The Five "C's" and Linguistics
Selected Topics in Introduction to Chinese Linguistics
General thoughts

Linguistics and Five "C's"

Teach cultures, connections and comparisons through linguistics courses

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An overview of today's talk

The Five "C's" and Linguistics
Approaches to linguistics in areal studies departments
The ACTFL Five "C's"
A Decade of Foreign Language Standards
Linguistics can teach these three C's!

Selected Topics in Introduction to Chinese Linguistics
The fundamentals of linguistics
Readings related to teaching the three C's

General thoughts
Issues and Challenges
Encouraging Facts

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Section 1: The Five "C's" and Linguistics

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Two different approaches

- ▶ To teach an areal linguistics course mainly as a cultural course within the language program

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Two different approaches

- ▶ To teach an areal linguistics course mainly as a cultural course within the language program
- ▶ To teach a general linguistics course using a particular language, e.g. Chinese

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Two different approaches

- ▶ To teach an areal linguistics course mainly as a cultural course within the language program
- ▶ To teach a general linguistics course using a particular language, e.g. Chinese

Both approaches are necessary, with one being the major approach though.

In Introduction to Chinese Linguistics, I choose the first approach as the major approach.

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Three of the Five "C's"

The description of these three standards can be found at
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- ▶ CULTURES(3P's Products, Practices and Perspectives) : Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

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▶ CULTURES(3P's Products, Practices and
Perspectives) : Gain Knowledge and
Understanding of Other Cultures
  ▶ Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an
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- ▶ CULTURES(3P's Products, Practices and Perspectives) : Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures
    - ▶ Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.
    - ▶ Standard 2.2: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

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- CONNECTIONS: Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

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- ▶ CONNECTIONS: Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information
  - ▶ Standard 3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

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- ► CONNECTIONS: Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information
    - ► Standard 3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.
    - ► Standard 3.2: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

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- ▶ COMPARISONS:Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

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    - ▶ Standard 4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.
    - ▶ Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

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ACTFL Report on the Implementation of the Standards

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- ▶ create a bibliography of Standards as they appear in the professional literature; categorize topics addressed and annotate major works;
- ▶ assess how Standards have been institutionalized in educational programs and identify the degree to which Standards have forged connections between K–12 and higher education;
- ▶ identify areas in which research and professional development could more effectively promote teaching toward Standards.

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The project surveyed 1299 language teachers. The following figure shows how the five C's are implemented and incorporated in their teaching plan.

Rank Order of the Five Goal Areas in Terms of Emphasis on Planning and Learning Experiences (5 = Most Emphasis)

#1: Communication (5: 79%)

#2: Cultures (5: 22%)

#3: Comparisons (5: 12%)

#4: Connections (5: 11%)

#5: Communities (5: 8%)

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▶ only "communication" is very well implemented.

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► only "communication" is very well implemented.
► among the less-well incorporated C's, "cultures" is still much better implemented than the remaining three C's.

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Easiest to Teach/Most Difficult to Teach

Easiest: Communication and Cultures

Most difficult: Communities and Connections

► "Connections" is difficult.

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Easiest to Teach/Most Difficult to Teach

Easiest: Communication and Cultures

Most difficult: Communities and Connections

- ▶ "Connections" is difficult.
- ▶ "Comparisons" is not easy either.

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Easiest to Teach/Most Difficult to Teach

Easiest: Communication and Cultures

Most difficult: Communities and Connections

- ▶ "Connections" is difficult.
- ▶ "Comparisons" is not easy either.
- ▶ "Cultures" is easy, but this needs some qualification.

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Reasons That Cultures is the Easiest Goal Area

1. "I am well traveled/fascinated with cultures myself/have lived abroad/am a native speaker."
2. "It's embedded in everything/easy to embed with communication/language instruction."
3. "Students are interested in cultures."

"Interesting" responses in this section:

Three respondents indicated that teaching Cultures is easy because it can be done in English.

"Culture. Just explain it."

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► It seems that most teachers would incorporate their cultural experiences into their teaching.

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- ▶ It seems that most teachers would incorporate their cultural experiences into their teaching.
- ▶ It does not seem that such introductions are rigorous enough.

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- ▶ It seems that most teachers would incorporate their cultural experiences into their teaching.
- ▶ It does not seem that such introductions are rigorous enough.
- ▶ Cultures could be taught in English. But in my language classes, we cannot use too much English.

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- ▶ It seems that most teachers would incorporate their cultural experiences into their teaching.
- ▶ It does not seem that such introductions are rigorous enough.
- ▶ Cultures could be taught in English. But in my language classes, we cannot use too much English.
- ▶ Most students that I know are definitely interested in cultures very much.

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Reasons That Connections is the Most Difficult Goal Area

1. "Not enough time"
2. "It's difficult to connect to other disciplines/other departments"
3. "Lack of resources"
4. "Lack of knowledge of how to address this goal area"

"Interesting" responses in this section:

"Connections—I have to create and translate nearly everything I do, which is 'sooo' time-consuming."

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"Interesting" responses in this section:

"Connections—I have to create and translate nearly everything I do, which is 'sooo' time-consuming."

"Connections" is hard, because it needs interdisciplinary perspectives and also a higher level of L2 competence.

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Reasons That Comparisons is the Most Difficult Goal Area

1. "Students are not familiar with their own native language."
2. "Difficult to teach in the TL/difficult to plan this."
3. "This goal area is not clear/should change it."

▶ Indeed students are not familiar with their own language.

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3. "This goal area is not clear/should change it."

▶ Indeed students are not familiar with their own language.

▶ Also students are not exactly familiar with talking about their own culture in more technical terms, unless they have taken a course in that area.

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▶ Among the five C's, "comparisons" and "connections" are more difficult to teach.

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► Among the five C's, "comparisons" and "connections" are more difficult to teach.

► "cultures" is considered easy to teach, but "culture" is a flexible term. More rigorous cultural perspectives cannot be introduced in a language classroom, because it will lead the subject matter off language itself too much for a language class.

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- ► Among the five C's, "comparisons" and "connections" are more difficult to teach.
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What we cannot teach in a language classroom, we can in a linguistics class.

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What we cannot teach in a language classroom, we can in a linguistics class.

In my Chinese Linguistics courses, I have been trying to incorporate "cultures", "comparisons" and "connections" into my lectures, discussions and workshops.

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Section 2: Selected topics in Introduction to Chinese Linguistics

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As the stats show previously, students are not familiar with their own language. Therefore the fundamentals of linguistics should be introduced throughout the semester as needed.

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Phonology and Phonetics

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Phonology and Phonetics

- ▶ IPA, and decription of Chinese sounds

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Phonology and Phonetics

- ▶ IPA, and decription of Chinese sounds
- ▶ Concept of phonemes and allophones

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Phonology and Phonetics

- ▶ IPA, and decription of Chinese sounds
- ▶ Concept of phonemes and allophones
- ▶ Tone sandhi (this will be reviewed later in syntax, since tone sandhi needs to refer to phrase boundaries.)

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- ▶ Tone sandhi (this will be reviewed later in syntax, since tone sandhi needs to refer to phrase boundaries.)
- ▶ Rhoticization with -er and relevant rules (this will be the basis for sociolinguistic studies of -er in Beijing, c.f. Labov's study on the -r sound in New York)

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The technicalities of phonetics and phonology can be tedious and overwhelming for students.

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Morphology

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Morphology

- ▶ Many basic concepts, e.g. affixing(derivational/inflectional, prefix, suffix, root, stem, etc), compounding, reduplication

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- ▶ Analysis of major morphological processes in Chinese

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- ► Possible inflection-like morphemes (aspect markers) in Chinese and their semantics (this will be used in later readings on language and culture)

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- ▶ Compounding and the notions of "head" and "structure"

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- ▶ The hierarchical structure of language so far, i.e. phonemes-morphemes-words

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Although there is not much morphology in Chinese, there are actually many important topics in this chapter. Students also like morphological problem sets.

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Syntax

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Syntax

- ▶ Traditional structuralist notions of word classes and constituent analysis. (Students do not have prior knowledge of word classes and constituency)

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Syntax

- ▶ Traditional structuralist notions of word classes and constituent analysis. (Students do not have prior knowledge of word classes and constituency)
- ▶ Phrase structure rules (very simple introduction)

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- ▶ Phrase structure rules (very simple introduction)
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- ▶ Syntactic analyses of typical Chinese sentences

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- ▶ The notion of movement, and special topics in Chinese such as wh-movement, topicalization etc.

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- ▶ The architecture of language from phoneme to discourse, and the Standard Theory.

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- ▶ Language universals, typology and UG

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- ► The architecture of language from phoneme to discourse, and the Standard Theory.
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Students like to draw trees! Syntax is a difficult, but my primary goal is to teach students the model of grammar, and basic notions of constituency and dependencies.

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Historical Linguistics

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Historical Linguistics

- ▶ Comparative methodology, and Sino-Tibetan

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Historical Linguistics

- ▶ Comparative methodology, and Sino-Tibetan
- ▶ Reconstructions of Old Chinese, Middle Chinese, and Early Modern Chinese

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Historical Linguistics

- ▶ Comparative methodology, and Sino-Tibetan
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These topics can be technically difficult.
Thus I try to approach them moderately but with rigor, while incorporating more cultural aspects.
Students are more interested in the history of the language.

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Writing system

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Writing system

- ▶ Origin and historical development of Chinese characters

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Writing system

- ▶ Origin and historical development of Chinese characters
- ▶ Structural principles of characters

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Writing system

- ▶ Origin and historical development of Chinese characters
- ▶ Structural principles of characters
- ▶ Simplification of characters

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Writing system

- ▶ Origin and historical development of Chinese characters
- ▶ Structural principles of characters
- ▶ Simplification of characters

There are many interesting cultural, interdisciplinary and philosophical issues related to Chinese characters. Students are very interested in these topics.

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What is not emphasized

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What is not emphasized

- ▶ Semantics, but touched upon in many places, e.g. aspect and tense, Aktionsart, scope.

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What is not emphasized

- ▶ Semantics, but touched upon in many places, e.g. aspect and tense, Aktionsart, scope.
- ▶ Pragmatics: presupposes many semantic theories. Thus without a proper semantic theory, pragmatics cannot be introduced with rigor.

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- ▶ Pragmatics: presupposes many semantic theories. Thus without a proper semantic theory, pragmatics cannot be introduced with rigor.
- ▶ Language Acquisition: some students are interested in L1 and L2 acquisition. I might find some papers for them to read in the future, but for now I have not had the time to incorporate this aspect

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The core areas of linguistics are my emphasis. For other areas of linguistics, I find accessible research papers on specific Chinese topics for students to read, present and discuss.

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How to teach culture, connections and comparisons through linguistics: my two cents

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How to teach culture, connections and comparisons through linguistics: my two cents

- ▶ After each chapter, I would find some relevant papers in sociolinguistics, language and culture, psycholinguistics, philosophy of language, etc for students to read.

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- ▶ This semester, I ask students to answer review questions and bring them to class for discussion.

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- ▶ These papers and discussions would guide students' in their writing of a final paper.

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- ▶ I have tried to ask students to present the papers.
- ▶ This semester, I ask students to answer review questions and bring them to class for discussion.
- ▶ These papers and discussions would guide students' in their writing of a final paper.

I will list some of the papers that I have chosen for my students.

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Chinese Language and Society

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Chinese Language and Society

▶ -er rhoticization and social registers and stratification

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Chinese Language and Society

- ▶ -er rhoticization and social registers and stratification
- ▶ Language and Gender Identity (how is the Chinese language used differently by male and female speakers?)

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Chinese Language and Society

- ▶ -er rhoticization and social registers and stratification
- ▶ Language and Gender Identity (how is the Chinese language used differently by male and female speakers?)
- ▶ Neologisms and internet

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Chinese Language and Society

- ▶ -er rhoticization and social registers and stratification
- ▶ Language and Gender Identity (how is the Chinese language used differently by male and female speakers?)
- ▶ Neologisms and internet
- ▶ Politics of dialects and national language

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Chinese Language and Society

- ► -er rhoticization and social registers and stratification
- ► Language and Gender Identity (how is the Chinese language used differently by male and female speakers?)
- ► Neologisms and internet
- ► Politics of dialects and national language

Such topics are usually quite accessible, and fun to read.

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Chinese Language and Culture

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Chinese Language and Culture

▶ Whorf's original paper on language and culture "Science and Linguistics"

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Chinese Language and Culture

- ▶ Whorf's original paper on language and culture "Science and Linguistics"
- ▶ Counterfactuals and theoretical thinking in Chinese

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Chinese Language and Culture

- ▶ Whorf's original paper on language and culture "Science and Linguistics"
- ▶ Counterfactuals and theoretical thinking in Chinese
- ▶ Color terms in Chinese

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Chinese Language and Culture

- ▶ Whorf's original paper on language and culture "Science and Linguistics"
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- ▶ Kinship Terms in Chinese

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- ▶ Color terms in Chinese
- ▶ Kinship Terms in Chinese

Language and culture can be "superficial" if taught without the right methodology. Thus I emphasize hypothesis testing, data analysis (quantitative or qualitative), and the experimental method. Thus students will have deeper understanding of the issue.

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Chinese Characters

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Chinese Characters

▶ Lateralization of brain functions and the processing of Chinese characters

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Chinese Characters

▶ Lateralization of brain functions and the processing of Chinese characters
▶ Branding using Chinese characters in marketing strategies, relative to the processing difference

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Chinese Characters

- ▶ Lateralization of brain functions and the processing of Chinese characters
- ▶ Branding using Chinese characters in marketing strategies, relative to the processing difference
- ▶ Chinese characters and the Ideographic Myth

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- ▶ Lateralization of brain functions and the processing of Chinese characters
- ▶ Branding using Chinese characters in marketing strategies, relative to the processing difference
- ▶ Chinese characters and the Ideographic Myth
- ▶ Chinese characters and the Idea Theory/Logocentrism

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- ▶ Lateralization of brain functions and the processing of Chinese characters
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Some of these topics are also "lanaguage and culture" topics.

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Traditional Chinese culture

In teaching the history of the language, there are many opportunities to incorporate themes related to traditions.

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Traditional Chinese culture

In teaching the history of the language, there are many opportunities to incorporate themes related to traditions.

▶ Sino-Tibetan and early Chinese civilization

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Traditional Chinese culture

In teaching the history of the language, there are many opportunities to incorporate themes related to traditions.

► Sino-Tibetan and early Chinese civilization
► Classical Chinese and diglossia

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In teaching the history of the language, there are many opportunities to incorporate themes related to traditions.

- ▶ Sino-Tibetan and early Chinese civilization
- ▶ Classical Chinese and diglossia
- ▶ Major works in Classical Chinese (sources for reconstruction)

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- ▶ Cultural exchanges (side evidence for reconstruction)

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- ▶ Cultural exchanges (side evidence for reconstruction)

In order to make the historical linguistics part more accessible and interesting, I try to introduce language change from a more cultural perspective while maintaining the rigor of methodology. I do not want to make sweeping generalizations without teaching students sound methodological foundations.

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Issues and Challenges
Encouraging Facts

Section 3: General Thoughts

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Issues and Challenges
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Issues and Challenges

▶ Students have diverse reasons, needs and goals.

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Issues and Challenges
Encouraging Facts

Issues and Challenges

- ► Students have diverse reasons, needs and goals.
- ► Balance between linguistic theory and target language data

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Issues and Challenges
Encouraging Facts

Issues and Challenges

- ▶ Students have diverse reasons, needs and goals.
- ▶ Balance between linguistic theory and target language data
- ▶ Instructor's own research strengths and interests

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Issues and Challenges
Encouraging Facts

Issues and Challenges

- ▶ Students have diverse reasons, needs and goals.
- ▶ Balance between linguistic theory and target language data
- ▶ Instructor's own research strengths and interests
- ▶ How to motivate students (I have tried multi-media such as videos and sounds, to encourage discussion, hands-on exercises, alternation between dry/difficult topics and fun/easy topics etc.)

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Encouraging Facts

- Students learned a lot, and generally they liked the course and topics.

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Encouraging Facts

- ▶ Students learned a lot, and generally they liked the course and topics.
- ▶ Instructor also strengthened professional knowledge.

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Issues and Challenges
Encouraging Facts

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- ▶ Students learned a lot, and generally they liked the course and topics.
- ▶ Instructor also strengthened professional knowledge.
- ▶ Linguistics courses contribute to a language program.

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Encouraging Facts

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- ▶ Linguistics courses also contribute to our linguistics program at GW.

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Thank you!