more directly related to her beliefs about foreign language teacher education. As a foreign language classroom teacher for over 40 years, Dawn was passionate and enthusiastic about foreign language. She loved learning foreign languages when she was a high school student, "I kind of fell into it. I loved languages from the first class I took in high school" (Interview, 7/12/2013). After she graduated with French major in college, she took the opportunity to work as a teacher with her mother's help.

I was graduating from college and I said, what am I going to do? And so my mother actually worked with the district office for a school system. She said, well, why don't you come in and talk to the personnel people here and suddenly, I was signed up and I was in a program to get my credential and I had a job the next year. And you know, it wasn't necessarily my plan but in a way, I was lucky because it was the right place for me and I've really enjoyed my career. I think I'm really a teacher and I was glad that this is what happened to me (Interview, 7/12/2013).

As for the importance of foreign language teaching, she believed that:

I think it [foreign language teaching] doesn't get the importance that it deserves and that we need. I think it's important individually. It opens students and people who learn another language to other cultures. It opens their minds in a lot of ways. But I think both politically and economically, it's important for the country as a whole (Interview, 7/12/2013).

She emphasized the importance of learning a foreign language for both individuals and the entire nation. In her opinion, learning a foreign language could benefit individuals in learning other cultures while contributing to the growth of the United States politically and economically.

Regarding the strategies of learning a foreign language, Dawn thought that different languages required different skills and strategies to learn.

I'm not good at learning languages but the thing is that learning a language involves a lot of different skills and talents and sometimes people are very good at the oral part but not so good at the reading and writing and sometimes it's otherwise. So it varies a great deal with what's difficult. And for example, you know, if you're learning Chinese, the writing system is much more difficult for American students but it wouldn't be so much if you're studying French or Spanish (Interview, 7/12/2013).

Dawn believed that each individual learner was different in terms of learning different components (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) of a foreign language; one might be good at reading but terrible in writing. When asking the best and worst language learning experience she had, Dawn provided an example to support her beliefs about the importance of travel and study in the country where the target language was spoken.

I think some of my best were, of course, when I was able to travel and study in other countries. I found particularly, I started, I taught both French and Spanish and my Spanish was really, really bad when I

started. I had a minimal minor but I ended up teaching a lot and just teaching it improved my Spanish, of course. And then I went off to Mexico for a summer and discovered that my Spanish was better than everybody else's in the group so suddenly, I was the one who was translating for everyone and doing it all. It's amazing how fast my Spanish improved by that kind of thing. Some of the worst, I think, again, when I was younger, I was very shy and I would often, I was already teaching languages and I was, I wouldn't say too much because I was so embarrassed to make mistakes. I'm the language teacher. I'm supposed to be perfect. And of course, it wasn't true. It took a while to get beyond that (Interview, 7/12/2013).

In her mind, travel and study in the target country played a significant role in enhancing her own foreign language learning. Based on her experience in studying Spanish in Mexico, she found out that her Spanish was improved greatly by constantly translating conversations. Positive feedback helped building up her confidence level in speaking Spanish. She further explained that the worst foreign language learning experiences happened when she was too afraid and shy to speak the language she learned. The impact of self-confidence level on foreign language learning has been widely recognized. In Dawn's case, when she was embarrassed and shy, she didn't feel confident enough to speak the language she learned. When she gained her confidence from translating between Spanish and English, she then gained more and more confidence in learning Spanish. These experiences had shaped her beliefs about the importance and different strategies of learning a foreign language.

Dawn's beliefs about foreign language learning and teaching influenced her beliefs about foreign language teacher education. She believed that foreign language learning deserved much more attention politically and economically in the United States. She valued the immersion language learning experiences while traveling to the country where the target language was spoken and stressed the importance of authentic language experiences in foreign language teaching. These beliefs could be viewed as the reasons why Dawn thought foreign language teacher education was a gradual process. Because of the underestimated importance of foreign language learning and the difficulties in providing more authentic experiences in teaching foreign language, Dawn believed in the relatively "gradual" process in foreign language teacher education (Interview, 7/12/2013). Next, I introduce the major theme emerged from all Dawn's data.

*Integrating Social Media in Foreign Language Teacher Education is a "Ramping up" Process*

In this section, I present three subthemes to illustrate Dawn's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. First, as described in the previous section, Dawn's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education was largely influenced by her beliefs about the gradual process of foreign language teacher education. She insisted that social media integration and foreign language teacher education both needed a "ramping up" process to ensure high "quality" (Interview, 7/12/2013). Second, her beliefs about the gradual integration of social media also reflected in her teaching practice. By examining her actual use of the Wiki and Twitter in PB, I further demonstrate the

alignment of her beliefs and teaching practice about the “ramping up” integration process of social media. Third, I analyze and summarize Dawn’s beliefs about the existing challenges that make the social media integration process slow.

Develop High “Quality” Foreign Language Teacher Education Program is a  
“Ramping up” Process

In addition to her own foreign language learning experience, Dawn described her journey of becoming a foreign language teacher and the training she had received. From learning a foreign language to being a foreign language teacher, Dawn felt that she didn’t have enough preparation and training before stepping into the classroom. She claimed in the first interview that she didn’t receive any formal methods training about how to teach a foreign language before going into classroom (7/12/2013). In fact she obtained her knowledge of foreign language teaching methods through professional development opportunities:

In [the state where Dawn worked] you have to do a fifth year for a credential and I did the normal thing. But I, on my transcript, you’ll find something that says foreign language methods but it wasn’t really. It was, they dumped all of us in together for all of the subjects and then just put different numbers on it and so I really had almost nothing in the way of foreign language methods before I started teaching... I picked up most of my methods through conferences and workshops and more than anything else, the foreign language project (Interview, 7/12/2013).

The above excerpt demonstrated that Dawn believed, although being educated and trained in a major university for four years of college and one-year teaching credential, she wasn't prepared for foreign language teaching in the classroom after graduation. Because of this kind of experience, Dawn considered a quality methods training the most important among all factors and the lack of it could be detrimental in foreign language education. This belief was reinforced when she began her career as a foreign language educator. She said in her first interview that

we're finding this [lack of methods training] true of a lot of the teachers we work with, that they have not had methods courses, had very bad methods courses and so a lot of what we're doing, particularly in our beginning strands is bringing them up to date on what the most research approved methods are in the foreign language learning (7/12/2013).

Besides methods courses, Dawn also emphasized several important factors in determining whether a foreign language teacher education program was effective or not. These factors included adequate amount of time, observation, and micro-teaching. She also thought that a gradual "ramping up" process was ideal for training foreign language teachers.

[In foreign language teacher education programs] you get people who have never been in a classroom, at least in a secondary or K-12 classroom. And so you need quality. I think this is, again, one of the things we're working on this summer is that the placement with a master cooperating teacher is very important ... that's one of the

biggest influences on a teacher. And I think it has to be an adequate amount of time. Some places, the student teaching is very, very short and you need this whole period of guidance. And I like, I've had student teachers from some of the local schools. I like the program that they do at [a major university in western U. S.] because they start off just observing for a while and then gradually, they're teaching a mini lesson and by the late spring, they've taken over the class. So I think this kind of gradual ramping up, it's a very good thing to do (Interview, 7/12/2013).

Dawn viewed the foreign language teacher education as a gradual process that required appropriate amount of time for teachers to digest and apply what they learned in teaching practices. This "ramping up" process was the key to make the "quality" of foreign language teacher education. Moreover, during this process, observing master teacher and conducting micro-teaching were also important factors to influence the "quality" of a teacher education program that Dawn believed in. Besides the importance of formal training, Dawn considered a continuous professional development as a necessary component for foreign language teacher education:

I don't think you can say that once a teacher gets out, has a credential, even if they've come out from a really good program that they're going to be a fabulous teacher on day one. This is where I really, really believe in professional development throughout the career. And they need the guidance. Within their schools, they need to have good

mentors and, but what happens in a lot of schools, the mentors are not necessarily language teachers...there are some special techniques they [foreign language teachers] need and of course, this is why I want them to come to our program. I think they really help people. And we've learned also with our professional development that one day things don't do it, you've got to have a continuing program (Interview, 7/12/2013).

In Dawn's opinion, professional development after the formal teacher training was helpful in facilitating foreign language teachers learning throughout their career.

Dawn, based on her experiences with foreign language teachers, noted that a continuing professional development program worked much better than sporadic one-day workshops. Dawn's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were embedded in her beliefs regarding foreign language teacher education. One clue that could easily be identified was how she emphasized the concept of "gradual" and "ramping up" process as the keyword to develop a "quality" teacher education program and to really make good use of social media in a teacher education program.

#### Social Media is Beneficial When Gradually Integrated into Foreign Language Teacher Education

Dawn overall had positive attitude toward the role of social media in foreign language teacher education. She summarized the potential benefits of social media in her interviews, including opening up the world for language teachers and building connection between teachers and students. In the second interview, Dawn provided a

detailed explanation of her beliefs about the usefulness of social media in foreign language teacher education:

You know what I think one of the greatest things is if you can get this organized, it opens up the world to language teachers. You know, typically, used to be, like when I started teaching, I was the only person speaking that language they ran into practically. And so they're stuck with my accent, my experience. Suddenly, they can go out to the world, they can contact people in other countries, have real conversations with real people who speak it and I think this is one of the big benefits. The whole idea of opening up the world, being able to communicate with people in other parts of the world. Where before it was very difficult. You know, the best we used to be able to do was try to create pen pals and that never worked very well, to be honest. Partly because it just takes so long to get a letter back and forth, snail mail, and now it's instantaneous (7/31/2013).

This excerpt is a nice summary of Dawn's belief with respect to the use of social media in foreign language education. She believed in the instantaneous and collaborative feature of social media, which supported the real life communication in foreign language education. Real life connection and communication with other people around the world could be beneficial in opening foreign language teachers' minds. Language and culture can't be separated when learning or teaching a foreign language; the ability to connect with people who speak the target language instantly using social media could help learners use foreign language in meaningful and

authentic practices, get better understanding of the target culture, thus, enhance the language learning.

While evidently believing in the effectiveness of social media in promoting authentic social communication, Dawn also mentioned that social media could easily interest and motivate young foreign language learners:

One other thing, of course, it's always, we're dealing with students of this age group and it's so natural to them that it's coming to your students where they are, the things that interest them and the ways they live their lives. These days, that's the way they communicate with each other and so if you can set this up, they can communicate with other people, new people and even with a teacher, and the ways they're used to doing it, then, I think it's very valuable...I think probably it would be a lot more if I still were in the classroom. But you know, that's one of my problems, still being involved in education and going to things like this, that I can't go back and try them on my students anymore. So right now what I'm doing, I'm working with other teachers and so probably a little bit there (Interview, 7/31/2013).

By acknowledging the popularity of social media in young students and even many teachers, Dawn considered it was valuable to use social media in foreign language classrooms. Although Dawn seemed in agreement with the positive role of overall social media, she didn't show a passionate attitude towards the actual use of social media in foreign language teacher education. In her second interview, she further

elaborated her stance in using social media to train foreign language teachers and concluded that the awareness of the social media was useful because it helped teachers to know what students were doing:

Overall, I think it [social media]'s just another thing that you can use.

I, sometimes I think the most useful thing is to let teachers be a little more aware of what their students are doing. I'm not sure that it added that much to the program itself and the things we were doing

(7/31/2013).

Dawn viewed social media as a popular tool that students in K-12 settings were using and could provide students more opportunities in practicing foreign language.

However, she thought that it would be sufficient for foreign language teachers to be aware of it and introducing social media to foreign language teachers only had the benefit in raising this kind of awareness. It may be more accurate to describe Dawn's attitude toward using social media in foreign language education as an indifferent one as she mentioned in the follow up interview "I think it [social media] is another tool we have in our bag. I wanna use as many different things as possible" (4/9/2014). In her interviews, she showed her understanding of the essential feature of social media as the social collaborative communication in a virtual community. She didn't rule out the possibility that social media had some educational benefits while keeping an indifferent attitude towards the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Overall, Dawn didn't seem to be enthusiastic about the integration of social media.

Dawn's beliefs about social media could also be supported by her definition and personal use of social media. Dawn defined social media to be a broad concept that included tools and applications more than Facebook and Twitter. She noted in the first interview that "social media is very broad. When people say social media, they're thinking Facebook and Twitter, and I think there's more to it than that" (7/12/2013). Dawn described herself at a very basic level of proficiency in using social media for both personal and teaching purposes. For personal uses, Dawn perceived herself "highly proficient" in using email and internet research, "somewhat proficient" in graphic design (animation); "very basic proficiency" in using social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) and digital media (e.g., YouTube), and "not very proficient" in Blog and web design and development (e.g., HTML) (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). In addition, she claimed that she used Facebook "every few weeks" and Twitter and Blog "less often" (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013), which was a moderate frequency of using social media. Besides personal uses, she also mentioned that she had the experiences of using social media for professional and educational purposes (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). Regarding the integration of social media and STARTALK teacher program, she stated that she was "highly proficient" in using internet research and email; "very basic proficiency" in digital media, graphic design, and web design and development; "not very proficient" in using social networking sites and Blogs (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). When she was asked the question "how often do you access/use social media in teaching your language courses in the STARTALK program", Dawn reported "less often" for Twitter and "Never" for other social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Blog.

This matched with her previous answers about her moderate proficiency level of using social media for personal purposes.

Although considering herself as a social media user at a basic proficiency level for both personal and professional purposes, Dawn viewed herself as being savvy and interested in computers and technology. She explained in detail how she developed courses in “digital photography and creating videos” to help foreign language teachers. She was confident toward her integration of technology in foreign language education, but didn’t really attach any important role to the specific use of social media.

Personally, I’m on Facebook and I’m one of these people who goes and looks at it periodically. I just don’t use it particularly. I just don’t have a lot of time for it. I, in spite of my age, I am something of a nerd. I’m very, I’m been in computers since almost the first time they ever appeared in the school. I use it a lot (Interview, 7/12/2013).

It was interesting to notice the discrepancy in her beliefs that while she thought that she was a technology “nerd,” (Interview, 7/12/2013) Dawn only perceived herself as a basic social media user. Dawn clearly valued the use of technology but not specifically social media. Therefore it is understandable that she didn’t advocate specifically the educational benefits of social media in foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education. She concluded that the integration of social media in PB was a “gradual process”, which corresponded to her own beliefs. She clearly didn’t want to leave social media behind, however it would take a long time for her to fully encompass social media in foreign language teacher education:

I think this is gradually moving more and more into our programs. We work as a team on all of these things and, you know, we get things here and there and certain of our presenters will add more. But it's a very slow, gradual process (Interview, 7/31/2013).

Like other technology, social media is constantly changing with new applications coming up on a daily basis. It is challenging to fully integrate social media when foreign language teacher educators don't have enough opportunity to learn how to use certain social media first and then implement that into their teacher training.

However, for the advocates of social media, Dawn's beliefs could lead to promising opportunities, after all a gradual process has already started.

Overall, Dawn supported the use of technology in foreign language education and was confident about previous experiences when she provide technology workshops for foreign language teachers. In addition, she had successfully conducted many method courses and trainings in helping foreign language teachers learn how to better use technology. As for social media, although Dawn valued the educational benefits social media had on foreign language teaching, she viewed social media just as "another thing" that foreign language teacher needed to be aware of (Interview, 7/12/2013). Regarding the integration of social media in foreign language teacher education, Dawn's beliefs in the gradual process of the integration are demonstrated through her use of the Wiki and Twitter in PB, which are analyzed in the following sections.

*The Wiki needs a gradual process to be fully integrated into foreign language teacher education.* As far as the Wiki is concerned, although she expressed

particularly that it was “essential” and tried to incorporate more collaborative features (Interview, 7/12/2013), the Wiki was used only as a virtual resource center for teacher participants to download materials. In PB, the Wiki was used as a major tool to share information and program related materials. Being one of the eight strands of the State Annual Summer Seminar, PB was specifically designed to integrate technology. This emphasis on technology enabled the Wiki to be an essential component of PB. It was Dawn’s decision to create the Wiki for PB and added the discussion feature (Interview, 4/9/2014). Dawn claimed that they “do incorporate a fair amount of technology” in their program that was “heavily into web based applications that teachers can use in classrooms” and the Wiki was an essential application in the program (Interview, 7/12/2013). Mainly, PB’s Wiki was set up to post all the materials and the internet links. Dawn stated that the convenient and financially reasonable storage of materials was the main reason why the Wiki was used.

It [Wiki] depends on how it’s used. I think it can be. We’re using it because, well, number one, it’s free. And number two, because we’re getting away from using paper as much as possible. And we like having these things posted. It means people can come back to them as they need them. You know what happens with paper. It goes home and gets lost and put away (Interview, 7/12/2013).

Dawn also considered the use of the Wiki as welcome by the teacher participants and it was a success of the program.

We had, we got really nice feedback from our participants. They were so happy to come in and find it already set up. All the materials there.

So this has been something that the participants have really, really liked (Interview, 7/12/2013).

Dawn reported that participants in the previous programs were satisfied with the Wiki being a resource center where they could access the materials anytime they want. She also implicitly supported one major benefit of the Wiki and suggested it could provide a virtual space that teachers and students could both have access to share information.

In order to understand the real role of the Wiki, it is important to examine its actual use in PB. A snapshot of Dawn's classroom instruction illustrates the purpose of the Wiki in PB program and reveals Dawn's understanding and belief regarding the use of the Wiki:

July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013. I observed Dawn's class because she was going to give an introduction to their Wiki from 4:45pm to 5pm Eastern Time. Because of the time difference, Dawn started her class around 1:50pm in her local time. I connected to the other participant (Emily)'s laptop and used Skype to conduct the observation. It was a regular classroom with a projector in the middle of the room and screen showing the topic "Introduction to Our Wiki". Dawn stood in the front of the classroom, already started her introduction. Emily, together with the other two instructors, sat at the back of the classroom so that I could have a better view of the entire classroom. Dawn started to talk about the home page of the PB's Wiki site. She first explained that because PB was one of the eight strands of the State Annual Summer Seminar,

PB's Wiki was embedded in the overall Seminar's Wiki as well. In other words, there was an overall Wiki for the entire Annual Summer Seminar and eight different Wikis for each of the strands. Dawn first explained the above information about the overall Wiki and PB's individual Wiki by showing the different Wiki pages. After that, Dawn began to walk through every component on PB's Wiki. She first opened the Agenda page and explained the tentative agenda for each day, introducing the topics, activities, and assignments from the beginning to the end of the program. Day one was about teacher professionalism. Day two reviewed the current standards and theories in language teaching and learning. Day three focused on recruiting master teachers. Day four discussed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and creating reflective practice. Day five introduced the teacher work and personal life balance. Day six was a wrap up. After explaining the details for each day, Dawn briefly went through all the remaining components of PB's Wiki by clicking on different links for different sections in order to give a general idea of what resources were available and where they were located in the Wiki. She used about 4 minutes in showcasing all other components of the Wiki. She particularly emphasized the newly added "discussion" feature on the Wiki. She encouraged teacher participants to share their thoughts and suggestions about the readings posted on the Wiki. The entire introduction lasted about 15 minutes.

Teacher participants didn't ask any question regarding the organization and content of the Wiki (Observation notes, 7/20/2013).

The observation notes, although only documented a 15-minute classroom instruction, indicated that Dawn presented Wiki as a virtual resource space for participants to have access to the reading materials. Besides the agenda, reading materials, and extra resources, Dawn also showed the discussion function and try to motivate teacher participants for potential collaboration. However, she didn't mention what other applications participants could use Wiki for, such as collaboratively writing one paper and keeping track of all the changes in the process.

To better understand what the teacher participants in the PB program were viewing every day in their six-day PB program, a screenshot of PB's Wiki site regarding the "Activities" is presented (see *Figure 5.3*). As seen in the screenshot, all the detailed agendas of PB for each day of the program were listed. In addition, each day's course readings were also uploaded in the Wiki, providing the opportunity for participants to access the reading materials at any time and any place where Internet connection was available. For example, for Day One, the readings included *The Spirit of the Chinese Character* and *Standards and Expectations for the Teaching Profession*. The direct access to reading materials and clear layout of agendas and activities seemed to make it easy for all participants to understand the content and goal of the program on a daily basis. Also, there are three buttons in the upper right hand corner of the Wiki page: the first one "Edit" allows instructors and teacher participants to make any changes and revisions to the entire Wiki site; the button in

the middle shows the number of discussion topics that are posted on the Wiki; the last button on the far right provides all the revisions that have been done on the Wiki site.

The screenshot displays the STARTALK Cooperating Teachers Wiki interface. On the left is a navigation sidebar with links like 'Wiki Home', 'Recent Changes', and 'Pages and Files'. The main content area is titled 'Activities' and features a 'Day 1' section with a PDF resource 'The Spirit of the Chinese Character' (416 KB) by Barbara Ana and Russell Eng Gon. Below this is a 'Standards and Expectations for the Teaching Profession' section with a DOC resource (36 KB). The 'Day 2' section includes 'Who wants to be a Millionaire?' with a DOC resource (3 MB) and a 'Millionaire Template.ppt' (3 MB). A detailed paragraph explains that the PPT is a 97-2004 presentation and may not work on newer software. Further down, it provides instructions for using the 50/50 slide feature. The 'Day 3' section has a resource 'Little Scenes in the Education World' (42 KB). The 'Day 4' section is titled 'Program Planning Templates' and includes three resources: 'Program\_Planning\_Template.doc' (38 KB), '1\_day\_Agenda\_Template.doc' (36 KB), and '5\_day\_Overview.doc' (45 KB). At the bottom, there is a footer with site information and a Creative Commons license.

Figure 10 PB Wiki Site Activities

Other than the classroom observation and the Wiki site, one essential part of the puzzle was how the instructors perceived the use of Wiki in their teacher development program including how it was actually used and whether it contributed to their foreign language education. Dawn's explanation definitely shed light on these crucial questions:

We used our Wiki and we had discussion tabs. They [teacher participants] did some reading and then they were to report on the reading on the discussion tab... We had so many readings we thought were useful and we finally decided that rather than making a lot of paper copies and handing them out, we would put up this choice of readings and give, let them do it on their own and choose the ones that interested them ... basically what they [teacher participants] did was, you know, the only thing we really assigned them to do was to read an article and respond and I think that's useful to share. And the idea, and I don't know if people will go back and look at it cause everybody was very busy, to say oh, I read this good article and maybe you wanna see it, too, because we gave them a choice of things to do. And so I think that could be very useful. How much they took advantage of it, you know, did they look at say, oh, I wanta go read it, too? I'm not sure. And it might happen later (Interview, 7/31/2013).

As described in the above excerpt, besides sharing resources, teacher participants in PB were expected to use Wiki to both access the reading materials and turn in reading responses. The instructional team of PB decided to use the Wiki to upload more

articles than participants could actually read in this six-day program, as there was no extra cost to do that. The instructors labeled some articles as supplementary materials for participants to read during their spare time or even after the program ended. Participants were also encouraged to post and share their response to the readings they selected to read. Unfortunately, as seen in *Figure 5.3*, there was no discussion post in PB's Wiki site. As described earlier, the discussion function on the Wiki was a place designed by Dawn and other instructors for teacher participants to share their responses and suggestions. Teacher participants were not required to post their response unless they wanted to. Dawn also claimed that sharing ideas with peers was a challenge to all teacher participants in PB:

It's interesting that we've had a hard time getting people to really do that, to go onto the blog pages or the discussion pages. It's been a challenge. For some reason or other, they just don't get into that too much (Interview, 7/31/2013).

PB program used the Wiki both in 2012 and 2013. Dawn compared these two programs specifically and claimed that the 2013 program incorporated the "discussion" feature of Wiki. However this thoughtful feature didn't make a "lot of difference" in terms of overall instructional outcome comparing with the STARTALK program in 2012:

I don't think it made a lot of difference, to be honest. We didn't use that much, and I'm comparing with what we did last year. And the main difference, we had the Wiki last year [2012] as well but we didn't use it in the real definition of social media. It was one way

communication. And so we added just a little bit this year [2013], where there was a chance for responses. And I don't think it did a lot. The difference between 2012 and 2013 PB program was that the instructors changed the way they used Wiki in 2013 by adding a participant response feature. Unfortunately her expectation was confirmed by the fact that no reading responses were posted on the Wiki site (Interview, 3/21/2014), let alone any active discussion. Whereas Dawn demonstrated some understanding regarding social media's unique feature, the actual practice of this discussion and interaction feature of the Wiki in PB remained in vain.

Wiki is a free encyclopedia and its unique feature is that everyone online can add, delete, and modify the informational articles through collaboration with others in a virtual community. Because the feature of social collaboration in the virtual community, Wiki is a good example of social media. Many researchers have acknowledged the benefits of Wiki. In foreign language education, Wiki can be particularly useful in increasing students' motivation and accountability when being integrated to complete writing assignments (Arnold, Ducate & Kost, 2009; Kessler, 2009; Lund, 2008; Mak & Coniam, 2008; Martinsen & Miller, 2012). When using Wiki, students had access to each other's texts from the first draft through the final product, where students were also constructing the content of the course while being peers' audience (Arnold, Ducate & Kost, 2009). As gathered from this literature, Wiki is especially useful in education if its social collaboration and sharing authorship could be fully employed. Dawn used Wiki only to share resources and reading materials among all teacher participants. Although she acknowledged the

educational benefits of the Wiki as a free virtual space to enable participants to share and download program materials at any time and space, she didn't seem to be supportive of other educational benefits that Wiki could add on to foreign language teacher education. Social media is powerful in reducing the limitation of communication and interaction in terms of time and distance. However, as evidenced from the classroom snapshot, the Wiki site, and the instructor's self-description, it is fair to conclude that, Dawn valued the Wiki as a place to easily upload and download documents at no cost. She added the discussion feature, which favorites the social media nature, to PB's Wiki and her teaching. In Dawn's classroom instruction with respect to the Wiki, she didn't elaborate on other potential ways of integrating the Wiki with foreign language teaching and learning. Although a discussion component on the Wiki was included, it wasn't a mandatory requirement and yielded no responses. In her interview, Dawn didn't mention other benefits that the Wiki could have on foreign language teacher education, such as facilitating the language writing projects, enabling participants to collaboratively construct knowledge, and learning through peer reviewed writing process.

Although Dawn claimed that the Wiki was an "essential" (Interview, 7/12/2013) part of the PB program, based on the findings regarding how the Wiki site was actually used, questions are very likely to be raised: how essential was it indeed? Could it be easily replaced by some other application or website that has the feature of free/unlimited uploading and downloading? If the Wiki was an essential part of the program, how did it contribute to the foreign language education? Shouldn't it play a more important role in the delivery of content, evaluation of students' learning

progress, or establishment of a professional development community, which could be achieved through a more thorough employment of the Wiki as a social media?

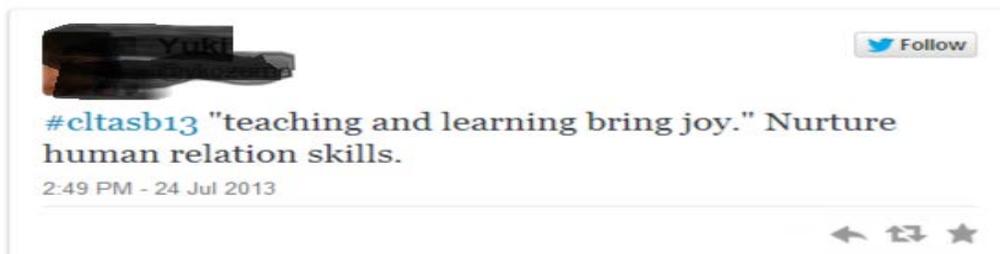
Nevertheless, the finding about the Wiki did correspond to Dawn's overall beliefs about social media and its role in foreign language education: while technology can have positive impacts, the process of integrating social media into foreign language education is rather slow and "ramping up".

*Twitter can't be fully integrated into foreign language teacher education without a gradual process.* Another social media that PB used was Twitter. Dawn clearly brought that up in the first interview that "we will not be using Facebook. The overall seminar is going to have a Twitter presence" (7/12/2013). In 2013 PB program, Twitter was promoted so much that it became a contest, as Dawn described in the second interview:

The whole seminar was really pushing Twitter and so a number of our groups, our group did that. We had a contest. One of our members was one of the winners and at least one day, we had an assignment within our session where we asked everybody to tweet on what they'd learned the day before. And some people had never done it before and so we did some guidance on that. The overall seminar [the overall foreign language teacher training program that PB was involved] did this where the groups, the new, person who did the most tweeting and then the new tweeter who did the most. And so you know, she obviously really got into it and I think probably learned a lot. And as I said, I didn't have a lot of time. I skimmed some of the Tweets on the main

site but I didn't really look to see which ones were ours and which were somebody else's so I couldn't say which used it the most (7/31/2013).

Dawn's description sheds light on a number of aspects regarding why Twitter was used, how it was used, and how she personally viewed it. Dawn agreed that the overall State Annual Summer Seminar and PB both advocated the presence of Twitter, and used this particular social media as an informal tool to facilitate and encourage the sharing of ideas and discussion about the program topics. Moreover, many activities were designed and implemented using Twitter. For example, a Twitter contest was held among all eight strands of the State Annual Summer Seminar in which the person who tweeted the most got an award. In addition, PB also had an assignment for participants to tweet what they learned in that day. These Twitter activities were also presented in the overall State Annual Summer Seminar's Wiki. The person who was responsible for designing and maintaining the overall Seminar's Wiki and Twitter collected all the tweets (including PB) their participants posted during the seminar. Below, I present some screenshots of the tweets that were stored on the program Wiki.





*Figure 11* Tweets examples from participants

It must be noted that the displayed tweets were not only from the participants in PB but also the entire State Annual Summer Seminar. These tweets reflected a variety of topics and themes that were closely related to the seminar and each individual program, including showing personal emotions, sharing academic learning progress, and commenting on the new knowledge that participants had just learned. Although PB was also involved in this Twitter contest, Dawn showed relatively little interest in using the Twitter or even reading and identifying the topics and themes that PB's participants tweeted. When she compared the Twitter usage between 2012 and 2013

and concluded that very few participants completed the majority of tweets in 2012, she indicated her attitude toward the use of Twitter in foreign language classrooms:

As far as the Twitter goes, I'll tell you last year [2012]'s experience, we had this and there wasn't a lot of response. You know, I looked back over last year's tweets and, you know, there were three or four people who did almost all of it. So it's the kind of thing that you need to push or convince teachers that it's really worthwhile. And for a lot of them, although they might like it for themselves, it's not something they can take back to their schools. You know, there are very few schools that allow students to go onto Facebook and Twitter in a school situation. So it kind of limits their interest in it (Interview, 7/12/2013).

Dawn, based on her previous experience with Twitter usage in foreign language teacher education, believed that there were two reasons that resulted in the difficulty of pushing Twitter for foreign language teachers. One was that most of them could not use Twitter in the context of K-12 schools, which reduced teacher participants' interests. The other one was the challenge of convincing the teacher participants to believe in the educational benefits of Twitter. The perceived challenges for Twitter integration also reflected Dawn's personal belief regarding social media. Because of a more indifferent approach Dawn was taking, she believed that social media was among various available tools that foreign language teacher could use. Twitter, with its limited and restricted uses at K-12 school settings, was not that attractive to

foreign language teachers. Thus, it was reasonable for Dawn to strategically not to actively integrate Twitter in her teaching practice in PB.

However, Dawn's view of Twitter is limited in describing the educational benefits that Twitter has. Twitter, the microblogging service founded in 2006, is one of the most popular social media with over 200 million active users (Bennett, 2012). Its distinguishing features include its follower structure, link-sharing, use of hashtags and real-time searching. Researchers have identified Twitter usage trends, including: developing and maintaining relationships (Marwick & Boyd, 2010; Smith & Rainie, 2010); gathering and sharing information (Lotan et al., 2011; Namaan et al, 2010); mobilization and social protest (Dunn, 2011). In the interviews and observations, Dawn didn't mention all these possible benefits of using Twitter in foreign language teacher education. The previous analysis of Dawn's educational beliefs already suggested her moderate confidence and tactic attitude in integrating social media in foreign language teacher education. It is not surprising to see how she struggled to see the actual connection between Twitter with foreign language teaching and learning: to Dawn, Twitter was just a contest joined by a small number of participants among the entire program and didn't show a potential to be incorporated as a meaningful part in foreign language teacher education. Dawn's attitudes toward the Wiki and Twitter in PB gave clear clues on her general beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

Twitter, developed for social communication, didn't gain much popularity in Dawn's PB program as well as her foreign language teacher education. For the use of Twitter in PB, she thought it was only a contest for fun in order to encourage more

communication at most. She didn't seem to pay much attention to why and how the communication should be encouraged and what those communications actually were. Although she expressed her concern regarding the use of Twitter was widely restricted in K-12 setting, it would be interesting to discuss whether the restriction was the reason why she didn't promote in her teacher training program. Or another kind of explanation may be possible that Dawn would rather spend precious instructional time discussing other topics, such as foreign language teaching methods. After all, she considered training in foreign language teaching methods as more important, and some awareness of the existence of social media such as Twitter would suffice foreign language teachers' needs in teaching their students. In her mind, Twitter might need even more time, comparing to the Wiki, to be integrated into foreign language teacher education. Without the necessary "ramping up" process, Twitter can't bring out its full potential in foreign language teacher education.

#### Existing Challenges Make the Integration of Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education Gradual

In seeking for the reasons why social media needed to be integrated gradually, Dawn summarized many challenges that could impact the integration of social media with foreign language teacher education. When Dawn expanded the conversation to the university courses in which she was involved, she pointed out that it was a challenge to motivate teacher participants to share their opinions and generate discussions using social media. In order for an online discussion to be fully developed, two important elements must be presented. One is that the discussion tasks should be designed to provide enough opportunity for teacher participants to

collaborate among each other. The other is the instructors must provide sufficient support and guidance as well as scaffolding and modeling for teacher participants. In PB, the reading response on the Wiki site was not mandatory and Dawn wasn't actively involved in this process of monitoring and motivating response posting. Therefore it wasn't a surprise to see the discussion feature on the Wiki was underexplored.

Dawn believed teachers' expertise and experience in technology was another kind of challenge that influenced her use of social media in foreign language teacher education. Modeling and scaffolding became particularly challenging in a STARTALK teacher-training program that was designed to provide intensive training in a short period of time. According to their curriculum template (See *Figure 5.1*), PB was designed to recruit 24 participants in eight teams who would include instructional supervisor, a methods instructor and existing or potential cooperating/master teachers. However, the actual participants comprised no university method course instructors and supervisors and some of the participants were new teachers who needed extensive amount of extra help and guidance. In a six-day program, the use of social media was seriously impacted by this different experience and expertise, as she analyzed:

Well, the first thing, you should give people... of course, in our group, even more than the typical one, we have people of widely varying ages and technical expertise, interest. And so I've taught tech seminars a lot and my experience has been that you get people who have to have their hand held all the way through, you know, at every step, to the ones who should be teaching the class, far more than a typical

classroom of various subjects. In technology, you get this really, really wide range of abilities and experience. And so if you're doing it in a program, you have to count on spending a lot of time and sometimes time is very limited. And it's a good chance for differentiation, definitely (Interview, 7/31/2013).

In order to integrate social media in foreign language teaching and learning, teachers needed to know how to use social media first before they adopted them in their teaching. This challenge, in Dawn's mind, could only be overcome by purposeful differentiation that would take a large amount of time. In other words, for teacher participants who had little expertise in social media, teacher educators needed to model step-by-step and explicitly link the social media with foreign language teaching and learning. Unfortunately this time commitment was usually not available due to the nature of a STARTALK program as a summer language program.

In addition, Dawn claimed that contextual factors, such as school restrictions, sometimes restricted teachers from integrating social media in their classrooms. As a result social media's role in foreign language education program was further weakened:

One of the hard things is even if you're teaching in a university setting, where they have open access to everything, if they wanna go back and use it in the typical public or private school, frequently, they're very, very limited as to what social media they can get onto. You know, there are lots of schools that block YouTube even and so this kind of thing is how much time do you spend on something that then they

can't go back and use. Or you know, you have to do a lot of talking about what the value is of it. Should you go back and [negotiate] with your administration to say we ought to be allowed to do this? We spend time on teaching people how to download videos so they can have them in their classroom. So there are a lot of complications. And then some schools have such slow servers that it's very difficult so there are a lot of problems. You know, there's tremendous opportunity here, I think, but I think there are a lot of hurdles to get over sometimes (Interview, 7/31/2013).

Dawn considered that, because most foreign language teachers could not use social media, such as Youtube and Twitter, in K-12 school settings, it is very difficult to integrate social media in K-12 foreign language teacher education. Dawn declared that foreign language teachers, even those who were really enthusiastic about using social media in their teaching, needed to go through tedious negotiation with school administration. Calculating the time and effort that foreign language teachers would have to spend when trying to make use of social media in their teaching, Dawn considered the use of social media was not worth of jumping over so many "hurdles" (Interview, 7/31/2013).

Overall, as an experienced foreign language teacher and teacher educator, Dawn always considered students learning in the first place. Because of the wide acceptance of social media among students, Dawn believed that social media could play a role in foreign language classrooms and foreign language teachers should be aware of various social media to keep up with their students. In other words, she still

valued social media based on its advantages in facilitating communication in foreign language teaching and learning. Her beliefs regarding the integration of social media in foreign language education was anything but straightforward and clear. She expressed her dissatisfaction toward the fact that the discussion feature of the Wiki wasn't fully used but didn't see an urgent need to change it. She showed an even more indifferent attitude toward Twitter and wasn't actively involved in the related activities. Although she understood the collaboration and communication feature of social media, she considered social media as just "another thing" that foreign language teachers and teacher educators could use (Interview, 7/12/2013).

In summary, Dawn showed some understanding of the social media as a tool for social communication and collaboration although her use of social media was limited and her confidence in using social media was quite moderate. She initially incorporated social media including the Wiki and Twitter in PB since 2012. In PB, the Wiki was used for the purpose of sharing resources and generating discussions (not a mandatory task) from participants and Twitter was used with the goal of enhancing communication and exchanging ideas. Although Dawn considered that using the Wiki as a virtual space for accessing resources was successful and received complements from the participants, there were other advantages that the Wiki could bring to PB. Wiki is believed to have some distinct features including the continuous access to the collaboratively constructed text and the opportunity for peer review (Mak & Coniam, 2008). They are the reasons why Wiki is considered a social media. From the interviews, Dawn mentioned the discussion feature of Wiki but not the collaborative construction aspect. Therefore, it was impossible to see this feature to

be actually employed in the program. The Wiki in PB, rather than being regarded as a social media, was used more like a free internet website for easy storage and access of reading materials. Twitter, in Dawn's eyes, was only one tool that foreign language teachers needed to be aware of. With the existing challenges, Dawn believed that the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education was a "ramping up" process, which echoed her beliefs about foreign language teacher education. Next, I compare the differences between Dawn's beliefs and practice about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

*Comparing Dawn's Beliefs and Practice about the Integration of Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education*

Dawn's beliefs of the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were aligned with her teaching practice in PB. During the two online observations, she only used the Wiki for the purpose of introducing the site and content to all participants (Observation Notes, 7/20/2013, 7/23/2013). Further, she estimated that she used social media about 15% in her teaching in PB (Interview, 4/9/2014). Her beliefs about the integration of social media were enacted evidently in her teaching practice. Regardless of the reasons why she held beliefs about the gradual process of the integration of social media, it was consistent that Dawn chose to view social media as one of the tools in foreign language teachers' bag. She took an indifferent approach to acknowledge social media, valuing its popularity and some educational benefits in foreign language teaching while perceiving its "ramping up" integration with foreign language teacher education (Interview, 7/12/2013). She didn't rule out the possibility that social media could play a more important role.

However, even if the integration would happen, Dawn believed that it would be a “slow” and “gradual” process (Interview, 7/12/2013).

Reviewing her actual practice about the Wiki also provides evidence to support the argument that Dawn’s beliefs about social media and its potential benefits in foreign language teacher education. Many researchers have argued that the Wiki can be helpful in increasing students’ motivation and accountability when being integrated to complete writing assignments (Arnold, Ducate & Kost, 2009; Kessler, 2009; Lund, 2008; Mak & Coniam, 2008; Martinsen & Miller, 2012). Considering the fact that the Wiki was only used as a resource center, Dawn didn’t seem to embrace its full potential that were supported by the literature in PB. This could be traced back to her beliefs about the gradual process of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education. Therefore, it is obvious that Dawn’s beliefs about social media were actively represented in her teaching practices in PB.

#### Summary of Chapter 5

Dawn’s case was particularly interesting at both belief and practice level. Regarding the beliefs about social media, on one hand, she acknowledged some benefits that social media had on foreign language learning due to students’ increasing adoption of social media; on the other hand, she held beliefs that foreign language teachers only needed to be aware of the advantages of social media, in other words, social media needed a “ramping up” process to be gradually integrated into foreign language teacher education. In terms of practice level, while Dawn used the Wiki and Twitter in PB, she didn’t implement the full potential of both social media. It is clear based on the online observations and interviews that Dawn’s beliefs were

enacted throughout her teaching practice in PB. Her beliefs towards the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education influenced her teaching practice and led to the underdevelopment of the Wiki and Twitter usage in PB. Dawn's beliefs about social media aligned with her teaching practice. Her internal beliefs about social media and its application to foreign language teacher education was the strongest barrier to restrain her from fully integrating social media.

Furthermore, Dawn's case also indicates that many teacher educators, even like Dawn who perceived herself as a technology "nerd" (Interview, 7/12/2013), always show a relatively limited understanding about the potential benefits that social media has on foreign language teaching and teacher education. This calls for more support and guidance in the training for both foreign language teachers and teacher educators. In order to help foreign language teachers and teacher educators better understand social media and its affordances in foreign language teaching and teacher education, more professional development programs need to be developed with an emphasis on how to differentiate social media from other technology tools and integrate social media in foreign language teaching. Social media is more than just "another thing" that foreign language teachers need to be aware of. The participatory nature of social media can engage learners in the processes of social interaction, sharing information, dissemination of learner-generated content, building community (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007). Thus, guidance in demonstrating the aforementioned educational benefits that social media enables will help foreign language teachers and teacher educators get a better understanding of social media, and thus, change their beliefs and attitudes towards the integration of social media.

## Chapter 6: Emily's Case

In this Chapter, I introduce Emily, the third participant of my study. By introducing background information about her STARTALK teacher program (Program B), I provide detailed program goals and components. Next, I present Emily's educational background and teaching experiences, followed by the analysis of the themes and subthemes emerged from Emily's data. Last, I compare Emily's beliefs with her teaching practices and draw conclusion.

### Background Information of Program B (PB)

As the same program that Dawn (my second case study participant) was involved, there were a total of four instructors who taught in PB in the summer of 2013. Unlike Dawn, Emily just served as a teacher program instructors without administrative duties. PB was proposed to offer professional development opportunities for cooperating/master teachers and language teacher educators. The program originally planned to recruit 24 participants in eight teams that each would ideally include an instructional supervisor, a methods instructor and existing or potential cooperating/master teachers (See *Figure 6.1* PB Curriculum Template). Emily described PB as "special" because it trained teachers to be leaders or master teachers:

We're special. We're training teachers to go back and be leaders or master teachers, or for training student teachers to go out into the classroom. So we're working primarily with methods instructors, master teachers and university supervisors. So our goals and objectives

simply is that those people will feel prepared to do an excellent job getting student teachers ready to be in the classroom. That's our main goal (7/10/2013).

However, only 12 participants, including teachers, administrators, and teacher educators from Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and Turkish languages, applied and completed the program (Program Final Report, 9/24/2013). Meanwhile a number of the teacher participants didn't meet the requirements and possess insufficient experience and knowledge in foreign language teaching, which resulted in a modification of the program content and schedule changes. Regarding the participants' background, Emily stated that:

It was interesting because the people who were in our group, some of them should not have been in our particular strand. They did not actually fit the definition of what, of the people who were supposed to apply for it. For example, there was someone who had just literally graduated and just got their credential. And that person didn't, should not have been in the program. He was a really, really nice person and I loved, I'm so glad I got to know him but he, he shouldn't've been in the program. So we had a few people like that, so we had to adjust our teaching and strategies as we went, kind of on a daily basis and meet the needs of the people in the program (Interview, 7/30/2013).

It is clear that some of the participants who attended PB were not experienced teachers as proposed in the original plan that was to recruit instructional supervisor, methods course instructor, and master teachers to work collaboratively as a team. The

unexpected diverse population of participants, and especially the group of new teachers who just graduated from college and obtained their teaching credentials, made it difficult for Emily and other instructors in PB to deliver the content and instruction as in their original proposal.



## 2013 Teacher Program Curriculum Template

For step-by-step help in completing this document, please see the accompanying guide.

Basic Program Information			
Host Institution:	[REDACTED]		
Program Title:	Professional Development for Cooperating/Master Teachers of World Languages and Cultures		
Language(s):	Any STARTALK World Language	University Credit:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes ___ No
Program Setting:	Residential:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes ___ No	Distance/Online Component:
	Other (please specify):		
Duration:	Weeks/Days:	6 days	Contact Hours: 40
Curriculum Designed By:	[REDACTED]		
E-mail:	[REDACTED]		

### Program Overview and Theme

In a paragraph, provide a brief overview of your program. Who will your participants be? What will participants experience during the program? What do you hope your participants can do after the program ends?

This program is designed to support Cooperating Teachers, Methods Instructors and University Supervisors in planning an integrated teacher preparation experience for future World Language educators. The overall goal is to prepare a cadre of educators capable of increasing the competence of language learners who are able to speak and interact in culturally appropriate ways with native speakers of the critical languages supported by STARTALK. During the program, teachers will engage in research-based activities that are currently known to best prepare teachers to teach 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. The program parallels on a smaller scale, a teacher preparation program and what each of the stakeholders in such a teacher preparation program need to know and be able to do in order to prepare and support teacher candidates to meet the current goals of the World Language teaching profession. At the end of the program, the expectation is that each team or individual will have a roadmap informed by what they have learned that will either create or transform their teacher preparation program. Due to the fact that the participants come from different states and teacher learning/preparation contexts and language communities, the goals for each group vary, but the program is designed to have each group leave with the knowledge, skills and concrete plans to either reinvigorate their existing teacher preparation programs or to create new pathways for teacher certification that will increase the number of certified teachers in the STARTALK priority languages.

Figure 12 PB Curriculum Template

PB was a six-day/40-instructional hour residential program held from July 19<sup>th</sup> to July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013. This professional development program focused on: 1) Acquiring knowledge on such topics as teacher preparation standards, certification requirements,

Second Language Acquisition theory, performance-based assessment, cultural backgrounds and differences, and coaching techniques; 2) Discussing best practices for teaching languages and cultures and how to best impart these to new teachers in the field; 3) Role playing and modeling best practices in both teaching and supporting student teachers, including peer and cognitive coaching and framing and providing effective feedback; 4) Analyzing effective teaching strategies in video and other multimedia segments such as those developed by STARTALK; 5) Networking and exploring different dimensions of professional learning communities; 6) Preparing model lessons to share with their student teachers that exemplify best practices in all three communicative modes: interpretive, interpersonal and presentational, 7) Reflecting on their roles as teachers of language and culture as well as cooperating/master teachers. As described in Chapter Five, the instructional team employed the Wiki as an online platform communication and collaboration, with the goals of creating a professional learning community where participants could continue to share and support each other after the summer program ended (See *Figure 6.1 PB Curriculum Template*).

As for the classroom style in PB, Emily described it to be an interactive conversation, which was different from a typical lecture:

In order to accomplish that, we use a typical, what for us, what is a typical classroom style which I wouldn't call it a lecture. It's not a lecture. It's more of an interactive conversation with our, with our students. We have information to share with them or ideas to share with them. We engage them in activities so they have to think and

process and create the ideas that they're going to then turn around and use with their, with their teacher candidates or student teachers. So they have to talk to each other, they talk to, write things down. They have to work in groups. They do projects. And there's listening involved, too, because you can't, they can't do anything without imparting information and so you have to talk about it. We put information on PowerPoint. So PowerPoint and Prezi those two things are the main way of putting information so that everybody can look at it (Interview, 7/10/2013).

Emily stressed the importance of teacher participants' ongoing conversation in PB. She explained how PB was set up and how the content was delivered in details, and further identified the overall program as an interactive conversation to engage participants by using many activities and technologies, including social media like the Wiki and other technology tools like PowerPoint and Prezi.

PB was also unique in that it was an intensive residential program embedded in the local Annual Summer Seminar for Language Teachers in a major state in the western United States. As one of the eight strands, PB's Wiki and Twitter activity were all documented in the overall Seminar's Wiki. Participants in PB also joined general sessions in the Seminar. This thoughtful collaboration offered all participants in PB an opportunity to communicate and interact with other local foreign language teachers. Same with Dawn, there was no required participation or assignment that teacher participants needed to complete when they were taught by Emily. Next, I

describe Emily's educational background and teaching experiences as a foreign language teacher and teacher educator.

*Emily's Educational Background and Teaching Experiences*

Emily is a White female in mid 40s who was born in Ohio, the United States (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). She got her Bachelor of Science degree with majors in Spanish and American Studies at a university close to her birthplace. With her interest in being a foreign language teacher, she continued her study and earned a Master of Education degree at a university in the western United States in August 1995. Emily also obtained a Master of Arts degree in Educational Administration at another university in the western United States in August 2005 (Emily's Resume, p. 1). As a Spanish teacher for over 20 years, Emily taught in various K-12 school settings. From August 1988 to June 1996, Emily taught at an elementary school in a major state in the western United States. From September 1997 to June 1998, she taught at a high school in the same area. Switched to another high school in the same state in 2003, she continued her teaching career as a Spanish teacher until present. As a foreign language teacher, Emily earned many teaching credentials, including: Clear Single Subject Teaching Credential –Spanish (expire in 2018), Clear Multiple Subject Teaching Credential (expire in 2018), Clear Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development Certificate (no expiration), and National Board Certified Teacher, Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/World Languages Other than English (expire in 2015). As an experienced classroom Spanish teacher, Emily described several keywords in her teaching philosophy as student centered, standard-based, experiential learning, and educational technology:

I am a Spanish teacher who cares about her students and their achievement. I plan standards-aligned lessons that include experiential learning and that are engaging and geared to my students' interest and abilities. I participate in extra-curricular activities with my students. I am highly engaged in professional development activities, both as a teacher leader/mentor and a lifelong learner. My educational technology skills are up to date. I positively contribute to my school community through active participation on committees (Emily's Resume, p. 1).

Her resume clearly showed that Emily valued the importance of standards-based lesson plans and experiential learning in teaching Spanish. She also declared that she had concurrent technology skills that could facilitate her teaching. It was also worth noting how she believed that she was proficient in using technology in her teaching practice with the continuous professional development she had. For the importance of learning a foreign language, Emily thought that foreign language learning was imperative for all students in the United States.

I think it's absolutely imperative that all students learn a language to a level that's possible for them in our educational system. I don't think they really have enough time to learn it in the current system that we have cuz it's, you know, they don't start, the majority of them don't start until middle school or high school. But I think that everybody at least needs start learning one. Everybody needs to start learning one. Because it's just part, in my opinion, it's just part of a full education.

There's a lot of reasons but it's just part of, it's like learning math or learning to read. It's just part of what an educated person is, knowing another language. There are many other reasons as well. Another reason is because why do you need to learn math? Why do you need to learn to read? It's because those are skills you need to be successful in the world. Well, you need the language at this point because the world is a small place and we need to be able to work with other people, get along, especially get along with other people, understand other people and you can't understand other people if you don't understand their language. You don't understand how people think if you don't understand their language. So to me, it's just part of an education, a full education is learning another language (Interview, 7/10/2013).

Throughout her interviews, Emily's dedication to foreign language teaching, intensive experiences and work with both elementary and secondary, and a passion toward teaching foreign language were always notable and impressive. Emily advocated that foreign language learning needed to be included as part of the full education system where every individual would learn at least one foreign language. To her, learning a foreign language was just as important as learning math and reading because an educated person needed the ability of understanding other people and culture by learning their language.

Emily was also involved in foreign language teacher education as a leader, supervisor, and instructor for many years. She was hired by a major university in the western United States as a supervisor and methods course instructor from September

1996 to March 2005. In addition, she worked as the Director of a local Area Foreign Language Program at the same university where she taught method courses from October 1998 to July 2006. She actively participated in many educational affiliations and teacher training programs, such as Foreign Language Association of [the local] County, [State] Language Teachers Association, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, [State] World Language Project, [University] World Language Program, [State] Teacher's Association (Emily's Resume, p. 2). In her first interview, Emily emphasized her contribution to the foreign language teacher education in her local area, which was a major part of her career:

Over the course of my career, I live near [University title] so I've worked with, I've been working for the [University] Teacher Education program for 15 years, I think. Every year, I do something for them. It just depends what they need. I've taught methods for them. I've taught their methods course. I have been the university supervisor where I go out with their student teachers. I've been a master teacher. I've helped them develop rubrics. I mean, every single year, they call me and say, hey, could you do something. I do whatever they ask me to do. So yes, I am involved in teacher education. I also teach professional development to teachers through the [University] World Language Program and I've done that, I've done that for 20 years (7/10/2013).

From the above excerpt, Emily verified that she had participated in the foreign language teacher education program in the University, including offering professional development and teaching methods course. Using her own experiences as a master teacher of Spanish, Emily shared valuable knowledge and expertise in both foreign language teaching and teacher education. She further explained her motivation of being a foreign teacher educator:

The motivation for me, the money they pay me to do this is not very much. It's a very small amount of money compared to what I do but the motivation is really, I think, helping people and feeling like I have some expertise that I can share with people and when I look at the faces of the people I'm working with and I see the light bulb go off, just like with the students, it's the same thing. It just makes me feel very happy because in my heart, I'm a teacher. Oh, and there's another reason, too...it keeps me fully abreast of what's happening. Because it's what I do, I have to read, I have to know, I have to learn, I have to grow. I have to continually understand what the research is so it keeps me growing as a professional educator as well. So that's another reason, cause I feel like to stay on top of my game, I have to continually learn. With a language, you have to continually learn and grow (Interview, 7/10/2013).

Emily believed that being a foreign language teacher educator offered her opportunities to share what she learned and knew about teaching foreign language with other teachers. Moreover, she thought this was helpful for herself to learn new

skills, teaching strategies, and content knowledge based on current research, which in turn, enabled her to be a better classroom foreign language teacher by connecting research and teaching practice. To Emily, it was the continuous learning and sharing of new knowledge in foreign language teaching and learning that made her enthusiastic about foreign language teaching and teacher education.

As for her experience with STARTALK program, Emily had been both a participant for one year and instructor for over five years (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). She specifically explained how she was involved in the World Language program at the state where she worked, in which STARTALK teacher program was embedded. In 2013 STARTALK teacher program, Emily was one of the four instructors who led PB. As described in Chapter Five, PB was one of the eight strands of the State Annual Seminar for language teachers. Although Emily was not the lead instructor in PB, she had taught many sessions according to PB's program agenda (PB Agenda). For Emily, I was able to conduct three online observations with one on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> 2013. Next, a brief explanation of Emily's beliefs system about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education is presented.

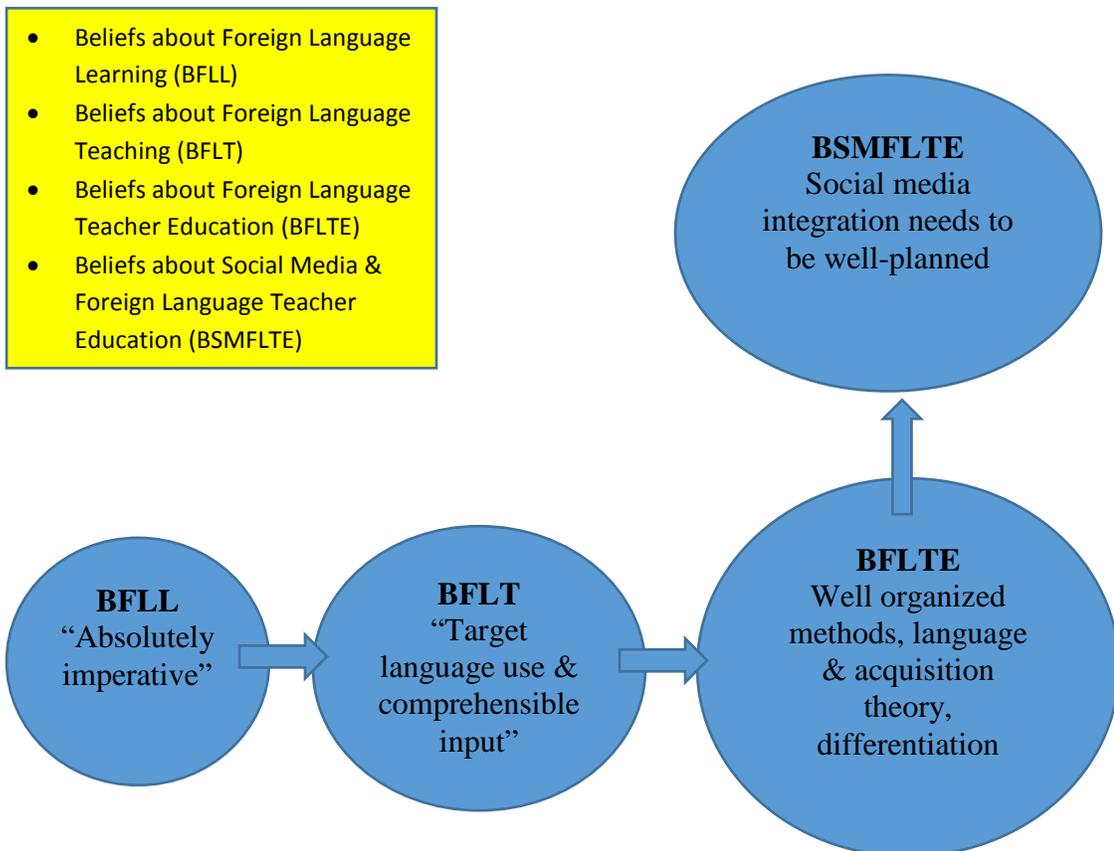
*Emily's Belief System about Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education*

*Figure 6.2* (Emily's belief system about social media and foreign language teacher education) below explains the relationship between Emily's four different categories of beliefs about foreign language learning, foreign language teaching, foreign language teacher education, and the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. In general, Emily viewed the integration of social media

and foreign language teacher education as inevitable and thus took a positive attitude to accept and explore its potential in foreign language teacher education. Although she identified many challenges, Emily believed that social media would be effective when being implemented with detailed plans and meaningful purposes.

Emily's beliefs about the value of social media and other technology in foreign language education were also obvious in her online questionnaire. She also claimed that she was at a relatively high level of proficiency in using social media for personal and teaching purposes. For personal uses, Emily perceived herself "highly proficient" in using email and internet research, "somewhat proficient" in social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), Blogs, and digital media (e.g., YouTube), and "not very proficient" in graphic design (e.g., animation) and web design and development (e.g., HTML) (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). In addition, she claimed that she used Facebook "several times a day" and Blog "every few weeks" (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013), which was considerably a middle to high frequency of using social media. Besides personal uses, she also used social media for professional, recreational, educational, and informational purposes (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013), which showed that she was familiar with social media for various uses. In regard with the integration of social media and STARTALK teacher program, she stated that she was "highly proficient" in using internet research and email; "somewhat proficient" in social networking sites and digital media; "very basic proficiency" in web design and development; "not very proficient" in using Blogs and graphic design (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013).

How Emily used social media in her teacher-training program was really noticeable. When she was asked how often she accessed/used social media in teaching language courses in the STARTALK program, Emily reported “3-5 days a week” for Facebook, and “less often” for Blog, and “never” for Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, and Tumblr (Online Questionnaire, 7/3/2013). This was in line with her relatively high proficiency level of using social media for personal purposes. All of these evidences suggested Emily believed in the integration of social media and foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education. However, it was worth noticing that even though the Wiki and Twitter was officially used in PB, Emily answered with “never” used Twitter regardless of purposes and didn’t mention the Wiki. In the following sections, I analyze all the data from Emily and present the emerging theme and sub-themes.



*Figure 13* Emily's belief system about social media and foreign language teacher education

Emily's beliefs about foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education were closely related and showed a logical relationship with her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Emily claimed that learning a foreign language was imperative in the United States because she believed that an educated person in today's world needed to learn at least a foreign language to better understand other people's culture. Therefore, to better teach a foreign language, Emily found that using the target language to teach and making language comprehensible were effective based on her experiences of learning Spanish and Chinese as foreign languages. Emily stood against the "paper and drill" way of teaching because it lacked real life connection and meaningful purposes. Instead, she advocated an approach that emphasized comprehensible communication and interaction in teaching a foreign language. Because she considered foreign language teaching as a profession that was more difficult than other content area teaching, Emily embraced a comprehensive and well-designed approach for foreign language teacher education with the requirement of a variety of knowledge including language acquisition theory, teaching methods, and target language knowledge (e.g., grammar). Emily's beliefs about the importance of foreign language teaching led to her focus on the comprehensible input and target language use in foreign language teaching, and then resulted in her emphasis on the well-designed foreign language teacher education.

Emily posited that a foreign language teacher education needed to include many components such as content knowledge about the target language, methods of teaching a foreign language, language acquisition theory, and learners' differences.

There's a lot of special training that we have to have. We absolutely have to know our language. We have to know everything about our language, you know, the grammar, the vocabulary... there's so much about our language we have, you have to know. Doesn't mean you have to be a native speaker but you have to be very good at it. You have to know language methodology, how to teach a language. You absolutely have to know how to teach a language so that second language acquisition, all that kind of stuff. Then you have to understand your learner. You have to know who the student is. It's different to teach language to a 5 year old than it is to teach language to a 17 year old. Completely, it's a whole different animal. So you have to understand your learner and then you have to be prepared to do that all day long, speaking the language. So there's, there's a ton of stuff you have to know to be able to do this well. And it's equal. You can't, it's not just knowing the content. It's not just knowing the language. It's also equal, knowing teaching methodology. So you have to know all those things (Interview, 7/10/2013).

Emily thought foreign language teachers must be well prepared and equipped with the necessary knowledge regarding foreign language teaching methods and instructional strategies. It is also because of this idea, Emily believed that the integration of social

media and foreign language teacher education must be well-planned with meaningful purposes. Although social media kept changing, it served as a role of being an important part of the teaching methods and learning strategies. Emily was passionate toward the integration of social media in foreign language education, however this integration must be carefully planned to tie in the systematic delivery of teaching methods. If social media was used only because people thought it's a good idea rather than having a real purpose and careful plan, it would not render positive results.

*Social Media Needs to be Planned and Integrated Purposefully with Foreign Language Teacher Education*

Emily defined social media as closely related to the use of technology with a focus on facilitating communication and interaction among people.

To me, social media is the use of technology in such a way that people can interact with one another regardless of whether they are next to each other. Regardless of whether they're physically together in the same space. Technology has changed our world so that we don't have to physically be together in the same space in order to interact. And to see, to talk, to type, to simply exchange information, very personal information with someone regardless of whether they're next to us (Interview, 7/10/2013).

Emily defined that social media was a kind of technology that served as reducing the physical distance among people. She also clearly stressed one of the key features of social media and stated it was for people to exchange information. In her mind, social

media could be beneficial to human interaction by allowing individual to communicate regardless of their physical location.

I personally use Facebook. I don't use Twitter. I started using it and I didn't see a reason to use it in my own self, in my own life. I mean, I understand what it is but to me, so far, I haven't seen a reason. But to be fair, at first I didn't see the reason why I would use Facebook and one of my student teachers talked to me, explained it and then now I use it everyday. So Twitter might be coming down my path, too  
(Interview, 7/10/2013).

Emily showed a welcoming attitude toward social media and she felt that she need to use social media (Facebook) when she found the meaningful purposes of using it. Providing the example of Facebook, she demonstrated that she was an open-minded foreign language teacher and teacher educator who was willing to learn new skills and knowledge to make her teaching better. This kind of belief played an important role in forming her strong beliefs in the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

Moreover, Emily believed in the value of social media in foreign language education because both social media and foreign language education relied heavily upon thoughtful plan and implementation. She further emphasized that the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education would be effective because social media enhanced communication, and thus, made real life purpose of using it in training foreign language teachers.

Because it's absolutely effective because language is about communication and social media is about communication. So in that regard, I think it's very, using communication, it's a real world purpose for what you're doing (Interview, 7/30/2013).

Emily also indicated that it was her own belief of foreign language teaching and learning that shaped her own acknowledgment of social media, not the vice versa. When she was asked whether the use of social media changed her teaching philosophy, Emily specifically pointed out her teaching philosophy had been well set up already and social media was one of the tools that could help her achieve teaching goals:

I don't think so because I, I feel that I already look at teaching as the way... education to me is the great equalizer. I've always, I've always felt that you can change your circumstances by working hard and by learning and deciding what you wanna do with your life and education is the key to that. And social media, to me, is just one of those things that as soon as you see it, you go oh, well, that's, that contributes to this idea of equalizing. So if you know how to use social media, it's one of those, it's just part of your education. So I mean, I didn't have that realization here. I think I sort of already had the realization...I already had looked at it and said, oh, this is part of what you would need to have (Interview, 7/30/2013).

It was obvious that Emily didn't think social media changed her teaching philosophy, which was also supported by the interviews and online observations that are discussed

in the following sections. To her, social media was only a necessary part that she needed to learn and master in order to better teach her K-12 students, which needed to be planned carefully and purposefully before integrating into foreign language teacher education.

#### The Wiki was Well-planned and Integrated as a Resource Center

As discussed in Chapter Five, Dawn's case, the Wiki was incorporated in PB under a detailed planning and organization. The four instructors of PB set up the Wiki as a virtual space to organize the entire program. All the reading materials, PowerPoint slides, assignments, and tasks were uploaded onto the Wiki. *Figure 6.3* below showed the Navigation Panel of PB's Wiki. The left hand side panel circled in red color was the navigation panel, where participants could find: 1) "Home" page which listed the instructors' information and the basic goals of PB; 2) the "Agendas" for each day; 3) all topics that were covered in PB, such as "The Teaching Profession", "21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills & Common Core", "Standards & Objectives", "Credentialing", "Observation Guidelines", "Coaching Skills", "Instructional Strategies", "Support for Student Teachers"; 4) "Other Resources" and "Articles of Interest" which provided supplementary reading materials and research articles, and links to various online resources; and 5) "Activities" which consisted of PowerPoint Slides and core information that were designed for participants to learn on each day (see *Figure 6.3* PB Navigation Panel).

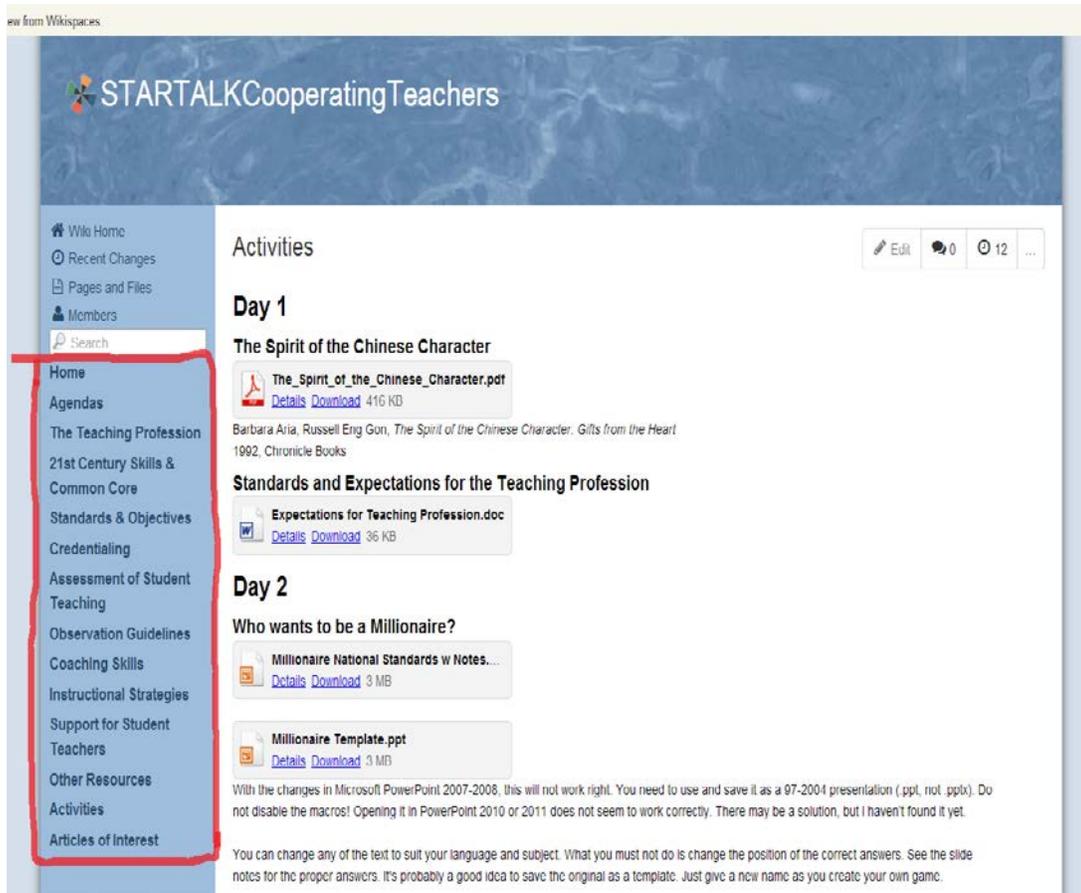


Figure 14 PB Wiki Navigation Panel

The Wiki was organized in a way that participants could easily find the relevant information based on each individual topic. Emily also confirmed how she and other instructors used the Wiki in her interview:

We put everything in a wiki site so that it can be accessible to them before, during and after the program. The wiki space in a way is social media because they are, they have editing privileges on it. They can add things and put things up there and they tend to put their little, like little things, they make a handout or something like that. We encourage them to put that right up on the Wikispace so everybody can share it. So it's sort of built into, built into it... The fact that they can

get to the information 24/7 from, you know, before, during and after and the fact that they can contribute to it so that they're, their ideas and their thoughts, their creations are just as important as ours are at least in the sense of they're all in one place where all of us can get to them. And even the world could get to it. I think, I'm not sure if it's public or not because I'm not the original author of it and I don't remember. And we, I don't even know if we've ever talked about whether or not we wanna make it entirely public. But I know that at least people in our group can get to it (7/10/2013).

The above excerpt was from the interview conducted before PB started. It must be noted that Emily explicitly pointed out the nature of the Wiki as a social media. She stated that the Wiki in PB allowed teacher participants to "edit" the content and uploaded things they thought would be helpful to the program. She elaborated the whole process of co-editing by the instructors and teacher participants and apparently valued teacher participants' input because it's "as important as" the instructors' input. In her opinion, social media would only be beneficial when integrated in foreign language teacher education through meaningful communication and interaction which allowed participants to co-construct the knowledge and share what they learned. Another important feature that Emily pointed out was that social media could grant instantaneous access to the information on the Wiki. After carefully setting everything up in the Wiki, participants, even the general public around the world, could access the information.

Although Emily was excited about using the Wiki as a social media before the program started, she didn't think the Wiki was used as it was originally proposed. In the second interview after the program, Emily was asked about how they used the Wiki, she only mentioned the resource sharing feature:

We used the Wikispace, first of all, and we used that to organize materials and put, I don't know how you call it, put the resources so people can get to them later if they want to. Organizationally, the Wiki space is... we have to have that. We have to have something. If it's not wiki space, we need Blackboard or we need something that's interactive that way. So that, that was indispensable and for organization. We don't, we don't collect written assignments from them. So the syllabus was on the wiki, the instruction was organized on the wiki and actually were able to reorganize ourselves based on the learner needs but I don't know that social media contributed to that. It was more just, it was a tool. It's really the tool for organization for us, in our case (7/30/2013).

Apparently Emily thought other tools such as Blackboard that has the same kind of organization function could replace their use of the Wiki. Similar to Dawn's perception, Emily pointed out the fact that they only used the Wiki as a resource sharing center, not an open discussion forum that participants would contribute to the knowledge building and sharing. Emily further explained that although the Wiki was just a tool to organize information and materials, it was still essential to all instructors and participants of PB. Also, she specifically questioned the specific use of the Wiki

in PB as a social media integration, because she believed that communication and collaboration were two important components for any technology to be qualified for social media integration in foreign language teacher education.

#### Twitter is Useful When Integrated into Foreign Language Teacher Education with Meaningful Purpose

Twitter was another social media that PB implemented as part of the requirement by the overall State Annual Summer Seminar. Emily explained the reasons behind the selection of Twitter in her second interview by claiming “not just our STARTALK but the whole entire overarching staff wanted to use Twitter so we all started using Twitter” (7/30/2013). Emily seemed to be one of these staff members who wanted Twitter in the program. She actually tried to incorporate Twitter in her classroom instruction with a specific plan with other activities. My classroom observation on Emily’s class provides a snapshot how she used Twitter as part of her instruction.

July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013. I observed Emily’s class at around 1:20pm Eastern time. Emily used her cellphone to Skype with me so that I can see her closely. The topic for today’s class was linking Common Core Standards with teacher credentialing and what teacher candidates need to know and do. The goals of this class was to brainstorm what teacher candidates need to know and be able to do based on Common Core Standards and draft a plan to solve the problem.

After every participant sat down on their seats, Emily began the lesson by first showing her first slide of the PPT. “Essential Question: What

do Support Professionals need to know about the state of foreign language teacher preparation and standards in order to adequately support credential candidates? ” Pulling up her Twitter account on the screen that connected to her laptop using a projector, Emily encouraged participants to tweet a short answer to the above question after class. One teacher participant tweeted “Startalk teachers working many states standards!” and another one tweeted “STARTALK teachers working mega standards from multiple states!” (See *Figure 6.4* Tweet about Standards) In the meanwhile, Emily also explained to the participants about possible risks of using Twitter including presenting personal ideas in the public virtual space that could be seen by people all around the world. She suggested that participants who didn’t want others to identify them on Twitter could create a fake account using unidentifiable Twitter user name and email account. Clearly she had concerns about participants’ privacy when using Twitter.



*Figure 15* Tweet about Standards

After Using QR code to [QR code is a type of matrix barcode (or two-dimensional barcode). Usually used via mobile devices to scan, displaying the code and converting it to some useful form, such as a standard URL for a website] link the previous documents, participants could use their smartphone or mobile devices to access and download the documents. She further made the connection between the QR code and teaching foreign language in classroom by providing examples of her students' use of QR code and

related apps on mobile devices. Next, Emily changed to the second slide with two sets of questions on it “If you are or were a K-12 teacher, what were the most important parts of your teacher preparation program? How did you get credentialed?” and “If you have never been a K-12 teacher, what made you decide to go into education as a career, but NOT into the classroom, what was the process?” Emily then asked teacher participants to respond to these questions by writing down their ideas on sticky notes. She spent 7 minutes to do this activity and teacher participants were required to write only one thing per sticky note. She constantly checked for comprehension of all participants by asking whether they understood what they were supposed to do (Observation Notes, 7/21/2013).

In this class, Emily started her class by integrating many technologies such as PowerPoint, QR code, and Twitter. She first introduced the major goal of the class and then checked participants’ prior knowledge by asking them to tweet brief answers using their Twitter account. In order for the teacher participants to all be able to use Twitter, Emily demonstrated and modeled the process of having a Twitter account, how to Tweet, and how to protect privacy. This modeling process demonstrated Emily’s familiarity with Twitter. By Tweeting the short answers to the questions, all teacher participants’ answer were instantly presented to everyone involved in this classroom instruction as well as other instructor in the program. As seen in *Figure 4*, teacher participants were actively involved in the Twitter activity and sharing their ideas. The instructors could assess everyone’s background knowledge quickly and

build their instruction on the basis of that. This integration of Twitter with foreign language teacher education was effective because it was well-planned and took into account the “brief sharing” feature of Twitter and successfully contributed to the exchange of thoughts. With a meaningful goal, Emily advocated the successful use of a social media that could benefit foreign language teachers’ learning. After tweeting brief ideas, Emily made participants write as many ideas as possible for specific questions. Comparing the brief sharing using Twitter and the relatively lengthier sharing with sticky notes, Emily demonstrated how different kinds of tools could be used for different purposes. When swift and brief messages were needed, Twitter could be a good choice. When a longer drafting process was involved and a more well-written text was needed, traditional paper style still had its role.

Although Emily tried to incorporate Twitter in her classroom instruction, she was still struggling with the real purpose of using this social media in foreign language education, as she stated, “honestly, I still don’t see a good reason to use Twitter” (Interview, 7/30/2013). She definitely believed that Twitter could be used by foreign language teachers in K-12 schools and stated it could be helpful for students to learn about culture. However this was different from the purpose why Twitter was used in PB:

And when I said I’m not sure about Twitter, so one day, I actually thought of how I’ll start using Twitter with my students and that is, this is a different purpose than what they asked for us but I’m gonna ask them to look for examples of culture that they find when they’re out and they’re just, their meanderings in the world and tweet it to

everybody. So to me, that seems like a useful purpose for it. So that was my own result of having, being required to learn how to use Twitter (Interview, 7/30/2013).

In PB, teacher participants used Twitter to tweet what they had learned and what they thought about the topics that were being discussed in the class. As passionate as Emily was for social media, she didn't seem being supportive of this use because it was not "fun". According to Emily, being fun was an important feature of social media, as she described:

I think it was fun for people to, people who did tweet, I think it was fun for them. So there's that aspect. You wanna make learning fun and participation fun. They can see, and they could see uses beyond what they were doing at that moment. They could see uses, there's a benefit to them because they can see, oh, I can take this back to my classroom (Interview, 7/30/2013).

When K-12 students were tweeting their understandings of other culture, Emily considered it fun because they could communicate with peers and the entire world and keep learning something new and exciting about the target culture. On the contrary, in PB program, teacher participants were just asked to share what they had discussed in the classroom and they knew that not many people (probably nobody outside of the program) would actually read their tweets. Emily believed that teacher participants would not "take back" the use of social media to their classroom if they didn't see the real meaning and pleasure of doing it. Allowing participants to see the

meaningful purpose of using Twitter, in Emily's opinion, was the best way to integrate it into foreign language teacher education.

It must be noted that Emily spent a big chunk of her time in introducing and demonstrating the use of QR code. Abbreviated from Quick Response Code, QR code is the trademark for a type of matrix barcode (or two-dimensional barcode) first designed for the automotive industry in Japan. Originally designed for industrial uses, QR codes have become common in consumer advertising. Typically, a mobile device (e.g. tablet, smartphone) is used as a QR code scanner, displaying the code and converting it to some useful form, such as a standard URL for a website, thereby obviating the need for a user to type it into a web browser (Denso ADC, 2011).

Scan this QR code to get right to the wiki.

OR go to:

<http://startalkcooperatingteachers.wikispaces.com/home>



*Figure 16* Emily's QR Code

Emily focused on guiding teacher participants to use QR code (See *Figure 6.5* Emily's QR Code) and instantly access the ongoing discussion on Twitter. QR code itself is not a social media. However by using it, teacher participants could easily participate in the Twitter discussion, obtain any meaningful information, and establish connections between their personal electronic devices (or any electronic device that could scan a QR code) with the discussion feature in PB's Wiki. Emily's work on QR code further confirmed her in-depth understanding about the functions and careful planning for the actual use of social media. More importantly, the fact she spent time modeling using QR code, a feature that not all social media users employ, shed light

on how passionate and well-planned she was in integrating social media in foreign language education. By clearly making the connections between Twitter, QR code, Wiki, and sticky note activity, Emily demonstrated her expertise in planning and delivering instructions from which her beliefs in purposeful integration of social media and foreign language teacher education could clearly be seen.

Answer Garden is an Exciting Social Media When Designed Thoughtfully with Foreign Language Teacher Education

Besides the Wiki and Twitter, Emily discovered and introduced another social media, Answer Garden (see *Figure 6.6* Answer Garden Website). She specifically mentioned the Answer Garden and described how she used it in her second interview:

I don't know if you would consider my use of Answer Garden to be social media or not but I decided to use that. It was something I had learned a couple weeks ago and I decided to put it up there because I wanted to show people something that they could use in their class if they wanted to. Answer Garden, it's... Answer Garden is where you ask people, you set up a query and they write their answers and then it all gets displayed, for the class to see what everyone's thinking. So I guess that's a way, it's kind of a social media. I used that [Answer Garden], after the first day, I hadn't originally intended to use it but after the first day, I would tell that I have some, like limited English speakers in the group and I also had some people who don't share out verbally. It is not, some of it was because of their limited English and some of it was because of their personality, they're timid people. And

so I wanted to give them the opportunity to say something that everybody could see. I also, it was a way for me to check for understanding, to find out where everybody was. And it was also a hook into the lesson, going into it. So I had three reasons for using it. And it went over well. In addition to the use that I wanted them to be able to see something they could use in their own teaching (7/30/2013).

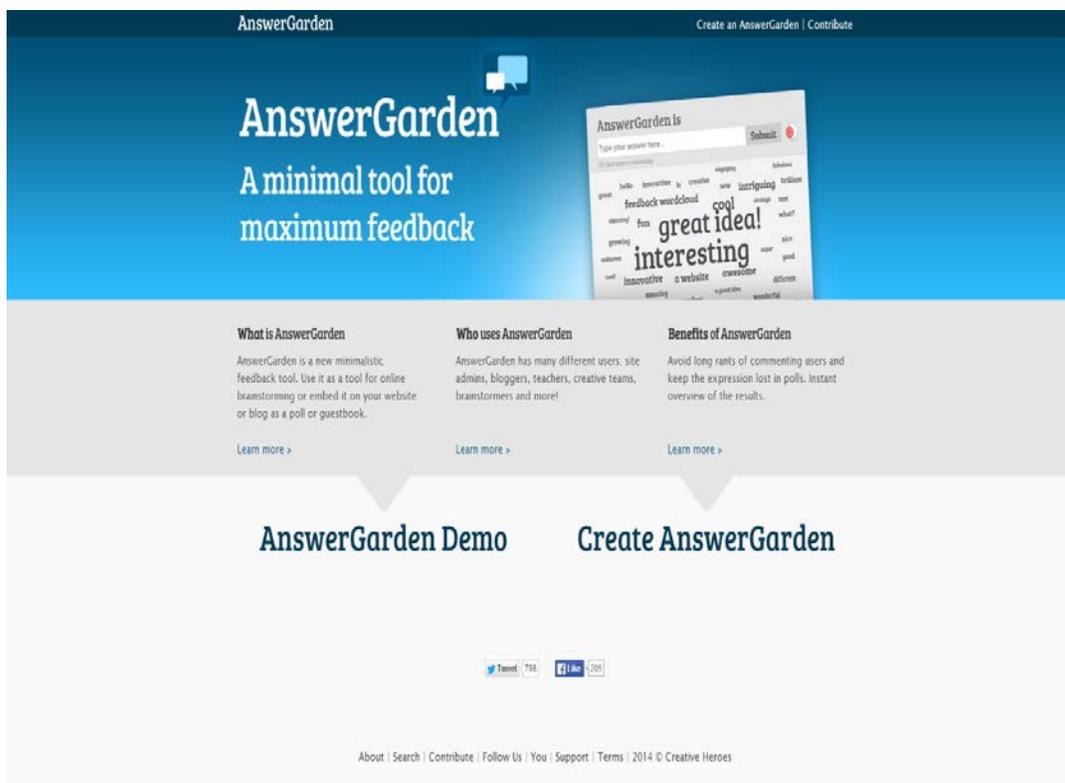


Figure 17 Answer Garden Website

Although Emily didn't use Answer Garden when I was observing, the excerpt above demonstrated why and how she used it: 1) teacher participants would post their thoughts and responses in a low-anxiety virtual community, 2) the instructor could check every participant's learning any time; 3) the question/answer pattern would

engage students and get them interested in the lessons. With the meaningful integration, Emily introduced Answer Garden as an online educational tool that teacher participants could use to ask questions and collect student's answers, to generate interactions within teacher participants. Because some teacher participants were not verbally active in the discussion due to English proficiency, Emily specifically designed and implemented Answer Garden to elicit participants' conversation and communication in the written format.

With her own goals of using the Answer Garden, Emily also wanted her teacher participants to find this social media to be helpful and use it in their own classroom teaching. The use of Answer Garden is not just a tool in her instruction, but also part of the content in her foreign language education:

We explicitly, for example, I explicitly refer to Answer Garden after I did it, after I showed them, I said, can you see how you would use this in your classes. They could immediately see uses for their classroom about it. So they were excited about that (Interview, 7/30/2013).

As she planned, Emily believed the Answer Garden activity went well and she was particularly content with teacher participants' actual participation. As she perceived, if well planned, social media could definitely facilitate foreign language education. Admittedly, even after the careful planning, the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education still faces many challenges. Emily identified some challenges that could hinder the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, which are described below.

## Challenges of Integrating Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education

Recognizing the benefits of social media in enhancing communication, Emily also expressed her concerns about using social media in foreign language teacher education. One of the biggest challenges that Emily identified was the different degree of acceptance for social media from K-12 students and teacher participants, which could result in different effects in a foreign language education program and a foreign language classroom. Sometimes using a social media effectively in training foreign language teachers doesn't lead to the same success in teaching foreign language to K-12 students. Using her own experience as an example, Emily explained how reluctant her students were to use Facebook in learning foreign language (Spanish).

I do in some ways but I think I use it indirectly. I think that the, I think really the way I use, for example, Facebook is I'm friends with a lot of my professional development colleagues around the country and we share ideas on Facebook. Indirectly, I think I'm using it for teaching because then I take that back and use it in the classroom. And then I've tried really hard with the students to set up Facebook groups for the clubs I advise, groups, things like that. It's interesting how reluctant they are to do that. They have to become friends...you know, I haven't figured out a way, you have to become friends with them to make a group and then they don't wanna be friends with me and I don't want them to be friends with me either until they graduate. So that has not been successful (Interview, 7/10/2013).

As a teacher educator in PB, Emily constantly tried to think from a foreign language teacher's perspective. When she was a teacher participant in a training program, the use of Facebook was successful. However it was a completely different story in a K-12 classroom. Emily specifically addressed the fact that her K-12 students didn't want to be "friends" with her in the Facebook group she set up for her class. Students' resistance to use social media (Facebook) might be caused by several reasons, such as 1) they didn't find the adoption of social media helpful in foreign language learning; 2) they didn't want to share information especially private comments or concerns with their teacher in social media; or 3) they didn't want to share their opinions and ideas with their peers. Emily, as a teacher, didn't want to be "friends" with her students either.

Emily also found a certain level of resistance or indifferent attitude towards the integration of social media from participants in PB. According to Emily, some older participants in PB were having difficulty when learning how to use social media.

The only challenge was, you know, some people are not interested in it. They're not, they don't see a reason for it. A lot of times, it correlates to their age and I don't, and I don't want you to think that that's what I think about all the time, it's just something that I've noticed. Like I don't think old people don't use social media. I can tell you a whole bunch of people who do and I don't think all the young people use social media cuz I can show you a number of examples of people who don't. But I can say that in this particular group, with

these particular people, a couple of people who were not interested or couldn't figure it out and they just happened to be older. Like in their 60s, so you know, whatever (Interview, 7/30/2013).

Although she didn't believe age was an important factor in determining the proficiency level and frequency of using social media, it turned out that participants who were reluctant to use social media in PB were the older ones. For these old ones, they sometimes possessed relatively less knowledge about social media, which created more challenges. Emily further explained that she had to explicitly demonstrate how to use certain social media due to the fact that some older participants needed a step-by-step guidance even though it was not part of the instructional goal of PB.

It wasn't one of our explicit goals so not explicitly teach them how to do it. We provided them with ideas but people, like we didn't teach how to use wiki spaces. We used, they got taught how to use Twitter but, and I had to help some people with that, during class time, it was an aside. So yeah, they learned how to use Twitter. Answer Garden, I sort of walked them through it a little bit but I don't know that. So those three things, like I said, the wiki space, if they wanted to create their own, they would just have to go and figure it out. We didn't, we did not take time to teach them how to do that (Interview, 7/30/2013).

Besides the unexpected explicit instruction that she had to offer, Emily also showed concerns about the future use of social media among PB participants. In her second interview, she claimed that she was not sure whether this particular group would

“continue to talk with one another” after the program ended, because “there’s a big age range and I’m not, just not sure if people are interested in that” (7/30/2013).

Being an experienced Spanish teacher for many years, Emily clearly saw the challenge for being a foreign language teacher because of the required knowledge to teach everything in another language.

I think we have a harder job than most teachers because we have to do everything a regular teacher does. We have to know all the bag of tricks, have to know all the, all the stuff about teaching and we have to know our language, but then we have to turn around and do it all in another language. So nobody else has to do that. That, and that step of having to turn around and do it all in another language is the part that makes us so special. Because, in addition to standing up there and spouting off this language that everybody else in the room doesn’t know, we have to figure out how to make it comprehensible to them as we’re doing it at the same time (Interview, 7/10/2013).

In Emily’s opinion, foreign language teacher must have all the knowledge of teaching, including strategies and methods as well as knowledge of the target language. More importantly, foreign language teachers’ knowledge must be delivered to the students in a comprehensible way. If looking back to how Emily integrated social media in her foreign language education, it is obvious that she designed and implemented many social media in various activities and made everything comprehensible to the teacher participants and expect them to “take back” to their own foreign language classrooms. For instance, she tried her best in making sure

every step of using any social media was clear and understandable for all her teacher participants. When she introduced Twitter and QR code, she spent a majority of her instructional time modeling and demonstrating the processes in details. The way how she made her integration of social media in foreign language education clearly suggested the way she believed how social media should be planned and delivered.

Emily believed that in order for social media to be successfully integrated in foreign language teacher education, teacher participants needed to be motivated and see the connection between the social media and their own teaching practice:

The thing about social media and this is true in our own classroom and you, I'm sure you already know this is that everybody helps each other and you just figure it out. If it matters to you, you figure it out and you do it. And if it doesn't matter to you, then you won't so the thing about social media is nobody's gonna force you to do it. You just, you do it if you want to and if you have motivation, you figure it out. So it's all, it really is all about motivation (Interview, 7/30/2013).

Based on both her experiences with K-12 students and teacher participants in PB, Emily identified that lack of motivation and technological knowledge could create barriers for integration of social media in foreign language teaching and teacher education. Additionally, Emily also believed that it was a challenge for teacher educators to keep learning how to use new social media.

I think technology is something that, understanding and using technology to our advantage is a skill that we all need to have, as language educators and just getting along in the world today. It's just

stuff that we have to do. And the nice thing about that is it can be very helpful, when it works. When it doesn't work, it's frustrating but you just get by. You just keep going. But I think that if you don't have it in your bag of tricks, then you're missing something. I sat next to somebody two days ago at a reception who said that they got a computer like five years ago and they still don't really know how to use it and I thought to myself, how are you managing to function in the world? You don't know how to use a computer? Like how do you have a job? How do you, how do you... yeah, I couldn't believe it. I thought to myself, wow, you're behind the whole world and you're being left behind and apparently, you don't care. But whatever. So I think to keep up to date, it's just something like if I were still using a typewriter, you know. It's like you have to keep... not that you have to have the latest and greatest all the time but it's just part of what is required to stay up to date in our profession and within our practice (Interview, 7/30/2013).

Emily obviously viewed that continuous learning played a key role in integrating social media and foreign language education. She claimed that like any other technology, features and formats of social media changed on a daily basis. Only through a nonstop learning process, could foreign language teachers and teacher educators keep their pace with the development of social media and bring its full potential to teaching and learning. In addition, Emily thought that she didn't have any professional development on the topic of using social media in foreign language

teaching (Interview, 7/10/2013), which raised some concerns about whether effective professional development on how to use social media in foreign language teaching existed and how much help it could provide.

Although Emily identified many challenges, she had a clear vision and positive attitude towards the integration of social media in the future and claimed this integration had to happen:

We have people who are terrified and they think they're gonna lose their jobs and everything's gonna change and it's true. I mean, their way of life maybe is gonna change. But you can't, it's like the airplane or the train or something. You can't like pretend it's not gonna happen. It's gonna happen. You're better off prepared for it (Interview, 7/30/2013).

In her mind, the integration of social media and foreign language teaching and teaching education was inevitable. Therefore, she decided to take a positive way to embrace the change rather than ignoring it. Moreover, despite all the challenges she identified, Emily insisted to embrace social media because it was a powerful tool that can provide real life interaction and communication:

It's so easy to be global because of social media. I use social media to stay in touch with all my friends all over the world. That's the main reason I use Facebook. And it, so that's just logical for teachers. Skype is logical to use for language teachers. I have Skyped people in from different countries. My friend, one of my friends, I said, hey, could you teach the class how to prepare and drink correctly. The drink in

Argentina. We did the lesson on Skype so they had this real person they were watching and he's in this kitchen, preparing the drink. So like those things are obvious to me because it's not, it's not like a book, it's not a picture. It's not even a video on YouTube. It's real life, right now, happening... not the methodology but the tools that they can use in their classrooms because it's a tool. It's not, for me anyway, it's not, it doesn't replace the teacher and it doesn't replace, you know, the curriculum and that sort of thing but it's a means to get to that. The teacher could be far away... I try to tell people, it's like, guys, you can't bury your head in the sand. It's coming down the pike and it would be so much better if... You don't have to embrace it but you should at least know about it. You should, you should learn about it. See why it's important (Interview, 7/30/2013).

With the Skype example she provided, Emily clearly noticed the benefits that social media brought to teaching foreign language and culture. If teacher participants could see the connection between social media and classroom foreign language teaching, they would acknowledge it and tried to learn about its possible usage in foreign language classrooms. Emily also stressed the bottom line that social media was just a tool and it could never replace good teachers and would not lead directly to successful teaching in foreign language classrooms if not designed well.

In summary, although Emily believed in the benefits that social media has on foreign language teaching and teacher education, she insisted that no social media would be effective unless a thoughtful planning and purposeful implementation were

carried out. Using Twitter as an example, research has demonstrated that the microblogging service can be used as a back channel in a live event to encourage immediate participation from the audience (Elavsky, Mislana, & Elavsky, 2011), which was exactly how Emily used Twitter in one of the online observation (7/21/2013) where she asked participants to tweet a brief answer to a general question she raised. Emily specifically claimed that she used Twitter and Answer Garden to encourage participants to join the discussion because some of them were verbally quiet due to language issue. This coincides with the literature in that many researchers argue that Twitter makes it easy for audience to ask questions, have discussions, share resources (Ross, Terras, Warwick, & Welsh, 2011) and create shared comments on learning materials (Ebner, 2009) thus solve the problem of lack of feedback and nervousness about asking questions. It must be noted that, besides facilitating immediate communication, Twitter is also beneficial in encouraging participation by engaging in the virtual space (Rinaldo, Tapp, & Laverie, 2011), extending communication beyond classroom (Lowe & Laffey, 2011; Rinaldo et al, 2011), enhancing social presence (Ebner, Lienhardt, Rohs, & Meyer, 2010), building a strong learning community and largely reduced the sense of isolation among student groups (Dunlap & Lowenthal, 2009; Ebner & Maurer, 2009; Wright, 2010). Even though she didn't mention these benefits in her interviews, Emily did assign a specific purpose for using Twitter in her instruction with a careful plan integrated with other activities. After discussing the major themes emerged from Emily's data, next, I compare her beliefs and practice about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

*Comparing Emily's Beliefs and Practice about the Integration of Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education*

Overall, Emily's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education matched with her teaching practice in PB. As the Wiki and Twitter were required to use in PB according to the curriculum template and the overall State Annual Summer Seminar, Emily adopted it actively in her teaching. However, she wasn't satisfied with the results of using the Wiki and Twitter because the social functions were either not explored or realized in an engaging way. She claimed that she used 25% to 30% of social media for instructional purposes and 50% for personal purposes in 2013 PB (Interview, 3/25/2013). Considering the short duration of PB, Emily's percentage of using social media was relatively high. This estimated percentage of integrating social media could also be verified with the online observations. Emily constantly sought for other social media and technology to integrate in her teaching that she perceived to serve a better role in her instruction. For example, she thoughtfully adopted Answer Garden, another social media, and combined it with the use of Twitter. This meaningful combination not only provided beneficial social media for teacher participants to use in their foreign language classrooms, but also made it clear between the different purposes of using Twitter and Answer Garden by comparing the two within a classroom activity.

It must be pointed out that Emily wasn't the curriculum developer and didn't get to decide and plan for the use of the Wiki and Twitter. The comments from the program director of PB in the Program Final Report would offer some insights about future improvement regarding the use of social media that:

We will invite participants to the Wiki in advance of the institute with suggestions for preparatory reading. As we never are able to do all we would like in a week, this could ease some of the time pressure as well as address some of the diversity in knowledge and experience of the participants. We will also include a discussion page on the Wiki where participants can post their ideas and concerns during the seminar as well as afterwards (9/24/2013).

Obviously the program director and instructors of PB, including Emily, noticed the insufficient integration of social media and committed to improve the program by adding preparatory readings and exploring more of the discussion features in the Wiki. Emily, as one of the instructors, would keep playing a role in shaping the integration of social media in foreign language education in PB. Her focuses on the deliberately planning and implementing of social media in foreign language teacher education had made change and would continue changing her foreign language education program.

Although Emily and Dawn served as instructors for the same program (PB), their beliefs about and teaching practice of the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were different from each other. Emily's case was overall consistent in that her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were aligned and enacted in her teaching practices. She took a positive approach when conceptualizing social media and its benefits in foreign language teacher education. She believed that the benefits of social media that she experienced or found a purposeful way to integrate in her teaching. She realized

the integration of social media could not be stopped, thus, the better way to deal with it was to learn to use them and identify which ones were effective in what ways.

Though it seemed that the social media that Emily used (the Wiki, Twitter, and Answer Garden) was focused on its part of their potential advantages, she did design the lesson well with a meaningful purpose and delivered successfully with engaging activities.

### Summary of Chapter 6

Emily was passionate about the integration of social media in foreign language education. However this integration must be carefully planned and delivered in connection with foreign language teaching. The beliefs about the careful design and integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were consistently enacted in Emily's teaching practice (the Wiki, Twitter, and Answer Garden). In fact, all the instructions I observed were planned and carried out around the belief about engaging teacher participants in meaningful communication. All her social media usage integrated in the instruction I observed were also targeted on the meaningful purpose and making connections between social media and foreign language teaching.

From Emily's case, it is worth noticing that her beliefs played an important role in influencing her teaching practices. It suggests that fostering certain beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education may be useful for teachers who are willing to learn new knowledge and skill. Moreover, foreign language teachers as well as foreign language teacher educators need to clearly see how to implement social media with a meaningful purpose before they can

adopt any. When providing training on using social media in foreign language teacher education, a step-by-step demonstration and scaffolding may be helpful for teacher to better understand the effective way of using social media, thus increasing the chance of the actual social media integration in their teaching.

## Chapter 7: Hong's Case

In this Chapter, I introduce the last case of my dissertation study, Hong. I first provide the background information, detailed program goals, and components of Program C (PC) that Hong worked in the summer of 2013. Then, I present Hong's educational background and teaching experiences. Next, I analyze and triangulate all the data collected from Hong and explain the emerging theme and sub-themes. Lastly, I compare Hong's beliefs with her teaching practices and draw conclusion on her case.

### *Background Information of Program C (PC)*

PC was proposed by the [State] Department of Education in the northeastern United States which consisted of programs for both elementary students and teachers. The student program offered a two-week summer camp for 38 Kindergarten to Second Grade students. Students participated in a morning camp for four days each week as an introduction to Chinese language and culture learning and get familiarized with the immersion program in which they enrolled beginning in the Fall semester of 2013. With the immersion experiences provided, students at the end of the program were expected to be able to demonstrate, in Chinese, comprehension of common classroom commands and topic-related questions, appropriately answer questions with limited responses (yes/no, either/or) and begin to formulate simple sentences from learned vocabulary.

Recognizing the importance of immersion teacher development, PC also had a teacher program in which teachers who taught in the student program received

professional development training with a focus on comprehensible input and checking for understanding. The PC teacher program was designed to provide a standards-based and feedback-rich learning experience for elementary Chinese language teachers through a combination of methods seminars, practicum experiences, and instructional coaching sessions for 96 hours over the course of 16 instructional days from July 18<sup>th</sup>, to August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2013 (See *Figure 7.1 PC Teacher Program Curriculum Template*). The teacher program included two parts: first, teacher participants received an intensive three-day mini-methods course before the PC student program started, and second, teacher participants worked as teachers in the PC student program. As a result of these trainings and experiences, teacher participants were expected to be able to: 1) provide comprehensible input for students while remaining in the target language; 2) engage all learners all the time using active participation to check for understanding; and 3) design and deliver instruction that was standards and proficiency-based. Teacher participants from the teacher training program had the opportunity to teach in the student program and receive feedback on their overall teaching efficacy and successful implementation of particular strategies (PC Curriculum Template & Site Visit Report). There were 9 teacher participants attending PC's teacher program who were all native Chinese. Among these teacher participants, 8 were preservice teachers and only one was experienced teacher.



use. So under each principle, they are given the strategies. So we are trying to stuff the teacher with as many strategies as possible ... We're gonna debrief each afternoon and the student [teacher participants] can just see what their reflections are on the strategies. What worked, what didn't work and how to make them better... Another goal is that we have walked through documents supporting each strategy so that we get to field test those documents. Basically, they're a lot of checklists. So we need to make sure the documents really work and get feedback from the teachers to modify them. And to have to get teachers familiarized with, to be comfortable with the idea that, you know, checklists and those are the things I need to do. Those are the things I need to consider when I prepare each lesson. Another important goal for me personally... is to really form a network of Chinese teachers. Every teacher is working in isolation right now in different schools (7/11/2013).

With detailed information, Hong described the overall goals for the program and her personal goals as well. She perceived that PC would prepare all teacher participants necessary pedagogical strategies and materials under the five guiding principles (comprehensible input, checking for understanding, engage all learners, scaffolding and modeling, and target language use). It is worth noticing that Hong also set up her personal goal as to build a support network for all the Chinese teacher participants. Further, Hong described the teacher participants' background information and specific foci and activities:

Two things that we will specifically try is modeling so we're gonna model a lot, you know how something looks like in reality. Modeling by having them watch the video, modeling just to have a Spanish teacher teach a Chinese teacher a Spanish lesson or a German lesson so that they get to feel what students will feel when they're immersed in a foreign language...And also, teaching practice. For example, like we introduce songs. So you [teacher participants] need to have different songs for different purposes in a foreign language classroom and that's great, to have students learn the language through songs. Now, you can use 30 minutes to create a song that's about weather in Chinese. So you get to working, you pair, in pairs or in groups to create a product that they will walk away and they can use in their teaching. This is not a credit program so basically they do not really have much responsibilities (Interview, 7/11/2013).

From Hong's interview, the 9 teacher program participants varied in their teaching experiences which added extra difficulties to fulfill the goals of PC's teacher program. In terms of the goals for the teacher component of the program, Hong's description matched with the program curriculum template. The goals included: 1) providing an intensive methodology experience that focuses on making input comprehensible and conducting checks for comprehension for early language learners; 2) developing and implementing an early language learning practicum experience in which preservice, in-service and alternative-route teacher candidates can implement and participate in best practice instruction for early language learners;

and 3) providing real teaching opportunities in a school setting so that participants learn to effectively provide input and check for comprehension in an early language learning classroom setting (See *Figure 7.1* PC Teacher Program Curriculum Template). With these concrete goals in mind, I present Hong's educational and teaching background in the next section.

### *Hong's Educational Background and Teaching Experiences*

Hong is a Chinese female in her early 30s who was born in China (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013). She studied English Education from 1999 and received her Bachelor of Arts degree at a normal university in the southern province of China in June 2003. From 2003 to 2005, she was hired as an English language teacher at a college in the same province where she finished her undergraduate studies. Keeping her career path in education, she then took a job at a major private education corporation as the principal assistant and English teacher for two years from 2005 to 2007. Accepted by a state university in the southern United States, she continued her education in pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Multilingual and Multicultural Education with a teaching fellowship. In January 2009, she started her doctoral study in Instructional Systems at the same university and only four months later she transferred to another university in the northeastern United States to finish her doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction. After graduating in 2012, she worked as a Chinese Immersion Instructional Specialist for the Department of Education in a northeastern state in the United States (Hong's Resume, p. 1).

Being a classroom teacher for many years, Hong has various experiences in teaching foreign languages (Chinese and English) in both the United States and

China. She earned many teaching certificates including: 1) Chinese Language Teacher Certification (State where she currently works), 2) Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Teacher Certification (a southern state in the United States); 3) Certificate for Teaching English as a Second Language (Online) English Teaching Certificate for K-12 (China); and 4) English Teaching Certificate for College Students (China). For teaching English as a foreign language in China, Hong had taught college-level English courses from 2003 to 2005. She also taught Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Graduate Records Examinations (GRE) test preparation courses from 2005 to 2007. For teaching Chinese as a foreign language in the United States, she was an elementary school teacher for the entire year of 2008, teaching 6 classes/150 students from Third Grade to Fifth Grade in the southern United States. In addition, she also taught Chinese as summer camp instructor in 2010 (Hong's Resume, p. 2).

Interested in helping other Chinese teachers, Hong also became involved in foreign language teacher education in many areas. She worked as Chinese Language Student Teacher Supervisor since September 2009 at the College of Education in a university in the northeastern United States. Her duties included conducting classroom observations and evaluations for preservice teachers, providing feedback and mentorship for preservice teachers, and assisting preservice teachers to complete their teaching portfolios. She also worked for a Chinese after school program as a teacher trainer where she provided many professional workshops for Chinese teachers. With her current job at the [State] Department of Education, Hong is in charge of developing Chinese curriculum, providing professional development for

Chinese language teacher, and promoting the Chinese immersion programs in the local area (Hong's Resume, p. 1). Hong explained how she changed her career path to foreign language teacher education in her first interview:

I was an English major in college in a normal university, a teachers' university where basically everybody graduates from normal university in China becomes a teacher later. That's why I became an English teacher. I came to the United States to study English as a second language because I wanna go back to China to be a better English teacher, in so many ways. Then I realized that it's not possible to get a TESOL job in the United States. It's not that I really planned to stay. My husband is here and my family is here. To have another option for my life...why don't I just become a Chinese teacher? So in my internship, the school I was placed in, so I requested can I teach Chinese instead of teaching, being a TESOL teacher ... There was so much preparation work and I was not supported because nobody else speaks Chinese in that community. I did not have anyone to talk to. But I had difficulty. I don't know how to deal with it. So it was very tough. After that internship ...I focused on Chinese language teacher preparation and resources, things like that. I love everything I do over here because it's so impactful. I'm becoming a better teacher each day and I'm helping many more teachers to grow each day (7/11/2013).

By experiencing the difficulties and challenges of being a Chinese teacher in K-12 settings, Hong realized that foreign language teachers, especially Chinese teachers,

were always isolated and needed help and support from other teachers or mentors. Therefore, she decided to share her knowledge and experience to better prepare foreign language teachers in the United States. Following that goal, Hong hosted a number of workshops, such as *Emotional Intelligence Leadership for Chinese Language Teachers* in April 2012, *Praxis II World Language Test Preparation Workshop* in October 2011, *Challenges and Opportunities for Chinese Language teachers in U.S. Public Schools* in February 2011, and *Content-based Instruction and Integrating STEM in Chinese Language Class* in January 2011 (Hong's Resume, p. 2).

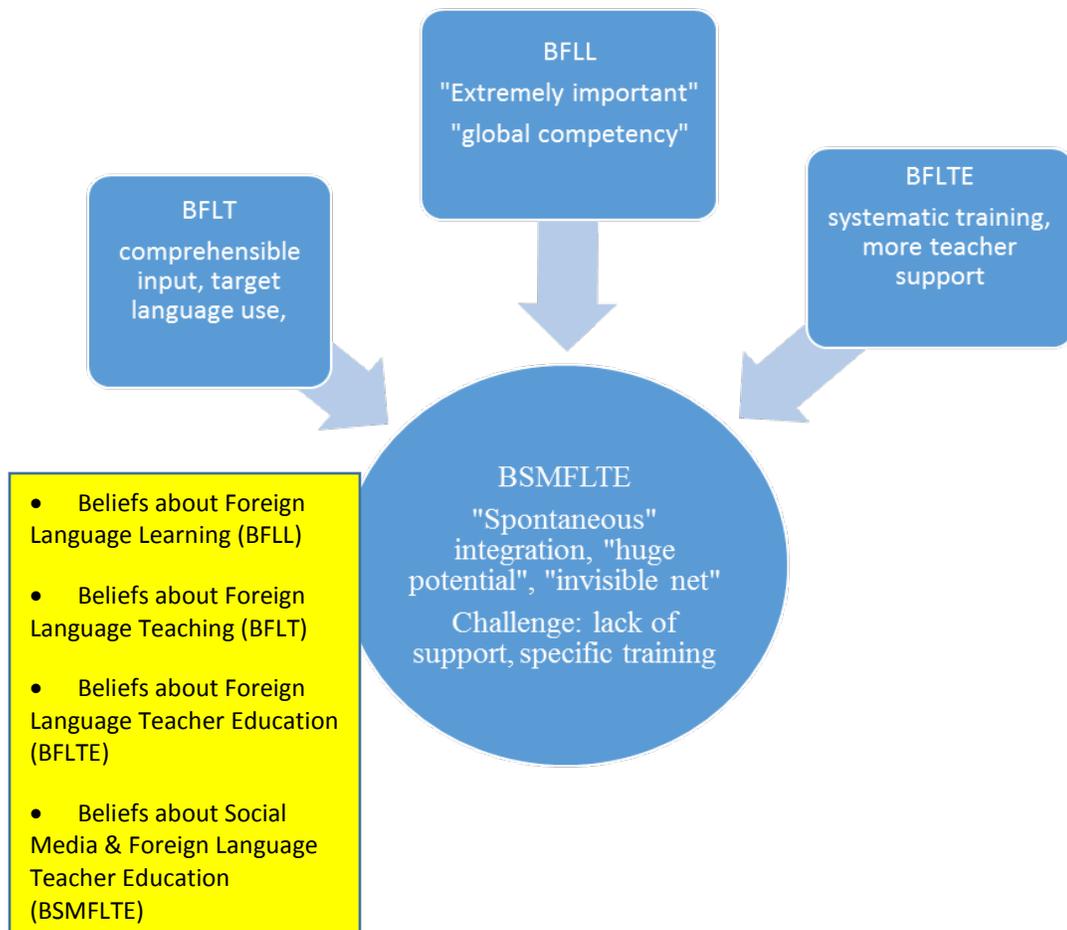
Besides professional workshops, Hong also actively participated in academic research in the field of foreign language teaching and teacher education. She published many articles focusing on a variety of topics including: immigrant teachers' perceptions, Chinese language teachers' beliefs, Chinese teacher certification program development, and motivation to learning Chinese (Hong's Resume, p. 2). In relation to STARTALK program, she was a participant in a STARTALK Chinese teacher program held at a university in the northeastern United States in the summer of 2008. PC was her first experience as a lead instructor in STARTALK teacher program. I was able to conduct two online observations (one on July 19<sup>th</sup>, the other on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013) for two class periods that Hong led the session. As the chapter continues, I present an overall picture of Hong's beliefs system using the four categories of beliefs.

Hong's Belief System about the Integration of Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education

*Figure 7.2* (Hong's belief system about social media and foreign language teacher education) below explained the relationship between Hong's four different categories of beliefs about foreign language learning, foreign language teaching, foreign language teacher education, and the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

Regarding the beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, Hong embraced the idea that social media had many benefits and were inevitably woven into everyone's life. When integrated into foreign language teacher education, Hong believed that social media could be helpful in a spontaneous way where teachers could seek for support and guidance virtually. Admittedly, Hong also thought that foreign language teachers and teacher educators had to be aware of the challenges that could impact the social media integration, such as the lack of technical support and internet access, and lack of training and guidance in how to use social media in foreign language teaching (see *Figure 7.2*). Hong's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education was largely impacted by her beliefs about foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education. Hong extremely valued the importance of learning a foreign language which could increase individual's global competency. Further, she advocated foreign language teachers must provide comprehensible input in the target language using various activities to engage learners, which could be enhanced by adopting social media. Along with these beliefs about foreign language learning and

teaching, Hong agreed that a systematic approach was needed for the current foreign language teacher education where teacher educators design the training based on foreign language teachers' real needs. Considering the inevitability of the integration of social media, Hong believed that specific training about how to use social media in foreign language teaching and teacher education were underdeveloped and needed further attention.



*Figure 19* Hong's belief system about social media and foreign language teacher education

Hong's beliefs about the usefulness of social media and other technology were also evident in the Online Questionnaire (7/1/2013), where she claimed that she was at the relatively high level of proficiency in using social media for personal and teaching purposes. For personal uses, Hong perceived herself "highly proficient" in using email and internet research, "somewhat proficient" in using social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) and Blog, "very basic proficiency" in digital media (e.g.,

YouTube) and web design and development (e.g., HTML), and “not very proficient” in graphic design (e.g. infographic, animation) (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013). In addition, she claimed that she used Facebook and QQ “several times a day” and Twitter and Blog “about once a day”, MySpace and LinkedIn “3-5 days a week” (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013), which was considerably a high frequency of using social media. QQ, a Chinese version of Skype where people can chat and video call online, was added to the answer by her as another social media. QQ is an instant messaging software service developed by Tencent Holdings Limited in China. QQ also offers a variety of services, including online social games, music, shopping, microblogging, and group and voice chat. As of March 2013, there are 798.2 million active QQ accounts, with a peak of 176.4 million simultaneous online QQ users (PR Newswire, March 2013). QQ is definitely a social media because of its communicative and collaborative features that allow users to connect through a comprehensive way including video, audio, and text.

When asked for the purpose of using social media, Hong answered that she used social media for personal networking, professional networking, entertainment, educational, and informational purposes, which were all the items listed in the online questionnaire (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013). In regard with the integration of social media and STARTALK teacher program, she stated that she was “highly proficient” in using internet research and email; “somewhat proficient” in social networking sites, and Blogs; “very basic proficiency” in digital media and web design and development; and “not very proficient” in graphic design (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013). When she was asked the question “how often do you access/use social

media in teaching your language courses in the STARTALK program”, Hong reported the same answer with her usage of social media for personal purposes, which were “several times a day” for Facebook and QQ, “about once a day” for Twitter, “3-5 days a week” for Blog, MySpace, and LinkedIn. This coincided with her previous answers about her high proficiency level of using social media for personal purposes. With the high frequency of accessing different social media for both personal and professional purposes, the Online Questionnaire data reinforced the argument that Hong held strong beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education. In the following sections, I analyze all the data from Hong and present the emerging theme and sub-themes.

*The Integration of Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education Can Be Unplanned and Spontaneous*

The integration of social media was inevitable to Hone because she believed that social media “is an invisible net” that played a fundamental role in everyone’s life. Hong conceptualized social media as a broad term that people couldn’t avoid to use in today’s world. She explained in the first interview that:

We work with computers, okay. We can’t live without computers. We shop. We entertain ourselves. We’re connected with our friends through some of the different things on computers. And now is the “T” generation, iPad, iPhone so basically when we awake, we have something in our hand to play with. And it’s important to us. So the things that I have right now, I have two laptops, I have an iPhone and an iPad. Even though I resist it at first but my husband is like no, you

have to have that. And every time I make a new friend, so do you have an iPhone? You have these apps? You know, they're cool. Luckily, I have an iPhone so I know what they are talking about. Otherwise I would feel like I'm so old. I have Facebook, I have QQ. I use Twitter. I use Animoto, LinkedIn. I have accounts in all these things, but I log on QQ and Facebook every day. I use it because that's the most convenient way for me to connect with my friends, so to check what's up with them and to post my status. And Skype, I use a lot because it's cheap and it's convenient to have the video chat or anything like that. LinkedIn, I got a request my friends that I did not accept because I'm not logged on. It's just something I have and I'm never gonna use it. I use photo sharing a lot. My kids' photo on the computer so my parents, parents in law can see the kids growing. We actually do Facetime every day with our parents in law so that they get to see the kids. The kids, it's like, that's where grandparents live, in the computer. Literally. Like my younger one is 18 months. Every time when I chat someone with the computer, he's like, Nanny, Nanny, Nanny is in my computer. So you just mention the digital natives, that's true. I don't ever have to teach them how to use an app. They just know how to use it. They can do something with my iPhone that I can't do. Screen shot, I don't know how to do it. They know how to do it. They're only 3 and 18 months. So... I try to get away from it but I realize I can't. Those social medias that... just can't. I even

communicated with my husband through Gmail every day because we don't get to talk to each other (7/11/2013).

Using her own experiences with various technology (computers, smartphone, iPad) and social media (Facebook, Twitter, QQ, Skype, LinkedIn, Animoto), Hong was absolutely aware of different social media and had been using them frequently for her personal purposes, which coincided with her answers in the Online Questionnaire (7/1/2013). However, Hong seemed to interchangeably use the two terms, technology and social media. She perceived that social media and technology couldn't be differentiated easily by drawing a clear line between the two. Further, she believed that using social media had many benefits in communication and interaction regardless of the physical distance. Based on her personal experiences, Hong held a positive attitude to embrace the adoption of social media in connecting to family members and friends because she witnessed the increasing demands of using social media among digital natives and the "I" generation (Interview, 7/11/2013).

Regarding the integration of social media and foreign language teaching, Hong provided many examples of using social media.

When I was a teacher, I tried different gadgets. It was a Voice Thread, I tried that. And also, I remember, another thing I tried is to like I will have different pictures and put them in the movie so I use the windows moviemaker plus my voice so it's gonna be an online story for the kids to look at when they go home. Something that we are doing right now is to have every teacher has a personal page so it's a teacher's page, she can post teacher resources for the parents to see because

immersion education the communication between the teacher and the parents is super important. So we do photo sharing a lot and also file sharing a lot. Like at one of the schools that I'm working with, they said teachers share folders so every teacher has to post something on it and they have to learn file sharing. They have different things teacher can learn. And also, another thing I tried but, in a conference, we try to do a survey in the audience, very quickly so they can text their answer. Big screen, you know. That was really interesting (Interview, 7/11/2013).

Clearly Hong knew many technology gadgets including social media such as Voice Thread. However, it was still unclear whether she could separate social media from other technology. Her perception about technology and social media made it difficult to determine how she would define social media. It was no doubt that Hong valued the integration of technology (including social media) in foreign language teaching and teacher education and already started using such gadgets in her teaching. When answering the question of “do you plan to use social media in your STARTALK teacher program” before her teacher program started, Hong, again, mixed the two terms social media and technology together.

Right now, I don't see it [social media integration] because we don't have really smart boards or iPads. There will be internet connection. We encourage them to bring their own laptop or iPads. But I can see a lot of teachers are taking their iPads all the time so... each one of them has a cell phone. You know, most likely it's a smart phone. So I don't

have any plan right now but probably we'll do something about it. We will talk about topics because just like I told you, we live and breathe in social media nowadays. There's no point to ignore it. So I'll see opportunities and chances (Interview, 7/11/2013).

Each time Hong talked about social media, she connected it to general things such as computers, iPads, and smartphones which were technology devices used to access social media. Even without a concrete plan of social media integration in PC, Hong did think social media could contribute to the program.

I think it's gonna contribute a lot, if we have the presentations, specific training for them. Like I told you, one of the things we will do is to do a neat survey so I don't have that added yet. I'm gonna add it. It's like what is your needs for learning about technology to enhance your teaching in the classroom. Cause all of the teachers we recruited this year are pretty young. A majority of them are in their 20s. So they're like half digit natives so if I ask the question, do you have such a need, probably they will say yes and we'll think what we can do for them. Or to see if they are experts in any of the social media (Interview, 7/11/2013).

From the above excerpt, it was evident that Hong believed that younger generation, like digital natives, were familiar with technology including social media. Therefore, she thought there was a need to include social media and other technology into their teacher training program. This belief also supported previous arguments about her vague definitions about social media and technology. Although Hong showed a rather

unclear conceptualization of social media, she perceived that social media “like an invisible net that really connected us” (Interview, 8/20/2013).

#### Spontaneous Social Media Integration in PC

Without a detailed curriculum and lesson plan to incorporate social media in PC, Hong confirmed, in her follow-up interview that the actual use of social media in PC “is a spontaneous idea” and the program director and she “didn’t plan for that [social media integration]” (4/16/2014). The program director and Hong just picked up Dropbox because they needed to share some PowerPoints with the teacher participants. They “just created it [Dropbox account] on the first or second day of the teacher camp” (Interview, 4/16/2014). In Hong’s second interview, she also confirmed about the importance of the unexpected integration of social media:

I would have to say that even though it [social media]’s not so obvious, not a very obvious part of our teacher and student camp program but it was very essential. Since the beginning, since the planning phase of the STARTALK, I was able to Skype with experts nationwide to get ideas from them and [program director] started the Dropbox so teachers were connected in that way and also the Facebook, I have to say that it was huge cause in that way that we got to share the videos and the pictures and got to say thank you. You know, we don’t really say thank you to each other in the face but we say thank you on Facebook...It was just like kind of, everybody’s friends with everybody. Yeah, just adding each other and, you know, [program director] would leave something like “I feel great today.

Thank you so much for contributing to the success of the program”. All of us would like, we’d click “like” and we would respond like “thank you for doing the organization work”. You know, that, in that way, other than email, that’s another good way for us to stay connected even beyond the camp (8/20/2013).

According to Hong, social media was widely used by instructors and teacher participants due to its benefits in file sharing, reducing the physical distance, and enhancing communication and connection within the group. Therefore, social media became “essential” (Interview, 8/20/2013) to PC even though it was not originally planned to be integrated. Hong kept explaining the reasons why teacher participants were using social media.

Hong: every teacher has a cell phone, everybody has a smart phone. So they were using a smart phone a lot. Taking pictures, taking videos and sending those pictures and videos out because we’ve got media release permission from parents so we can take a lot of pictures and videos. And you know, for the teachers, social media is huge cause everybody is using Facebook to post their pictures, teaching, students’ work on their Facebook.

Me: Okay. So like the teacher participants are just using their personal devices to access those social media that you mentioned, right?

Hong: Yes. It was just easier that way (Interview, 8/20/2013).

Clearly, teacher participants were using their cellphones to access social media for video and picture taking and sharing because it was easy for them to do that.

Facebook was also used by teacher participants and instructors to post their teaching in the student program due to its easy and instantaneous feature. For example, *Figure 7.3* below was a Facebook post created by the program director of PC showing a group picture of all the participants, instructors, and administrative staff members.

Mobile Uploads

Back to Album · Delvin's Photos · Delvin's Timeline

Previous · Next



The [redacted] STARTALK Team... So much wonderful learning has happened already - looking forward to even more during camp! — v [redacted]

Like · Comment · Share · July 20, 2013 near N [redacted]

u and 28 others like this.

1 share

[redacted] Do I see most are our girls?  
July 20, 2013 at 4:18pm · Like

[redacted] Indeed, A [redacted]. It's been wonderful to watch them show what they're learning through the evolution of their demo lessons!  
July 20, 2013 at 4:29pm · Like · 1

[redacted] Give [redacted] a big hello from me. She interned in my district and taught in our elementary STARTALK Program.  
July 20, 2013 at 6:25pm · Like · 1

[redacted] Great seeing elementary FL teachers like these.  
July 20, 2013 at 8:46pm · Like

[redacted] Good luck!! Looking good!  
July 20, 2013 at 9:32pm · Like · 1

[redacted] Great team with great leaders!  
July 20, 2013 at 10:08pm · Like

[redacted] Miss you!!!  
July 21, 2013 at 7:20am · Like

Album: Mobile Uploads  
Shared with: Friends (+)

- Tag This Photo
- Edit Location

- Open Photo Viewer
- Download
- Report

Figure 20 PC Facebook Posting

From the above picture, it was evident that about 30 Facebook users interacted virtually with the person who posted the group photo by clicking “Like”. Moreover, many users posted comments about the photo and made connections with the people that were tagged in the photo. By communicating virtually in Facebook, teacher

participants and instructors could build personal bounds within the group and support each other. Although none of the comments were really focusing on the content of the teacher program, it seemed that teacher participants were actively involved in using social media, like Facebook, to interact and get to know each other better. As described in her second interview, Hong stated that “really, I don’t see any resistance. It’s just natural that everybody’s using the smart phone to do different things already, like different social media” (8/20/2013). To Hong, social media, such as Facebook and QQ, were used by everyone to a natural degree that no one could live without it.

Social media has huge potential cause everybody’s using it anyway and we breathe and live in it and we can’t live without it...without a phone, we’re not ourselves anymore...So I think it’s such a huge part of teacher’s life these days, especially when teachers are teaching in a building. You know, they have to check email several times a day and they need to keep updated of their, you know, friends or relatives in China and the best way to do that is to just open their phone, turn on the phone, get QQ or WeChat so they can check information all the time. But you know, these school buildings, they often, and the school computers do not allow you to do that. But you can use it with your phone (Interview, 8/20/2013).

Hong considered social media as a major component of foreign language teacher’s life nowadays which couldn’t be excluded. Since everyone is using social media, such as Facebook and QQ, to connect personally and professionally, Hong perceived social media as an “invisible net” that weaves every individual in the society (Interview,

8/20/2013). This belief regarding the popularity of social media plays a vital role in supporting her beliefs about the spontaneous use and potential benefits of integrating social media and foreign language teacher education. Widely adopted by everyone, social media is indeed “an invisible net” that connect different people together (Interview, 8/20/2013). It is the “invisible” nature of social media that makes Hong think that social media integration happens spontaneously and naturally. Next, I present some of the unplanned use of social media in PC.

According to Hong, the adoption of Dropbox, one kind of social media that is popular for its file sharing and cloud saving features, was particularly useful in supporting the teacher participants in getting the materials and turning in their lesson plans.

For example, on the Dropbox, that was so important and I know that people have still been adding things to that Dropbox when they have created something...actually, one of the teachers, said why not just do something that, to connect all the, you know, there are so many Chinese immersion teachers in the United States and there's no really good platform for them to stay connected so they can share resources. Everybody's kind of working to create, to invent their own will. So why not just share whatever you have, too. So what I'm doing right now is through email and the Google drive for our team, whatever I have created, I send it to them and then they will share also with the rest of the team, whatever they have created. It's been working really well so far...So [program director] started a Dropbox and invited

everybody to participate. She put pieces of information there for the start and so we got teaching materials from [another] STARTALK program so we put all those PPTs and the worksheets and different things in there to get it started. And then teachers got to create their materials along the way and they, they were given a deadline to add whatever they had created to the Dropbox. So when I opened the Dropbox like a week ago, it was full of information. It was categorized by grade cause we had got three grades, kindergarten, 1st grade and 2nd grade. It was categorized by themes cause we were teaching numbers, colors, fruits, you know, animals. So they were a wealth of information in Dropbox...I just share with one of the teacher yesterday about the content on Dropbox who was quite impressed. And I got a video showing her how those teachers used those materials. Like there was a PPT about the story of Mulan, so how that teacher adapted the story and made it shorter and simpler to recycle those important vocabulary and sentences she wanted students to master. She was like, oh, my god, can I use this? Okay, take it away and use it. So it's been really great. So many, many minds were put together to create a wealth of information that was shared with many other teachers. The Dropbox was great. And the Google drive as well (Interview, 8/20/2013).

Hong emphasized the fact that she and her teacher participants were using Dropbox and Google Drive spontaneously to share documents and files related to foreign language teaching. Dropbox and Google Drive are cloud storage that allow users to

upload and download large size files to the cloud server as well as sync with personal computers, mobile devices. They both enable users to share the files to anyone who has an account. Dropbox even allows user to work both with and without internet connection. Google Drive, easily connected with Gmail accounts, make it possible for users to edit the same document at the same time. With these advantages in sharing information and editing simultaneously, Google Drive and Dropbox contribute to the collaboration among group members. Hong's use of Google Drive and Dropbox clearly helped teacher participants in sharing information and knowledge among each other. Moreover, the Dropbox was used as a place for teacher participants to upload their assignments. Teacher participants were required to review the guidelines and materials that the program director and Hong uploaded in Dropbox and then submit their lesson plans onto the Dropbox to share with everyone. For the assignment, Hong and the program director would create a list of things that teacher participants needed to complete. "After creating that, you [teacher participants] will have to upload to the Dropbox. That's like mandatory" (Interview, 4/16/2013). If teacher participants didn't upload, Hong and the program director would send them an email to remind them. In fact, Hong's actual integration of social media can be found in one of the online observations. I selected one scenario where Hong was showing the uploaded lesson plan and PowerPoint that one of the teacher participants made to ask for other teacher participants' feedback.

July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Around 1pm in the afternoon, Hong begins her session on providing feedback for teacher participants' lesson plan and PowerPoints. Her instructional goal is to review teacher participants'

works and assess whether they were using various strategies to provide comprehensible input in the target language [Chinese] in immersion classrooms. Hong starts the lesson by logging in her Dropbox account and showed one of the teacher participants' PowerPoint about the story of Mulan through the projector. Everyone looked at the big screen to review the PowerPoint while the teacher participant who created the PowerPoint was explaining her ideas. The lesson plan was to introduce the story of Mulan, who voluntarily joined the army because she didn't want her old father to do that. The teacher participant was going to teach second graders about Mulan's story. She introduced Chinese vocabulary words about family members [father, mother, grandma], some animals [horse, pig], and numbers [from 1 to 10]. All other teacher participants were able to see the PowerPoint on their own laptop because they downloaded it using Dropbox. Then Hong led the discussion and engaged teacher participants to critique about the PowerPoint. Teacher participants were actively involved in the discussion and provided many suggestions about how to improve some of the activities. (Observation Notes, 7/25/2013).

This short scenario that Hong provided demonstrated that she used Dropbox as a natural tool to deliver her instruction. In addition, Hong's adoption of Dropbox was also found in the first online observation where she constantly accessed it to share resources and materials with teacher participants (Observation Notes, 7/19/2013). For the easy sharing feature, Hong didn't need to make specific plan before she opened

the Dropbox account. It is the spontaneous function of Dropbox that makes Hong considered her social media integration in PC happened naturally without plan.

Hong also mentioned that “YouTube and Google Docs” were “optional” (Interview, 4/16/2013). Besides sharing, Hong also mentioned that teacher participants suggested to establish a discussion forum after the program ended to keep the learning and sharing beyond classroom.

We were talking about like having probably an online forum so that the learning could be continued after the STARTALK. Everybody exchanges their phone number or an email address and I’ve been adding them as my Facebook friends cause we went out to dinner a day and I was checking out it cause we, you know, it’s so interesting that everybody’s taking pictures and when they had a picture of another teacher in it, they would tag that teacher on their Facebook. And as soon as those notifications, I realized, yeah, I don’t have that teacher on my Facebook so let me add her. So as soon as they can, we added each other as friends on Facebook or QQ ... So that’s where I get to see a lot of the social media being used after class, off campus. That when teachers want to, you know, keep in touch beyond the camp (Interview, 8/20/2013).

Not only did social media integration in Hong’s case contributed to reducing the distance between participants and instructors when they used Facebook and QQ to make friends with each other, teacher participants were also inspired by many social media they encountered and tried to extend their learning opportunity by building an

online forum. From the above excerpt, it was clear that teacher participants in PC naturally used social media such as Facebook for the purpose of making friends with each other. More importantly, they spontaneously proposed the idea of building an online forum for discussion to extend their learning beyond the STARTALK program. This kind of integration was also evident in their usage of QQ since all teacher participants were native Chinese and familiar with the popular social media in China.

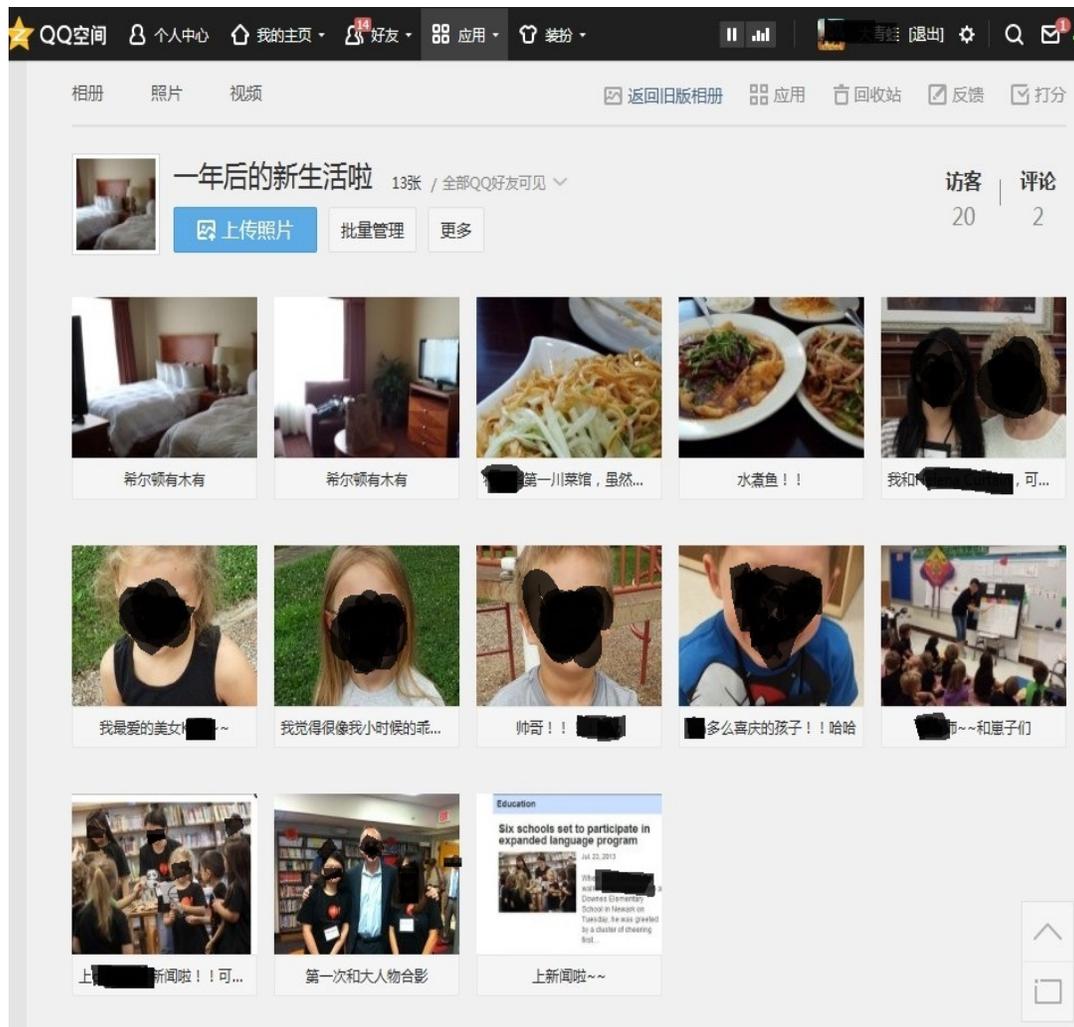


Figure 21 QQ Zone

Figure 7.4 is an example of one of the embedded functional areas that QQ has, called QQ Zone, where users can upload pictures and videos to share with their friends through QQ. The user in Figure 7.4 was one of the teacher participants that Hong trained in PC. She posted the pictures of the kids that she taught in the student program of PC in the summer of 2013. One of the pictures (the third one on the third row) was the screenshot of the local online news that described the success of PC. Through sharing these pictures with her friends, the impact and positive results of PC were promoted across the continent. This is a good case in point to demonstrate the spontaneous integration of social media by the teacher participants to share their ideas about teaching. In addition, Hong also integrated other social media, such as YouTube, to further enhance the learning by uploading videos of teacher participants' teaching in the student program of PC (see Figure 7.5).



Figure 22 PC YouTube Video Clip Screenshot

The above screenshot showed one of the lessons that two teacher participants were teaching. This kind of resource, supported by social media (YouTube), can be seen by

all the teacher participants and the general public. Teacher participants can watch their teaching videos to reflect upon their instructions to find out what needs to be improved at any time outside of classroom. Moreover, teacher participants may also receive comments and suggestions from the general public who see this video clip. Allowing teacher participants to self-reflect and gain possible feedback from others, social media makes the learning more participatory and engaging.

#### Social Media has “Huge Potential” When Integrated with Foreign Language Teacher Education Naturally

Besides the actual use by teacher participants, Hong further demonstrated her vision of incorporating QQ in foreign language teacher education in the second interview:

And so maybe if I were one of the teachers, I would really wanna start a QQ account for my students, when they're older enough, you know encourage them to add friends in China because Facebook is not the best way of communication in China, you know, but QQ is. Have a QQ account. Find a few Chinese native friends. I might even assign students homework, just find four friends and just introduce yourself in Chinese to your four friends. And let's see how that goes. So you know, down the way, of course, I think social media is gonna really shorten the distance between learners in China who want to learn English and the learners here who want to learn Chinese (8/20/2013).

By using QQ as an example of integrating social media in teaching Chinese, Hong clearly showed her beliefs and knowledge about social media. She emphasized the

communication and interaction with native people who speak the target language in teaching Chinese by purposefully designing assignments in QQ. Making friends with real Chinese people and use the language to communicate made it students' learning as authentic as possible. This specific example of integrating QQ in teaching Chinese indicated that Hong not only used social media spontaneously, but had a clear understanding about how to use social media in the foreign language teaching. Similar to Catherine, Hong believed that the relationship and community that teacher participants built would "impact their life" as foreign language teacher (Interview, 8/20/2013). Furthermore, using social media, "if they [teacher participants] have any questions, they can email each other or just ask a question on Facebook" (Interview, 8/20/2013). To Hong, the connection built by using social media was valuable than anything else for teacher participants. The unplanned and informal use of social media in PC demonstrated that Hong's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education enacted her teaching practice. Teachers' frequent use of social media, as Hong reported, would help them to share their beliefs, influence each other's practice, and eventually support their foreign language teaching.

Hong was optimistic about the future and provided an example in her second interview:

I'm seeing this happen on unofficial level, in our department...the world language education associate of the Department of Education here, he suggested every world language teacher in [state] should join Animoto and he send instruction page to every teacher, that this is how

you sign up for account. Step one, step two. And you have to do it because this is how we stay connected. And he's been using that, he's been sending out all his information and messages, like job openings or sharing, sharing a new, newly found website or great song that's recommended for Spanish teachers to use in class. He's been starting those threads in Animoto and teachers start to respond and have started their own threads already. So I'd be receiving message from Animoto at least ten, five to ten messages every day in my email. Spanish teachers, German teachers, Italian teachers, Chinese teachers, and yeah, our Chinese teacher was sending a message "I'm a Chinese teacher who works in the south [county name] county, who else will be teaching Chinese here Please let me know". You know, looking for friends or some teacher was looking for house, you know it's been working well here in [state] and I can see that reason teachers using that because they find a value in it. Wonderful information from that. And it's connected to email so you get a notification in your email. And it's education approved. I mean, it's not like Facebook or, cause Animoto is like, in my opinion, is more education approved. Like either you're using that as an educator or you're using it for, for your work, not for personal (8/20/2013).

The social media example that was described in the excerpt, Animoto (See *Figure 7.6* Animoto Homepage), is an online application in which users can create and share video and pictures and provide comment and feedback to others.

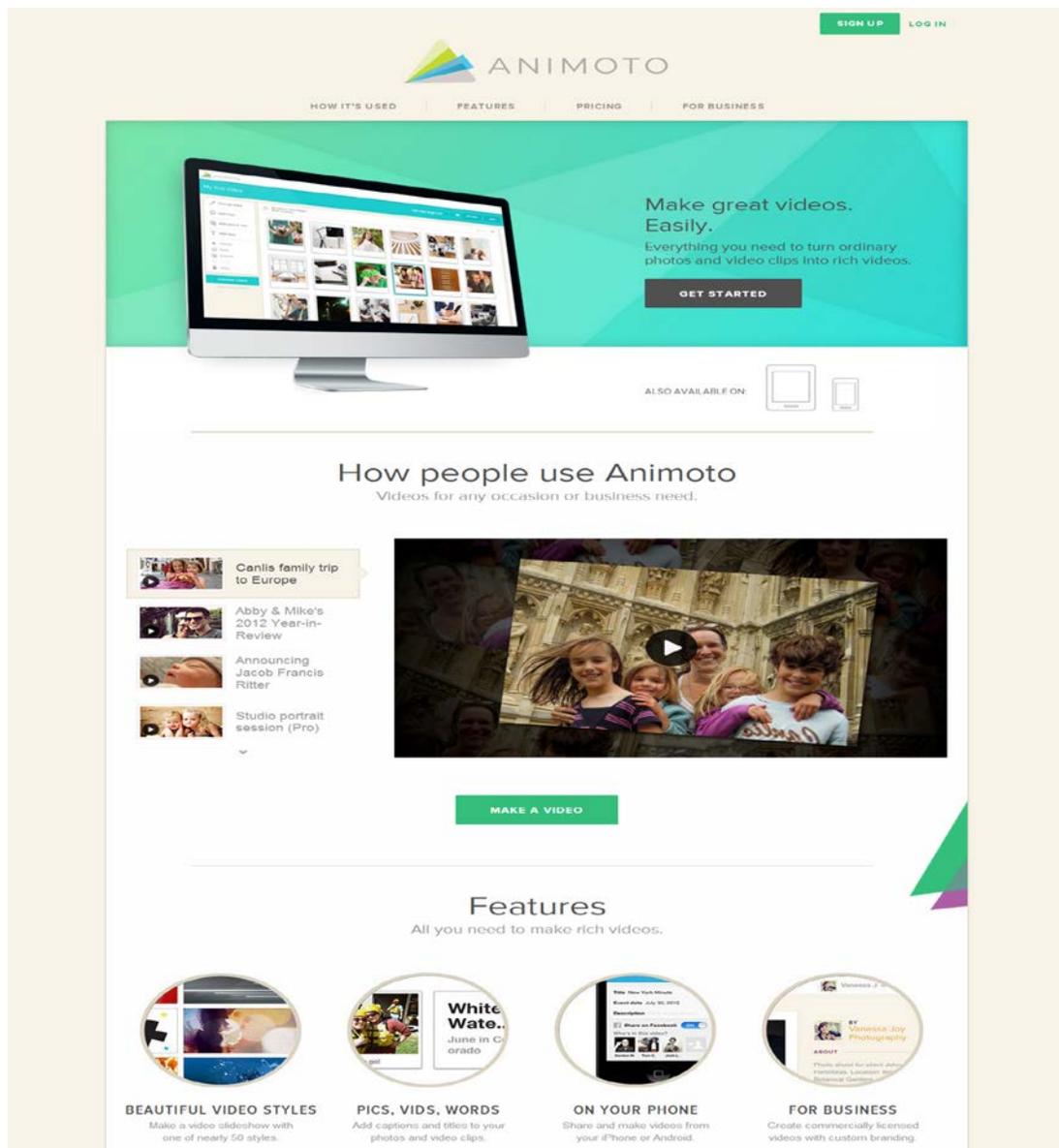


Figure 23 Animoto Homepage

With the instantaneous sharing and commenting, Animomto helped Hong, her colleagues, and many foreign language teachers successfully connected with each other. The meaningful interaction and sharing provided legitimate reasons for foreign language teachers to use Animoto for professional purposes. This scenario also suggested that social media would be beneficial when guidance and instructions about how to use it were explicitly provided. Thinking long term effects, Hong posited that:

The training in social media could be beneficial for the teachers because in the future when students get more language, they might make friends with Chinese native speakers in China, friends their own age, through QQ or Facebook, you know. So that could greatly motivate their learning. And teachers are kind of learning those things by themselves but I think it will be very beneficial if like in one of those trainings that they get to really understand this better and to figure out ways to integrate this into their language learning. So I really think it has huge potential and we should do more of this in the future. (Interview, 8/20/2013).

Hong thought that the only effective integration of social media in foreign language teaching would happen when students learn more about the foreign language with an approach that intrigues student's motivation to learn the target language. For fulfill that goal, Hong believed that foreign language teachers needed to be trained regarding how to use social media to engage their students in learning the target language. Students would use social media regardless of foreign language teachers' attitudes and beliefs, thus, Hong suggested that foreign language teachers better equip themselves with the necessary knowledge about the integration of social media in order to keep up and better serve their students' needs. After discussing Hong's vision about the potential of social media integration with foreign language teacher education, I present the challenges that she identified.

## Challenges of Integration Social Media in Foreign Language Teacher Education

Despite all the benefits that social media could bring to foreign language teacher education, Hong also identified some challenges including the lack of technical support, and limited equipment and access to the internet.

Actually, in the school location, there was no Wi-Fi in the first few days... there was no internet at all ... I mean, it [social media]'s very, sometimes it's limited by the access you have to the internet cause it's not like you can use it anywhere, anytime, on your computer, unless you are in a location that you have Wi-Fi and you have the authority to really use all those software on the computer. And you know, we used a computer that are checked out of Department of Education but those office computers ... we didn't have the proper authorization to install anything so we just have the basic, basic, standard, you know, equipped software, like Microsoft ... And there was no Chinese on it [computer] on the first day and somebody came over to help us to install the Chinese input methods on the computer... So it was very limited in terms of technology support and there was no smart board at all in any of the classrooms. We also checked out a projector. There was a projector but, you know, with younger kids, put on a projector, the kindergartners were so curious about it and they start to play with it. Put their hands in front of the projector so that they can see the shapes of their hands projecting on the wall. It was a little bit out of

control in the kindergarten class at the beginning (Interview, 8/20/2013).

Hong noted in the excerpt that internet access was a challenge to the integration of social media in PC. The lack of internet connection in the first few days and the poor signal strength after internet access was provided made it difficult for teacher participants and instructors to use internet. In Hong's opinion, the lack of technical support, especially the lack of authorization to install software on the computer was a huge challenge to her integration of social media. In both online observations, "there were no technical support person in the classroom" (Observation notes, 7/19/2013, 7/25/2013). Further, she raised the issue of the distraction that kindergartners had on certain technology devices (projector), which also influenced the use of technology in PC.

Hong also pointed out that teacher training for the specific use of social media in foreign language teaching was scarce and teachers needed guidance and training in how to use social media in foreign language teaching. She claimed that "no, I didn't have any training about how to use social media in teaching foreign language. My best teacher is my technology person here in the Department of Education" (Interview, 7/11/2013). She explicitly stated that another limitation of social media was not "coming from the social media itself but coming from the people who are using it. So it really takes a lot of education on the trainer herself to realize that" (Interview, 8/20/2013).

But for the teachers, I think they need more guidance on what kind of social media is the best for teaching language and how do to use it. So

what are the pitfalls that you want to avoid and just see some good examples, you know, successful examples how teachers been using those integrate as part of their curriculum. In a more organized way, I mean. Right now, everybody's doing their own thing, kind of in an isolated way. But nobody would say that social media is not important because that's how we stay connected, right? (Interview, 8/20/2013).

To Hong, the current foreign language teacher education didn't provide enough training on how to use social media in foreign language teaching. Without the necessary guidance from teacher educator, teachers were lost in figuring out which and in what ways social media could be used in their classrooms. This specific challenge suggested that professional development workshops were really necessary for better preparing foreign language teachers in using social media. To further illustrate this point, Hong elaborated that:

I don't really see a lot of professional development about social media, at least in the program that I work for or what I'm aware of right now. I don't really see that happening. Because I think one of the reasons is that we don't really have qualified trainers who really know the social media so well and then who really see the values and who's willing to step out and prepare high quality PD session for our teachers. So it's that, like we might need first step training for trainers, to get people who are really interested... maybe kind of certification program, you know, for those who want to do this for language education can get a

certificate or something and they can get the qualification to offer workshops for more teachers (Interview, 8/20/2013).

In the above excerpt, Hong concluded that lack of qualified teacher educators who knew how to use social media in foreign language teaching was the main reason why professional development about the effective integration of social media was difficult to find. In terms of solutions, Hong suggested that the first step would be train teacher educators about the practices and strategies of using social media. Starting from there, teacher education programs, even certification programs, could be established to further prepare more foreign language teachers about how to adopt social media in their teaching.

Another potential challenge Hong identified was the lack of connection between using social media and teaching foreign language in an immersion classroom.

Not sure but if it also had something to do with the grade levels that we're working with. I mean, immersion, right now we are working with K and 1 so very young kids who don't really have a cell phone yet or who do not have the computer. They don't really spend a lot of time in front of computer or with a cell phone yet so they're pretty young so things might change when they hit middle school because everybody has, it's all about those devices, electronic devices. So that's another thing I think I could add is the age group that we're working with. They're not there yet (Interview, 8/20/2013).

Hong believed that for young learners who were in kindergarten and first grade, social media could not be integrated easily with a meaningful purpose. These young learners didn't have the access or spend much time in using social media. Therefore, teacher participants who were going to teach in this immersion settings might not be interested in exploring the benefits of using social media in their teaching. The benefits and challenges that Hong identified represented her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. These beliefs were closely related to Hong's beliefs about foreign language teaching, learning, and teacher education.

#### Connections between Hong's Beliefs about the Social Media Integration and Foreign Language Learning, Teaching, and Teacher Education

Hong's beliefs about the inevitable and spontaneous nature of social media were manifested in her beliefs about foreign language learning, teaching, and teacher education. As both foreign language teacher and teacher educator, Hong paid much attention on the importance of learning a foreign language in the United States.

I think it's extremely important and it's becoming more and more important because historically, foreign language has not been treated as a core subject in the mainstream classrooms. And we have seen the disadvantage, the disservice that it has done to our students.

Nowadays, with the global connection and with, in [state], it's all about business, you know, cause kids grow up, they need to compete not only locally but also globally. If they can't speak and communicate

with people from outside of the United States, they are gonna be in big trouble (Interview, 7/11/2013).

Hong viewed foreign language learning as being part of a global competency for students who would grow up in the near future. She believed that for today's students, the lack of the ability to communicate with people in other countries and cultures would severely impact their success. To further support her argument, Hong described in detail how the state she currently works provided funding to initiate foreign language programs for K-12 students.

So the governor is super supportive of foreign language, especially Chinese and Spanish because there are established business relationships with many companies in China already and there's an increasing Chinese population here in [state]. So he dedicated \$1.9 million every year in the ten year whole language expansion initiative to increase the number of students learning Chinese and Spanish and most likely French for next year ... a major component is an immersion program. Basically students spend half of the day learning the content area in the targeted language and the other half of the day learning English language arts plus they get constant reinforcement. And it's been working well so far. For now, they, for Chinese program, we have five schools already and the number is supposed to increase next year and the goal is to by 2015, Spanish plus Chinese, 20 schools. Another component is that middle school part so for schools who do not have Chinese right now, they get funding to have online Chinese

offering to their middle school students. We contracted with Middlebury Interactive Language Learning and it's been going on for a year. The feedback is overwhelmingly positive. Cause just middle school kids are so excited to be able to learn a foreign language because it's not traditionally offered in middle schools. So that's gonna shape the landscape of language, foreign language learning and teaching in [state] in the next decade because when the students, you know, when they enter middle school and they enter high school, when they go to higher education, that requires, you know, the higher education to respond in a way that they cannot teach in the way they're teaching right now...the University of [state] is responding ... trying to create a master's degree program for foreign language teaching with a concentration for Chinese to meet the teacher supply needs ... three more state led Chinese immersion in the country, Arizona, Georgia and South Carolina. There are many districts in those programs and many independent schools are doing the same thing. Or even charter schools. So it's changing because people know that they cannot to be able to just be English anymore. Greg Roberts, I quote her, from Utah, so he is the education associate out of the Department of Education in Utah. So he said that the new illiteracy in the new century is monolingualism (Interview, 7/11/2013).

Based on the above excerpt, from immersion programs, middle school programs, to master degree certification programs for foreign language teachers, the state Hong is

working showed an obvious emphasis on initiating foreign language programs for the students and teacher preparation programs for the foreign language teachers. Hong also mentioned that several other states and school districts were also in the process of creating foreign language programs, which indicated, from a practical aspect, that monolingualism (English) is out of date for 21<sup>st</sup> century students who need global competency when they grow up. This belief in the importance of foreign language teaching influenced Hong's beliefs about how to use social media. Since 21<sup>st</sup> century students are quite familiar with social media (Pew Research Center, 2012), it is logical to believe in the benefits of social media when it is integrated in foreign language teaching.

For foreign language teaching, Hong strongly against the traditional language teaching methods which used paper and drill practices as much as possible. Recalling her experiences in learning English as a foreign language, Hong complained that:

It was very traditional. Basically, it was a lot of teacher centered whole school, whole class instruction. There was a textbook that goes page by page and different exams that we have to take. It was a lot more like grammar focused and vocabulary drill. To be honest, it was so boring, those classes, and listening and speaking was not specifically taught (Interview, 7/11/2013).

Regarding foreign language teaching, Hong thought the paper and drill practice was nothing but boring to students. Without connecting to real life situation, the traditional way of teaching foreign language (English in her case) was not effective

and engaging. She explicitly described the ideal way of teaching a foreign language in the first interview:

So when I walk into a classroom, first of all, she has to speak only in the target language. I don't wanna hear any English. That's just like bad. So okay, she introduces something. So she's doing it by providing a lot of the visual support. For example, pictures, videos. And gestures and facial expressions and things like that. You know, just objects. An apple, this is an apple. So I think that's great. Any language. Even though I don't speak that language, I sit there for five minutes, I got, I learned a few words. So that's what I wanna see. Something I don't appreciate much is that a teacher does too much drill...I don't think that's a good teaching. The good teaching is that the teacher gives the students, to give them the tools. Those are the vocabulary, those are the sentences. Let me give you an example. I saw a lesson I really like. The teacher has a picture. So students have learned the shapes, numbers, colors and they have the sentence frame, I see or I like. So two of them are put in a pair to discuss about a picture they see. This is a real life situation. So they say okay, I like red. I like red, blue. I see white. Something. Okay, so the kids have a conversation to describe something they see in front of them. So a good lesson should push the students to use the sentences in real life situations. So the teachers have to be very creative when she designs the activities for students to be engaged (Interview, 7/11/2013).

In her mind, a good foreign language teacher would engage students in the learning process with many activities that provided an authentic connection and real life purpose for students to use the target language. Further, she emphasized the idea of teacher speaking the target language 100% during instruction. The most difficult part for foreign language teachers, Hong considered, was how to make the input comprehensible while keep using the target language all the time. She suggested to use strategies such as providing visual cues by presenting photos and real items that representing the vocabulary word and physical gestures and expressions. These thoughts from Hong indicated that she valued a communicative approach of teaching the target language which laid the focus on learning language through social interaction and meaningful communication. Social media has been proved to be useful in enhancing communication by reducing the physical distance and providing instantaneous interaction through the Internet. It is not difficult to link social media with foreign language teaching when facilitating communication is taking into consideration. Hong's beliefs about the usefulness of integrating social media into foreign language teacher education clearly relies on her beliefs about how foreign language should be taught. Her beliefs about the importance of meaningful and authentic communication made it easier for Hong to embrace social media's advantages in foreign language teaching and teacher education.

Hong also pointed out many hurdles that impacted the current foreign language teacher education, especially for Chinese teachers.

To be honest, I don't think the system we have right now does a very good job. Preparing, especially Chinese language teachers. First of all,

there's such a huge hurdle for them to jump through, and wonderful teachers work in weekend schools for 20 years but they just can't get a job in a public school because they don't have citizenship and they couldn't have the certification because their English. They can't pass Praxis one and another difficulty is they got their bachelor's degree in China and it's not accredited in the United States. It's not considered as valuable as what they have here. So those are two huge hurdles to have to jump before they can get a certification...But for a lot of teachers, they are just walking and looking around, trying to figure out the next step because nobody tells them what might be ahead of them, you know. So that part of the training, I think, could be strengthened. And also to get information about certification and how to jump over those hoops to get to where they wanna be. And another difficulty, I think teachers apply because, because right now, the majority of the Chinese language teacher pool are from China, Taiwan. They were not educated. They were not born and educated here in the United States so they have difficulty understanding different framework and to integrate and really feel like they're a part of the school, they're a part of the community. And another issue is job security. They've got jobs but perhaps they'll lose it next year because budget cut or anything like that. So policymaking levels, institutional, higher education level (Interview, 7/11/2013).

Hong was not satisfied with the current way of foreign language teacher education for Chinese teachers. She listed many potential areas that needed to be strengthened, including difficult to get certified to teach Chinese due to the low proficiency in English, Chinese teacher qualification and degree in China were not valued, Chinese teachers lacked the support and guidance from teacher educators, difficulty in adapting to different philosophical systems and values, and the insecurity of jobs. Although it is almost impossible to overcome all these hurdles by using social media, according to Hong's beliefs, some of these problems could be solved by integrating social media with foreign language teacher education. For example, Hong discussed her beliefs regarding the powerful influence that social media had on extend learning beyond classroom. By establishing an online forum, Chinese teachers could search for help from other experienced teachers and teacher educators and exchange ideas even course materials to support each other, which was evident in Hong's teacher program where Dropbox, Google Doc, YouTube and many other social media were used to encourage sharing among participants. Chinese teachers may also use social media to learn more knowledge about the certification process and cultural differences in the United States. Overall, Hong's beliefs about foreign language learning, teaching, and teacher education were closely related to her beliefs about the integration of social media in foreign language teacher education.

*Comparing Hong's Beliefs and Practice about the Integration of Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education*

Although her definitions of social media and technology were interrelated and entangled together closely, Hong paid special attention on the values of social media

integration in foreign language teacher education. She perceived that social media could be beneficial in connecting teacher participants and encourage sharing and learning beyond the classroom. In her teaching practice in PC, although Hong didn't particularly planned deliberately for social media integration, a variety of social media were used formally and informally throughout the program. Hong adopted Google Drive and Dropbox to share resources between instructors and teacher participants, while utilizing Facebook and QQ for building personal connections with teacher participants. These spontaneous integration of social media indicates that she believed in the natural adoption of social media in foreign language teacher education.

In the follow up interview, when she was asked to give an estimate of how much social media she used in PC, Hong clearly stated that "I would say around 30 to 40% we used it [social media]" (4/16/2013). Considering the technical difficulties PC had and the unplanned nature, 40% demonstrates a high percentage of social media integration. Thus, it seems that Hong's beliefs about the advantages of integrating social media were fully enacted in her teaching practice by her unplanned use of social media both formally and informally. Overall, she noted that the teacher program was "successful" and "the teachers were pretty happy and is surprised at how much they have learned" (Interview, 8/20/2013).

### Summary of Chapter 7

Hong believed in the huge potential and the spontaneous ways of the social media integration while admitting many existing challenges that could hinder the integration process. Hong's actual teaching practice were aligned with her beliefs

about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Hong's case is particularly interesting in that although she didn't specifically plan to use social media, the spontaneous adoption of various social media enhanced her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. From this case, it is clear that Hong's beliefs were reinforced when she identified the benefits that social media brought to the teacher participants both formally and informally. Thus, it suggests that teacher beliefs may be changed according to the result of the teaching practice. In other words, if positive results about a certain belief are found, teachers may feel more confident about that belief. Therefore, if foreign language teachers have the opportunity to explore the advantages of using social media by seeing its application and purposeful integration, they will be more likely to incorporate social media in their teaching.

## Chapter 8: Cross-case Analysis

In the previous four chapters, I described four participants' beliefs system about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education and how their beliefs impacted their teaching practice in STARTALK summer teacher programs. In this chapter, based on the analytical methods explained in Chapter Three, I discuss the emerging themes based on cross-case analysis of the four individual cases and answer my three research questions.

The goal of this study was to explore how four instructors use social media in their STARTALK teacher programs and what differences and similarities can be identified between their beliefs and practice about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Three research questions were addressed: 1) What beliefs do four STARTALK instructors have about social media and foreign language teacher education? 2) How do four STARTALK instructors integrate social media in their teacher programs? 3) What differences and similarities can be identified between four STARTALK instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education?

Overall, all four instructor held strong beliefs about the importance of foreign language learning in the United States. All four participants expressed explicitly that learning a foreign language would be beneficial in many aspects including: broadening one's view, doubling one's knowledge, increasing global competency, and helping people better understand other culture (Participants Interviews). It is important to note that, even though the degree of social media integration varied from case to case, all four participants cared about their teacher participants and always

tried to provide positive learning experiences. For example, all four participants emphasized the real-life connection and authenticity when designing and planning a lesson or instructional activity. During the online observations, all four participants tried to engage teacher participants with meaningful tasks that they could apply to their own foreign language teaching (Observation Notes). Specifically, Catherine introduced how to create a rubric and made teacher participants realized how they could use rubrics in their teaching; Dawn and Emily explained the Wiki and encouraged teacher participants to share their ideas; Hong adopted a variety of social media to build the connection between foreign language teaching and her instruction. Furthermore, the findings from four cases depicts a mixed result in that some instructors' beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education differed from their teaching practices, while others' beliefs aligned with their practices closely. In the following sections, major themes emerged from the cross-case analysis for each of the three research questions are discussed. These themes were analyzed based on constant comparison of the findings of four individual cases.

*Research Question 1: What Beliefs Do Four STARTALK Instructors Have about Social Media and Foreign Language Teacher Education?*

Synthesizing from four individual cases, three themes can be found in relation to my first research question: 1) participants used the terms social media and technology interchangeably, 2) participants believed that social media is beneficial in facilitating collaboration and communication in foreign language teacher education,

and 3) participants believed that integrating social media with foreign language teacher education is challenging.

#### Participants Used the Terms Social Media and Technology Interchangeably

Based on the four individual cases that were presented from Chapter Four to Seven, three instructors (Catherine, Dawn, and Hong) used the term social media interchangeably with the term technology. They all defined social media in a broad way that, to some degree, is difficult to differentiate with the term technology. Only one instructor, Emily, showed a relatively better understanding of the term social media.

Catherine conceptualized the term *social media* in a broad way that could include all of the things that one can charge and plug in and connect to using a wireless internet connection, such as texting, Facebook and Twitter, and also reported her observations regarding the prevalent use of social media among her students (Interview, 7/7/2013). Catherine's definition of social media includes everything that can be used with a wireless Internet connection, which is not clear to differentiate with the term technology. In her interviews, she sometimes used the two terms, social media and technology, interchangeably without making a distinction. Similar to Catherine, Dawn also defined social media in her interviews as a broad concept that included tools and applications more than Facebook and Twitter (7/12/2013). Hong also considered media as a broad term that people couldn't avoid to use in today's world. Using her own experiences with various technology (computers, smartphone, iPad) and social media (Facebook, Twitter, QQ, Skype, LinkedIn, Animoto), Hong was absolutely aware of different social media and had been using them frequently

for her personal purposes (Online Questionnaire, 7/1/2013). However, Hong seemed to interchangeably use the two terms, technology and social media. She perceived that social media and technology couldn't be differentiated easily by drawing a clear line between the two. Each time Hong talked about social media, she connected it to things such as computers, iPads, and smartphones which were technology devices used to access social media. Although Hong showed a rather unclear conceptualization of social media, she perceived that social media "like an invisible net that really connected us" (Interview, 8/20/2013).

Emily, on the other hand, had a relatively clearer conceptualization towards social media. She mentioned that "social media is the use of technology in such a way that people can interact with one another regardless of whether they are next to each other" (Interview, 7/10/2013). Emily defined that social media was a kind of technology that served as reducing the physical distance among people. With the emphasis on facilitating communication and interaction among people, Emily pointed out one of the distinguishing features of social media. Moreover, Emily conceptualized social media within the context of foreign language teaching and learning and concluded that social media was effective when used in foreign language teaching and learning because both social media and language were about communication. Although Emily expressed a better understanding about social media, the majority of the instructors demonstrated an ambiguous perception about social media and its core features, which may impact their beliefs about and the practice of the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

Participants Believed that Social Media is Beneficial in Facilitating  
Collaboration and Communication in Foreign Language Teacher Education

Comparing all four instructors' beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, a major potential benefit that all participants agreed upon is that social media can facilitate collaboration and communication in foreign language teacher education.

Catherine summarized the benefits of using social media in foreign language teacher education as: 1) social media could be used as “back channel option of communicating” in teacher or teacher educators' professional discussion, especially in “a panel discussion or something and you've got these sort of multiple conversations going on” (Interview, 7/7/2013); 2) sharing knowledge and information using “Wiki” and “Google Doc” (Interview, 7/29/2013); 3) extending the learning “outside of classroom” (Interview, 7/29/2013); and 4) social media could contribute to a more “enriched discussion because they [students] were bringing up authentic materials” (Interview, 7/7/2013). All these benefits validate the argument that social media is beneficial in enhancing communication and collaboration.

Dawn valued the instantaneous and collaborative feature of social media, which supported the real life communication in foreign language teaching and teacher education. The ability to connect with people who speak the target language instantly using social media could help learners use foreign language in meaningful and authentic practices, get better understanding of the target culture, thus, enhance the language learning. By acknowledging the popularity of social media in young students and even many teachers, Dawn considered it was valuable to use social

media in foreign language teaching and teacher education. With the advantages of social media, Dawn believed that it could easily motivate foreign language learners and teachers and thus facilitate their collaboration and communication.

Emily, in her mind, emphasized the value of social media in foreign language education because both social media and foreign language education relied heavily upon communication. She stated that the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education would be effective if social media was adopted to enhance communication for a real life purpose. Hong also believed that social media was used by everyone to a natural degree that it became a major component of foreign language teacher's life nowadays which couldn't be excluded. Widely adopted by everyone, social media is indeed "an invisible net" that connect different people together (Interview, 8/20/2013). Further, Hong concluded that using social media could reduce the physical distance for communication and interaction. Based on her personal experiences, Hong held a positive attitude to embrace the adoption of social media in connecting to family members and friends because she witnessed the increasing demands of using social media among digital natives and the "I" generation (Interview, 7/11/2013).

The four instructors clearly stated the benefits that social media could bring to foreign language teacher education, including reducing physical distance, engaging and motivating learners, enhancing communication, facilitating collaboration, and building a "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger 1991). Besides all these positive beliefs, the four instructors also identified many challenges when integrating social media in foreign language teacher education.

## Participants Posited that Integrating Social Media with Foreign Language Teacher Education is Challenging

In general, all four instructors agreed that there were many hurdles that existed when integrating social media with foreign language teacher education. These challenges include: 1) lack of support and necessary guidance, 2) different levels of acceptance in using social media, 3) contextual challenges for K-12 schools, and 4) contextual challenges for STARTALK programs.

*Lack of support and necessary guidance.* All four instructors emphasized the fact that lack of support and guidance was challenging when integrating social media with foreign language teacher education. Catherine specifically expressed her concerns about the responsible use of social media and how the presence of social media could affect classroom management. In her opinion, since social media had already been used by students, foreign language teachers needed guidance and help with how to incorporate these social media tools into their teaching, especially how to manage the classroom when social media was used (Interview, 7/29/2013). She believed that only through classroom management and the teacher's meaningful use of social media could they make learning and teaching different and purposeful. However, foreign language teachers often didn't have the opportunity to be trained with the necessary knowledge about how to integrate social media in their teaching.

Dawn, along the same line, argued that modeling and scaffolding became particularly challenging in a STARTALK teacher-training program when social media was concerned. In order to integrate social media in foreign language teaching and learning, teachers needed to know how to use social media first before they

adopted them. This challenge, in Dawn's mind, could only be overcome by purposeful differentiation that would take a lot of time. In other words, for teacher participants who had little expertise in social media, teacher educators needed to model step-by-step and explicitly link the social media with foreign language teaching and learning.

Emily particularly emphasized the importance of teacher support for novice teachers and preservice teachers. She addressed that mentoring and explicit guidance would help preservice and novice teachers to better understand what kinds of social media were effective when used in foreign language teaching. She further explained that novice and preservice teachers needed to learn from master teacher and establish a support group to get help from teacher educators, school administrators, master teachers, and other peers. She envisioned that social media integration couldn't be stopped, thus, foreign language teachers and teacher educators might need more help in understanding how to best integrate various social media.

Hong further pointed out that teacher training for the specific use of social media in foreign language teaching was scarce and teachers needed guidance and training in how to use social media in foreign language teaching. She explicitly stated that the challenge was not derived from the social media itself but from the people who were using it. Therefore, specific training on the subject of social media was the only way to help foreign language teachers and teacher educators realize the benefits (Interview, 8/20/2013). Without the necessary guidance from teacher educator, teachers were lost in figuring out which and in what ways social media could be used in their classrooms. Thus, Hong concluded that lack of qualified teacher educators

also directly influence the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

*Different levels of acceptance in using social media.* Catherine, Dawn, Emily, and Hong addressed the issue of different levels of social media acceptance when integrating social media with foreign language teacher education. Catherine noticed a significant difference in an individual's willingness to learn social media and integrate it into language teaching among her teacher participants. Dawn claimed that it was difficult to motivate teacher participants in PB to use social media (the Wiki, Twitter) due to the various levels of social media usage and experiences among teacher participants. Emily reported different degrees of acceptance for using social media from both K-12 students and teacher participants. Emily also found a certain level of resistance or indifferent attitude towards the integration of social media from participants in PB. In her interviews, she even showed her concern that the teacher participants in PB might not use any social media after the program ended (7/30/2013).

Echoing the other three participants, Hong argued that the lack of connection between using social media and teaching foreign language in an immersion classroom might impact the actual integration. Hong believed that for young learners who were in kindergarten and first grade, social media could not be integrated easily with a meaningful purpose. These young learners didn't have the access or spend much time in using social media. Therefore, teacher participants who were going to teach in this immersion settings might not be interested in exploring the benefits of using social media in their teaching. From K-12 students to foreign language teachers, the three

instructors thought that the various age groups and individual differences resulted in different acceptance levels of using social media. This particular challenge is indeed influencing the integration of social media with foreign language teacher education.

*Contextual challenges for K-12 schools.* Besides the aforementioned challenges, all four instructors, to some degree, confirmed that contextual challenges for K-12 schools might hinder the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Catherine believed that contextual factors such as K-12 school policies and restrictions were challenging when integrating social media. In her interviews, Catherine, more than once pointed out that K-12 schools wouldn't promote the use of social media because it was a potential challenge for the school to provide technical support and necessary equipment to fulfill the integration of social media and foreign language teaching (Interview, 2/27/2014). Dawn reinforced Catherine's points and claimed that K-12 school policies sometimes restricted teachers from integrating social media in their classrooms. As a result, social media's role in foreign language education program was further weakened. From Dawn's point of view, because most foreign language teachers could not use social media, such as YouTube and Twitter, in K-12 school settings, it was difficult to adopt social media in K-12 foreign language classrooms. Dawn declared that foreign language teachers, even those who were really enthusiastic about using social media in their teaching, needed to go through tedious negotiation with school administration. Emily also expressed the concern that her teacher participants wouldn't be able to use social media when they go back to their K-12 classroom settings and lack of internet access and technical support. Hong further explained that because social media was often

excluded from immersion programs in K-12 schools, her teacher participants faced challenges when trying to incorporate social media in their foreign language teaching. The technical difficulties and the school restrictions on how teachers could use social media made it difficult for the integration of social media.

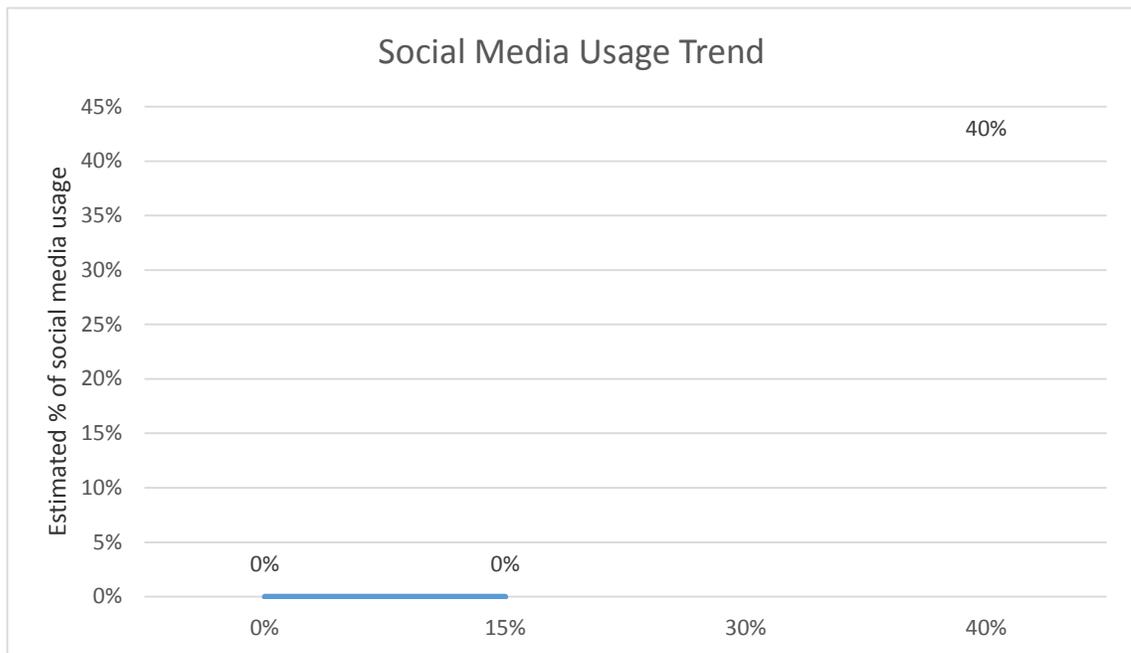
*Contextual challenges for STARTALK programs.* According to all four instructors, the short duration of the STARTALK teacher program also adds difficulty to the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. In all the interviews and observations from the four instructors, the short duration was identified as a major barrier. In all three STARTALK teacher programs (PA, PB, and PC), teacher participants were busy learning new knowledge and applying it to their own situation in one to two weeks. In such a short time period, it was already hard to convey all the pre-planned content and knowledge, let alone the integration of social media. All four instructors mentioned that they would spend more time in planning and integrating social media if more time was provided. In addition, the lack of technical support person and internet access are also identified as challenges for the social media integration with STARTALK teacher program. All four instructors showed concerns about the limited internet (wireless) connection at each program site. More specifically, Hong elaborated that the lack of authorization to install software on the computer was a huge challenge to her integration of social media in PC.

In summary, the four instructors believed that social media had many benefits as well as challenges when integrated with foreign language teacher education. Although the beliefs varied from case to case, the four instructors overall showed a

positive attitude towards the adoption of social media in foreign language teaching. As far as the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education is concerned, four instructors differed in their beliefs, ranging from an indifferent view (Dawn), to a pragmatic one (Emily), to a spontaneous one (Hong), and to a conflicting one (Catherine). More specifically, Dawn showed an indifferent attitude towards the usage of social media when training foreign language teachers and believed that social media is only one of the tools that foreign language teachers needed to be aware of. Dawn only used the Wiki and Twitter as the program requirement and didn't fully integrate the social media with more explicit instruction and various purposes. Emily always tried to find a pragmatic way of integrating social media with a meaningful purpose in real life situation. A good case in point is the scenario where Emily integrated Twitter, QR code, and Sticky Note activity together to engage teacher participants to share their ideas about the national and local standards for foreign language teaching. Hong demonstrated her beliefs about integrating social media in foreign language teacher education in a spontaneous way while she adopted a variety of social media without a detailed plan before PC started. Catherine held an enthusiastic attitude towards the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, but didn't use any social media in PA. Next, I describe four instructors' teaching practice in STARTALK teacher programs in relation to social media integration.

Research Question 2: How Do Four STARTALK Instructors Integrate Social Media in Their Teacher Programs?

Regarding the teaching practice of using social media in STARTALK teacher program, four instructors showed a linear trend on the level of integration. Specially, the overall usage of social media in four different cases ranges from Catherine's no usage, to Dawn's 15%, then to Emily's 30%, and finally to Hong's 40%. *Figure 8.1* demonstrates the increasing usage trend among the four individual participants based on the estimated percentage of social media usage in their programs.



*Figure 24* Social Media Usage Trend

In PA, there was no requirement of using social media. Although Catherine held strong beliefs in the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, she didn't actually use any social media. However, she did report about 8% of usage for other technology (e.g. PowerPoint, Digital Camera). In PB, Dawn

and Emily were required to use the program Wiki and Twitter. The incorporation of social media including the Wiki and Twitter was a decision made by the instructional team (four instructors) not by Dawn or Emily alone. In PB, the Wiki was used for the purpose of sharing resources and collecting some reading responses (not a mandatory task though) from participants and Twitter was used with the goal of enhancing communication and ideas exchange. Although Dawn and Emily were in the same program, their usage of social media differed in a noticeable way. Dawn claimed a 15% of social media usage and only used the Wiki and Twitter as originally planned by the instructional team. She didn't put much emphasis on advocating the adoption of these social media, nor did she integrate social media other than the Wiki and Twitter. On the contrary, Emily mentioned 25% to 30% social media usage and embedded the use of social media in a well-designed and purposeful approach to enhance the communication among teacher participants. She tried to merge different social media (the Wiki, Twitter, Answer Garden) together to compare the different uses of certain social media with a careful plan. By clearly making the connections between Twitter, QR code, the Wiki, and sticky note activity, Emily demonstrated her expertise in planning and delivering instructions from which her beliefs in purposeful integration of social media and foreign language teacher education could clearly be seen. Nonetheless, both Dawn and Emily didn't fully bring all the potentials of social media into teaching. For example, they didn't embrace the benefit that the Wiki could have on collaboration and opportunity for peer review (Mak & Coniam, 2008). However, they indicated that the main reason for the failure of the Wiki's

communication and collaboration was because teacher participants were difficult to be motivated or even reluctant to share their thoughts on the Wiki.

In PC, though social media was not required, Hong stated 30% to 40% of social media usage and adopted Facebook, QQ, LinkedIn, YouTube, Google Drive, and Dropbox without pre-planning. Because teacher participants were using these social media informally, Hong and the program director decided to integrate social media unexpectedly. According to Hong, Dropbox and Google Drive were widely used by instructors and teacher participants due to its benefits in file sharing, reducing the physical distance, and enhancing communication and connection within the group. Therefore, social media became “essential” (Interview, 8/20/2013) to PC even though it was not originally planned to be integrated. Facebook and QQ were used by teacher participants and instructors to post their pictures and comments of teaching in the PC student program due to its easy and instantaneous feature. LinkedIn was used to build personal and professional connections for teacher participants. YouTube was also adopted to post short video clips of teacher participants’ teaching and further reflections. By incorporating a variety of social media in her teaching, Hong clearly demonstrated her passion and enthusiasm on the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. After discussing the teaching practice of four instructors related to social media integration, I compare their beliefs and teaching practice and present the themes emerged from the comparison in the following section.

Research Question 3: What Differences and Similarities Can Be Identified between Four STARTALK Instructors' Beliefs about and Actual Practices of Integrating Social Media in Foreign Language Teacher Education?

By analyzing all the data from four participants to answer the third research question, three out of the four instructors (Dawn, Emily, and Hong)' beliefs aligned with their teaching practice in their 2013 STARTALK teacher programs while one instructor's (Catherine) beliefs differed from her teaching practice about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education.

Dawn's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were aligned with her teaching practice in PB. In her teaching practice in PB, Dawn only used the Wiki as a resource center for all teacher participants to access program related materials. Although she added the discussion and edit features in the Wiki, Dawn didn't push teacher participants too much to share their ideas. She showed an indifferent attitude toward Twitter and wasn't actively involved in the tweeting process. This limited usage of social media in teaching matched with Dawn's beliefs about the integration of social media. She took a rather neutral way to acknowledge social media, valuing its popularity and some educational benefits in foreign language teaching while believing in a gradual process for social media to be integrated with foreign language teacher education. Because of the wide acceptance of social media among students, Dawn believed that social media could play a role in foreign language classrooms and foreign language teachers should be aware of various social media to keep up with their students. She valued social media based on its advantages in facilitating communication in foreign language teaching

and learning. Although she understood and thought highly of the collaboration and communication feature of social media, she considered social media as just one of the tools that foreign language teachers and teacher educators could use.

Emily's case was overall consistent in that her beliefs in foreign language teaching, learning, teacher education, and the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were all aligned together and enacted in her teaching practices. She perceived herself as an open-minded foreign language teacher and teacher educator who was willing to learn new skills and knowledge to make her teaching better. This kind of belief played an important role in forming her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. She chose a pragmatic approach when conceptualizing social media and its benefits in foreign language teacher education. She showed a welcoming attitude toward social media and she felt that she need to adopt social media when she found the meaningful purposes of using it. She realized the integration of social media could not be stopped, thus, the better way to deal with it was to learn to use them and design purposeful plans to make them effective. As *Figure 8.1* demonstrates, Emily incorporated more social media than Dawn while they were teaching in the same program.

Hong's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education also aligned with her teaching practice. She paid special attention on the values of spontaneous social media integration in foreign language teacher education. She believed that social media could be beneficial in connecting teacher participants and extending learning beyond the classroom. In her teaching practice in PC, although Hong didn't particularly planned deliberately for social media

integration, a variety of social media were used formally and informally throughout the program. She adopted Google Drive and Dropbox to share resources with teacher participants and utilized Facebook and QQ for building personal connections with teacher participants. The unplanned and informal use of social media in PC demonstrated that Hong's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education enacted her teaching practice. Teachers' frequent use of social media, as Hong reported, would help them to share their beliefs, influence each other's practice, and eventually build a support community in foreign language teaching. Hong's active participation in using social media informally was beneficial in connecting with teacher participants and building positive relationship between her and participants.

Contrary to the previous three cases, Catherine's case was unique because of the conflicting facts that while she held strong beliefs in the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, she didn't use any social media in her STARTALK teacher program. Catherine was enthusiastic about trying new technology in foreign language teaching and teacher education. However, due to the fact that she had to work with colleagues to co-design the curriculum and followed the required STARTALK procedure, and the unclear conceptualizations of social media and technology, she was unable to adopt social media as much as she wanted to. This dilemma also indicates that the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education depends on many factors, some of which may be outside of the instructor's control. Therefore, even if instructors have strong beliefs in using social media in foreign language teacher education, they need to overcome many

obstacles beyond the pedagogical level of how to use social media, such as lack of tech support and lack of internet access, individual differences among participants, school policies and rules, and program length. Catherine's case is the only one that beliefs and practice were not matched due to the first-order and second-order barriers that were discussed in previous chapters (Ertmer et al., 2001). This special case calls for more research on exploring the impact that first-order and second-order barriers have on instructors' beliefs (Ertmer et al., 2001).

### Summary of Chapter 8

In this Chapter, I analyzed across the four individual cases and explained the major themes that emerged from the cross-case analysis. Although four individual instructors' actual use of social media differed from case to case, they all believed that there were many benefits as well as challenges when integrating social media with foreign language teacher education. The benefits include enhancing communication and interaction, facilitating collaboration, and building a teacher-support community. The challenges consist of lack of necessary training and support, individual differences in accepting and incorporating social media among teachers, and contextual factors for both K-12 schools and STARTALK programs, such as school policy and restrictions, lack of time and access, and technical difficulties. Comparing four instructors' beliefs and practices of the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, it is worth noticing that the majority of them demonstrated an alignment whereas one instructor showed a clear conflict between their beliefs and practices. All the analysis together reinforced the argument that teacher belief is a "messy construct" (Pajares, 1992).

The findings of this study support two major arguments that previous researchers made: 1) teacher beliefs about teaching and learning have the potential to guide teacher decisions made about the teaching and learning process, along with selection of specific content (Smith, 2005). When instructors' beliefs were aligned with their teaching practice (Dawn, Emily, and Hong), their instructional decisions were directly influenced by their beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Furthermore, the three instructors conscientiously tried to align their beliefs about social media integration with their actual teaching practice, thus making instructional goals more likely to be accomplished (Saroyan & Amundsen, 2001); and 2) the relationship between beliefs and their teaching practice is complicated (Norton et al., 2005), where teachers' beliefs about technology did not always match up with their teaching practice (Ertmer, Gopalakrishnan, & Ross, 2001).

## Chapter 9: Discussion

In this Chapter, I first provide a synthesis of all the findings based on the individual case analysis and cross-case analysis of the four different cases in the Discussion section. Then, I connect the findings of this study to foreign language teaching and teacher education research and practice by drawing implications to research as well as practice. Following that, I present the limitations of this study. Finally, I offer conclusions as the closure of the study.

### Discussion

#### Findings from Individual Cases

In this section, I synthesize all the findings from the individual analysis for each of the four cases. The four individual cases are presented in the order of: Catherine, Dawn, Emily, and Hong.

*Catherine's case.* Catherine's took an enthusiastic attitude towards the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education while having a vague definition of social media. Her beliefs about building the "community of practice" to support teacher participants were clearly reflected in her teaching practice. It was evident that her beliefs about foreign language teaching and teacher education were aligned with each other consistently throughout the program. Data collected from primary (Curriculum Template) and secondary reports (Final Report, Site Visit Report) also provided indirect evidence of Catherine's beliefs and practices in building the "community". Moreover, she identified many educational benefits as well as challenges regarding the integration of social media and foreign language

teacher education. The benefits included: 1) social media could be used as a “back channel option of communicating” in teacher or teacher educators’ professional discussions, especially in “a panel discussion or something and you’ve got these sort of multiple conversations going on” (Interview, 7/7/2013); 2) sharing knowledge and information using “Wiki pages” and “Google Doc” (Interview, 7/29/2013); 3) extending the learning “outside of classroom” (Interview, 7/29/2013); 4) social media could contribute to a more “enriched discussion because they [students] were bringing up authentic materials” (Interview, 7/7/2013); and 5) help teachers build a “support network” (Interview, 2/27/2014). The challenges are: 1) classroom management and responsibly using technology and social media; 2) lack of technical support and access; 3) school policies and restrictions; 4) short duration of STARTALK program; and 5) age differences in using social media.

However, Catherine’s case was particularly interesting because of the conflicting fact that she claimed that she didn’t use any social media in her STARTALK teacher program while she held strong beliefs in the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. From this case, it is worth noticing that contextual factors, such as peer collaboration and pressure, limited access to internet, and specific program requirements needing to be fulfilled in a relatively short period of time, had huge impact on how an experienced teacher educator, like Catherine, made her instructional decisions about whether or not to integrate social media. Moreover, the fact that Catherine didn’t have a clear distinction between social media and technology in general might have influence on her beliefs about the integration of social media and her teaching practice in PA.

*Dawn's case.* Dawn believed that the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education was a “ramping up” process, which would happen gradually by overcoming many challenges (Interview, 7/12/2013). She considered social media as “another thing” among various technology tools that foreign language teacher could use in their teaching (Interview, 7/12/2013). Although she indicated positive feelings about the use of social media (the Wiki and Twitter) in PB, Dawn seems to take an indifferent approach towards social media and believed in a gradual process for the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Dawn's beliefs of the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education were aligned with her teaching practice in PB. During the two online observations, she only used the Wiki for the purpose of introducing the site and content to all participants (Observation Notes, 7/20/2013, 7/23/2013). Further, she estimated that she used social media about 15% in her teaching in PB (Interview, 4/9/2014). Regardless of the reasons why she held beliefs about the gradual process of the integration of social media, it was consistent that Dawn chose to view social media as only one of the tools in foreign language teachers' bag. She took a neutral approach to acknowledge social media, valuing its popularity and some educational benefits in foreign language teaching while perceiving its “ramping up” integration with foreign language teacher education (Interview, 7/12/2013).

Dawn's case was unique at both belief and practice level. Regarding the beliefs about social media, on one hand, she acknowledged the social benefits that social media had on foreign language learning due to students' increasing adoption of social media; on the other hand, she held beliefs that foreign language teachers only

needed to be aware of the advantages of social media. In terms of practice, while Dawn used the Wiki and Twitter in PB, she didn't implement the full potential of both social media. For example, as Wiki is demonstrated to be helpful in increasing students' motivation and accountability when being integrated to writing assignments (Arnold, Ducate & Kost, 2009; Kessler, 2009; Lund, 2008; Mak & Coniam, 2008; Martinsen & Miller, 2012), Dawn only adopted the Wiki as a resource center in PB. It is clear based on the online observations and interviews that Dawn's beliefs were enacted throughout her teaching practice in PB. Her indifferent attitude and beliefs towards the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education influenced her teaching practice and lead to the underdevelopment of the Wiki and Twitter usage in PB.

This case suggests that teacher beliefs play a vital role in influencing their teaching practices. Dawn's internal beliefs about social media and its application to foreign language teacher education played as the strongest barrier to keep her from fully integrating social media. Furthermore, Dawn's case also indicates that many teacher educators, even like Dawn who perceived herself as a technology "nerd" (Interview, 7/12/2013), often show a rather limited understanding about the potential benefits that social media has on foreign language teaching and teacher education. Social media's participatory nature are supported by socio-cultural theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). Social media can be useful for foreign language teacher education in creating and sharing ideas, supporting community building, and enabling the dissemination of learner-generated content, (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007). Therefore, in order to systemically form a pipeline of well-trained foreign language

teachers, more professional development programs need to be established with an emphasis on how to integrate social media in foreign language teaching and strategies of changing teacher beliefs about social media integration. Purposeful and explicit guidance in demonstrating the aforementioned educational benefits that social media enables will help foreign language teachers and teacher educators get a better understanding of social media, and thus, change their beliefs and attitudes towards the integration of social media.

*Emily's case.* Emily viewed the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education as inevitable and chose a positive and pragmatic attitude to accept and explore its potential in foreign language teacher education. Although she identified many challenges, Emily believed that social media would be effective when being implemented with detailed plans and meaningful purposes. Emily's beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education matched with her teaching practice in PB. As the Wiki and Twitter were required to use in PB according to the Curriculum Template and the overall State Annual Summer Seminar, Emily adopted it actively in her teaching. However, she wasn't satisfied with the results of using the Wiki and Twitter because the social functions were either not explored or realized in an engaging way. She claimed that she used 25% to 30% of social media for instructional purposes in 2013 PB (Interview, 3/25/2013). This estimated percentage could also be verified with the online observations. Emily constantly sought for other social media and technology to integrate in her teaching that she perceived to serve a better role in her instruction.

It is worth noticing that Emily's teaching practices were influenced by her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. The belief about the careful design and integration of social media and foreign language teacher education was consistently enacted in Emily's teaching practice and evident in the online observations. All her social media usage integrated in the instruction I observed was also targeted on the meaningful purpose and making connections between social media and foreign language teaching. This indicates that teacher beliefs indeed directly impact teaching practice. Thus, fostering certain beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education may be useful for teachers who are willing to learn new knowledge and skill. Moreover, foreign language teachers as well as foreign language teacher educators need to clearly see how to implement social media with a meaningful purpose before they can adopt any. When providing training on using social media in foreign language teacher education, a step-by-step demonstration and scaffolding may be helpful for teacher to better understand the effective way of using social media, thus increasing the chance of the actual social media integration in their teaching.

*Hong's case.* Regarding the beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, Hong embraced the idea that social media had many benefits and were inevitably woven into everyone's life. When integrated into foreign language teacher education, Hong believed that social media could be helpful in a spontaneous way. Although her definitions of social media and technology were difficult to separate from each other, Hong considered highly about the affordances of social media integration in foreign language teacher education. She perceived that

social media could be beneficial in connecting teacher participants and encourage sharing and learning beyond the classroom. In her teaching practice in PC, although Hong didn't particularly planned deliberately for social media integration, a variety of social media (Dropbox, Google Doc, YouTube, Facebook, QQ, LinkedIn) were used formally and informally throughout the program (estimated 30% to 40% social media integration), which verifies her beliefs about the natural adoption of social media in foreign language teacher education. It seems that Hong's beliefs about the advantages of integrating social media were fully enacted in her teaching practice by her unplanned use of social media both formally and informally.

Hong's case needs special attention because although she didn't specifically plan to use social media, the spontaneous adoption of various social media enhanced her beliefs about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. From this case, it is clear that Hong's beliefs were reinforced when she identified the benefits that social media brought to the teacher participants both formally and informally. Thus, teacher beliefs may be changed according to the result of the teaching practice. In other words, if positive results about a certain belief are found, teachers may feel more confident about that belief. Therefore, if foreign language teachers have the opportunity to explore the advantages of using social media by seeing its application and purposeful integration, they will be more likely to incorporate social media in their teaching.

#### Findings from Cross-case Analysis

Although four individual instructors' actual use of social media differed from case to case, they all believed that there were many benefits as well as challenges

when integrating social media with foreign language teacher education. Comparing four instructors' beliefs and practices of the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, the majority of them demonstrated an alignment whereas one instructor showed a clear conflict between beliefs and teaching practices.

To answer my research questions, the cross-case analysis was conducted under each of the three research questions of this study. For the first research question (What beliefs do four STARTALK instructors have about social media and foreign language teacher education?), three themes emerged from the analysis, including: 1) participants used the terms social media and technology interchangeably, 2) participants believed that social media is beneficial in facilitating collaboration and communication in foreign language teacher education, and 3) participants believed that integrating social media with foreign language teacher education is challenging. Three out of the four participants (Catherine, Dawn, and Hong) showed a rather unclear understanding about the term social media and often confused with the term technology. Only Emily seems to know better about what social media is and its distinguishing features. The vague definitions of social media indicate that foreign language teachers and teacher educators may need more guidance and step-by-step scaffolding on what affordances and challenges social media has on foreign language teaching and teacher education. Further, all four participants identified many benefits and challenges regarding the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. The benefits include enhancing communication and interaction, facilitating collaboration, and building a teacher-support community. Although all participants pointed out many potential educational benefits that social media could bring to

foreign language teaching and teacher education, only some of them were seen in their actual teaching practices. For example, Catherine mentioned many advantages while didn't integrate any social media in PA; Dawn considered the collaboration and participation benefits when implementing the Wiki in PB, but didn't encourage the collaboration feature while using the Wiki. This situation, again, calls for attention on specific training about how to incorporate social media in foreign language teacher education, especially what social media is beneficial for what purposes.

Moving from affordances to challenges, participants stated that the challenges consist of lack of necessary training and support, individual differences in accepting and incorporating social media among teachers, and contextual factors for both K-12 schools and STARTALK programs, such as school policy and restrictions, lack of time and access, and technical difficulties. Based on the analysis, two major challenges seems to be outstanding to all participants. All four participants indicated that the lack of necessary training and technical support on how to use social media in foreign language teaching and teacher education. This specific belief also coincides with the fact that the three out of participants have an unclear understanding of social media, which calls for more systematic training on various social media for different purposes. The second major challenge across the four cases is the K-12 school policy and restrictions on using social media. All four participants, to some degree, mentioned that it was difficult for foreign language teachers to integrate social media in K-12 school settings because of certain policies and restrictions. This particular challenge plays a key role in refraining foreign language teachers from being interested and motivated in learning how to use social media. By further examining

the challenges that participants stated, some challenges, such as the lack of training and support, and different acceptance levels, can be overcome by providing more professional development opportunities and purposeful training. However, the K-12 school policy and restrictions can not be easily changed considering the complex factors that influence the policy-making process. Therefore, this is by far the most outstanding challenge that hinders the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Contrary to Ertmer et al.'s (2001) argument about the influence that first-order barriers have on teacher beliefs, the findings of this study suggest that the first-order barriers, such as school context and policy, still play a primary role in keeping social media from being integrated into foreign language teacher education.

For the second research question (How do four STARTALK instructors integrate social media in their teacher programs?), the findings from the cross-case analysis demonstrates a linear trend regarding the level of social media integration among four cases. Basically, Catherine didn't integrate any social media in PA; Dawn only used the Wiki and Twitter for limited purposes in PB; Emily practically selected some social media (the Wiki, Twitter, Answer Garder) and technology tool (QR code) when she taught in PB; and Hong spontaneously adopted a variety of social media including Dropbox, Google Doc, YouTube, Facebook, QQ, LinkedIn. Though many social media were used in all four cases, the major goal for using those social media was focusing on enhancing communication and building connection. The collaboration feature of social media was scarcely seen across all cases, which, in my opinion, is one of the most beneficial feature when integrating social media and

foreign language teacher education. This also calls for more research and professional development on exploring the different purposes and methods of using social media in foreign language teacher education.

For the third research question (What differences and similarities can be identified between four STARTALK instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education?), three out of the four instructors (Dawn, Emily, and Hong)' beliefs aligned with their teaching practice in their 2013 STARTALK teacher programs while one instructor's (Catherine) beliefs differed from her teaching practice about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. Dawn's tactic beliefs about the integration of social media matched with her limited usage of social media (the Wiki and Twitter) in PB. Emily's pragmatic view of the social media integration aligned well with her purposeful use of social media (the Wiki, Twitter, Answer Garden) in PB. Hong's enthusiastic and spontaneous approach towards the integration were reflected in her natural incorporation of social media in PC. Catherine, being the only exception, presented conflicting beliefs and teaching practices in PA. While she held strong beliefs in the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, she didn't use any social media in her STARTALK teacher program. The cases where beliefs and practices were not matched confirms Ertmer et al.'s (2001) argument that teachers' beliefs often differed with their classroom practice about technology use. Findings from the cases where instructors' beliefs and practice aligned reinforced the claim about teachers' beliefs played an important role in instructional decision making in the teaching practice (Smith, 2005). In either case, more empirical research

is needed to further unravel the complicated relationship between teacher beliefs and teaching practices.

### Implications for Research

This study focused on exploring STARTALK instructors' beliefs and teaching practices about using social media in foreign language teacher education. By analyzing and triangulating all the data, several implications can be inferred for future research regarding teacher beliefs about social media and the integration with foreign language teaching and teacher education.

As discussed in previous section, all four instructors conceptualized social media as a broad term that sometimes was difficult to differentiate from technology. This vague definition indicates that all instructors didn't have a clear understanding of what can be identified as social media. In other words, they didn't know the distinguishing features that are unique to social media comparing to others, such as technology. This unclear conceptualization of social media needs further attention especially on how foreign language teachers and teacher educators differentiate the two terms, social media and technology. Without a better understanding of the concept, it will be difficult to persuade foreign language teachers and teacher educators to integrate social media in their teaching. Thus, more research is needed to tap into foreign language teacher and teacher educator's beliefs about various social media and technology tools in order to differentiate the two terms.

The findings from this study contributes to the study of teacher beliefs on a theoretical level. The study results supports the argument that teacher beliefs is a "messy construct" (Pajares, 1992). The mixed results about the alignment between

instructors' beliefs and practices from the four cases suggest a rather complicated relationship between teacher beliefs and practices (Norton et al., 2005). In some cases, instructors' beliefs have direct impact on their teaching practice about the social media integration, whereas in one case, instructor's beliefs about the social media benefits failed to elicit social media incorporation in her teaching practice. The findings indicate that instructors have various beliefs that can influence their instructional decisions in teaching practices in both positive and negative ways. When instructors' beliefs about the benefits of social media stand out from all other beliefs, the social media integration often demonstrates a positive result where a variety of social media can be used for meaningful purposes (e.g., Emily and Hong). When instructors' beliefs about the challenges of incorporating social media take the first place, negative results are more likely to show up because of the limited or even no usage of social media (e.g., Catherine). The findings from this study also reinforced the argument that if teachers conscientiously aligned their beliefs about teaching with their actual teaching practice, instructional goals were more likely to be accomplished (Saroyan & Amundsen, 2001). Future research needs to further determine what kinds of beliefs foreign language teachers have about various social media and their effectiveness in foreign language teacher education. In so doing, foreign language teacher educators may have a better understand foreign language teachers' beliefs about social media, thus improve the quality and effectiveness of professional development programs by providing what foreign language teachers really need. Moreover, considering the relatively short duration of STARTALK teacher programs,

longitudinal studies are in great need to draw a clear picture of teacher beliefs due to the complex nature of the construct.

The actual social media usage found in the four cases demonstrated positive result for the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. This also provides evidence to support previous research results about the benefits that social media has in possibly connecting informal learning to the formal learning environment (Greenhow & Li, 2012) and providing engaging channels to facilitate student-student, student-instructor, and student-content interactions in multimedia formats (Hughes, 2009; Nellison, 2007). Nonetheless, four participants in this study seemed to only bring out a few aspects of social media's potential. To make the best of social media, more research is needed in exploring the effectiveness of different social media when integrated into foreign language teacher education. Researchers may also focus on categorizing various social media by its most effective features for the integration with foreign language teacher education and create a list of useful social media ultimately.

Since the four instructors overall valued the popularity of social media and its potential benefits in foreign language teaching and teacher education, future research may pay more attention on sample participants. For example, researchers may purposeful select exemplar instructors who are social media advocates and explore how they use social media in foreign language teaching and teacher education. Researchers could also choose participants who are against the integration of social media to study what beliefs they have and why they are not in favor of adopting social media. The comparison between the two contradictory groups of instructors

may be useful in identifying the affordances and challenges of using social media and untangle the complicated relationships among various instructors' beliefs about the social media integration. Moreover, this study only focused on STARTALK teacher programs which emphasize the importance of foreign language teacher training in Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) in a relatively short period of time. Researchers may further study instructors' beliefs and how social media is used in other types or models of foreign language teacher training programs, especially in undergraduate methods courses or certification training programs.

### *Implications for Practice*

This study also provides some practical implications for foreign language teacher education. Because STARTALK teacher programs usually last a short period of time, teacher educators need to carefully select the topics and content that they try to deliver. A more balanced and purposeful training may be more effective than a holistic and comprehensive one. In other words, rather than choosing too many topics to cover in one STARTALK teacher program, program directors and instructors could select the most important issues based on the foreign language teachers' needs, such as how to provide comprehensible input in target language, how to successfully integrate social media in foreign language teaching and learning. Alternatively, program directors and instructors may design different levels of training programs to give differentiated learning experience. They could also provide follow up meetings to track how teacher participants are using the concepts and knowledge that they learned from the STARTALK program. For the integration of social media, the findings of this study suggest that instructors may benefit from embedding social

media with other classroom instructions and activities for the purpose of enhancing learning outcome and supporting teacher participants. For example, Emily used Twitter with other instructional tasks (QR Code and Sticky Note) that helped teacher participants in PC better understand national and state standards about foreign language teaching. This kind of thoughtful integration can enhance learning and fulfill instructional goals while introducing different uses of social media. The findings of this study is also in favor of a balanced approach when integrating social media in foreign language teacher education. Teacher educators need to develop their own plans for the social media adoption based on personal expertise, instructional goals, and contextual limitations.

The four participants in this study all stated that no specific training on how to incorporate social media in foreign language teaching and teacher education was found. Therefore, foreign language teacher educators could pay more attention on developing programs to demonstrate how to incorporate social media in foreign language teaching. Foreign language teachers may gain a better understanding if the connections between social media and classroom teaching are made clear to them. In other words, foreign language teacher educators have to think from a classroom foreign language teacher's perspective and illustrate what and how social media can be used in teaching a foreign language. Considering the individual differences in accepting social media, an explicit and step-by-step scaffolding is necessary when introducing social media to teacher participants.

Based on Hong's case, it is worth noticing that spontaneous integration of social media may also be beneficial in helping teacher participants to connect with

each other. This kind of informal use of social media must not be ignored and underestimated. Foreign language teacher educators may integrate social media either formally in their instructional time or informally after class. To fully embrace the affordances that social media has on foreign language teacher education, different formats and approaches are needed when adopting social media. Therefore, foreign language teacher educators may try various ways of integrating social media when training foreign language teachers in order to engender positive learning outcomes.

Another implication for foreign language teacher education is that it may be helpful when social media is integrated as a program requirement. Based on Dawn and Emily's case in this study, the Wiki and Twitter were required to be used by the instructors and teacher participants. Although the collaboration feature didn't work out, teacher participants at least had the opportunity to learn how to use Wiki as a sharing center and Twitter as a backchannel communication space in foreign language teaching. When designing foreign language teacher education programs, it is suggested that teacher educators may integrate social media as a requirement to engage teacher participants and encourage communication and connection through the mandatory use of social media.

Last but not least, based on the findings of Catherine's case, an important implication can be drawn that foreign language teacher educators need to provide more help for foreign language teachers who hold strong beliefs in using social media in their teaching yet can't integrate it due to many contextual challenges. When training foreign language teachers about the affordances of using social media, it is necessary to identify the potential challenges that foreign language teachers would

encounter in K-12 school and other contexts. Using Catherine's case as an example, she didn't integrate any social media while holding an enthusiastic belief about its benefits in foreign language teaching and teacher education. In her opinion, the social media integration in PA was mainly limited by the program (co-teaching, no requirement and support) and contextual factors (lack of internet access). Although these challenges are not easy to overcome, it will be better if foreign language teachers understand them before they plan to integrate any social media. In addition, foreign language teacher educators could provide examples and experiences of successful social media integration in K-12 schools and recommend strategies for foreign language teachers to deal with various challenges. In so doing, foreign language teachers could learn how to incorporate social media in their teaching as well as the negotiation process with school administrators, students, and parents to engender more effective adoption of social media.

### Limitations

Admittedly, this study has its own limitations. First, due to the nature of STARTALK teacher programs, instructors needed to cover a variety of topics in a short period of time, usually one to two weeks. The short duration of the teacher program may only reflect partial information about instructors' beliefs and their teaching practice. Therefore, the findings especially about their teaching practices may be biased because some instructors might have to change their teaching style to accomplish the program goals. Because the short duration of program, it was difficult to schedule online observations with all instructors.

Further, more than one instructor was involved in each of the three STARTALK teacher programs, which means the four participants were only responsible for half or even less of the total instructional time. Within that limited time frame, it was difficult to schedule the online observation. For all four instructors, I was able to conduct two to three online observations for each participant, which is still a limited amount of time to observe their teaching practice. The limited online observations might have influence on the data analysis about instructors' practices of using social media. It is possible that some instructors might have adopted social media in their teaching that I didn't observe. While STARTALK is atypical for a teacher training program, it is typical for foreign language teachers who are teaching LCTLs. The findings from this study may only reflect foreign language teacher training programs with a focus on LCTLs in a short duration of time.

Second, the lack of full access to the social media that participants used in their STARTALK programs limits my analysis on their beliefs and teaching practices. Because of the privacy concern and content restraint of social media, it is difficult to have full access to all the social media that instructors and their teacher participants used. For example, in Hong's case, although she mentioned the intensive use of Dropbox as a social media in PC, I didn't have chance to see the actual content and materials they shared in the Dropbox due to the access issue. The lack of access to social media may result in a rather limited analysis regarding instructors' beliefs and practice of the integration of social media.

Third, the online observation itself has limitations. Conducting online observations was challenging especially when technical problem came up. I had

trouble with connecting to the participants' laptop and cellphone for online observations. Even for the ones that internet connection was not an issue, there was still a limited view that I could see because the way participants set up their laptop or cellphone. Comparing to face-to-face observation, online observation has its limitation in capturing what was happening in the entire classroom, which also limited my analysis to some degree.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this collective case study was to explore four instructors' beliefs and actual teaching practice of social media in their STARTALK teacher programs. Three research questions were addressed: 1) What beliefs do four STARTALK instructors have about social media and foreign language teacher education? 2) How do four STARTALK instructors integrate social media in their teacher programs? 3) What differences and similarities can be identified between four STARTALK instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in foreign language teacher education? Overall, all participants identified many affordances and challenges regarding the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education. By analyzing and triangulating all the data at both individual and cross-case levels, a majority of participants' beliefs aligned well with their practices about integrating social media and foreign language teacher education while one participant's beliefs conflicted with her teaching practices.

The mixed findings regarding the beliefs and practices of using social media in STARTALK teacher programs suggest that teacher beliefs needs further exploration as a construct. Findings from this study support the argument that teacher

belief plays an important role in instructional decision making in the teaching practice (Smith, 2005) while sometimes differed with their classroom practice (Ertmer et al., 2001). Future research is needed in identifying best practices of various social media in foreign language teacher education and explaining complicated teacher beliefs about the effectiveness of social media in foreign language teaching and teacher education. In terms of implications for practice, foreign language teacher educators may consider more explicit approach and step-by-step guidance when introducing and integrating social media in preparing foreign language teachers. This study is significant for not only filling in the gap in the literature by connecting teacher beliefs, social media, and foreign language teacher education, but also show-casing a great deal of ways for foreign language teacher educators to incorporate social media in their training programs. With detailed analysis about four STARTALK teacher program instructors' beliefs and practices about the integration of social media and foreign language teacher education, the current study provides theoretical and practical evidence to support further exploration of teacher beliefs as a construct within the context of foreign language teacher education and social media integration.

## Appendix A: Email Invitation

Dear STARTALK teacher program instructor,

My name is Jiahang Li, and I am a doctoral student at the University of Maryland, College Park who is conducting my dissertation under the guidance of my advisor Dr. Jennifer Turner on language teachers' beliefs and practices of using social media. I would like to ask you to participate in my study by taking a short questionnaire, participating in three interviews, and allowing me to conduct observations during your teaching at the STARTALK program you are teaching.

The goal of this study is to investigate how instructors in STARTALK language teacher programs integrate social media and identify differences and similarities between instructors' beliefs about and actual practices of integrating social media in language teacher education.

Your participation in this study is voluntary so you may refuse at any time.

If you have further questions about this research you can contact me at 3421 Tulane Drive Apt 22, Hyattsville, MD, 20783, at 202-531-5291, or at [jiahang2011@gmail.com](mailto:jiahang2011@gmail.com); or contact Dr. Jennifer Turner at 2233 Benjamin Building, College Park, MD, 20742, at 301-405-0433, or at [jturner@umd.edu](mailto:jturner@umd.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you should contact the University of Maryland, College Park Institutional Review Board at 301-405-0678 or [irb@deans.umd.edu](mailto:irb@deans.umd.edu).

All the best,

Jiahang Li

## Appendix B: Participant Questionnaire

### Demographic Background

1. What is your native language? (If you have more than one native language, select all that apply.) **\*REQUIRED**
  - Arabic
  - Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese, or any other dialect of Chinese)
  - Dari
  - Hindi
  - Persian
  - Portuguese
  - Russian
  - Swahili
  - Turkish
  - Urdu
  - English
  - Other
  
2. What is your cultural or ethnic background? (Select all that apply.)
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian: Indian
  - Asian: Chinese
  - Asian: Other
  - Black or African American

- Hispanic or Latino
  - Middle Eastern or North African
  - Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
  - White
  - Other:
3. Where were you born?
4. To which age group do you belong?
- 20-30
  - 31-40
  - 41-50
  - 51-60
  - 61 and above
5. What is your gender?
- Female
  - Male

#### Professional Background

1. What is the highest degree you have earned?
- Doctorate
  - Master's
  - Some graduate school
  - Bachelor's (4-year) degree
  - Associate's or vocational (2-year) degree
  - Some college

- High school
2. In what discipline or subject area did you receive your highest degree?
  3. Have you received a US state certification, license, or teaching credential to teach a STARTALK language (Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Hindi, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, Turkish, Urdu)?
    - Yes
    - I am in the process of becoming certified
    - Not yet, but I plan to become certified
    - No
  4. Have you received a US state certification, license, or teaching credential to teach any languages other than a STARTALK language?
    - Yes
    - I am in the process of becoming certified
    - Not yet, but I plan to become certified
    - No
  5. Do you have any teaching certifications, licenses, or credentials for any subjects other than language?
    - Yes, please specify\_\_\_\_\_
    - No
  6. What is the extent of your training in language teaching? (Select all that apply.)
    - I have a degree in language education.

- I have a degree in a specific language or literature.
- I have taken courses at the university level.
- I have attended short-term workshops or institutes.
- I attended a STARTALK teacher training program prior to 2013.
- None of the above.

7. How many teachers do you teach in the STARTALK program?

- 0
- 1–10
- 11–25
- 26–50
- 51–75
- 76–100
- 101–150
- 151+

**Social Media Background**

1. On a scale of 1 through 5, how proficient are you in using the following social media and Internet tools for your own personal use?

<b>Tools</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
	Highly	Somewhat	Very basic	Not very	Not at all
Internet research (referring to the					
Social networking sites (Facebook,					
Email					

Web design and/or development					
Blogs					
Graphic design					
Digital media (Flickr, Picasa,					

2. How often do you access/use social media for your personal use?

Frequency/Social media	Facebook	Twitter	Blog	MySpace	LinkedIn	Tumblr	Other (please specify)
several times a day							
about once a day							
3-5 days a week							
1-2 days a week							
every few weeks							
less often							
Never							

3. For what purpose(s) do you use social media? Please check all that apply.

- Personal networking (family, friends)
- Professional/business/career-related networking
- Entertainment/recreational use (hobbies, interests)
- Educational/knowledge-sharing
- Informational(up-to-date events & news)
- Marketing/promotional
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. On a scale of 1 through 5, how proficient are you in using the following social media and Internet tools in teaching your language courses?

<b>Tools</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
	Highly	Somewhat	Very basic	Not very	Not at all
Internet research (referring to the					
Social networking sites (Facebook,					
Email					
Web design and/or development					
Blogs					
Graphic design					
Digital media (Flickr, Picasa,					

5. How often do you access/use social media in teaching your language courses?

Frequency /Social media	Facebook	Twitter	Blog	MySpace	LinkedIn	Tumblr	Other (please specify)
several times a day							
about once a day							
3-5 days a week							
1-2 days a week							
every few weeks							
less often							
Never							

## Appendix C: Questions for the First Interview

1. What is your definition of social media?
2. Tell me about your experiences using any kind of social media. What kinds of things did you do when you first logged in? Why?
3. For what purposes do you use different kinds of social media?
4. What is your opinion about using social media in language teaching and learning?
5. Tell me more about your experiences in using social media in the context of language teaching and learning, including language teacher education.
6. What beliefs do you have about using social media in educational settings?
7. What benefits and challenges do you believe for using social media in language teaching and learning?
8. What benefits and challenges do you believe for using social media in language teacher education?

## Appendix D: Questions for the Second Interview

1. Now your program has already started, could you tell me more about what works well and what doesn't work well in terms of your curriculum and lesson plan?
2. How do you think your teacher trainees are doing in general? Are they learning well or not? Why do you have such thoughts?
3. How do you think social media is helping your teacher trainees to learn the language? Give me an example.
4. Might social media be a challenge to any of your teacher trainees' learning? For whom? And in what ways?
5. What kinds of social media did you use in your program? Was that same/different from the social media that you planned to use in your program at the beginning of the program?
6. For the social media you already used in your program, what benefits and challenges could you identify when using them in preparing language teachers?
7. In the remaining of your program, what changes will you make in terms of using social media for better preparing language teachers? Why?

## Appendix E: Questions for the Third (follow up) Interview

1. Can you give me an estimate of the percentage from 0% to 100% that you used social media in your 2013 STATALK teacher programs?
2. If you ever used social media in your 2013 STARTALK teacher program, can you describe what and how you used it? If no, did you use any other technology tools, such as PPT, video camera, IPad, smart phone, etc?
3. Did you notice whether your teacher participants used social media for any purposes in your program? If yes, please describe how and for what purpose they used social media. If no, did they use any other technology tools, such as PPT, video camera, IPad, smart phone, etc?
4. Do you have anything to add or clarify about the benefits and challenges of using social media in foreign language teacher education?
5. Could you elaborate on the communicative approach, experiential learning you mentioned in the interview?
6. Can you elaborate on what role/purpose you see social media playing in your foreign language instruction?
7. If you will teach the same thing in the future, and there are no challenges or difficulties to implementing social media, what social media tools would you use in the foreign language teacher education programs, and why?

## Appendix F: Online Observation Protocol

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Observation: Began \_\_\_\_\_, End \_\_\_\_\_

What is the topic of this lesson/unit?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are the objectives of this lesson/unit? (Obtained from instructor prior to observation)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Were the objectives of the lesson/unit communicated to the students?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Were the objectives of the lesson/unit met? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

What evidence was there that the instructor did or did not achieve these objectives? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Brief Summary of

lesson/unit: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>The instructor:</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>What Social Media</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Introduced social media for language teaching and learning						
Used social media in teaching language						
Used social media to facilitate learning						
Used social media to enhance communication with students*						

Used social media to interact with students synchronously						
Used social media to interact with students asynchronously						
Understand social media that he/she introduced or used						

\*Students here refers to language teacher trainees who attend the STARTALK summer teacher programs at the chosen sites.

## Appendix G: Coding Scheme

<b>Initial coding</b>	<b>Refined Codes</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Themes</b>
Knowledge	Importance	BFLL	Learning a foreign language is important.
Understanding others	Importance	BFLL	
collaboration	Importance	BFLL	
Foreign language vs second language	Definition	BFLL	
Proficiency	Definition	BFLL	
Language difference	Challenge	BFLL	
Experiential importance	Challenge	BFLL	
Grammar	Challenge	BFLL	
Access to native speakers	importance	BFLL	
Decontextualized	Challenge	BFLL	
Experiential	characteristics	BFLT	Communicative approach is beneficial for learning foreign language.
Communicative approach	characteristics	BFLT	
Method	characteristics	BFLT	
Authentic	characteristics	BFLT	
Language is different	characteristics	BFLT	
Technology integration	characteristics	BFLT	
Alignment: objectives and materials	characteristics	BFLT	
Motivation to teacher educator: Diverse language background	motivation	BFLTE	Formal systematic training is the key to foreign language teacher education.
Motivation to teacher educator: Master teacher	motivation	BFLTE	
Formal training	component	BFLTE	
Communicative method from self	component	BFLTE	

Broad	component	BFLTE	
Theoretical grounding	component	BFLTE	
Student teaching, mentoring	component	BFLTE	
Authentic experience in target language	component	BFLTE	
cultivate	component	BFLTE	
Licensure/standards	component	BFLTE	
Activity based learning	component	BFLTE	
Teaching & modeling	component	BFLTE	
reflection	component	BFLTE	
Student-centered	component	BFLTE	
Differentiation	component	BFLTE	
Teacher support	component	BFLTE	
Challenge: classroom management	challenge	BSMFLTE	Integrating social media in foreign language teacher education is beneficial yet challenging.
Challenge: technology abuse	challenge	BSMFLTE	
Eager to use/proactive		BSMFLTE	
Challenge: support	challenge	BSMFLTE	
Enrichment: bring up authentic materials	affordance	BSMFLTE	
collaboration	affordance	BSMFLTE	
Critical thinking before integration	challenge	BSMFLTE	
Challenge: co-teaching	challenge	BSMFLTE	
Back channel communication	affordance	BSMFLTE	
Turnaround	challenge	BSMFLTE	
Limited access	challenge	BSMFLTE	
Missed opportunity	challenge	BSMFLTE	
Limited time	challenge	BSMFLTE	
Fast paced	challenge	BSMFLTE	

Less intense in longer program	challenge	BSMFLTE
Lack of tech support	challenge	BSMFLTE
Age resistance	challenge	BSMFLTE
Alternative plan	challenge	BSMFLTE
Extend learning modeling	affordance	BSMFLTE
Tech trend	affordance	BSMFLTE
Contextual challenge	challenge	BSMFLTE
Social media potential	affordance	BSMFLTE
Student engagement	affordance	BSMFLTE
Time saving	affordance	BSMFLTE
Easy access to authentic resource	affordance	BSMFLTE
Easy to share	affordance	BSMFLTE

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