Serve to Learn and Learn to Serve

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This article reports a pilot study of service-learning project which was designed to address two issues: the shortage of Chinese teaching resources for the K-12 setting in the United States, and the efficiency of producing qualified Chinese language teachers. Developed for a graduate teaching methods course, the service-learning project required each learner teacher to serve at a self-selected school by teaching the Chinese language and/or tutoring students for around 10 to 20 hours. It is shown that the service-learning project can help meet the community needs for Chinese resources, and enhance academic learning. Implications of service-learning are discussed for Chinese language teacher education in America.

Introduction

From the late 1980s on, practice of service learning in education has been steadily developing (e.g., Bringle & Hatcher, 2000; Bringle, Hatcher, & McIntosh, 2006; Howard, 1993; Jacoby & Associates 1996; Kendall & Associates, 1990; Morton, 1995; Morton, 1996; Porter Honnet & Poulsen, 1989), partly because "higher education is being called to renew its historical commitment to service," and partly because "higher education is questioning its effectiveness at achieving its most fundamental goal: student learning" (Jacoby, 1996, p. 3). The key statement written in the preamble to *Principles of Good Practice in Combining Service and Learning*—an outcome hammered out of the 1989 Wingspread conference on service-learning—is as follows: "Services, combined with learning, adds value to each and transforms both" (Porter Honnet &

Poulsen, 1989). Since then, numerous studies have been conducted on service-learning, including the exploration of the definition of service learning (e.g., Sigmon, 1994), the analysis of different service orientation (e.g., Morton, 1995), the methods of accessing service-learning (Cooks & Scharrer, 2006), and the effects of service-learning (Eyler et al. 2001).

Today "many institutions are increasing emphasis on service as an integral part of higher education" (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000, p. 274). This is because service-learning enhances both student achievement of academic learning and faculty satisfaction with effective teaching. According to Jacoby and Associates, "service-learning is a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. Reflection and reciprocity are key concepts of service-learning" (Jacoby & Associates, 1996, p. 5).

The veteran educator and leader in service learning, Keith Morton, distinguishes two types of service-learning courses: (1) The ones that assist students in reflecting on the learning from the service in which they are already engaged and (2) the ones whose content objectives can be further effectively reached by the inclusion of service (Morton, 1996, p. 227). Eyler et al. (2001) provides a nice summary of the research on effects that service-learning has on college learners, faculty, institutions, and communities. In terms of the positive impact of service-learning on learners, outcomes include, at the personal level, that students developed personal efficacy, personal identity, spiritual growth, and moral development. They also developed interpersonal competence such as the ability to work well with others, leadership,

and communication skills. At the social level, service-learning has a positive effect on reducing stereotypes, facilitating cultural and racial understanding, as well as raising a sense of social responsibility and developing citizenship skills. As for learning outcomes, service-learning improves students' academic learning in terms of their ability to understand and analyze problems, as well as their critical thinking and cognitive development – all of which contributes to students' career development.

With China's economic rise in the world arena, many young people in the world have turned to learning Chinese. During the past decade, young Americans have been attracted to learning Chinese in unprecedented numbers as reflected in the 51% increase in enrollment in American colleges and universities from 2002 to 2006 (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin 2007). The survey conducted by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) shows a 100% increase in the K-12 enrollment of Chinese from 2000 to 2007 (Weise, 2007). The immediate consequence of this "Chinese Fever" poses a number of serious challenges, especially the lack of "qualified" instructors. The issue is further complicated because, on one hand, there is a dearth of well-trained Chinese-language teachers in the K-12 setting, and on the other hand, regardless of shortage, each school can only hire "highly qualified" teachers, i.e., those who are state-certified in order to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001). Since service-learning provides pedagogies that could relate community needs with academic study so that each enhances the other, could the shortage of Chinese language teaching resources and the complexity of teacher education be addressed through service-learning?

Research Methodology

This paper attempts to examine the following questions. First, are there any efficient means that would help meet with the growing demands for Chinese teaching resources for the K-12 schools? Second, are there any effective ways to train and produce good Chinese language teachers who will be sufficiently competent to meet the challenge from the real teaching world? We will argue that integrating service-learning into the Chinese language teacher education curriculum will efficiently address the two questions. We will show, through a pilot study on a service-learning project, that the service-learning approach will help to bring the effective teacher preparation and the shortage of teachers together, eventually killing two birds with one stone.

Designed as a service-learning project in a one-semester graduate Methods of Teaching course, the project required each student to perform about 20 hours of service in a self-selected K-12 school by either teaching the Chinese language and culture or conducting a workshop on specific topics. In what follows, the data of the growing enrollment in Chinese and the shortage of teachers in America will first be presented. Then an account of different models for foreign language teacher education will be provided. After that, models of service-learning in higher education will be reviewed. With the data and the theories laid out, the pilot study on a service-learning project will be reported. Implications of service-learning will be discussed with respect to the future development of Chinese language teacher education in America.

"Chinese Fever" and "Help Wanted"

What was once regarded as a less commonly taught language (LCTL) in the

United States (Walker & McGinnis, 1995), Chinese has, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, gradually attracted many young American students both in the K-12 setting as well as at the college level. The following is the comprehensive data of the growing Chinese enrollment in American colleges and pre-collegiate schools, and scarcity of teaching resources.

American Modern Language Association (MLA)'s 1998 survey shows an increase of 7.5% in the Chinese enrollment from the total of 26,471 students in 1995 to the total of 28,456 in 1998 (Brod & Welles, 2002). The MLA's 2002 survey in the 2,769 United States institutions of higher education indicates that the number of students learning Chinese has increased 20% in four years from 28,456 in Fall 1998 to 34,153 in Fall 2002 (Welles, 2004). The MLA's recent survey shows that the enrollment in Chinese in the 2,795 United States institutions of higher education has dramatically climbed from 34,153 in Fall 2002 to 51,582 in Fall 2006, an increase of 51 percent (Furman, Goldberg, & Lusin, 2007). Medwick (2008) further reports that during the four years from Fall 2002 to Fall 2006, for the undergraduate level, there was a total Chinese enrollment of 50,455, an increase of 17,236; for the graduate level, there was a total Chinese enrollment of 1,127, increasing 193. According to Medwick (2008), in those past four years, 179 new Chinese programs were added to various universities and colleges throughout the United States, with an enrollment of 4,145 students.

As for the pre-collegiate level, McGinnis (2005) provides the data from the 2002 report of the Secondary School Chinese Language Center (SSCLC) at Princeton University: 203 schools in 31 states offered Chinese language classes, with a total student enrollment of 23,900. The survey of Chinese Language Association for Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS) in 2003-2004 shows a total enrollment of 16,091 students in 163 schools. The recent survey by ACTFL as reported in Weise (2007) shows that the number of elementary and secondary school students studying Chinese could be as much as 10 times higher than it was seven years ago. When ACTFL surveyed K-12 enrollment in foreign language classes in the year 2000, there were about 5,000 students studying Chinese. Another survey suggests that the number of students studying Chinese in the year of 2007 has risen to around 30,000 to 50,000. According to Weise (2007), nationwide, there were Chinese programs in more than 550 elementary, junior high, and senior high schools – a 100% increase in two years. In summary, Stewart and Wang (2005) projects that by 2015, five percent of American high school students, approximately 750,000, will learn Chinese.

In the face of this tremendous growth, one would naturally ask: Are there enough teachers to teach those students? As shown by the survey of the American College Board in 2004, 2,400 high schools expressed interest in offering the Advanced Placement (AP) course in Chinese language and culture (Stewart & Wang, 2005). In May 2007, when the College Board offered Chinese AP exams for the first time, 3,261 high school students took the test (Weise, 2007). Yet, the aforementioned surveys indicate that only around 163, or 203 to 550 Chinese language programs are in place. This implies that most of the schools wishing to offer Chinese do not have any resources to start.

As the "Chinese Fever" increases, the demand for qualified Chinese language teachers— "Help Wanted"—grows accordingly (Sweley, 2006). Taking the State of New Jersey for an example, in Fall 2005, only 18 schools could afford to offer

Chinese in the K-12 level (Corzine, 2005). While many schools are recruiting Chinese-language teachers, only a few teachers are ready to do the job. This is because, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001), all K-12 teachers of core curriculum including foreign languages must be "highly qualified," i.e., certified by the State Department of Education. At present, each state has its own particular requirements as to how to authorize teaching licensure. In order to become "qualified" to teach in the American public schools, potential teachers generally have to either go through a four-year rigorous training in education schools studying both content subjects as well as courses on education and psychology so as to gain the status of the "Advanced Standing," or file application for a probationary license so as to enter an "Alternate Route" after completing the required number of credits, and passing certain tests. Either way, it takes time to produce "highly qualified" teachers. Producing competent language teachers is the first and foremost step in starting up a successful Chinese language program. Given that a large number of schools are in need of Chinese-language instructors yet they are restricted to hiring only teachers who have been certified, what is a quick and effective way to produce competent teachers to answer the call of "Help Wanted?" How can we resolve the dilemma of the lack of teachers, and of hiring only certified ones despite the shortage? Before addressing these questions, we will take a look at models of foreign language teacher education.

Models of Teacher Education

This section will discuss teacher education with a focus on different models of language teacher education. For each model, a brief evaluation will be provided.

Richards (1990) identifies two traditions in teacher education. One is the so-called micro approach, and the other is macro approach. With the "micro" teaching, teaching skills are broken down into different observable and teachable segments, which are analyzed, reviewed, evaluated, and taught. With the "macro" teaching, focus is laid on the totality of the classroom context rather than observing particular teaching behaviors, thus generalizing holistic patterns.

Wallace (1991) examines three major models by which teachers including language teachers have learned about teaching. The first is called the Craft Knowledge, by which young teacher candidates, usually supervised by one senior and experienced mentor, learn to teach by imitating the mentor's techniques through observation, and by following his/her instruction and advice. By this traditional and conservative process, "expertise in the craft is passed on from generation to generation" (Wallace, 1991, p. 6). The disadvantages of this apprenticeship model are obvious. First, it confines teacher candidates to the experience of one supervisor, who, no matter how skilled, is limited in many ways, not mentioning the fact that teachers who serve as such models are often a matter of either chance or seniority. Second, learner teachers are not provided with formal coursework specific to teaching techniques (McDonough, 2002).

The second is the Applied Science Model, which puts teacher candidates in a classroom to learn the best theories and practices summarized from research—"distilled experience of many teachers and teaching situations" (McDonough, 2002, p. 125). Having the teacher candidates read the research on effective teaching and learn from many experienced language teachers rather than just one provides many benefits.

However, the disadvantage is that students, only sitting in the classroom, can acquire little knowledge of what happens in the real world, let alone acquire the practical knowledge that comes only from hands-on experiences.

The Reflective Approach is the third model, which places greater emphasis on the processing of teacher candidates' experience by offering them an opportunity to integrate theory with reality. Under this model, learner teachers go to the real teaching world to observe, practice, reflect, and teach. Thus, not only do they learn "received knowledge" in the classroom which includes, "among other things, the necessary and valuable element of scientific research," but also have opportunities to build "experiential knowledge" which is later transferred into the professional ongoing knowledge and experiences through reflection (Wallace, 1991, p. 17). With the key of reflection, the advantage of this model lies in the linkage of scientific knowledge and hands-on experience.

With respect to preparing Chinese teachers by the "Alternate Route", one of the practical issues is the lack of location for field teaching given that only certified teachers are allowed to teach in the classroom. The fact that (1) there is a rapidly growing community in need of Chinese teaching resources while most of teacher candidates who are ready to teach yet have no opportunity to practice, and that (2) teaching experience is required of applicants when they apply for jobs leads us to the proposal of adding service-learning to the Chinese language teacher education curriculum so as to help prospective teachers gain experience. Combining the "macro" and the "micro" teaching traditions, and adopting the Reflective Approach, we developed a service-learning project to provide a valuable opportunity for teacher candidates

to serve so that they can reflect on the course content, and learn to teach through service. After a review of service-learning in the next section, Section 5 will report in detail this service-learning project.

Models of Service-Learning

In this section, fundamentals of service-learning and different models of service-learning are discussed.

According to Bringle and Hatcher (1995), service learning is a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students participate in a well-planned service activity that promotes identified community needs, as well as reflects on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of what is covered in the course – a broader appreciation of the discipline that they study and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. As pointed out by Ehrlich (1996), "…the basic theory of service-learning is Dewey's: The interaction of knowledge and skills with experience is key to learning. Students learn best not by reading the Great Books in a closed room but by opening the doors and windows of experience. Learning starts with a problem and continues with the application of increasingly complex ideas and increasingly sophisticated skills to increasingly complicated problems (Ehrlich, 1996, pp. xi-xii).

There are four variations of service and learning typology found at colleges and universities (Sigmon, 1994): (1) Service-LEARNING which emphasizes that learning is primary while serving is secondary, (2) SERVICE-learning which highlights that services are more important than learning, (3) service learning which means that service and learning are separated from each other; and (4) SERVICE-LEARNING which places equal importance and weight on service and learning. Sigmon (1994) prefers the fourth

option, which is advocated by Jacoby and Associates (1996). Following Sigmon (1994), and Jacoby and Associates (1996), this paper will adopt the following assumption: Service and learning go hand in hand, each contributing and promoting the other.

Heffernan (2001) categorizes six models of service-learning: (1) "Pure" Service-Learning, (2) Discipline-Based Service-Learning, (3) Problem-Based Service-Learning, (4) Capstone Courses, (5) Service Internships, and (6) Undergraduate Community-Based Action Research. For the first model, students serve the community. Thus, students acquire skills, knowledge, and competencies. In the second model, students are expected to teach the discipline and learn through the teaching activities. The third model makes students relate to the community much as a "consultant" has a "client." Students work with community members to understand a particular problem or a need, and help to develop a solution to the problem. In the fourth model, Capstone courses require students to apply what they learned in the community to the real world, therefore helping them transition from the world of theory to the world of practice. The fifth model of Service Internship looks like the traditional internship, but it is different from the latter in that the experience is more intense and both the community and the students benefit equally from the experience. The last model is similar to an independent study option, which requires students to go to the community and conduct research under the supervision of the faculty. As can be seen, each model has challenges, and each has its own pros and cons. Based on the nature of our course, *Methods of Teaching Chinese/Japanese*, and the objective of our graduate program, we took the principles of Discipline-based Service-Learning and Problem-Based Service-Learning when designing and developing a service-learning project, which is discussed in the next section.

Service-Learning Project

In this section, a service-learning project completed in the fall of 2006 is reported. The description of the project, subjects, and requirements is first provided, followed by a discussion of the implications of the project.

Overview

Along the line of Bringle and Hatcher (1995), Sigmon (1994), Jacoby and Associates (1996), Ehrlich (1996), and Heffernan (2001), A term-long service-learning project was assigned to graduate students taking *Methods of Teaching Chinese/Japanese* in Fall 2006 (See Lally (2001) which reported a similar service-learning application for a *Foreign Language Teaching Methods* course taken by undergraduate secondary education majors). Contributing 25% of their total grade, the project assignment required of each student was to perform 10 to 20 hours of service using any of their Chinese expertise in a K-12 school that they chose. Students were required to report their work during the last class of the semester and submit a written report about the project. To make it more convenient for the students to serve and to be supervised, a private middle school was contacted in advance that was also a community partner of the University. As the school had no Chinese program, it was eager to welcome our students to offer Chinese language and culture, and very supportive of the students.

Objectives

The goal of the project was two-fold: (1) to expose prospective teachers to

the realities of K-12 schools in the United States so that they can practice teaching in the real world, and reflect on what they have learned in the classroom, and (2) to help the community meet the real needs for Chinese teaching resources. It was our best hope that throughout the service-learning assignment which addresses the community needs, students would experience working in schools with respect to the overall teaching and learning of Chinese and the use of teaching methods. As a result, students serve to learn how to teach, and as they fulfill responsibility for community development, they also learn how to serve.

Participants

The participants were nine graduate students in Asian Studies, taking the course *Methods of Teaching Chinese/Japanese* in Fall 2006. With the exception of one, they were all on the Teaching Chinese Language and Culture track, a new graduate program aiming at developing competent Chinese language teachers for the K-12 setting. The one student who did the service in Japanese is not reported within this paper.

Outcomes

Major aspects of the project are summarized in Table 1. Working in three schools, all of the students served at least 10 hours, and some served for over 20 hours. The curriculum included both the language covering the topics of Greeting, Family, and Counting and the culture, highlighting things such as Calligraphy, Holiday, and Zodiac. All of the students reported their experiences gained from this project. For example, one student who had years of teaching Chinese as a foreign language at the university level noted that because it was so different to teach young children, she did research comparing

similarities and differences between teaching adults verses teaching children, which was later presented at a conference. Another student who presented the method of task-based language teaching in class as one of the required assignments, tested the theories and principles by planning her lessons based on this approach. Following the principles of the task-based language teaching, she required her students to "report the task", which she recorded and shared with others during the oral presentation of her project. One student was even offered a substitute teaching job by the school where she did her service-learning project, and began teaching after the project.

Finally, it is worth noting some of the reflections that we received from the students participating in this service-learning project. For example, one student who had never taught before had the epiphany, "I can teach." Another student commented, "The kids have more desire to learn than I expected." At the conclusion of the project, another student came to the realization, "There is so much I need to learn and I want to learn to be a teacher." Another student made the following reflection with respect to what has been learned from participating in the project, "To integrate the theory and the real world, and be a part of the community."

Discussion

Does the current project fulfill our goals? To answer this question, let us first turn to the three necessary criteria taken from the *Service-Learning Course Design Workbook* (Howard, 2001, p. 15), and elaborate on each of them.

Table 1

Summary of Service Learning Project

Number of Students	School Type	Sections Taught	Content Covered
Female (*n=7*) Male (*n=1*)	Public Schools (*n=2*) Private Schools (*n=1*)	4 or more (*n=2*) 3(*n=4*) 2(*n=2*)	Language: Greetings Family Counting Culture: Calligraphy Holiday Zodiac

As illustrated in the diagram, the three criteria which overlap with one another are as follows: (1) Relevant and Meaningful Service with the Community, (2) Enhanced Academic Learning, and (3) Purposeful Civic Learning. By the first criterion, it means that the service performed in the community must be relevant and meaningful to those who provide the service and those who receive the service. Besides, Enhanced Academic Learning furthermore requires that the service performed by students must promote their academic learning. Finally, Purposeful Civic Learning demands that service-learning must prepare students for active civic participation, thereby raising their sense of responsibility for the community. The common core of the three is Academic Service Learning, to which each individual criterion contributes.

Diagram 1

Three Necessary Criteria for Academic Service-Learning
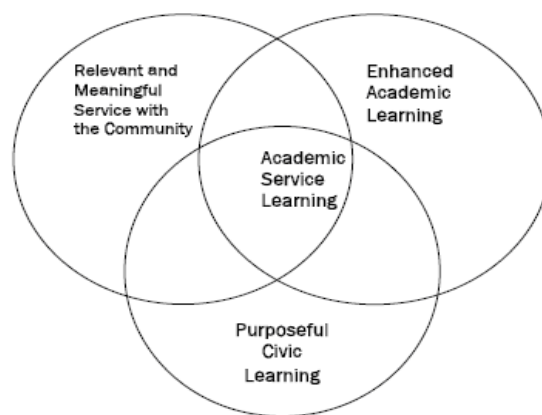
Taking these three criteria, let us look at the current service-learning project. In terms of the first criterion, the students' "teaching" and/or "tutoring" of the Chinese language and culture in the self-selected schools were relevant and meaningful to the students in the following ways. First, students had the opportunity to test the theories they had learned in the classroom by applying them to the real world. They discovered on their own to what extent these theories and realities could be related with each other. Second, the students who were exposed to the real world were able to practice what they had learned. Practice helped them grasp knowledge and skills. In the meanwhile, the criterion of relevance and meaning applies to the community partner who received the service. In this case, it was those children in the K-12 setting who were exposed to the Chinese language and culture, which they would not have been able to acquire otherwise. For them, they either learned some basic Chinese expressions, pieces of the Chinese culture, or developed some interest in the language and culture. Therefore, the service-learning project was directly relevant and meaningful to all stakeholder parties of the service-learning project.

Regarding the second criterion, this project enhanced students' academic learning. Without the project, the students could only read the papers, listen to the instructor's lectures, and discuss issues among themselves in class. With the service-learning project, these teacher candidates were offered a dynamic learning environment, allowing various possibilities and experiences. When exposed to the real world with real students, the student teachers underwent a process of "knowing-in-action" (Schön, 1983). They must use their acquired experiences to respond to real-life situations, and use their own judgment and assessment rather than

theories and principles derived from their coursework. In doing so, their experiences were transferred into enduring knowledge through reflection. Furthermore, the teacher candidates were able to reflect on the course content by comparing what textbooks say to what realities present, hence relating "received knowledge" with "experiential knowledge". As discussed before, reflection is an essential ingredient in the pedagogy of academic service-learning. Required to present their project in class and also to complete a written report about it, the teacher candidates were encouraged to think, reflect and write. While reflecting on what they had learned from coursework in class and what they had seen in reality, they consciously and constantly compared the two, and reorganized their experience in order to work out satisfying pedagogies. This process of seeking understanding and developing workable experiences for future professional action is "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1983). Through knowing-in-action and reflection-in-action, student teachers gradually, but effectively, acquired both "received" and "experiential" knowledge.

Finally, being situated in the real world, the teacher candidates naturally processed the following questions: (1) which of the teaching techniques and/or teaching methods would work effectively in the real world, and which would not work, (2) when to use which methods to teach, (3) how to motivate students to learn, and (4) how to engage students in the teaching process. The requirement of the oral presentation in class and the written report of the project enhanced their thinking and processing, hence promoting academic learning.

With respect to the third criteria, this service-learning project purposefully prepared the students to learn to serve their community. Community service is required of each resident within the community. Most would-be Chinese language teachers in the

K-12 setting are native speakers of Chinese—born and bred in China or other Chinese-speaking regions. Not fully adapted to the American culture, some Chinese teacher candidates are not used to the concept or the practice of community service. The standards of foreign language education proposed by ACTFL for the 21st century, also known as 5 C's, includes Communities (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). By Communities, it is required that foreign language educators teach and encourage learners to participate in multilingual communities while learning the foreign language. If language learners are required to participate in community-related activities and services in order to utilize the language beyond the context of school and, in the process, become a life-long learner, then these teachers should first be trained in this regard so that they can further help the students to reach their goal. In order to prepare the Chinese language teachers to take the challenge, it would be necessary for them to participate in the community-based service, and know how to serve. While there are many kinds of services that one can perform for a community, the service that requires special knowledge and expertise is more worthwhile. In other words, if would-be Chinese language teachers are able to teach, and the community needs their teaching expertise, they should contribute it—a consequence that will be beneficial to both. It takes time to develop right attitudes toward, and professional practices about community service. Therefore, it is quintessentially important that service learning is included in teacher preparation. Integration of a service-learning component in a teaching methods course would be a good strategy since it not only enables teacher candidates to learn to contribute their Chinese specialty thereby, satisfying the latter's need for Chinese teaching

resources, but also to achieve academic excellence through reflecting and practicing.

The benefits of the current project are obvious. First and foremost, the teacher candidates had learned much more—the knowledge and skills that they could not achieve from a regular class. This achievement was a direct result of the valuable opportunity to reflect, experience, and practice—something that is only indirectly and only sometimes transmitted by teachers and books. As discussed in Section 3, the best model of teacher education is the Reflective Approach, which emphasizes a balance of the "theoretical" and the "practical", i.e., the "knowledge" and the "experience". The project added "service" and "learning" to the Reflective Approach which further enhanced teaching education. Under this valued-added approach, would-be teachers learn while serving and, in learning to serve, they thus double the learning outcomes.

Second, it is definitely beneficial to the community which is badly in need of Chinese teaching resources. Two of the three schools where teacher candidates performed service could not afford to offer any Chinese courses in the near future. The children in these two schools were first-time learners of the Chinese language and culture. Though the exposure to the language was very limited, the children got an opportunity to experience the new language while still young. Meanwhile, administrators of the schools were also benefited in that they came to know a little bit about the teaching and learning of a new language. Having such knowledge is an encouragement and aid to determining whether or not to start up a Chinese language program and, if so, where to get resources as well as how to proceed.

The above two benefits constitute a win-win situation for both learners and

community. On one hand, because of the component of practice and reflection, teacher preparation can be carried out in a more effective and efficient manner; on the other hand, the supply and demand problem for Chinese teaching resources is taken care of to some extent. As discussed in Section 4, service-learning is different from traditional teaching internships because the latter places teacher candidates to teach after they have acquired some knowledge from coursework, whereas the former requires them to teach in the format of service while they are in the process of acquiring knowledge. The teaching/serving *per se* is, therefore, part of enhanced learning which, in turn, leads to "knowing-in-action" and "reflection-in-action."

The pilot study of service-learning that we have reported so far shed light on Chinese language teacher education in America. Some implications are outlined as follows: (1) integrate service-learning in teacher education curriculum such as the teaching methods course, or the course of second language acquisition, (2) develop effective service-learning course syllabi, (3) examine effectiveness of a service-learning course, (4) assess students' academic learning through service-learning, and (5) establish a partnership between the communities in need of Chinese teaching resources and the universities offering Chinese teacher education programs. While more research, theoretical and empirical, should be conducted in the above areas so that more understanding about the relationship between service-learning and teacher education can be obtained, the current study suggests that service-learning, when well planned and incorporated, can be very helpful and practical for learner teachers to develop good teaching experience and skills. Even when the supply and demand of Chinese teaching resources is no longer an issue for the K-12

setting in the United States, service-learning may still be a vital part of teacher education programs, partly because it helps transfer learner teachers' experiences into knowledge and skills, and partly because serving-to-learn and learning-to-serve promote the mission of contemporary higher education.

Conclusion

This paper examined two questions: whether there is an effective way to produce quality teachers of Chinese for the K-12 setting, and whether there is an efficient way to meet the growing demand for Chinese teaching resources. In reporting about a pilot study on a service-learning project, we have shown that the two questions can be appropriately addressed through an integration of a service-learning component into a teaching methods course. We have observed that adding service-learning to a teaching methods course can place students in a better position to examine whether and how what is learned in the classroom can be applied in the real world; it can also meet a community's need for Chinese teachers. Although the amount of service hours was limited, students brought linguistic and cultural aspects of Chinese to a large number of children who would not otherwise have been served. Meanwhile, the service-learning project granted would-be teachers with a valuable opportunity that enabled them to reflect on the course material and to discover the real world. By reflection and practice, teacher candidates obtained a better understanding of theories, principles, and practices about the teaching of Chinese in American K-12 schools. As a result, they have become more prepared for challenges of the real world. Although further research is required, we conclude that it is rewarding

to integrate service-learning into Chinese teacher education.

Notes

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