

Integrating and combining grammar translation teaching methods with biography driven
instruction in China: A qualitative case study

by

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B.S., Kansas State University, 2016

M.S., Kansas State University, 2018

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Abstract

Language is a communication tool used by everyone in their daily life as a means to convey information and arguments to others. Even though the Ministry of Education (MoE) in China has been switching from exam-oriented education to cross-cultural communication education, the classroom practices, teaching methods, evaluation system, school structures and materials, and aspects of the administrators and teachers are still traditional and contrary to the principles of cross-cultural communication and exchange. This study offered a biography-driven instruction (BDI) approach as a new method in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in China and examined two EFL teachers as they navigated the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas of implementing a BDI approach in a Grammar Translation Method (GTM) context. Professional development about BDI, including coaching sessions, was provided to two EFL teachers working in two public junior high schools in the province of Shaanxi and Gansu, and the understanding of the BDI approaches on teachers' practice and implementation was analyzed.

Different types of data sources, such as in-depth interviews of participants, pre- and post-surveys, and lesson plans and artifacts were collected and analyzed to better understand how these teachers made meaningful use of this new approach and negotiated its use in a GTM-dominate context. The findings, in general, showed that the BDI approaches helped these teachers build a more constructivist classroom while combining GTM and BDI methods, views, and classroom applications.

This study provided findings regarding exploration, integration, and localization of a BDI approach in the context of GTM. Well-planned and well-organized teacher development with on-going support and counseling is necessary.

Further, professional development and coaching conversations have important roles in teacher development. This study also revealed that the teachers were the most important people in implementing a new educational approach and shift in teaching methods as required by the MoE to ensure they can reach a more communicative and constructivist classroom, regardless of any insufficiencies.

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Major Professor
Suzanne Porath

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Dedication

Thus we may say that we become ourselves through others

Lev S. Vygotsky

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Weidong Han and Bilian Cao,
Who instilled in me a love of learning and exploring.
You believed that I could achieve anything
I set my mind to and because of your belief,
I believe.

And

My in-law parents, Junyuan Han and Maijun Xue,
Whose constant support with financial,
left me no worries while learning and living in the United States of America.

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My companion through life, Yi Han,
Who accompanied my dream at every step of this journey,
You motivated me to push my limits.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

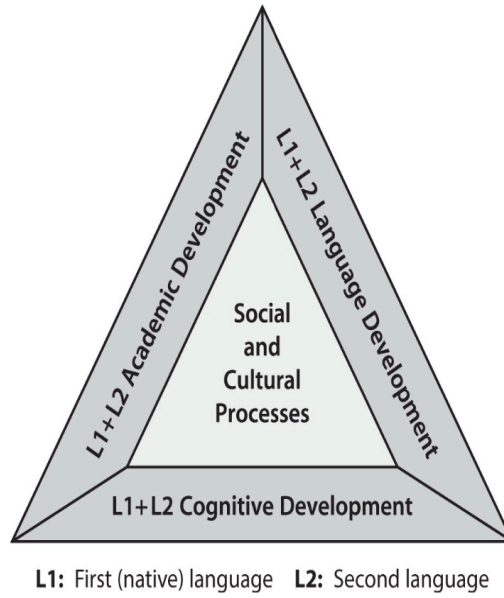
English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching occupies a prominent role in K-12 education in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Chinese policymakers, administrators, scholars, and educators view EFL as a necessary tool that can facilitate access to modern scientific and technological advances to promote commerce and academic communication between China and other developed countries where English is a major language. The focus of this research is on junior secondary (chuzhong) school EFL education. Because it is the stage of compulsory schooling at which most students study English language it has been more sensitive to shifts in the communicative/cognitive approach in response to dissatisfaction with rote-learning, inefficiency, and exam-oriented EFL pedagogy. Scholars (Littlewood & Swan, 1981; Richards & Rogers, 2014) have proposed the communicative/cognitive approach in the process of teaching, learning the vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, and all other aspects of English skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. They believe that this approach better equips students with both the oral skills and the literacy necessary for the contemporary labor market.

Cele-Murcia (2001) classifies the major trends in language teaching in the twentieth century into nine approaches which, interestingly, include Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Both methods are very useful, but they have obvious differences in terms of the approach and history of theory. GTM is a very traditional and classic method, whereas CLT, in contrast, is one of the latest methods that is used by teachers in many countries today in EFL classrooms. A fundamental purposes of teaching EFL through the GTM is to be able to help students to read and appreciate English language literature objectives. Students in GTM classrooms learn vocabulary and grammar rules of the English language, try to

apply those words and rules to their native language, then convert them into the English to be able to read literature written in the target language. In comparison, CLT intends to make the communicative competence become the essential goal of language teaching process (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011). Hence, through GTM the EFL teachers get the students to analyze the English language; on the other hand, through CLT the EFL teachers have the students use the English language. Because of that, useful topics to research are GTM being used as the current method in classrooms and connecting biography-driven instruction (BDI) to communicative/cognitive approach.

As a research-based instructional approach, the BDI method is rooted in the communicative/cognitive approach, which Herrera (2010) has proposed. This approach promotes culturally responsive teaching and learning by recognizing the backgrounds or prior experiences of the English language learner with a focus on English communication, forms, rules, and content-learning rather than an exclusive focus on mastery of the English-language grammar and forms. Herrera and Murry (2016, as cited in Collier, 1987, 1989, 1992; Collier & Thomas, 1989, 2007, 2009; Gonzalez et al., 2011; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2012) have stated that the Prism Model (see Figure 1.1) is conducive to understanding students from a holistic perspective to frame the differential learning and transition needs and diverse assets that students bring to the classroom. Figure 1 illustrates the four major components of the Prism Model: linguistic, academic, cognitive, and sociocultural factors are interrelated and involve developmental processes that occur simultaneously in students. This model is further detailed in the literature review in Chapter Two.

Figure 1.1. The Prism Model (Herrera (2022), p. 26.)



Source: Thomas & Collier (1997), p. 42. Used with permission.

Chinese EFL teachers in the GTM contexts have to teach a range of curriculum content, which includes grammar rules, vocabulary words, and standardized examination skills, while simultaneously creating a zone of development to support students to acquire proficiency in English language communication. The Prism Model defines four components that allow for analysis to be made regarding teachers' ability to make meaning of BDI strategies in the GTM context. To experience BDI strategies success in GTM contexts, two EFL teachers who are not yet trained in BDI need professional development that provides the same fundamental knowledge that American English as Second language (ESL) groups experience. This includes attention to the professional development processes that occur for teachers through the coaching sessions. EFL teachers conduct the teaching process – linguistic, academic, and cognitive development - in a supportive sociocultural environment with students with a background of native languages other than English via both their first language (L1) and their second language (L2) to enhance their English language learning.

English - Language Teaching in the PRC

EFL teaching, in theory, begins in the third primary grade and continues throughout primary and middle school and on through the college level. Both the Bureau of Universal Education and the Bureau of Higher Education in China have Divisions of Foreign Languages. Each school has an English Teaching and Researching Group that is in charge of English teaching. In addition to the widespread teaching of English at the primary- and middle-school levels, with an estimated 1,270,000 in-service English teachers English Teachers, and increased by approximately 4,000,000 college students major in English graduated from college institutions during 2012-2019 (The Mandatory Shift from Primary and Secondary School English Education to Elective Courses Appears to Be Meaningless and May Result in Approximately 420,000 English Teachers Facing Unemployment., 2021).

Students in China are learners of English as a foreign language (EFL); this means that they try to learn a foreign language in a country whose national language is not English (Brown, 2000; Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Therefore, compared to English as a second language (ESL) learners, EFL learners are less advantaged, as they lack the sociocultural and language context. Even in classrooms, the students have limited time to be exposed to the English language. Especially in public schools, instruction is generally conducted using the traditional GTM, as a centrally controlled educational system and nationwide examination (zhongkao and gaokao) are usually designed to test students' English-language knowledge of vocabulary. Grammatical rules, translation skills, and textbooks "provide a basis for application of relevant pedagogical approaches" (Chang, 2004, p. 41). Teachers usually present the sentence structures and grammar rules of the English language, but they rarely teach using the communicative approach to develop the student's competence to communicate in the English language with real-life

situations. Thus, the teacher plays a dominant role in traditional GTM classrooms, while students tend to act as passive receivers. As a result, students do not gain communicative competence.

English Curricula

Two recent conferences (Henan in April 2023; online in November 2022) held in China featured discussions concerning the future scope and direction of English-language teaching. These discussions confirmed the desires of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to: 1) improve national literacy; 2) cultivate talent with credibility and cross-cultural communicative ability; and 3) improve the country's international competitiveness and its people's international communicative ability.

At the primary- and middle-school levels, the MoE issues a revision of Compulsory Education's English Curriculum Standards for the teaching of English every 10 years. The 2022 Edition marked the beginning of a new era in the evolution of compulsory education. The English-language curriculum in compulsory education is fundamental, practical, and thorough. EFL is taught through sharing information about diverse cultures, comparing cultural similarities and differences, absorbing cultural essence, and gradually improving students' cultural awareness and communication skills. Students also learn to look at the world objectively, rationally, and with an international perspective. The new standards demonstrate that EFL teaching and learning in China is undergoing a great change; it will change from a purely knowledge-based approach to English-language ability and skills. For future middle-school students, the traditional GTM method of studying will no longer be able to meet the requirements of the new standards; students will thus need to devote more time to reading authentic English-language texts outside of the class, bring personal learning assets into the classroom, and practice critical thinking. The emphasis on communication will allow students to use the English

language, and this practical aspect is the core of English-language learning. The standards state that students from middle schools will enter tertiary institutions with a background in English grammar (basic structure, tenses) and pronunciation; they will have the ability to understand “explicit or implicit logical relationships in a discourse” and “the meaning conveyed by non-modal textual resources in a multi-modal discourse” (Wang, 2022), a vocabulary of 2,000 words, and the ability to express their own opinions with a focus on critical thinking. The specific goals are as follows (Compulsory Education’s English Curriculum Standards, 2022 Edition):

Language ability development

- Through practice activities, perceive, experience, accumulate, and apply the English language.
- Develop an awareness of similarities and differences between Chinese and English.
- Establish a sense of the English language and increase experience with using the language for meaningful communication and exchange.

Cultural awareness cultivation

- Learn about cultural achievements in different countries, compare cultural similarities and differences, develop cultural communication abilities, and form positive aesthetic tastes and correct values.
- Develop a deeper understanding of Chinese culture, establish international perspectives, and build confidence in one’s own culture.

Thinking and Capacity Building

- Develop logical, dialectical, and innovative thinking and build critical and creative thinking capacity.

- Observe and understand the world in its various dimensions and express views through evidence and facts in a coherent way.

Learning-ability enhancement

- Establish correct goals for English learning, maintain interest in English learning, actively engage in English-language activities within and outside the classroom, actively communicate, and use English in the process of learning.
- Collaborate and learn with others.
- Reflect on and evaluate learning progress.
- Learn about self-management to improve learning efficiency.

Fusing GTM and BDI

The goal of this study is to help the two EFL teachers implement BDI in a GTM dominate classroom to support students in developing communicative competencies. In addition, according to the BDI methodology, students are encouraged to bring their personal culture, academic background knowledge, and prior experience with English into the classroom. To do this, the teachers needed to learn about the foundations of BDI and the key Power strategies, and consider how to use these strategies in three phases with content that would complement the strategy. This enabled the teachers to choose the right strategy for the right content.

Significance of the Study

In China, the classroom practice activities, teaching methods, evaluation system, materials, and aspects of the administrators and educators remain advocates of traditional GTM for teaching EFL, despite the switch to a more constructivist and communicative approach. In that regard, China's educational system falls short in teaching English to students, even when they have taken English lessons for three years. Traditional GTM is no longer the best teaching

approach to improve English-language learners' communicative competence and promote their second-language acquisition (SLA). BDI encourages teachers to embrace students' diversity and bridge their zone of proximal development (ZPD)—the area between learners' level of independent performance and the level of performance with assistance—thus increasing their EFL learning motivation and addressing each student's individual learning needs (Herrera, 2022; Shabani et al., 2010).

This study may provide a new path to EFL teaching and learning, including suggestions and recommendations for English teachers and the MoE. Further, it may help English teachers understand BDI as a new method in English-language education in multiple ways: generating insights about the applications of BDI in their English-language teaching; fostering EFL learners' intercultural awareness; promoting learners' communicative competence; and increasing students' motivation to learn within different sociocultural and language contexts. The current study may also suggest the benefits of conducting professional development coaching sessions with an understanding that helping teachers change in their views and approaches to teaching English is very important.

Finally, in this dissertation, the teacher is going to be asked to consider a paradigm shift, changing from teacher-directed to student-centered, making the teacher a facilitator and student a creator. In that regard, the significance of this study may extend to revealing the challenges and dilemmas that teachers face when implementing a new system and approach.

Research Questions

- How do EFL teachers in Northwest of China make meaning of BDI in the context of GTM?

- How do EFL teachers navigate the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas of implementing BDI in a GTM context?

The researcher conducted a qualitative case study that explored understandings and descriptions of the participants' views of BDI based on their backgrounds, as well as their learning and teaching experiences. The research took place in two public schools in the neighboring provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu, China, was conducted via video conferencing, and included the participation of two middle-school EFL teachers.

After providing content about BDI, the researcher conducted two professional development coaching sessions, which included video reviewing, with the selected EFL teachers. The goal of the coaching sessions was to introduce BDI as a new method in EFL education. Next, the teachers were interviewed via video to see what was learned. Additional data was gathered through audio-recorded participant interviews, demographic information surveys, and pre- and post-surveys on GTM and BDI strategy use, as well as through the collection of the teacher's lesson plans and artifacts. The analysis of these sources addressed the research questions. Analysis of the data, along with the analysis of information from several theorists and researchers in this field, led to answers and insights regarding EFL teaching in China.

Chapter Summary

Despite its importance in this age of globalization and communication, EFL is still taught using traditional GTM in China. Because of the drawbacks of this traditional method, new applications and methods are necessary. This paper considers introducing BDI to EFL teachers and coaching them in this method to support them in providing culturally responsive pedagogy in GTM-dominated classrooms, thereby combining language acquisition with content learning and adding sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic dimensions. The main purpose of this

study was to explore how two EFL teachers who use the GTM in their classroom understood BDI as a new method in EFL education and how they applied it in practice. It also considers the insights that could be gained regarding professional development in English-language teaching in China.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Some Chinese scholars and educators have critiqued traditional grammar translation methods (GTM) in English language teaching and the teacher-centered classroom (Liu & Xu, 2017; Wu et al., 2021). This method requires English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students to possess mastery of grammatical rules and sentence structures and to focus on vocabulary, translation, and written skills (Richards, 2018; Sun & Zhang, 2021). Unfortunately, EFL students learning English through this method end up becoming silent English speakers, meaning they gain insufficient listening and speaking skills and find it difficult to carry out verbal communication. In response to this issue, in the field of compulsory education, EFL teaching in the classroom across China has undergone radical changes (Chen et al., 2022; Jiang & Zhang, 2021; Liu & Chun, 2022). At the core of these changes is, on the one hand, the rise in demand for the English language as a means of effective communication. The ever-increasing need for good communication skills in English has created a huge demand for quality English language teaching and it is important for the parents to equip their children with good English language knowledge (Richards, 2005).

On the other hand, the fundamental teaching methodology based on communicative approach to English language learning and teaching moves to a learner-centered orientation, which is very different from the GTM method. Studies have indicated that EFL teachers have responsibility to develop students' efficient communication skills (Ahmad & Rao, 2013).

Historically, English language teaching methodologies have been based on memorization of grammar rules and translation exercises (Gregg, 1984). These methodologies have been widely used in curriculum design and classroom teaching to improve students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as well as to teach vocabulary. The researcher's overwhelming experience of studying and working with EFL teachers and students in China showed that there is a tendency toward using GTM in classroom. This practice does not differ substantially from how the teachers themselves learned grammar in compulsory education and higher education. Thus, it seems that GTM is embedded in the overall framework of curriculum and instruction. Teachers seem to advocate for CLT, but do not implement it in their teaching (Burns, 1990; Guthrie, 1983; Kumaravadivelu, 1993) since it is not congruent with the current examination system.

The goal of teaching with GTM was to help EFL students pass standardized exams and read and write classical materials (Howatt, 1984; Rivers, 1981). Traditional GTM lessons typically consist of reading comprehension, new vocabulary with native language equivalents in each unit, detailed expressions of grammar rules in native language, paradigms to memorize, bilingual vocabulary lists, and testing. Additionally, applied linguists and methodologists have moved away from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and failed to deliver valid SLA pedagogic theories for second language teaching (Littlewood, 2004). According to Long (2000), "The scope of many SLA theories does not extend to the L2 classroom at all. (. . .) Most SLA theories, and most SLA theorists, are not primarily interested in language teaching, and in some cases not at all interested" (pp. 4–5).

Biography-driven instruction (BDI) is a communicative/cognitive method for providing culturally responsive pedagogies in language learning and integrating EFL students'

sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic resources to improve SLA. In communicative and task-based teaching, linguistics researchers and educators motivate EFL teachers to use English in the classroom to create a language environment, rather than using their mother tongue. Grammar should be taught with communicative skills rather than explicit teaching of rules (Ellis, 1994). However, communicative/cognitive language teaching does not fulfil the requirements of EFL learners in Northwest of China (developing area), because EFL learners from developing areas find it difficult interacting with active English speakers. Thus, more and more linguistics researchers and educators are striving to find and adopt effective teaching methods.

In this chapter, I discuss the theory used as a framework for this study and review the relevant literature. The theoretical framework draws upon and expands constructivism to ensure that English language-learning encompasses students' active participation and the synchronous development of EFL teaching and learning with the aim of producing a high-quality education. The second section provides a review of relevant literature that sheds light on important themes related to the research questions that guide the study, including professional development, motivation, the Chinese English teaching and learning context, the grammar translation method (GTM), communicative language teaching (CLT), the biography-driven instruction (BDI) method, and the dilemmas and challenges EFL teachers face when integrating and combining BDI with GTM.

Theoretical Framework

Defining Constructivism

Constructivism is the theory that people learn through experience and interactions with content and each other. As an instructional model, this theory describes learning as happening when people create their own understanding through assimilating and accommodating a prior

experience or existing cognitive framework, and using new knowledge (relevant information). The constructivist theory of learning emerged from Piaget and Vygotsky's cognitive theories.

Piaget (1896-1980) is cited as the founder of constructivism. He draws on the ideas of cognitive constructivism as an individual perspective, active learning, assimilating (adapting new information to fit existing knowledge) new knowledge into learners' existing knowledge framework, how individuals accommodate (altering existing ideas due to new information) new knowledge, and how schemes are organized or use prior knowledge to produce a learner's mind. Piaget's theory revolves around the central idea that knowledge could not simply emerge from an experience; instead, an existing structure is necessary to help make sense of the world. Learners construct their understanding of the world via assimilation and accommodation. This means that cognitive growth is achieved by integrating more straightforward concepts of knowledge into higher-level concepts at each stage of development.

Vygotsky (1896-1934) contributed the theory of social cultural constructivism (social-constructivism perspective) with an emphasis on learning based on context through interactions with others. The social constructivist classroom is rooted in Vygotsky's view that knowledge is not pure output from teachers to students; rather, it is constructed in the students' minds through group work, teacher facilitation, social interaction, and students' assimilation of their interests with their own cultures. Hence, learning is a process where learners must actively adapt prior knowledge to new knowledge and transform it to make it their own.

Constructivist approaches have proposed the *top-down* and *bottom-up* learning methodologies; the *top-down* approach to instruction begins with complex problems or tasks and discovers basic knowledge and skills needed to solve or perform them, while the *bottom-up* approach refers to instruction that isolates the basic skills, teaches them separately, and builds

incrementally before tackling higher-order tasks. The constructivist approach emphasizes conceptual understanding over rote learning, thus making constructivism a “top-down” rather than a “bottom-up” instructional approach. This means that the teacher should teach students to discover the main ideas and then derive the details from those main ideas rather than teaching all the details, as well. Gul (2016) has concluded the following:

Scholars and philosophers such as Dewey (1916), Piaget (1973), and Vygotsky (1978) had different perspectives and ideas on constructivism although they were arguing mainly around the same epistemology and ontology. In other words, the scholars interpreted the same concept from their different angles, experiences, minds, and worlds (p.10).

Constructivism is in the mind of knowers; they construct a reality, interpret it by relying on their experiences and understanding of how they constructed (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Duff & Jonassen, 1992). Experience is also important in constructivism. In this regard, knowledge is life itself and stems from learners’ experiences; not an abstract entity in the world that exists independently of the learner (Dewey, 1916, 1997). Therefore, teaching and learning processes should be related to the real, practical world. Further, the classrooms are designed such that it is not only a teacher talking, but also students asking critical questions, sharing ideas and experiences, and exchanging knowledge interactively (Brooks & Brooks, 1999).

As demonstrated above, constructivist teaching emphasizes conceptual understanding rather than rote memorization. Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that teachers should instruct students to identify the main idea of what they learn before concerning themselves with the details. Additionally, Piaget and Vygotsky’s theory is supported by Bruner’s cognitive theory, which says that learners build on their understanding and experience as they learn new concepts. Furthermore, he (1961) has stressed the importance of learners being able to

choose and change objectives of study, construct hypotheses, and make decisions based on their knowledge and experience. Bruner emphasized the social nature of learning that teachers should help students develop skills through the process of scaffolding. Scaffolding “refers to the steps taken to reduce the degrees of freedom in carrying out some tasks so that the child can concentrate on the difficult skill she is in the process of acquiring” (Bruner, 1978, p. 19), meaning that it involves helpful, structured interaction between teachers and students with the aim of helping the students achieve a specific goal.

It is important in constructivist theory that learners actively develop knowledge in their interactions with the environment and create cognitive structures. Cognitive interaction occurs through the cognitive structure created by the learner’s activity and liveliness. Aminah and Asl (2015) have argued that the process of adaption and adjustment occurs according to the demands of the environment; such change happens continuously thorough the process of reconstruction. This researcher conducted professional development created through a compilation of knowledge from concrete experience, reflections, and interpretations. Professional development means constructing the environment so that participants are motivated by learning BDI strategies. It is assumed that the participants will have a different understanding of communicative/cognitive approach depending on personal experience.

Learning from experience is “education that occurs as a result of direct participation in events of life” (p 221). It begins with experiential education based on prior experience or existing cognitive structures in the classroom and discussions with classmates, who then contemplate, contribute ideas, and develop new knowledge. Therefore, emphasizing constructivism in education and teaching means the following: (1) prioritizing real learning in the relevant context,

(2) giving priority to the process, (3) inculcating learning in the context of social experience, (4) learning in order to construct experience.

Constructivist Foreign Language Instruction

As discussed above, Constructivism is defined as an approach that shifts education from behaviorism to cognitive theory, and suggests (Giridharan, 2012) that learners construct new knowledge by adapting and assimilating it based on their previous experiences. This could be useful in the Chinese context.

Teachers in China public-sector schools follow a traditional theory of teaching and learning, that views teaching and learning as a process of systematic giving and taking. In this model, the teacher is the central factor delivering knowledge, whereas the learner is the recipient of knowledge in the process. In the Chinese language, this method of imparting knowledge to learners is widely known among teachers as “传道授业解惑也 (one who could propagate the doctrine, impart professional knowledge, and resolve doubts),” with *transmission* as the English counterpart. The transmission model prevails in China public-sector schools and assumes that knowledge exists independently of the learner; teachers disseminate information, already set by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in textbooks, mainly through a lecture format, which requires learners to accept information and knowledge as presented by their teachers. The typical transmissive lesson can be described as didactic. Didacticism is grounded in teacher-centered education and is often conducted within *chalk-and-talk* which focuses on whiteboard and the teacher’s voice.

These activities differ from constructivist approaches that require students’ active participation. Through cooperative learning, blended learning, and smart classrooms, students can participate actively in a variety of activities. The active mental processes of development

enable students to construct knowledge rather than having teachers simply pass it onto them; the students are the builders and creators of meaning and knowledge during the learning process (Sharma, 2014). As Benítez Velásquez (2012) affirms, this approach implies that the learner should be actively engaged in the learning process and solve problems during learning. This view takes into account students' interests, abilities, attitudes, performance, and motivations. Both the teachers and the students benefit from this strategy, as it offers flexibility, motivation, adaptability, and creativity. It encourages teachers to use appropriate learning methods in conjunction with students' backgrounds and prior experiences; students are encouraged to be autonomous in the process of teaching. In light of these salient features of constructivism, students will have a more enjoyable experience learning English if this strategy is used (Gray, 1997).

Principles of Constructivism in Foreign Language Teaching

Wolff (1994, 1997), a prominent German foreign language teaching (FLT) researcher, has outlined the characteristics of FLT using constructivism through a *constructivist* vs. *instructivist* discussion. Instructivism is defined as being directed by a pedagogical-psychological concept, through which learners are considered “reactive beings” who either accept or reject the material the teacher offers, while constructivists postulate that learning is a process that is highly subjective, autonomous, and active.

1. The constructivist approach to teaching languages emphasizes cooperative learning, project-based learning, and learning by teaching.
2. Constructivism emphasizes learner autonomy and the individualization of learning.
3. Constructivist classrooms emphasize learning awareness, language awareness, and intercultural awareness.

4. An authentic and complex learning environment is at the heart of holistic language experiences in the classroom.

An important principle of constructivist language-teaching is action-oriented learning, which emphasizes participating in classroom activities and preparing various projects, along with teaching and collaborative learning. The second substantial principle of constructivism in FLT is student autonomy, which promotes individualization. Wolff (1997) has argued that teaching can only influence learning in a very limited way. This means that learners can develop a new knowledge framework autonomously using their prior knowledge and experience. It is the teachers' responsibility to choose and apply strategies and methods to complement the learners' language and intercultural awareness. In classes where learners have permission to choose fragments and sections, they can select the materials. As a means of fostering learners' autonomy, teachers should inform students in advance about the style and type of learning students' prefer, and they should consider the strategies and methods they select and apply during learning. In addition to learning awareness, it is important to have language awareness and complementing intercultural awareness.

Another constructivism principle refers to a content-oriented and holistic language experience that takes place in bilingual classes. In this approach, a complex and authentic learning environment is beneficial for acquiring a foreign language. This explanation is in accordance with Reinfried, (2000) who stated that radical constructivism does not work as a methodological meta-theory for language-learning because of its weaknesses at the explanation level and the degree of inconsistency. He defines a realistic constructivist theory as a student-centered theory, which places an absolute emphasis on language acquisition. What is radical constructivism? It provides a pragmatic approach to the problem about reality, truth, and human

understanding. The two basic principles of radical constructivism are that knowledge is not passively received through the senses but is actively constructed by the learner, and that the function of cognition is organization of the experiential world rather than discovery of an independent reality. The weakness of radical constructivism, in particular the processes of learning, teaching, interaction and class organization in the field of language teaching, is that the respective languages and cultures cannot take a meaningful part as societal constructs within the dichotomy of trans-phenomenal reality vs. subject-related reality. It can be concluded that the existence of verbal and culturally specific signs cannot be attributed to a strictly objective level, but only to an inter-subjective one. Furthermore, Gul (2016) has reviewed several studies and found that constructivist teaching was more effective than traditional teaching methods. Compared to traditional English-teaching methods, constructivist techniques improve students' reading comprehension more. The constructivist theory enables learners to create additional knowledge, such as poetry, short dramas, and scenarios, because it satisfies the learner's curiosity about new things. In other cases, students can use their knowledge to create and design something suited to their interests.

Professional Development

Constructivism is not just for the K-12 classrooms. Its principles are relevant to professional development for teachers also, especially if teachers are expected to implement constructivist approaches in their own classrooms. There is a considerable volume of research on the constructivist approach trends in teacher professional development. Howe and Stubbs (1997) note that a constructivism approach on professional development is designed to assist teachers with constructing their own knowledge in a supportive environment and, thereby, empowering them to be autonomous learners. A constructivist-based professional development program is

quite novel to teachers in Northwest of China as most in-service seminars tend to focus on knowledge transmission. Furthermore, traditional teaching approaches are most frequently used by teachers, the majority of them being unfamiliar with the constructivist approach in teaching. Hence, the professional development program aimed to help teachers develop a constructivist approach to teach in the existing curriculum, with the expectation that at the end of the program teachers should have produced their own teaching plans and curriculum materials. The researcher considered it an opportunity to convince teachers to participate in a project which would help them develop and implement appropriate strategies for teaching.

The traditional education system is criticized for emphasizing specific prescription and dictation and advocating fixed and ready models. Dewey (2001) stated that “definite prescription and dictation or which reproduce without modification ready-made models, may give muscular dexterity, but they do not require the perception and elaboration of ends, nor (what is the same thing in other words) do they permit the use of judgment in selecting and adapting means” (p. 204). Therefore, a participative, creative, and constructive method of EFL education for the students is vital. Anand and Rana (2018) conducted a quasi-experimental design study in India. The subjects were 62 student teachers in Kalka Institute who were divided into two groups, control and experimental, by researchers to test the effectiveness of the constructivist approach. The control group was taught in the conventional approach (talk and chalk), and the experimental group was taught in constructivist approach. Anand and Rana found significant differences in constructivist applications. They stated that constructivism places the learner centerstage and is effective for the student teacher student teacher, who can, in turn, apply it in their classroom as effective cognitive tools for the development of learners (Anand & Rana, 2018). This group of teachers ha been particularly involved in professional development (PD)

initiatives. Some of these measures have been very well received because they value the professionalism of ESL teachers. For example, the Education Bureau has organized many courses for English curriculum leaders, and the National Teaching Skills Competition for the English Teachers in Schools (NTSCET) was targeted exclusively at teachers of English. However, EFL teachers must continue to address the issue of how to enhance proficiency and classroom instruction to raise English standards.

As Pressley et al. (2004) have described, the quality of instruction is determined by integrating a variety of strategies based on students' backgrounds, learning preferences, and interests (Brown, 2007; Tomlinson et al., 2003) and assessing the success of an English language program as a whole. Anderson (1995) has defined teacher PD as the process of gaining experience and systematically reflecting on a teacher's teaching. Therefore, PD activities are those that allow responsive instructors to continue to enhance their expertise in EFL pedagogy to meet the needs of changing learners, increase students' communicative competence, and facilitate the integration of communicative approaches into GTM-dominated classrooms.

Characteristics of Effective Teacher PD

In general, effective teacher development programs help teachers understand teaching and their roles. Rossner (1992, cited in Piai, 2005) has identified the characteristics of effective teacher PD:

1. "it is about dealing with the needs and wants of the individual teacher in ways that suit that individual" (p. 20);
2. "much of [PD] is seen as relating to new experiences, new challenges and the opportunity for teachers to broaden their repertoire and take on new responsibilities and challenges" (p. 21);

3. “[PD] is not just to do with language teaching or even teaching: it’s also about language development (particularly for teachers whose native language is not English), counselling skills, assertiveness training, confidence-building, computing, mediation, cultural broadening—almost anything in fact” (p. 21);
4. “[PD], in most teachers’ opinions, has to be ‘bottom-up,’ not dished out by managers according to their own view of what development teachers need” (p. 21).

Given the prominence of PD in EFL education, a large body of research (Sparks & Hirsch, 1997; O’Hara & Pritchard 2008; Loucks-Horsley et al., 2009; Visser et al., 2010; Omar, 2014) has been conducted to determine the key characteristics of effective PD. Extending Rossner’s findings, research has concluded that PD should consider instructors’ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences, along with the curricular content, purposes, and effective approaches for delivering PD. For instance, Sparks and Hirsch (1997) have suggested that effective PD encourages participants to contribute to programs in order to ensure they meet specific needs and that participants act as resources for other participants. O’Hara and Pritchard (2008) have also added other core features: scheduling, delivery mode, and support and leadership. The importance of attending PD sessions is emphasized by instructors’ ability to model, coach, and develop problem-solving skills tailored to participants’ needs. As instructors become more skilled in the new, more effective practices through effective PD, they are exposed to authentic experiences and opportunities to apply scientific and inquiry-based teaching methods. According to Sims and Fletcher-Wood (2021), a successful professional development program relies on external expertise rather than being shallow, fragmented, unfocused, or based on educational fads.

Effective PD, in which teachers have active roles in their development, can create more sustainable academic outcomes for teachers and students. The main part of the PD program involved 2-3 workshops, the design of each being based on the constructivist strategy outlined in the previous section. Teachers were provided with opportunities and encouraged by the researcher to share their own teaching experience, to comment on the researcher's coaching content, and to explore and negotiate teaching strategies and activities. Additionally, an effective PD program has the potential to improve teachers' classroom practices and their subject-specific knowledge (Appleton, 2008). As Wenger and Snyder (2000) have stated, a community of practice encourages knowledge-sharing among professionals. People with a common interest collaborate to share ideas, solve problems, and build innovation to deepen their knowledge and expertise. Hence, district and school administrators should hold regular meetings for teachers to share concerns (Shank, 2005). Supporting professional relationships will help instructors develop teaching and learning communities that contribute to their satisfaction.

Models of EFL Professional Development

Learning theory research provides important insights to inform teacher professional development and promote empowerment in the classroom. Crandall (1993) has outlined four models of professional development for ESL teachers. The first is the craft model of mentoring, which involves collaborating with a mentor teacher to plan lessons, observe peers, and practice reflectively. The second is the theory to practice model, which includes the techniques of video training, teaching principles, analysis, application, and follow-up. The third is the inquiry-based or reflective practice model, which promotes action research among teachers, researchers, and administrators. The fourth model is a combination of all three, in which theory is incorporated with practice.

In the 21st century, teachers must learn increasingly complex skills to be prepared to create productive classrooms. Educational professional development (EPD) supports this process. In order to develop critical thinking skills, complex problem-solving abilities, effective communication and collaboration, and self-direction, students need sophisticated forms of teaching. Teachers who are enrolled in EPD programs must concentrate on aspects of professional growth that help them learn the pedagogies required to teach these skills in a variety of social, cultural, and political contexts. Therefore, the professional development (PD) model a program adopts must be flexible enough to accommodate the PD goals of instructors at different levels of development. Table 2.1 illustrates how the professional development methods used in my study relate to the characteristics of effective PD.

Table 2.1. The Characteristic of Effective Professional Development and How They Related in My Study

Effective Professional Development	Professional Development in My Study
“it is about dealing with the needs and wants of the individual teacher in ways that suit that individual” (Rossner, 1992, as cited in Piai, 2005; p. 20).	Effective PD encouraged teachers to contribute to programs in order to ensure they meet specific needs for developing students’ communicative competence.
“much of [PD] is seen as relating to new experiences, new challenges and the opportunity for teachers to broaden their repertoire and take on new responsibilities and challenges” (Rossner, 1992, as cited in Piai, 2005; p. 21).	As teachers become more skilled in the new, more effective practices through watching 6 videos, they are exposed to authentic experiences and have the opportunity to apply BDI teaching methods.
“[PD] is not just to do with language teaching or even teaching: it’s also about language development (particularly for teachers whose native language is not English), counselling skills, assertiveness training, confidence-building, computing, mediation, cultural	The PD program involved 2 coaching sessions that were based on the viewing guides. Teachers were encouraged to share with researcher their own understating of BDI strategies.

broadening—almost anything in fact”
(Rossner, 1992, as cited in Piai, 2005; p. 21).

“[PD], in most teachers’ opinions, has to be
‘bottom-up,’ not dishd out by managers
according to their own view of what
development teachers need” (Rossner, 1992,
as cited in Piai, 2005; p. 21).

Teachers produced their own teaching plans and
curriculum materials at the end of the program.

Instructional Coaching

Instructional coaching has been adopted in schools across the U.S.A. to facilitate an increase in student achievement by providing high-quality professional development program for teachers. Supporting teacher growth (Kraft et al., 2018) through instructional coaching provides PD sessions, and helps teachers learn how to implement the constructivism approach. The interest in coaching emerges from rising expectations for student achievement (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001), research indicating the strong relationship between teacher quality and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000), and a new paradigm for teacher learning (Learning Forward, 2011).

Joyce and Showers (2002) find that teachers are more likely to implement new classroom approaches when coaching is embedded to facilitate teacher PD. Tschannen-Moran and McMaster’s (2009) conducted quasi-experimental study; the subjects were 93 K–2 teachers who chose one of four professional development formats presenting the same instructional reading strategy. All teachers began with a lecture-style workshop, and then additional supports were added for the different professional development formats (demonstration with students, practice opportunities with peers at the workshop, follow-up classroom coaching). This research found that the teachers who participated in the professional development formats had the greatest

impact on self-efficacy beliefs for reading instruction, but also the greatest level of implementation of the new reading strategy.

Some researchers (Costa & Garmston, 1994; Ippolito, 2010; Nowak, 2003) focused on the talk and actions of coaches during the coaching process, exploring various stances and models that coaches employ in their work with teachers. Ippolito (2010) examined 57 literacy coaches' attempts to balance coaching as being either directive or responsive. Additionally, Nowak (2003) and Heineke (2010) found that coaches tended to take a dominant approach with teachers during one-on-one sessions. In navigating a balance between peer and instructional leading, Coburn and Woulfin (2012) found that coaches in their study not only provided educational support, but also positioned three stances, pressuring, persuading, and buffering, to influence teacher learning and teacher change. Steering clear of a directive, dominating stance, Costa and Garmston (1994) viewed cognitive coaching as a method of instruction that promotes the use of specific language and procedures designed to engage teachers to think more reflectively, and fosters independent learning. Schon (1987) proposed three coaching models, namely "follow me," "joint experimentation", and "hall of mirrors" (p. 212). While a variety of coaching models or stances have been advocated, learning more about how coaches can most effectively implement the constructivism approach in supporting teacher PD warrants additional research. Thus, my research focuses upon the "how" of constructivism approaches by coaching sessions, the context in which these coaching sessions take place, and the motivation seen throughout the coaching sessions.

Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

Around the world, grammar translation is perceived as antiquated. Linguistics researchers and educators have criticized it (Cummins, 1979), claiming that language-learning should

involve the development of speaking and listening skills in authentic situations rather than merely studying grammar. As Rouse and Appleton (1925) have noted, the GTM seeks to “know everything about something rather than the thing itself” (p. 2). However, with the need for increasing cooperation with Western countries (especially English-speaking countries), the English-language teaching syllabus for China’s compulsory education has moved from GTM to the communicative approach. Classical GTM has been replaced with the framework of CLT based on grammar and vocabulary memorization.

GTM was originally used to teach foreign languages, including classical languages such as Latin and Greek; and so it came to be recognized as a classical method (Dunkel, 1988). According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), GTM is “a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language” (p. 6). Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2013) have also described this method. GTM has existed for some time; it has different names, and language teachers have used it to help students read and appreciate foreign-language literature for many years. It was also hoped that, through the study of the target language’s grammar, students would become more familiar with the grammar of their native language, and this familiarity would help them speak and write their native languages better. Finally, it was thought that foreign-language learning would help students grow intellectually; with a recognition that students would probably never use the target language, but the mental exercise would be beneficial regardless (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2013, p. 11).

GTM is one of the most traditional language-teaching methodologies; its origins can be dated to the end of the 19th century in Germany. The goal of GTM was to help students study

foreign languages by memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary. GTM is considered a traditional, classical method in China, as well; most schools (middle schools and high schools) and colleges apply this method. EFL teachers are the main source of communication in a classroom. All classroom activities and the tasks teachers assign to students are intended to teach them to pass their standardized exams after studying, reading, and writing using classical materials (Howatt, 1984; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Rivers, 1981).

As Larsen-Freeman (2000) has stated, grammar translation is a classical method that is taught deductively, with a focus on the rote memorization of grammatical structures and vocabulary. In GTM, English grammar translation consists of an explicit framework to guarantee the production of correct structures and expedite the learning process. Students master languages by practicing rules repeatedly. EFL teachers assess students' level based on their mastery of the grammar and vocabulary. The EFL teacher cannot be sure whether students have learned the language (Damiani, 2003). Finally, GTM vocabulary is taught in the form of isolated word lists and elaborate explanations to encourage students to memorize grammar rules (Thanasoulas, 2002).

Although GTM gradually developed into a popular, dominant language-teaching method, it also faced strong opposition. Richards and Rogers (2014) have noted, "though it may be true to say that GTM is still widely practiced, it has no advocates" (p. 7). GTM focuses on memorizing grammatical rules and emphasizes lexical meanings and written work over oral production. Consequentially, in GTM the individual is limited to learning grammatical structures; communicative language is missing. Teacher-centered teaching is not conducive to active learning, and students have no opportunity to use techniques for English language-learning.

Communicative Approach

Communicative language teaching (CLT) has been the most effective theoretical model in English-language teaching since the early 1970s all over the world. It involves interaction as well as situational and structural approaches. Richards and Rodgers (2001) have stated, “CLT aims to (a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication” (p. 155). Zhou (2012) has further emphasized that CLT aims to achieve communication and interaction as the means, with an ultimate goal of teaching a foreign language. Thus, the communicative approach has focused on all the components of communicative competence—not solely grammatical competence—thereby engaging students in the potential communicative, pragmatic, and functional use of language for social meanings. That is, language-learners not only need to be competent in linguistic forms, but also associate them with appropriate non-linguistic knowledge to achieve a specific functional meaning (Littlewood, 1981).

Chomsky (1957) criticized GTM for only stressing futile, mechanistic pattern drills, the memorization of grammatical structures, and inadequate reinforcement rather than real-life communication in teaching foreign languages. The North American linguist and anthropologist introduced the phrase “communicative competence.” Hymes (1967) built on Chomsky’s (1957) concepts, defining communicative competence as not only linguistic or grammatical competence alone, but also the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of cultural and social contexts. Furthermore, Howatt (1984) stated, “Communicative language teaching stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use English for communicative purposes and attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching” (p. 27). CLT

assumes that instructional communication and learning goals occur in a social context. BDI provides teachers with a culturally responsive pedagogy to promote the success of English-learners in their classrooms (Herrera & Murry, 2016).

BDI

Herrera (2010), a nationally known literacy expert, proposed BDI as a powerful teaching method to provide a practical guide for teachers serving culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. The goal of BDI (Herrera, 2010) is to integrate students' background knowledge into a curriculum that fosters growth from the known to the unknown and that creates opportunities for each student to demonstrate their learning in the "third space" at the end of class (quoted in Pérez et al., 2012, p. 27).

BDI is a model of providing culturally-responsive pedagogy that knows students holistically in order to be responsive to students cultural and linguistic assets and needs. EFL teachers explore *sociological, linguistic, cognitive, and academic* dimensions of student biography (Herrera, 2010) to answer the following questions (Herrera & Murry, 2011):

- Sociocultural: What brings students life, laughter, and love?
- Linguistic: In what ways do students use their first language (L1) and second language (L2) for comprehension, communication, and expression?
- Cognitive: How do students know, think, and apply?
- Academic: To what degree do students have access, engagement, and hope?

(p.22)

With the questions above, EFL teacher create a low-risk learning environment in which students feel comfortable and open to engaging in the lesson and sharing information with the teachers and their classmates. Teachers also foster a supportive classroom ecology by sharing the

goals and tasks of the lesson and creating a road map for learners that tells them the destination and what will happen along the way (Herrera, et al., 2012).

These four dimensions are interrelated. At the core, sociocultural dimensions ground the life of the students, including his or her family background, cultural experiences, values, and traditions. In turn, these shape the students' viewing and understanding of the world and how they interact and communicate with others. The linguistic dimension asks EFL teachers go to beyond simply understanding a student's English from the perspective of proficiency levels in reading and writing (grammar rules and vocabulary) based on standardized tests. Instead, EFL teachers explore how students combine their first language (L1) and English to comprehend, communicate, and express themselves. In order to track the specific ways students know, think, and apply in the context of each lesson, EFL teachers maximize students' cognitive dimension. When implementing BDI, EFL teachers use the student's biography as the foundation for their teaching, and a student's academic dimension to consider how to integrate past and current educational experiences to support students with access, engagement, and hope, rather than looking solely at prior grades and standardized achievement tests.

Herrera and Murry (2016) have advocated the use of CLD methods to make instruction more representative and inclusive. According to Herrera (2016), the term CLD includes "not only our nonnative English speakers, but also those students whose first language is English yet who use various dialects and registers that, perhaps, do not adhere to the expectations of Standard American English" (p. 6). Hence, the researcher believes that teachers must be fully aware of the wider implications of the term CLD and develop classroom practices that address students' diverse backgrounds.

Herrera and Murry (2016) have defined BDI as “a research-based instructional method that emphasizes reciprocal and facilitation and navigation of the official classroom space and unofficial space of student’s lives outside the classroom, which draws on assets of both spaces to promote culturally responsive teaching and learning” (p. 5). In other words, BDI supports learners in reaching academic standards in classrooms and uses students’ background knowledge as a springboard for new learning. CLD students are seen as assets for promoting culturally responsive teaching and learning. It is important to ground instruction in the lives of students and consider their home dynamics as well as their cultural experiences, values, and traditions. Therefore, many researchers, especially Chinese educators aiming to improve student’s English-language skills through culturally responsive instruction, recommend using BDI.

BDI Power 6: Strategies in Action

The BDI strategies provide a through-line of processes and actions for teachers and students that guide the reciprocal teaching and learning that occurs (Herrera et. al., 2017). Each BDI strategy incorporates activities, strategies, and techniques, and hands-on tools support teachers and students to track emerging understanding.

One such BDI strategy is **DOTS** -determine, observe, talk, and summarize – which is made up of three phases: Activation, Connection, and Affirmation. Students first determine what they know in the Activation phase by recording their initial connections to the topic as they write (using their native language and/or English) and draw in the A-Z alpha boxes of their individual DOTS charts. The teacher then asks learners to write the target vocabulary words around the edges of their charts. Students continue to use this chart as a tool to scaffold their learning throughout the remainder of the lesson. In the Connection phase, students *observe* links between their background knowledge (words and images recorded in the boxes) and the concepts and

vocabulary of the text/larger lesson. They draw lines on their DOTS charts to indicate these connections, linking the words written around the chart to the ideas documented in the boxes. *Talk* between students (in pairs and small groups) as well as between students and the teacher is supported by the evolving connections that students document on their charts. Students are able to share their individual perspectives on the topic and concepts, using the words and ideas on their chart to support their communication efforts. Teachers are able to formatively assess student's unique ways of processing the lesson's language and content, using insights gleaned to advance the learning of the entire classroom community. In the Affirmation phase, students use their DOTS charts for support as they *summarize*, solve, and synthesize their learning.

A second strategy is **U-C-ME**. This acronym stands for Uncover (U), Concentrate(C), Monitor (M), and Evaluate(E). Students first demonstrate their prior knowledge and background to connect with the particular topic or concept. The teacher then extends knowledge, as Herrera et al., stated, "they then orchestrate the conditions necessary for students to delve into the subject matter in ways that simultaneously pursue the answers to personal questions of interest" (p. 106, as cited in Tovani, 2000). Throughout the lesson, teachers encourage students to have confidence in their learning abilities by guiding them, actively monitoring their comprehension, and encouraging them to take control of the learning process. In the activation phase, students become *creative* while looking for links between their brainstormed words and ideas (recorded in the schema map) and the topic of the lesson. They hear other's ideas and further connect personal perspectives to the topic, and then they write down ideas that are most relevant to the topic in the U-C-ME chart to make predictions about content. In the connection phase, teachers guide questions to support *students* setting a purpose for reading and listening during the lesson. Students are able to evaluate their understanding of the topic while they share individual

perspectives with peers/small groups. This phase encourages students to focus on the process of comprehension rather than the results. In the affirmation phase, students use their U-C-ME for support as they *review*, *assess*, and *evaluate* their learning.

A third strategy is **Vocabulary Quilt**. Teachers first choose eight vocabulary words based on the content of curriculum. The students create eight boxes on chart paper, and write the preselected vocabulary words in the boxes (one word per box). Throughout the lesson, Vocabulary Quilt is a tool for students to connect with the text and also get them thinking intuitively about the words and what they meant within the text. In the activation phase, Vocabulary Quilt supports each student to share what he/she knows about the words based on background or prior learning experience. During the connection phase, teachers can guide students toward the target words and knowledge by using biography information documented during the activation phase. Students are able to move from the original, out-of-context associations to a level of understanding that is built upon one's cultural, linguistic, and academic knowledge. In the affirmation phase, students are able to use their native language to express what the words mean, or write personal perspectives to explain their understanding of the content and vocabulary, which encourages students to invest themselves in the outcomes of learning.

The **Foldables strategy** provides students with the opportunity to interact with other students through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students first *share* their initial thoughts about the topic, targets words, and concepts in the My Prediction column. During the lesson, teachers guide students to use Foldable to practice and apply their developing understanding of the new materials, which demonstrates "What I learned" and "examples of the word." At the end of the lesson, students are able to use the My Definition column for review an

assessment of the topic, vocabulary, and concepts while connecting to their linguistic and cultural dimensions.

The sixth strategy is **Linking Language**. When implementing this strategy, teachers encourage students to record words in both their native language and English. As Herrera et al., (2015) stated, teachers who are teaching in the secondary schools can use Linking Language to support students' previewing the text by looking at photographs, charts, tables, and maps. At the core, Linking Language focuses on visuals and motivates students' perception. In the activation phase, teachers use pictures to provide students' first context with the text or materials they read. Students with varying language abilities are able to comprehend the context/materials by pictorial representations of the topics/concepts. In the connection phase, teachers bridge students' words into and explain the context. Students participate in a collaborative group tasked to provide varying additional background knowledge about the topic/concept. In the affirmation phase, in order to gain a comprehension of the skills and knowledge students have accessed, teachers are able to use informal or authentic assessments (end-of-unit quiz and paper-and-pencil quiz).

The sixth strategy is **Extension Wheel**. Teachers first ask students think individually of three effects of thoughts related to the central topic in the activation phases and the collaborative learning conduct to help them understand how ideas can be expanded depending on the person's point of view. In the Connection phase, the teachers listen to what students share with their peers or group members to understand what students know during the lesson. In the affirming phase, the Extension Wheel strategy encourages students to document their learning, and teachers are able to review lesson content and plan future lessons by reviewing students' work, referring back to the wheels and incorporating the students' ideas.

Although including a description of each BDI strategy is not possible within the context of this chapter, full strategy descriptions, directions, and explanations of benefits for students and teachers are provided in Herrera et al. (2017). Students and the teachers collaborate by sharing and building on their individual background knowledge, ideas, and expertise. Students use a hands-on tool to document and scaffold their learning throughout the Activation, Connection, and Affirmation phases.

Integration of GTM and BDI

In the 20th century, foreign-language teaching became popular as new methods based on theoretical foundations for instruction emerged. Understanding theory became essential to the instructional design of language and practice in the classroom. Instructional design consists of the features of the Prism Models, including social and cultural processes, L1 + L2 academic development, L1 + L2 cognitive development, and L1 + L2 language development (Herrera, 2010).

The beginning of the 21st century marked a paradigm shift in teaching methodologies. CLT and CLD brought changes in the communicative aspect and the learner's role in the classroom (Herrera, 2010; Kong, 2011). The communicative/cognitive approach evolved as a substitute for GTM and later became the root of the BDI methodology. Educators started considering it an inevitable part of foreign-language teaching. The significant shift in language-teaching and learning from GTM to communicative and cognitive models concentrated on the CLD aspect of language. This aspect had a large impact by enhancing EFL students' abilities to be communicative and competitive; it inspired enthusiasm for using the English language in classroom; and it focused educators' and literacy experts' attention on students' diverse background functions. Meanwhile, a research-based approach favored obtaining academic

knowledge, especially regarding people from diverse sociocultural backgrounds. It has innumerable advantages for foreign-language teaching by bridging students' native language knowledge, background, and new concepts and vocabulary. It helps them develop critical-thinking skills and maximizes the learning process.

The intensive English development/Teaching English as Second Language (TESL) Program (Murry et al., 2017) was developed to teach English at the K-12 level in Ecuador by integrating aspects of CLD into the pedagogical curriculum. This was intended to build teachers' capacity for BDI teaching (quoted in Herrera, 2016; Herrera et al., 2015; Murry & Herrera, 2011; Murry et al., 2014). The core of TESL-GT is BDI, which uses learners' native language to achieve better comprehension of the foreign language. Herrera et al. (2015) have highlighted the positive aspects of this method and minimized its weaknesses. The method has three phases: activation, connection, and affirmation. In the activation phase, teachers build conditions of trust and respect to activate students' background knowledge; In the connection phase, teachers guide students to make a connection between prior knowledge and experiences and new academic content and vocabulary; and In the affirmation phase, students demonstrate the language and learning outcomes that they document via strategy-based tools, and teachers assess students' linguistic and academic gains by affirming their engagement with the lesson objectives (Murry et al., 2017).

China is the largest English language-learning and language-using population among all EFL countries, with an estimated number of users between 440 and 650 million (He & Zhang, 2010). The situation of teaching English in developing countries has completely changed, and solely relying on CLT is no longer appropriate. The main purpose is still to achieve teaching goals and pass examinations, which can be done appropriately through GTM. This approach

clarifies the rules, saves time, and increases understanding. As Swan (2011) has noted, GTM teaches grammar as a single, interconnected system; otherwise it is difficult to make comprehensible sentences and teach them correctly. Grammar is formed and aided by different components so that language learning can be successful. Thus, GTM should be used appropriately in English language-teaching classrooms. Integrating translation and BDI makes Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis more comprehensible—namely, that language is acquired “by understanding input containing $i+1$; that is, by understanding language that contains input containing structures that are a bit beyond the acquirer's current level” (p. 40)—and it makes teaching and learning more meaningful (quoted in Herrera, 2010; Schmidt, 1990).

Teachers should consider the systematic use of GTM and BDI rather than completely avoiding GTM because the fusion of the two generates better results for L2 learners. The strength of GTM lies in teaching a target language (English) using grammar; thus, integrating grammatical competence with BDI has the element of communicative competence. The use of the L1 and students' prior knowledge strengthens the concepts of L2 and develops reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills (Kong, 2011).

Dilemmas and Challenges Facing Teachers

Integrating GTM with BDI can be seen as educational constructivism, which focuses on a learner-centered approach to teaching, advocates English language-learning in culturally and linguistic diverse environments, and promotes problem-based activities through which students construct knowledge and interact with new content. However, some dilemmas and challenges have been found with regard to teachers' practice of educational constructivism; Windschitl (2002) has categorized these into *conceptual dilemmas* (teachers' difficulties with understanding constructivism and negotiating their current beliefs and teaching philosophies), *pedagogical*

dilemmas (teachers' difficulties with designing curricula that promote student learning that fulfills constructivist demands), *cultural dilemmas* (the role and expectation shifts from traditional teaching that teachers and students facilitate a constructivist ethos of learning), and *political dilemmas* (parents, administrators, or governments imposing institutional norms on teachers' constructivist practices). When moving from GTM to a constructivist approach using BDI, teachers not only have to learn new instructional approaches, but they also must manage the dilemmas that arise (Porath, 2016).

The most significant of these dilemmas is the need to reduce the dependence on standardized curricula and standardized achievement tests while also promoting teachers' autonomy (Windschitl, 2002, pp. 154–155). English tests in China mainly focus on grammar and vocabulary. Learners must take tests at every stage of their learning process. For example, junior high school students must participate in senior high school entrance examinations, and senior high school students take the Gao Kao college entrance exams. Therefore, considering their significance, these official English exams influence language-teaching innovation. Most teachers tend to prioritize preparing their students for these examinations instead of using the constructivist approach. Moreover, these tests likely affect learners' needs and expectations about English class. Students who take examinations seriously likely expect teachers to explain grammar points and vocabulary instead of organizing communicative activities. Therefore, if the exam system cannot be changed, there is little possibility that teachers will move to using BDI. Moreover, English language-teaching in China is based on textbooks. The wide use of grammar-translation and encyclopedic textbooks in China is one reason for the use of GTM. As Windschitl (2002) has noted, "These textbooks fuel teachers' anxious sense that they must cover an ambitiously broad but desperately thin curriculum. Such an agenda encourages the culture of rote

learning and precludes teachers' spending class time on authentic forms of inquiry" (p. 157).

With regard to the selection of textbooks, in the past, all schools had to use ministry-prescribed textbooks; today, however, more middle and high schools are entitled to choose textbooks according to the particular needs of their own students.

Additionally, constructivist teaching and learning require an understanding of the classroom as culture; traditionally, the role of a teacher is that of an all-knowing input provider. As Windschitl (2002) states,

[The d]ominant culture in schools is one of coping and compliance, where teachers control the intellectual activity to ensure uniform "exposure" to the curriculum and to maintain discipline. In response, students over time grow into the role of passive observers rather than active participants in their own education (p. 151).

Most Chinese students regard teachers and textbooks as the authorities; hence, they are accustomed to learning through attentive listening and uncritically accepting knowledge from the teacher and the textbook.

Chapter Summary

China's economic revitalization in the past several decades has led to an unprecedented development of English-language education and witnessed public interest in learning English. Paradoxically, it has not brought about a remarkable change in the approach to English language-teaching, even though the central education authorities have mandated the implementation of CLT. In brief, this reform of instructional practices has not gained wide acceptance in real classrooms.

This chapter summarized the theoretical component of this dissertation. It started by describing constructivism as the theoretical framework. Then, the term "teacher professional development" was defined, and specific characteristics and models were presented to emphasize

what makes them effective teacher-learning practices. Next, I discussed how motivation can affect learners' SLA and how motivation can help me better understand my participants' English-teaching experiences regarding GTM in China. These experiences were discussed in relation to communicative/cognitive approaches. Following this discussion, I reviewed the literature on GTM, including the key scholars and their ideas, as well as their applications in China. The next section concerned BDI, including the definitions, key scholars, and strategies. I then presented how GTM and BDI worked together in the process of EFL teaching to fit my research. In the final section, I presented the dilemmas and challenges teachers face that influence transforming GTM into BDI.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

In this chapter, the research design of the study is presented; it further discusses the research approach taken in relation to the aims and research questions of this study. The first section describes the method used in this dissertation. Next, the position of the researcher is presented, followed by a general review of case studies. The process of participant selection and data collection is then explained. Fourth, the setting of the study is described, and the research design is examined next, after which information about the data analysis is given. Finally, the trustworthiness and validity issues are discussed. It is worth noting that all processes in qualitative studies are interrelated, although participant selection, data collection, analysis, and other aspects are presented separately (Creswell & Poth, 2007).

Research Aims and Questions

The aim of this study is to introduce and coach the two selected EFL teachers in northwestern China on BDI professional development and explore and interpret how they make sense of the BDI in the context of GTM. As BDI is rooted in communicative and cognitive approaches to English-language instruction teaching and learning, this paper considers how to support teachers in providing a culturally-responsive pedagogy in GTM-dominant classrooms, combining second-language acquisition with content learning, and examining the relevant sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic effects. It also aims to identify insights that can be gained regarding professional development in English-language teaching in the Chinese context. With the help of my studies in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Kansas State University, I became aware of the importance of using BDI best practices in both education in general and in EFL education in particular.

As a result, I introduced BDI to two English teachers through providing the first two chapters (*1 The Foundations of Biography-Driven Instruction* and *2 Biography-Driven Instruction*) of the textbook *Biography-Driven Culturally Responsive Teaching* (Herrera, 2010), conducting two or three professional development coaching sessions, and then collecting documents from their textbooks, syllabi, lesson plan, and handouts to see how they applied it in practice. The research questions in this study are as follows:

1. How do EFL teachers in Northwest of China make meaning of BDI in the context of GTM?
2. How do EFL teachers navigate the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas of implementing BDI in a GTM context?

Positionality

Positionality is integral to the process of qualitative research, as it “reflects the position that the researcher has chosen to adopt within a given research study” (Savin-Baden & Major, 2023, p.71). Scholars (Foote & Bartell, 2011; Savin-Baden & Major, 2023) stated that the positionality describes a researcher’s world view and backgrounds, as well as the position they adopt in a research program and its social and political context. Positionality cannot be simply disregarded because no one can hold an absolutely neutral position in their research. The individual’s world view or researcher’s background influence an their belief about the nature of social reality, the nature of knowledge, and the way we interact with our environment and relate to it (Sikes, 2004; Bahari, 2010; Scotland, 2012). Human beings possess various subject positions and are always negotiating their subject positions within different discourses of what these positions are meant to be. In other words, our individual beliefs, assumptions, and the values we have on situations are influenced by their our positions. In light of our unique personal

backgrounds and the way we perceive the world, our understanding of our surroundings and how make choices of action can be varied.

In this section, I provide a brief orientation to the importance of identifying subjectivity through personal reflections and convey a subjectivity statement in order to lay the foundations for my own experiences that helped shape the lens through which I approached this study. However, declaring my subjectivities does not affect my methodological processes. More importantly, the disclosure of my subjectivities reflects my critical thinking process and intellectual honesty, and adds more academic rigor and trustworthiness to this study.

Positionality Statement – Beliefs and Assumptions

I am a 33-year-old female international student from China. I grew up in northwestern China and spent my first 22 years in China. I attended three years of college in China and made an important decision to study in the U.S. as a foreign exchange student during my senior year. After I earned my B.S. at Kansas State University, I pursued an M.S. by switching my major from accounting to education. I currently attend Kansas State University as a full-time doctoral student in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on ESL Studies.

My memories of learning English throughout my secondary school and college years center around the rote memorization of vocabulary, practice test booklets, and grammar rules. In English class, the first thing we did was dictate vocabulary words. If we misspelled a word, we were punished and had to write that word 20 times or more until we memorized it. Our EFL teacher taught us that vocabulary words were the most important aspect of learning a language. We were told that memorizing vocabulary words improves reading and writing. Students who did not know the vocabulary were thought to know nothing, not to mention writing an English essay. We had to memorize all the vocabulary words because they could appear on the unit quiz.

If we did not achieve a high score on the quiz, the teacher told us it was because we could not remember the vocabulary words. After learning the words in each unit, the teacher moved to dialogue and reading a text. We simply read these once, and then the teacher explained the grammar usage and asked us to translate each sentence into Chinese. The grammar rules and translation were boring. One of the most memorable grammar rules from my teacher was that two action words can never co-exist in one sentence with their original forms. We spent most of the class sessions on grammar rules and translation, but speaking and listening were rarely mentioned.

The spring semester of 2017 was my first time attending a BDI method class at a midwest university in the United States of America. It was an inspiring and exciting class, and I looked forward to attending each week. In that class, I learned that English could be taught in a totally different way with BDI. I was drawn to BDI, as it meets students' interests and needs and values students' learning in four different dimensions: cognitive, sociocultural, linguistic, and academic. The BDI approach showed me new ways of learning English and helped broaden my horizons in acquiring SLA. I reflected on my previous English-learning experiences, and strongly recommended that students in China should be provided this new avenue to learn English more effectively.

During the last semester of my master's degree in 2018, as a student teacher, I started teaching ESL at a local high school in the U.S. I utilized some BDI strategies in my ESL class to examine their effectiveness. Meanwhile, I pursued more coursework on BDI to enrich my knowledge on adapting BDI to my teaching and help in assessing students with BDI. I also attended professional workshops related to ESL teaching. I hope to gain as much theoretical

knowledge on BDI as I can, and collect practical experience on using BDI strategies in the classroom to build more support for future teaching and research.

I graduated with a master's degree in May 2018 and started teaching English at a vocational and technical college in China. I taught EFL classes at that college for one and half years. There, I saw that many students lacked interest and motivation to speak English, and they typically struggled with listening and speaking English. I understood their suffering, as they reminded me of the pain I experienced as a student trying to learn English with GTM. Given that students must pass the College English Test (CET-4) to obtain a graduation certificate, I have integrated GTM with BDI in my ESL class to ensure that I teach test skills. At the same time, using BDI increases their interest in the subject and makes learning both more enjoyable and more efficient.

Reflecting on my years of learning and teaching English in China, I personally did not like the way English was previously taught and is currently taught there, and I am seeking a more effective approach for EFL learners in China. As an international student from China, while I studied at Kansas State University, I especially enjoyed the BDI teaching that benefited my SLA. This inspired me to begin researching BDI and EFL teaching. My interest in the topic, specifically supporting EFL teachers' professionalism by helping them step outside traditional approaches to education in order to best serve all students, has evolved over the last three years. As a PhD student, a Chinese college EFL teacher, and a teacher educator, I have worked extensively with Chinese EFL learners who suffer from cultural identification and cultural identity anxiety while learning English in contemporary China. While it has long been my desire to advance the teaching of English with EFL learners with GTM, as an EFL teaching researcher,

my primary focus is now researching how to integrate BDI into GTM-dominant classrooms and help other EFL teachers work more effectively with students.

The Chinese central government and the country's Ministry of Education have prioritized curricula and instruction development. Similarly, in English-language education, the communicative approach has increasingly attracted researchers' attention in recent years. Few studies, however, have focused on integrating GTM with BDI, so it will be useful to explore the role of BDI in enhanced GTM-dominant classrooms. Accordingly, I adopted a qualitative study by conducting semi-structured interviews with two EFL teachers from different middle schools in northwestern China (a developing area). There, English-language education is often inadequate and does not sufficiently promote the modernization of compulsory education in China. Hence, a study in a developing area can provide rich insights and various pedagogical applications for middle-school EFL teachers to deliver in future EFL teaching in China.

As a PhD student, I have experience navigating two educational philosophies that have facilitated my ability to conduct research effectively in the United States and China. First, as a college EFL teacher, I can seamlessly move between researcher and object perspectives, maintaining aspects of both in each context. In China, I share the educational background of my research subjects and possess a domestic and foreign educational philosophy that, although it still presents significant challenges in introducing American education philosophies, nonetheless enables me to integrate myself into the communities and lives of those I study. Likewise, my status as a public figure without a party affiliation positions me as an outsider and allows me to provide new understandings and insights and communicate these findings in a way that resonates with students, scholars, and development professionals in the more traditional parts of northwestern China. In China, my insider status enables me to connect with mainstream Chinese

education culture and society, while my outsider status lets me apply the diversity of educational philosophies, paradigms, theories, and perspectives. This has significantly enhanced my ability to recognize and highlight curricula and instruction, such as how EFL teachers unpack their teaching and learning experiences in different sociocultural contexts and how they interact with GTM and BDI to promote students' SLA. Consequently, the depth of my research and its innovation provide insights that enhance perspectives that I can bring to the EFL classroom in China.

Participants

The participants of this study were two EFL teachers working in two public schools in two neighboring provinces (Shaanxi Province and Gansu Province) in northwestern China. Although this was not intentional, both participants in the study were women. In order to protect the participants' privacy, the researcher used pseudonyms, referring to them as Angela and Connie (participants chose these particular English names). The background and demographic information about the participants are provided in demographic survey (see Appendix K) and interviews (see Appendix E for First Interview Guided Prompts). All participants have the basic educational qualification of middle school teacher, which is a bachelor's degree. Angela holds an M.A. degree in overseas education and has four years of teaching experience. Connie holds a B.A. degree and is pursuing a master's program in EFL education. She has more than five years of teaching experience.

In qualitative research, the sample selection is usually nonrandom, purposeful, and small so that information-rich cases can be identified and selected, which allows resources to be used most effectively (Patton, 2002). This approach contrasts with the larger, more random sampling of quantitative research. As Creswell and Poth (2007) notes, in purposeful sampling, "the

inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon” (p. 125). This nonrandom, purposeful sampling design was chosen because of the detailed information and shared experiences of the participants, which helped the researcher answer the research questions. As Erlandson (1993) stated, “Purposive and directed sampling through human instrumentation increases the range of data exposed and maximizes the researcher’s ability to identify emerging themes that take adequate account of contextual conditions and cultural norms” (p. 82).

Following this approach, the main criterion in selecting the teachers was their status as EFL teachers in public junior high schools, where they taught a variety of grade levels, ranging from seventh to ninth grades. Second, the participants’ minimum education level requirement was having graduated from a four-year university. Finally, they had at least three years of EFL teaching experience.

It was expected that selecting participants from the investigator’s own professional learning network would bring important advantages. For example, the teachers could be contacted as needed, especially during the data-collection process, which included interviews and collecting documents from textbooks, syllabi, lesson plans, and handouts. Creswell & Poth (2007, 2009) has emphasized the importance of the researcher finding people who are easily accessible. In addition, the researcher worked with the group of teachers, who were from her professional learning network, because both she and the participants shared the same cultural and educational background, which made the research process more meaningful and convenient for the researcher. Meanwhile, the researcher could predict what would have happened to study participants had they not known BDI or, in coaching sessions, what would have happened had they received new theory and strategies that are known to be effective.

The researcher selected the participants based on voluntary criteria and had them sign a consent form (see Appendix C) to participate in this research. The researcher provided thorough information about the research project and answered the volunteers' questions regarding the project. They were given information and were assured of the confidentiality and protection of their personal data during and after the process. In the consent form, the participants were told what they would be asked to do during the project and how long it would last. They were informed about the benefits of exploring their own backgrounds and experiences through self-beliefs, and how the study would help them grant students the leading role and promote their initiative by integrating GTM with BDI. At the end of the form, the participants were provided with the contact information of the principal investigator (the major professor) and investigator (researcher). In addition, they were informed that they could withdraw from the research project at any phase and at any time. In this way, the project was implemented properly and democratically.

Participant Selection

The study participants were chosen for their backgrounds and ability to provide rich information and detailed understanding of the BDI that explored, integrated, and localized in the context of GTM. Knowing that "purposive sampling is a nonrandom sampling technique in which the researcher solicits persons specify characteristics to participate in a research study" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 264), I, as the researcher of this study, selected two English teachers with at least a four-year college degree and working in two public schools in two neighboring provinces in the northwest of China. I did a nonrandom and purposeful selection to get more detailed information from the participants to better understand the research problem and to be able to get some answers and insights into EFL teaching in northwest of China.

After my preliminary examination passed in March 2023, I started the process of IRB. After getting the approval, I contacted a friend who works at the local Bureau of Education, she personally connected 10 EFL teachers, four of which agreed to participate. Six EFL teachers declined because of a time conflict with engaging in advanced studies during summer break.

The main criterion in the selection of the teachers was their being EFL teachers in public junior high schools. All of the participants had at least 5 years of experience at a variety of grade levels ranging from the 7th to 9th grades. In the proposal, I had planned to recruit four English teachers preferably working in different schools located in two neighboring provinces, with the intent to set one-on-one interviews and coaching in order for them to have critical conversations and discussions about the applying BDI in the context of GTM and its applications in teaching during the data collection process. However, once reaching out to participants, I noticed that things did not go exactly as had been planned. As a result, I was able to recruit two EFL teachers working in two different schools in the Shaanxi Province and Gansu Province. During the processing of data collection, one participant pulled out due to health reasons (infecting COVID-19) putting them on medical leave until September 2023, another one participant quit because the participants had difficulties understanding the videos which was dubbed in English.

It was advantageous for me to work with a group of EFL teachers from Northwest of China in this study as we shared the same cultural and educational background, making the research process more meaningful and convenient. I selected the participants based on voluntary criterion and asked them to sign a consent form (see Appendix M) to take part in this research. I provided them with information about the details of the research project, such as the requirements from the volunteers, the benefits of the project for their professional development, and the length of the study in order to clear the questions in their minds. I ensured that the

confidentiality and protection of their personal data was important during and after the process. The contact information of the principal investigator (the researcher) and co-investigators (the dissertation advisors) was placed at the end of the form. I also explained that they were in a position that they could withdraw from the research project at any phase, anytime. In this way, I hoped that the project would be implemented properly and democratically. It was one of the strengths of this study that none of the participants left until the end of the research project. Although participating in such a study might have required extra responsibilities, workload, time, energy, and effort, they agreed to take part in this study only for the sake of friendship and for their professional development. More importantly, they never complained about anything at any phase of the research.

Demographic Information Survey and Demography Interviews

The background and demographic information (See Table 3.1) about the participants was provided in two ways: (a) demographic information surveys (see Appendix N), (b) 1st Interview (see Appendix C for Interview Protocol I). The demographic information survey was given to each participant when I contacted them for the 1st interview. They were asked to fill out the demographic survey and return it at the end of that meeting. Then, the next morning, I assembled the data and checked if the demographic surveys needed any completion or additional data. By asking the participants to fill out the survey, I got some general information about the participants such as their names, ages, gender, their own educational background, and their teaching experiences such as the courses they had taught. In addition to the demographic survey, there were also demographic interviews with each participant. These interviews were audio recorded. Since data storage is a critical issue in qualitative studies, I copied the recorded data to two external hard drives (SUMSUNG) and one PC (acer all in one) hard drive (2 TB) the

evening of the day they were recorded. I read and reread all transcribed data in order to get a general sense of the participants' teaching experiences and educational background. During this process, I thought, questioned, speculated, and wrote down some notes according to research questions in order to figure out the most common and interesting themes about the participants. I matched the demographic interviews with each participant's demographic information survey, as well. I read each survey and rewrote the information into a computer file. Finally, I evaluated the participants' answers around each question to gain more understanding about their demographics.

The background and demographic information of the participants such as their names, gender, ages, level of education, and teaching experiences, and the grade levels they teach at the time of the study is given in Table 3.1. Names of the participants are pseudonyms.

Table 3.1. Demographic Information of Participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Education	Type of Current School	How Long English Teaching	Hours Taught per Week	Teaching Grades in 2022-2023 Academic Year
P1: Angela	Female	31	BA, English MA, TESOL	Public Junior High School	6 Years	10 Hours	8th Grade
P2: Connie	Female	32	BA, Education MA, English Language Teaching	Public Junior High School	7 Years	18 hours	7th and 9th Grade

In order to protect the participants' privacy, I used pseudonyms. Participants chose particular English names; the first participant is named Angela; the second participant is named Connie. Although it was not planned, I ended up having both of the participants female. The age of all of the participants was over 30. All the participants have at least a four-year college degree: One participant was a graduate of Faculty of Arts and Sciences, whereas one of them is a

graduate of Education. One teacher had an M.A. degree with TESOL, and another one earned her B.A. degree and currently is pursuing her Master with English. Both of them are experienced teachers with more than 5 years in teaching and an average of 6.5 years teaching. Each participant taught at least ten hours per week, with an average of 14 hours per week. The participant teachers taught the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades in the 2022-2023 academic year. One participant taught 8th grade (P1); another taught the 7th and 9th grade (P2).

Setting

The research was conducted online through the WeChat app, and the participants were observed with pre- and post-surveys (See Appendix G, Appendix H), in-depth interviews, and professional development coaching sessions.

The study is set in two junior high schools in Shaanxi and Gansu Provinces, which are located in northwestern China, so that “they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon” (Creswell & Poth, 2007, p. 125). The demographic backgrounds of those two provinces are similar to each other. Selecting two intermediate public junior high schools in two neighboring provinces also allowed me to easily connect with the participants from both schools in the summer break when necessary. I purposefully selected the public schools, as I wanted to observe the applicability of BDI in public junior high schools with fixed education pattern in terms of teaching English as a foreign language when integrated and combined BDI with GTM. I also wanted to see if a teacher as the key factor in education can make a difference in his or her teaching in spite of the poor conditions such as dilemmas of conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political when she or he is motivated to change.

Most studies on EFL education in China have been conducted in more developed and well-resourced areas. Therefore, it is necessary to offer a snapshot of EFL education

implementation in a more conservative area. Although Shaanxi and Gansu are China's most populous provinces, with a population of 64.55 million in 2020, including about one million rural residents (The Seventh National Population Census), the education resources are relatively insufficient. The researcher lived in Manhattan, Kansas, in the United States, far from the research site, and therefore followed the mitigation protocols and completed the majority of the interviews and coaching session via WeChat. It was advantageous for the researcher to connect to the research site via WeChat, build a closer relationship with the participants, conduct face-to-face interviews, and address any follow-up questions.

In order to conduct this study, it was first necessary to gain access to the potential participants. This involved acquiring permission to observe the participants or events as needed, as well as the ability to request and read relevant documents (Glesne, 2011). First, the researcher contacted family and friends to request information about people they knew from Shaanxi and Gansu provinces who had taught in middle schools in the past 10 years, how many currently taught EFL, and their contact information for these teachers. After contacting family and friends, the researcher contacted the potential participants via email or through other means, such as WeChat, and asked them to participate in this research. Once these responses were received, eligible participants were selected with purposeful, criteria-based sampling.

The researcher obtained approval from Kansas State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to start the data-collection process of the research project. The researcher selected the participants based on voluntary criteria and had them sign a consent form (see Appendix C) to participate in this study. The participants were provided with thorough information about the research project. In the consent form, the participants were told what they would be asked to do during the project and how long the project lasted. The end of the form included the contact

information of the principal investigator (the researcher) and co-investigators (the dissertation advisors).

Permissions and Regulations

Regarding the permission and regulation issues, I obtained approval from the Kansas State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) in order to be able to start the data collection process of this research project.

I selected the participants based on voluntary criterion and had them sign a consent form (see Appendix A) to take part in this research. I provided them with necessary information about the research project and ensured that the confidentiality and protection of their personal data was important during and after the process. Participant anonymity is a professional way of executing research as it protects the interviewer/participant while allowing the researcher to gain vital data required for the completion of study. In the consent form, I informed the participants about what they would be asked to do during the project in a detailed way. At the end of the form, the contact information of the principal investigator (the researcher) and co-investigators (the dissertation advisors) was provided. I also told them that they were in a position that they could withdraw from the research project at any phase, anytime.

Design and Method

According to Creswell (2009), a research design includes “plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis” (p. 3). Creswell (2009) has stated that “research designs are types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design” (p. 41). According to this definition, the research design refers

to the overall strategy that describes what kind of study it is, its components, and the data sources that are created to analyze the data. Furthermore, as Creswell (2009) claimed, “the selection of a research design is also based on the nature of the research problem or issue being addressed, the researchers’ personal experiences, and the audiences for the study” (p. 3). Accordingly, the researcher decided to use qualitative research methods in the current study to get a deeper and better understanding of implementing BDI within the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas of the selected English teachers’ own EFL teaching experiences. The researcher intended to explore, understand, and interpret how the participants understood the BDI best practice and how they applied it into GTM-dominant classroom.

Qualitative research is the process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural settings research, having multiple sources, inductive data analysis, participants’ meanings, and being interpretive (Creswell, 2009). In this framework, the researcher was an explorer, collecting data in the natural settings and having face-to-face remote interactions with the participants, rather than sending some instruments to them. Further, the researcher was the instrument examining the documents, observing behavior in the natural settings of the participants, and interviewing them.

Qualitative research allows researchers to gather rich contextual insights to interpret people’s lived experiences and their perspectives and perceptions about a particular issue. In other words, in a qualitative study, the intent is to explore human behaviors within the contexts of their natural occurrence (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Therefore, the current study aims to explore, understand, and interpret how the participants understood under the constructivist theory how to best practice BDI strategies and how they applied it to their own practice. In this study, qualitative methodology was preferred because the researcher focused on the “why” rather than

the “what” of social phenomena, and this work relies on the participants’ own perspectives and experiences. Therefore, “[q]ualitative data do not profess to be replicable” (Nolan & Meister, 2000, p. 44).

The researcher used a qualitative research design to explore understandings and descriptions of the participants’ views and perspectives. Some authors (Creswell, 2014; Hatch, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 1989) have noted the characteristics of qualitative research designs include *natural settings* (researchers collect data at the site where participants experience the issue), *research as key instrument* (researchers collect data themselves rather than use or rely on instruments developed by other researchers), *multiple sources of data* (researchers gather multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, and documents), *inductive data analysis* (researchers build categories and themes from the bottom up by inductively organizing the data), and *participants’ meanings* (researchers focus on the participants’ issue or problem). The researcher in this study collected data in natural settings and face-to-face interactions with the participants rather than by sending data-collection instruments. Furthermore, the researcher collected and managed the data herself by examining documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants.

Creswell (2009) has claimed that five major types of qualitative research have been identified: ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenological research, and narrative research. The case study was preferred as the qualitative research strategy for this study. The cases were two EFL teachers working in two public middle schools in the Shaanxi and Gansu Provinces in China. They were considered and focused individually, one by one, rather than as a focus group to improve a narrative in depth for each case, which later led to answers and insights into EFL teaching and the idea of creating and maintaining professional development in the

northwest of China. To achieve this goal, as a qualitative inquirer, I asked open-ended questions (see Appendix E) which sometimes required more specific and concrete examples from the participants' teaching experiences to better understand their worlds. I also encouraged the informants to explain their perspectives on BDI as a new method in EFL education, to share information about how they perceived the impacts of this new method, and to explain how they applied it. The case study paradigm examines the perceptions of middle school EFL teachers regarding the integration of GMT with BDI and the BDI strategies they applied in the classroom. BDI offers over 20 different strategies (Herrera, 2010) that guide and support EFL teachers in improving current instruction methods to emphasize the "lens" of students' biographies to advance English language and content learning (as cited in Pérez, 2012, p. 29).

The case study is an inquiry process, which Yin (1994) has defined as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident . . . [and it] relies on multiple sources of evidence" (p. 13). The focus of the case study is an in-depth, multifaceted exploration of a complex issue within some specific conditions. One rationale for selecting this approach is that a case study focuses on a specific case, and this study examines two EFL teachers' work in middle school in northwest China. The main aim of a case study is to find a real-life application of a theoretical concept. Johnson and Christensen (2019) have argued that a case study design is a form of qualitative research that is focused on providing a detailed narration and analysis, and the narration is also holistic. It was evident that using a qualitative case study to examine the English-language teachers would result in a detailed description of their experience. The second reason for choosing a case study is to comprehend the middle-school English language teachers' perceptions of integrating GMT with BDI because I expect

these teachers will use some BDI strategies as techniques to advance English-language instruction in their currently GTM-dominant classrooms. The third reason for choosing a case study was that Yin (2012) has claimed that this approach provides more comprehensive pictures, richer insights, and is anchored real-life situations. Because of the backgrounds, experiences, insights, and voices of the teachers in this study, the case study design was the most appropriate to answer the research questions. The last reason for choosing a case study was the influence of the three attributes of the case study design that Merriam (1998) has identified: such studies are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic. “Particularistic” implies that the approach focuses on a particular aspect, such as a situation, program, phenomenon, or event. “Descriptive” means that the researchers use rich, thick description to aid the reader’s understanding of phenomenon under study. Finally, “heuristic” means that a case study provides detailed description to illuminate the reader’s understanding of both the phenomenon and context under study.

Given the qualitative approach, in interviews the researcher asked open-ended questions (see Appendix E) and encouraged the participants to explain their perspectives on BDI as a new method in EFL education. The researcher also elicited information about how the teachers perceived the impacts of this new paradigm and method in EFL teaching and how they applied it in the traditional, GTM-dominated classroom. The participants were also asked to give more specific, concrete examples from their learning and teaching experiences for the researcher to better understand their worlds.

In order to introduce and explain the project, and remove the concerns of the participants, the researcher sent an introductory letter to the participants to explain the project and address any concerns (see Appendix A). That letter briefly described the study and provided contact information for both the principal investigator and the co-investigators. Furthermore, the

researcher explained the process of coaching sessions and interviews, and their dates briefly.

This letter was also an invitation for the first interview. Finally, the participants were assured of their privacy and their right to leave the project at any phase or at any time.

Following the introductory letter, the researcher sent five follow-up letters (see Appendix F for Follow Up Letters I, II, III, and IV) to thank the participants for their previous interviews and inform them of the dates for the following coaching sessions and interviews. The dates of the interviews, demographic survey, professional development coaching sessions, pre- and post-survey, and lesson plans are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2. Timetable

Date	Day	Event	Participant	Other
12 June, 2023	Monday	Read Chapter 1, 2, and 3 of Biography-Driven Culturally Responsive Teaching		
2 July, 2023	Sunday	First Interview and Demographic survey	P1	First day of teachers in summer break
3 July, 2023	Monday	First Interview and Demographic survey	P2	
9 July, 2023	Sunday	Pre-survey on GTM and BDI strategy use	P1	
11 July, 2023	Tuesday	Pre-survey on GTM and BDI strategy use	P2	
17 July, 2023	Monday	First day of Coaching Session	P1	Watching three videos of first three BDI methods and filling out the viewing guide
24 July, 2023	Monday	First day of Coaching Session	P2	Watching three videos of first three BDI methods and filling out the viewing guide
31 July, 2023	Monday	Second day of Coaching Session	P1	Watching three videos of other three BDI methods and filling out the viewing guide
7 August, 2023	Monday	Second day of Coaching Session	P2	Watching three videos of other three BDI methods and filling out the viewing guide
14 August, 2023	Monday	Post-survey on GTM and BDI strategy use	P1	
16 August, 2023	Wednesday	Post-survey on GTM and BDI strategy use	P2	
21 August, 2023	Monday	Second Interview	P1	
22 August, 2023	Tuesday	Second Interview	P2	
1 Sept, 2023	Friday	Lesson Plans	P1, P2	Photograph or PDF
11 Sept, 2023	Monday	Final Interview	P1	Dilemmas of conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political
12 Sept, 2023	Tuesday	Final Interview	P2	Dilemmas of conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political

A coaching session is a one-on-one coaching meeting between a researcher/coach and a participant. The purpose of the coaching session is to help participants better understand the new notions or teaching methods that move closer to their goals. As a coach, we will ask questions, challenge assumptions, and provide support materials. A coaching session is not therapy, which is a focus on the present and future, not the past. A researcher or coach will create a plan to help the participant achieve their teaching goals. A practical coaching session has three main parts: the first part is a “warm-up”, used to build rapport and trust with participants; the second part is the meat of the session, where participants are asked questions and have assumptions challenged; the third part is the wrap-up, used to summarize the session. In conclusion, running a coaching session is about asking the right questions and giving your participants the space to learn and think.

Intervention and Trustworthiness and Validity

Intervention

An engaging two-month period, specifically 15-day turnaround (see Table 3.2) was agreed upon with the two participating EFL teachers, Angela and Connie, hereinafter P1 and P2. As the researcher, I sought to identify and assess their level of familiarity and usage of BDI constructivist pedagogical approaches. I undertook the first interviews, demographic survey, pre-survey on GTM and BDI strategy use, coaching sessions, post-survey on GTM and BDI strategy use, second interviews, lesson plan reviews, and final interviews with the two participants. My aim was to ensure the participants, who are EFL teachers in northwestern China, comprehended the benefits of BDI over traditional GTM and how they could blend the two together to ensure their students have better mastery of the English language, vocabulary, and enhanced speech capabilities.

Since I was not able to travel to their location, I engaged the participants through the WeChat app and email. I used the former to gather relevant data needed to validate my research while I used the latter to send follow up letters. Even though this method did not allow me to have physical interactions with the participants, I managed to gather sufficient information that I would have otherwise acquired if I were there in person.

The first interviews and demographic surveys were organized at a time that coincided with the first day of teachers' summer break to allow the participants sufficient time to respond to the questions before the busy school calendar. This was the period from July 9, 2023, to July 11, 2023.

In addition to that, participants dedicated the first day of coaching sessions to watching three videos of the first three BDI methods and filling out the viewing guide. This lasted from July 17, 2023, to July 24, 2023. The second coaching session lasted from July 31, 2023, to August 7, 2023, for the participants to watch the other three videos of the other three BDI methods and fill out the viewing guide.

The post surveys on GTM and BDI strategy use were conducted on August 14, 2023, and August 16, 2023, for P1 and P2, respectively. Five days later for each, on the 21st and 22nd, second interviews were conducted with the participants while lesson plans were reviewed on September 1, 2023, for both P1 and P2 (See Table 3.2). The final interviews involved “dilemmas of conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political aspects meet when integrating and combining BDI with GTM approaches” as viewed through the lens of P1 and P2 and as is currently applicable through the policies of the Ministry of Education in China. These were done on the 11th and 12th of September, 2023, for P1 and P2, respectively.

Trustworthiness and Validity

Trustworthiness and validity are two fundamental criteria for ensuring the quality of qualitative studies. In terms of triangulation in this study, I utilized different kinds of data collection instruments and methods such as the participant periodic interviews, documents and records review including lesson plans, video reviews, and email communication.

In a bid to ensure I gathered enough trustworthy data, I deployed the direct interviews method that required the participants to respond to my predetermined questions, in order to conform with the aim of the research objectives. I conducted two sets of 30-minute interviews for both participants to provide comprehensive responses to my questions. I provided them with a warm and comfortable atmosphere during the interviews to build rapport in order to gain their trust and confidence, so that they can answer the interview questions more openly and sincerely. Taking the participants through the viewing guide was instrumental in having them respond to the crucial aspects, namely: Extension Wheel, U-C-ME, DOTS, Linking Language, Vocabulary Quilt, and Foldables. This process gave me a chance to learn and gauge the participants' comprehension of BDI teaching methods rooted in communicative/cognitive approach as a panacea to better grasp the English language among Chinese students and how the process impacts them as EFL teachers. To get deeper into the system, I sought to analyze some of the teachers' lesson plans as a way of understanding the loopholes within the traditional GTM-oriented teaching.

Lincoln & Guba (1985) postulate that credibility in research is pivotal and to do so a researcher can utilize peer debriefing strategies. I relied on my PhD associates and mentors to help me validate the information as well as identify any potential biases that could have existed. My network in China was also instrumental in establishing utmost credibility, by helping to ascertain whether the communication between the researcher and the participants was free of

errors and misinterpretations. I also played a role in this by asking the interviewees if they understood the questions and what is expected of them in terms of responses. For this report, the participants understood the questions.

Data Collection Tools

Creswell and Poth (2007) have defined data collection as “a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions” (p. 118). Creswell and Poth (2007) have further asserted that all data falls into four basic categories: observations, interviewing, documents, and audiovisual materials. Data in this study was collected through demographic interview and surveys, interviews, coaching sessions, participants’ syllabi, lesson plan, and handouts.

Demographic Surveys and pre- and post-survey on GTM and BDI Strategy Use

To obtain information about the participants, each teacher was given a demographic survey (Appendix K) to complete at the beginning of the data collection process. The demographic surveys were given to the participants before they met with the researcher for the first interviews; the pre-survey on GTM and BDI strategy use (Appendix G) was given to the participants before the professional development; post-survey, which added one more question on the pre-survey, was given to the participants again after the professional development (Appendix H). This before-and-after approach measures changes in the outcomes in a group of participants before and after introducing BDI. The participants were asked to complete the surveys and return them to the researcher at the end of that meeting. The demographic information survey consisted of three main groups of questions. In the first part, general information about the participants, such as name, age, and gender, was elicited. In the second part, the participants were asked to provide their educational background. Finally, they were

asked to write about their teaching experience, such as courses and grades they have previously taught. The pre- and post-survey on GTM and BDI strategy use had 10 close-ended questions. The pre- and post- aimed to identify whether EFL teachers prefer the GTM method or the communicative approach (BDI) to teach English in their classrooms.

Interviews

Another source of data collection for this study was the interviews that intended to obtain profound information or knowledge. Different types of interviews were used, such as e-mail and face-to-face interviews that included both closed- and open-ended questions (Creswell & Poth, 2007). Data in this study was collected through individual, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with open-ended questions. Each question was prepared based on the themes identified in the English-language education and BDI theory literature. As Singleton and Straits (2005) have found, in-depth interviewing supports researchers as they “clarify or restate questions that the respondent did not at first understand” (p. 320). In-depth interviewing aims to gather as much information as possible from the perspective and judgment of the participants. Three one-hour interviews were conducted with each participant. The first set of interviews (see Appendix E for First Interview Guided Prompts) was conducted before the coaching sessions (in the beginning of July, 2023), while the second (see Appendix E for Second Interview Guided Prompts) occurred just after the coaching sessions (in the middle of August, 2023). The last interviews with each participant (see Appendix E for Third Interview Guided Prompts) were completed in September, 2023.

In the first interviews (see Appendix E for First Interview Guided Prompts), the interviewees were asked to provide general information about their educational background and learning and teaching experiences. They were also asked whether they had an opportunity to join

a professional development seminar before hand. In addition, their current knowledge about constructivism was solicited. In the second set of interviews (see Appendix E for Second Interview Guided Prompts), the participants were asked what they had learned that they did not already know and about perspectives on BDI after the coaching sessions. In the third interviews (see Appendix E for Third Interview Guided Prompts), the interviewees were asked questions about the implementation process, the successes and challenges they experienced, and their approach to overcoming such problems. Each interview included at least two completely open questions to address issues the researcher did not anticipate emerging from the interviews. Three sets of interviews were conducted over a total of three hours. All participant interviews were recorded and then copied to two external hard drives (SAMSUNG) and one PC (acer all in one) hard drive (2 TB) for data safety. The first author conducted the interviews in Chinese because the participants' English level would otherwise have prevented them from fully communicating their intentions and feelings. The whole process was entirely voluntary, and written consent was obtained from every participant before their interviews.

The researcher also sent follow-up letters (see Appendices F for Follow Up Letter I, II, III, IV) to maintain contact, remind participants of upcoming activities, and keep the interviewees informed. As semi-structured interviews rely on asking open-ended questions, the researcher hoped the answers to the questions might be shaped and framed differently based on each participants' backgrounds and experiences during the study. At the end of the interviews, all conversations were transcribed; subsequently, they were transcribed verbatim and translated into English for data analysis.

Coaching Sessions

In addition to the interviews, the primary source of data collection for this study, the researcher conducted coaching sessions to obtain additional evidence to support the analysis. The remote coaching model followed the individual coaching model as much as possible. Participants in the remote condition were provided with video viewing (see Appendix J Viewing Guide) to prompt them to reflect and report on their views of effective coaching. The use of video viewing was based on the underlying theory that carefully selected videos provide critical incidents to which participants may offer reactions or explanations, thus providing valuable insight into integrating BDI methods into their classrooms. To do so, the video must adhere to three guiding principles. First, the video must depict a situation that is meaningful to the participant and is based on his or her own reality (Sherin et al., 2011). The videos featured in this research depicted BDI power 6 strategies that teachers used to maximize students' potential for language acquisition and content learning by drawing on sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic aspects in the lesson. This situation was one in which the participants were preparing to improve their EFL teaching methods, thus making it meaningful to them. In this way, our videos met this first principle. Second, the video must feature open-ended questions (see Appendix J Viewing Guide) that allow the participant to infer the importance of the incidents depicted; these questions also allow the researcher to monitor participants' perceptions (Sherin et al., 2011). The use of open-ended questions allowed the participants to infer the goals of the coaching task based on their prior experiences as teachers being coached. Therefore, the video adhered to this second principle. Third, the selection of incidents should be based on previous fieldwork (Patton, 2002). In this research, the videos had been used both in the research setting previously mentioned and in a training setting with a different group of EFL coaches. This previous work established the

usefulness of this video for the current study. Therefore, the selection of the critical incident met the third principle. Having met these three guiding principles, the researcher determined that it was appropriate to use the videos as a stimulus to elicit participants' views regarding BDI strategies.

Documents and Records

The researcher also relied on documents and records in the data collection process (Merriam, 1998) to examine the phenomenon and study participants in detail. The documents collected from participants included the textbooks they used, their syllabi, lesson plans, and handouts. The textbook the participants used in their classes was *Go for It* (see Appendix I), adapted from People's Education Press English and Thomson Learning (2012). The textbook focuses on task-based language teaching that emphasizes communication. The textbook also focuses on the standards for foreign-language learning: communication, cultures, connections to students' knowledge in other fields, grammar and words, and English language in the community. The lesson plans (See Appendix L) provided a list of the class goals and objectives that reflected the EFL teacher's values and the MoE of China's curriculum standards for EFL teaching. I analyzed this source of information and compared it with the participants' actual responses from the observations of BDI learning and from the interviews. The textbook, the information on the lesson plans, and additional handouts provided significant data about whether the class integrated a communicative approach into traditional teaching. The researcher kept field notes throughout the project (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). The notes contained analyzing instruction materials and teaching strategy that demonstrated how teachers help students engage with and navigate the classroom. Building on the sources to illustrate classroom-driven

instruction decisions, notes also provided additional instructions for how teachers can instruct students.

Intervention

A two-day professional development was given to the two selected English teachers to introduce communicative techniques and BDI methods (see Appendix J for the viewing guide), which were done by the researcher during the coaching sessions. This professional development was organized and given in non-traditional ways and settings as required by constructivism. In every coaching session, a nice, warm, and relaxed atmosphere was provided for the participants to get them engaged in the professional development. This kind of environment caused the participants to get involved with viewing the video. Moreover, the environment was enjoyable for the participants, as well.

On the first day of the professional development, there was a constructivist warm up activity (See Appendix M) to create a warm atmosphere at the very beginning. Then, there was an introduction to set the foundations for the BDI, and an explanation of the viewing guide. In the afternoon, the first three videos were watched in playing order, and time was spent answering the questions in viewing guide. The day ended with a reading assignment for the next day.

The first two chapters of the book *Biography Driven Instruction* by Herrera (2016) that were assigned previously were discussed in the 2nd coaching sessions on the second day. Some guiding questions were also posed. In the afternoon, participants watched the last three videos and answered the questions in viewing guide. The researcher got feedback of theoretical information to monitor the understanding of participants for BDI by providing a viewing guide of BDI methods (Extension Wheel, U-C-ME , DOTS, Linking Language, Vocabulary Quilt, and Foldables) which was rooted in communicative/cognitive approaches. Some major concepts and

applications of BDI methods were explained. The constructivist theorists such as Piaget, Vygotsky, and Dewey and their point of views on this philosophy of education were also explained. Finally, a post-survey for the next day was given.

Data Analysis

Stuckey (2005) clarifies data analysis as the process of “moving from raw interviews to evidence-based interpretations” (p. 6), or data analysis in qualitative research is broadly defined as “the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 157).

This study followed a systematic plan for analyzing and interpreting the data to be able to describe the process of introduction of BDI methods to the two selected English teachers and their application of this new methods into GTM-dominated EFL teaching in two public schools in two neighboring provinces in the northwest of China. The main objective of the data analysis was to organize, synthesize, and make sense of the data collected to write a description that explained the EFL teaching processes and settings of each participant. Data analysis was done using an inductive analysis approach to search for patterns of meaning in the data so that reasonable conclusions could be drawn from them. Data were derived and organized mostly from the audio transcripts and the researcher’s notes.

The researcher processed and elaborated on the concepts and themes of the data collected through demographic surveys, pre- and post-surveys on GTM and BDI strategy use, interviews, coaching sessions (viewing guide), and lesson plans. Then, they were coded so that the researcher could readily retrieve and examine the data units that refer to similar topics that could be combined (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). After the coding, the data were classified into categories,

and analyzed within and across the groups of related items, topics, and subjects. Interpretations about the topics were made, and meaningful conclusions were drawn from the data gathered. As stated, “*Interpretation* is a process used to explain, to give meaning, to make sense of the many disparate events and ideas that we encounter” (Holly et al., 2009, p. 190, *emphasis original*). As the interpretation was an ongoing process, there was a continuous analysis in case new patterns and themes that could be found to get more meaningful and realistic conclusions. Finally, the researcher showed how these concepts, themes, and patterns proposed answers to the research questions of the study.

Demographic Interviews and Survey

One source of data collection for this study was the interviews that were intended to obtain deep information or knowledge (J. M. Johnson, 2002). In this study, the interviews were in-depth, semi-structured with open-ended questions, and were conducted with each participant one-on-one. Each question was prepared based on the themes found by an examination of constructivist theory and professional development literature. There were three thirty-minute-long interviews with each participant. In other words, there were face-to-face remote interviews with two participants separately in six different times. The first set of interviews (see Appendix E for First Interview Guided Prompts) was conducted before the coaching sessions (in the beginning of July, 2023), the second set (see Appendix E for Second Interview Guided Prompts) was right after the two coaching sessions (in the end of August 2023). The final interviews with each participant (see Appendix E for Third Interview Guided Prompts) were done during the Fall 2023 Semester (in September, 2023).

To obtain information about the participants, each teacher was given a demographic information survey (Appendix K) to complete at the beginning of the data collection process. In

the first set of interviews (see Appendix E for First Interview Guided Prompts), the interviewees were asked to provide some general information about their own educational background and teaching experiences. They were also asked whether they chose communicative skills or grammar rules and vocabulary as the goal of EFL education to the classroom. In addition, their current role on teaching English in the classroom was also asked.

In the second set of interviews (see Appendix E for Second Interview Guided Prompts), the participants were asked what methods of BDI they think would be easier to use in the GTM-dominant classroom in the northwest of China. Moreover, they were asked which methods they thought would be difficult to implement while confronting challenges from family/parents, administrations, and policy.

In the final set of interviews (see Appendix E for Third Interview Guided Prompts), the participants were asked to give their overall opinions about the BDI. They were asked what BDI methods they had chosen after participating in a professional development program in EFL teaching in northwest of China and how they integrated or combined BDI with GTM. Finally, they were asked whether they thought they had conceptual, pedagogical, structural, or political dilemmas. Each interview included at least one completely open question with no expectations in mind so that things that I would not anticipate could come up during the interviews. There were six sets of interviews with 3 hours in total. All participant interviews were tape-recorded, and then copied to two external hard drives (SUMSUNG) and one PC (acer all in one) hard drive (2 TB) for data safety. Knowing that the quality of the recording means is important, I used iPhone voice-recording app (Voice Memos), which does not impose a time limit for audio recordings.

In order to stay in touch with the interviewees and keep them informed of upcoming activities, I sent them follow up letters (see Appendices F for Follow Up Letter I, II, III, IV).

When I decided on using semi-structured interviews as one of the data collection methods and developed open-ended questions, I hoped and expected the answers to the interview questions would be framed differently based on each participant's background and experiences.

At the end of the interviews, all of the conversations were transcribed. I noticed that there were some questions that were either not properly answered or not answered at all. I wrote down the interviewees' answers to the interview questions in order to reveal the unanswered ones. In the proposal, I had planned to ask for additional interview appointments from the participants to complete the unanswered questions, but instead, I emailed the transcripts to them due to the time restraint. The participants kindly agreed to read the transcripts, check all their answers, and complete the missing parts. By doing this, I made sure that the data was completed and ready for analysis.

The researcher assembled the data and checked if they needed any completion or additional data, and reminded herself of the research questions, before the interviews were transcribed (Holly et al., 2009). The researcher read and reread all transcribed data in order to get a general sense of the participants, their teaching experiences, and educational background (Creswell, 2009). During this process, the researcher thought, questioned, speculated, and wrote down notes. The most common and interesting themes were figured out. These interviews were matched with each participant's survey, as well. The researcher read each survey, and compiled the information into a single computer file. The participants' answers were evaluated around each question in order to get a partial idea of their demographics.

After transcribing the interviews, I read all transcribed data in order to get a general sense of the data and general ideas of the teachers (Creswell, 2009). During this process, I was writing notes on the margins. I wrote the ideas, themes, and patterns that came to my mind constantly.

Further, before the coding stage, I selected the most interesting interview, mostly focusing on the meaning of what it was all about. I read one more interview with another participant. Then, I looked for similar, repeated and consistent words, phrases, and arguments in order to cluster together, categorize and create some groupings. I gave some abbreviations for the groups and categories that were also considered as the codes (Creswell, 2009). Next, I sorted the data. Color code schemes were also used in coding. I recorded them when necessary (Creswell, 2009). Then, I used coding to generate some themes and categories, and write some descriptions of the teachers' thoughts and application. Another task that I did was to check whether these themes and categories fit the data. After the data were taken apart (i.e., in categories), I brought them together in a logical way (synthesis) and made meanings and conclusions out of them (interpretation) (Holly et al., 2009).

Interviews

The interviews were transcribed first. The researcher read all transcribed data in order to get a general sense of the data and general ideas of the teachers (Creswell, 2009). During this process, the researcher also recorded her impressions as she read the data comparatively, questioningly, and speculatively on some notes (Holly et al., 2009). She wrote the ideas and impressions that came to her mind constantly. Further, before the coding stage, the researcher selected the most interesting interview, primarily focusing on the meaning of what it was all about. She read one more interview of another participant. Then, she looked for similar, repeated and consistent words, phrases, and arguments in order to cluster together, categorize, and create some groupings. The researcher gave some abbreviations for the groups and categories that were also considered as the codes (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Next, she sorted the data, using color code schemes and recoding as she believed necessary (Creswell, 2009). Then, the researcher tried to

generate descriptions of the teachers' applications and changes. In other words, the coding was used to generate themes and categories. Another task was to check whether the themes and categories fit the data. After the data were taken apart (i.e., in categories), she brought them together in a logical way (synthesis) and found meanings and conclusions out of them (interpretation; Holly et al., 2009).

Pre and Post Survey on GTM and BDI Strategy Use

Pre- and post-survey is conducted when research is interested to find out if there is a difference in observations before and after an intervention, which will suggest whether the intervention had an effect or not. In a pre- and post-survey design, the same participants are measured on the variables of interest before and after professional development in real time. The researcher wanted to test the change outcomes of integrating and combining BDI methods to the GTM-dominant classroom on participants' attitudes, and so she had two participants take a survey that assessed their attitudes before the professional development, and then the same participants take the survey again after they watched the video and finished the video guiding.

Coaching sessions

Guiding questions facilitate participants arriving at a particular end-point that is achieved by watching videos and reading assignments, as opposed to being told the answer by the researcher. The question can be delivered orally or in written form. On the one hand, the researcher can use viewing guide to encourage critical thinking, in which prompts participants to think more deeply and critically about BDI methods. A well-formed guided question can help participants connect new information with what they already know, identify English teaching patterns, and explore new methods; on the other hand, it can encourage reflection, in which help

participants to reflect on their teaching process and achieve metacognition. Without the questions, students may not pause and self-reflect.

Lesson Plans and Artifacts

The lesson plans were analyzed mostly to evaluate if the lesson were taught in one or more BDI methods and how the methods had been implemented with the GTM-dominant classroom. The researcher checked the lesson plans that were created for each participant. The researcher read and examined these lesson plans in order to find out some additional evidence for the research argument. During this process, the researcher took some notes, and checked for emerging themes and patterns in the frame of research questions of the study.

Trustworthiness and Validity

The quality of quantitative methodology is measured using validity and reliability criteria (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). In the qualitative paradigm, however, the criteria for measuring quality are different. Trustworthiness is checked for empirical qualitative studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; see also Erlandson et al., 1993); it concerns whether readers are persuaded of the importance and significance of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In other words, it shows how, why, and based on what criteria the results of the research are considered trustworthy and reliable. For instance, reliability refers to the replicability and consistency of the study in different locations, times, and even conditions in quantitative methodology (Campbell & Stanley, 1963); it represents consistency between the results and the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) have discussed credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability in qualitative studies. Of credibility, they argue, “the *reconstructions* (for the findings and interpretations are also constructions . . .) that have been arrived at via the inquiry are *credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities*” (original emphasis, p. 196).

Transferability (or applicability) depends on the level of similarity between the sent and received contexts. With dependability, they argue, one considers both instability and phenomenal factors or design-induced change. Finally, confirmability deals with the objectivity of the findings and data. In sum, trustworthiness must be considered in qualitative research.

Following the above, intensive interviews (i.e., three sets of hour-long interviews with each participant) were used in this study. The researcher conducted 6 hour-long interviews in total to create more opportunities to obtain trustworthy data, build rapport, and find consistencies and inconsistencies in the participants' responses. To "establish credibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308), the researcher used peer debriefing and thus avoided possible biases and misinterpretations. The researcher used "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314), member checking, to determine whether the researcher understood the participants correctly. For this step, the participants were asked to read the transcripts to see if there were any misunderstandings and misinterpretations and check their answers to complete the missing parts.

For triangulation, different kinds of data collection tools and methods, such as the periodic participant interviews, coaching sessions, and participants' documents, were used to increase credibility. Participants' lesson plans, syllabi, and handouts helped demonstrate how the selected EFL teachers understood BDI as a new notion in EFL education and whether they integrated it into their classroom applications.

Patton (1990) stated that the researcher as the instrument holds attributes such as competence, ability, skill, and effort. In this case, the researcher provided a comfortable and warm atmosphere during the coaching sessions and interviews and tried to create friendships and strengthen relationships with each participant to enhance their motivation and gain their trust and

confidence. The researcher also tried to build rapport by indicating that she was an EFL teacher who had been schooled at a middle school in northwestern China and had worked in public schools, as well, just like the participants.

As a result, the researcher hoped to determine whether using the BDI methods in EFL education had provided the teachers with better, more effective and communicative English-language teaching. In other words, the researcher observed whether any positive changes resulted for the EFL teachers in terms of their professional development (their behaviors, teaching methods, and approaches).

Summary

Chapter three discussed the research design, research questions, data collection, sampling, data analysis, and study procedures. This study used a qualitative case study design and incorporated professional development, with interviews and coaching sessions occurring throughout.

The research questions aimed to address communicative and cognitive competence; hence, the researcher used participants' periodic interviews, remote coaching sessions and participants' textbooks, lesson plans, syllabi, and handouts as data collection sources. The researcher created a systematic plan for analyzing and interpreting the data in the study. She organized, synthesized, and made sense of the data to find answers to the research questions. An inductive analysis approach was applied to seek meaningful patterns in the data so that reasonable conclusions could be drawn. The researcher hoped to see whether, as a new notion in education, BDI could be applied in English teaching in northwestern China. In addition, she hoped to learn how the teachers change in terms of applying the constructivist methods in their teaching.

Chapter 4 - Results

This case study was conducted to explore the participants' English language teaching dilemmas after their exposure to BDI in the context of GTM. The premise of this study was that all participants could offer valuable and insightful understanding regarding GTM and BDI, as they were the primary recipients and implementors of the two teaching approaches. This familiarity made them the foremost authorities of their own English language learning and teaching experiences. The participants were able to articulate their English language learning and teaching experiences in a descriptive and cohesive manner.

Throughout this dissertation, multiple sources of evidence were used. A qualitative questionnaire with open-ended questions regarding background and EFL learning and teaching experiences was given to the participants before the interviews. Three in-depth semi-structured interviews were given, and the researcher recorded the speech of the participants. Before and after the professional development, the pre- and post-survey were used to look at how teaching methods may change before and after coaching sessions of BDI strategies. During the professional development, the researcher understood how the participants were making meaning of the BDI strategies through the viewing guides they completed. Additionally, document analysis of lesson plans and artifacts was collected by the researcher. A word processing document was used for the participants to record their thoughts and answer the researcher's questions. Finally, the findings were discussed in detail, and the summary of the findings was shared with the readers.

All the data gathered were analyzed in order to explore the following two research questions:

1. How do EFL teachers in Northwest of China make meaning of BDI in the context of GTM?
2. How do EFL teachers navigate the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas of implementing BDI in a GTM context?

Portraiture of Participants

Qualitative data analysis included numerous pages of written materials, which can make it difficult to know where to start. In this research, the researcher created a narrative portraiture by developing two examples of narrative portraits that emerged from in-depth interviews for each participant. Narrative portraiture can be complementary to thematic approaches to bring the participants and their daily life experience into a portrayal of a single story, with an in-depth understanding of research phenomenon and each participant or case's story (Rodríguez-Dorans & Jacobs, 2020). In this research, the researcher worked with the narrative approaches, which explored how participants make sense of meaning of BDI in the context of GTM, as well as seeing them as powerful medium to communicate information (Gottschall & Wilson, 2005; Mitchell & Egudo, 2003).

Angela

Angela has a four-year college degree with English major, and she graduated from the faculty of Arts and Sciences. Her age is 31. She has more than 5 years of teaching experience. She graduated with her Bachelor's degree from a University in Northwest of China, and also holds an M.A. degree with TESOL major at Monash University, which is a public institution using the British system taught mostly by Australian professors.

She worked at a high school, called XI'AN Shi Di WUSHIWU ZHONG XUE, which is in Xi'an City, Shaanxi Province. This was her third year in this school where she had two groups

of students. Each group received 10 hours of English instruction and was about 45 students in the 2022-2023 academic year. It was a very large school with a middle and high school in it. At the time of the interview, there were 500 students studying in the 8th grade in that school. Girls and boys attended the classes together in the school. The students attended the school full-day, starting at 7:10 am and ending at 9:30 pm. There were eight class hours with 10-minute break intervals; and there was an 85-minute lunch break from 12:20 to 13:45. The classrooms in the XI'AN Shi Di WUSHIWU ZHONG XUE had a table and a chair for the teacher, each student had an individual desk, a smart board, projectors, and a computer in front of the classroom. With approximately 40 or more students, the classrooms in this school were crowded.

When Angela was asked to give a brief summary about her own process of learning English as a foreign language, she stated that she started systematically learning English at 7th grade at a public junior high school. She said:

I continued studying EFL until I completed my master's degree. Normally, other students might finish learning English by their second year of college, but because I majored in English, I spent four years in college studying it. Additionally, I pursued my graduate studies abroad, which added a few more years to my English learning journey. So, the actual duration of my English learning journey was from the 7th grade of junior high school to my master's graduation. As for the content of my studies, in junior high school, we used textbooks, and When I got to college, things were different because I was majoring in English. We used specialized English textbooks that were distinct from what other students used. My course curriculum included specialized courses in English such as intensive reading, extensive reading, English and American literature, English listening and speaking, phonetics, linguistics. There were also professional courses like

interpretation. These were the main courses I took. During my postgraduate studies in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), the school arranged courses for us, mainly focused on second language acquisition theories subjects.

As the quotation from Angela showed, because she majored in English as an undergraduate, she had more English classes while in China than most students. These classes went beyond traditional methods of grammar/vocabulary and delved into culture, literature, and speaking/listening. Once she graduated with her bachelor's degree, she chose to pursue an advanced degree in TESOL in an English-speaking country, Australia.

Angela spoke about her teaching practicum experiences in different schools when she was studying in Australia. There were many Chinese families in Australia, therefore there were many bilingual schools that hired Chinese teachers. She described her experience in these bilingual Chinese/English private schools in a detailed way to emphasize how Chinese teachers had to change or adjust their teaching methods, even if they sometimes do not comply with their own ideas, according to where/what type of schools they worked in. She stated that when Chinese teachers taught in Australia, they had to learn how to adapt to the structure and pedagogy of Australian schools, which significantly differed from Chinese schools. She said once she returned to her home country, she worked in a public junior high school with students' ages ranging from 13 to 15 years old, teaching EFL in Xi'an city, the capital city of Shaanxi province. She gave some additional information about those types of high schools:

These are nine-year compulsory education schools which educate students more adaptable to exam-oriented education and the Medium of education is Chinese. Under the present education system of China, education streaming after junior high school will mainly distribute students to the senior high school, secondary vocational school, or labor

market. *Zhongkao* entrance examination system, as an entrance examination and enrolment method for a junior high school student to go to senior high school, has more and more impact. Notably, the only way to enter colleges/universities is through *Gaokao* College entrance examination. That's why the graduates generally prefer senior high school, especially the public senior high school for their upper second education. When they choose English as optional subject, they are much easier gain higher scores than other Second language they were not leaned before high school in the college entrance exam.

As the quotation from Angela illustrated, exam-oriented education is a unique educational model derived from the influence of “diploma trumps everything” or “scores equal abilities,” with academic entrance exams entitled *Zhongkao* and *Gaokao*. Under the exam-oriented education system, teachers’ teaching abilities and achievements are entirely evaluated by students’ high scores and high enrolment rates. Their teaching methods, therefore, are affected by this demand for high scores. In other words, they often teach to the needs of the test.

Because most students in public high school were likely to go on to higher education, most of her students entered the public high school in Xi'an city with that as a goal. She felt obliged to teach mostly grammar, vocabulary, and reading in English even though she did not personally prefer this type of traditional teaching. However, there were no requirements for speaking on the entrance exam called the *Zhongkao*. This situation made her teach for the tests to meet the expectations of the students and the families.

After teaching for a few years, Angela conducted a project, called *Teaching English as Foreign Language Innovatively*, which was supported by the Monash University, Melbourne. In that regard, she had a chance to return to Australia, visited three Chinese/English bilingual junior

high schools, and saw the foreign language education systems of Australia. She noticed that the students in the Australian bilingual junior high schools she visited practiced speaking and listening in English. The Australian education system was based on communicative approaches. In Northwest of China, however, the students studied English to pass the tests only. As there were not any speaking requirements in the standardized tests in China, both the students and the families generally thought that doing communicative activities and skill-based tasks in the lessons were just a waste of time which impact classroom progress. Therefore, teachers generally had to ignore communicative skills such as speaking and listening and focus on grammar and vocabulary teaching. As a result of this, most Chinese people who learned English in junior high school know very basic conversational skills such as introducing themselves and asking someone for their name. Few Chinese students can hold an extensive conversation in English as they have not learned how to dialogue with another person.

Angela usually followed the examination-oriented education and did mostly grammar teaching. As she stated, “Well, I certainly teach vocabulary and grammar. Without emphasizing the vocabulary and grammar, I feel like I leave something incomplete. Without teaching vocabulary and grammar, I think that the students won’t be able to understand the texts, for example. That is because the primary goal is to prepare students for exams includes vocabulary and grammar.” When ask what the goals of English language teachers at EFL classroom and whether it should aim to improve EFL students’ communicative ability or teaching grammar rules and vocabulary, she replied,

I currently teach 8th grade, and students have to participate in various exams, such as mid-term and final exams each semester, as well as the *Zhongkao* senior high school entrance examination at the end of 9th grade. Parents concentrate on their kids’ grades,

and these grades are mainly based on knowledge, it largely comes from the vocabulary and grammar found in textbooks. When teaching in Chinese junior high schools, the primary focus is on exam preparation. Our EFL teachers emphasize the content that the school exams prioritize, and this is what we primarily teach the students. Therefore, in my English classroom, the main goal is on grammar, vocabulary, and practice exercises.

As the quotation from Angela stated, exam-oriented education as a utilitarian educational mode sets exams as the goal of education, with the teaching method of infusion education, unilaterally developing student's personal test-taking capacity. Under this education mode, the educational authorities evaluate schools and teachers by students' scores of college entrance examinations.

Angela also stated that due to the implementation of China's compulsory education English curriculum standards (2022 Edition), teachers were encouraged to engage in the classroom, guide the class, and provide ample space for students to take the lead in the classroom. However, in her classroom, she has found that student-centered depends on their English proficiency. In other words, if the group of students she teaches has foundational knowledge in English, whether vocabulary, grammar, or communicative abilities, then the teachers' role becomes that of a facilitator. Teachers ask a question, and students can discuss and complete the task on their own.

Connie

Connie has a four-year college degree. She graduated from the faculty of education. She is 32 years old. She holds a B.A. degree with major Education and continues her master program in English Language Teaching. She has 7 years of teaching experience. She has been working at her current school for 2 years and teaches the 7th and 9th grades for 18 credit hours a

week. Currently, Connie is working at Pingliang Railway Middle School, which is located in Pingliang City, Gansu Province. Girls and boys attended the classes together. The school provided a dual (morning and afternoon) session for the students. The morning session started at 8:00 am in the morning and ended at 12:20 pm while the afternoon session started at 1:45 pm and ended at 6:00 pm. There were eight class hours a day with 10-minute breaks in between.

Being a public middle school in one of the biggest prefecture-level cities in Gansu Province, Pingliang Railway Middle School had highly crowded classrooms too (approximately 45 or more students in each one). The classrooms had a table and a chair for the teacher and each student had an individual desk, a blackboard and chalks, projectors and visual or other kinds of teaching materials in the classrooms. The teachers could bring the necessary equipment (laptop) and tools borrowed from the relevant office to design their curricula according to what they had been taught about having BDI methods during professional development.

When Connie was asked to give information about the process of learning English as a foreign language, she said that she attended a rural public middle and high school where she learned English from textbooks. However, since she passed the *Gaoko* college entrance examination, she got acquainted with English at the University of teacher education (Normal School) (when she was eighteen) as her English course professor was an American man. She also said:

I mostly learned English from the textbooks. But I think I like to read aloud, I read a lot. And I recorded my voices and playback for listening because I didn't have various of materials to practice. I think the most important English learning experience is in my university because I can communicate with my English course professor who from

United States and in our campus has the English corners held every Friday afternoon.

From that time, I started to learn English till now I read every day. Never stop because I love it. I read a lot of English novels and I read the electronic types from my smart phone and I like to practice English songs.

As the quotation from Connie showed that even though she from remote region, her passion for learning the English language shines through her practice, patience, and persistence. She not only learned from textbooks but also actively engaged in reading aloud and recording her voice for more speaking practice. She described she had more opportunities to develop her English language major knowledge on major class taught by American literacy expert and dialogue with the native speakers after she attended college.

Connie has worked as an EFL teacher in different cities and different types of schools such as public primary and secondary schools in China. In addition, she traveled to a teacher training high school in Siirt, a city located in the Southeastern part of Turkey. Unlike many other EFL teachers in China, Connie has had experiences in schools abroad.

Her participation in the study started with a coincidence. I met her two years ago at a school meeting in Pingliang City, Gansu Province. At that time, she was working on her master's at one of the well-known universities in Shaanxi Province. As part of her program, she had been able to participate for one year in the English Language Program (ELP) at an American university. When we met, I mentioned my doctoral program in the USA and said that I was doing qualitative research for my dissertation and trying to find EFL teachers to participate in my project. Connie said that she was completing a similar study for her MA thesis and was very much aware of the difficulties of this research process. She added that she would be more than

happy to take part in the project and give support on every stage of the study. Being a graduate student in English Language Teaching, she had some knowledge about constructivist approach.

Connie said that she usually taught grammar and did mechanical drills related to the grammar topic of that week. As she continued, there was no time left for speaking or listening activities. She also talked about the obligation of following the pre-designed curriculum and yearly plans. Connie believed that EFL teachers should teach students grammar rules and vocabulary, as well as improve communicative skills. She explained why she thought both were important this way by giving an example of her teaching experience:

Actually, in my daily teaching, I seldom teach just only in the grammar rules. I teach a lot of examples to show them how to summarize grammar rules by themselves not just tell them. Sure, I teach grammar. We have five lessons every week, but I just pick one lesson to teach 20 minutes grammar rules. I help them to summarize the grammar rules by themselves, not teach directly. Chinese students face to the *Zhongkao* high school entrance examination. Along with the new English Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition) requires a check the competence of the students, communicative ability is one of the competences. I have to teach them both the language and knowledge.

As the quotation from Angela stated, she focused on practical examples and motivated students to derive grammar rules themselves, which helped students grasp the grammar rules but also enabled them to apply knowledge in the context of real-life communication. This aligns with new English education policies that prioritize communication and practical use.

Connie also stated that she prefers taking a facilitative role in teaching English in the classroom. She believes she is a designer of instruction. During the process of teaching, as a

designer and guider, she demonstrated students' procedures of class activities and what they need to. In short, she did not teach a lot, but rather guided students to what they need to do.

Introduction of BDI Approaches

This section summarizes the professional development seminar in which the participants were asked various questions regarding the six BDI Communicative Approaches. By viewing three videos (representing Activation, Confirmation, and Affirmation) for each of the six BDI methods, I managed to gather responses aligned to the respondents' perception and application of the Communicative Approaches. The information summarized herein is based on Viewing Guides I and II for Angela and Connie.

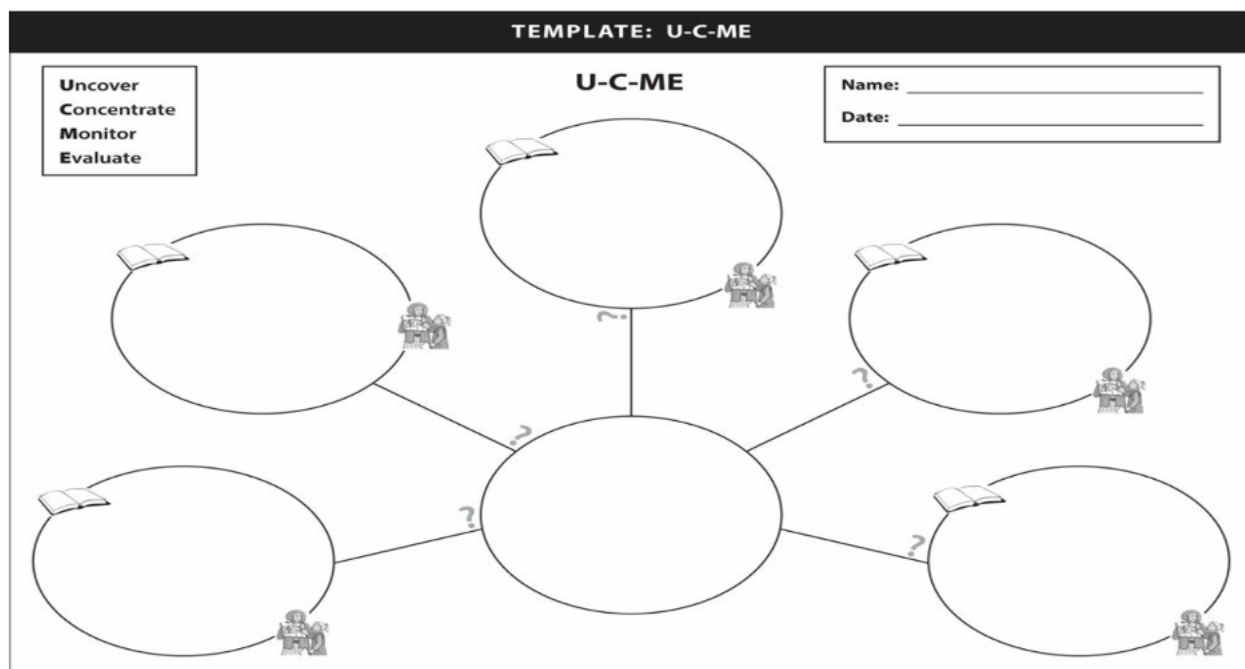
Before the professional development

Before the coaching sessions, neither of the teachers used BDI methods as a part of their teaching approach application. When I asked the participants what their foreign language teaching techniques and materials were, both teachers stated they relied heavily on grammar rules and vocabulary. The greatest learning gains by the teachers were in making the contents of their lessons concrete and getting their pupils to engage actively with the subject matter by applying BDI techniques and activities, questioning and encouraging cooperative learning. Researcher's reviews of teachers' viewing guides and second interview audio transcription indicated that they had basic understanding of BDI approaches. The greatest gains by the teachers were in contextualizing and structuring student's English language learning tasks, giving them active support during the process of class and encouraging them to help each other. The findings indicate that focusing viewing guides on domain-specific effective professional development can be a powerful contribution towards raising teachers' quality of instruction.

An overview of the respondents understanding of U-C-ME

Uncover, Concentrate, Monitor, Evaluate (U-C-ME) creates a lesson plan in three phases: activation, connection, and affirmation. In the first phase, the teacher allows students an initial association to be made between what they know or think they might know about a given topic. In the next phase, connection, the teacher tries to make connections from what students shared to the new content information being shared with them. The teacher uses a bubble diagram (See Figure 4.3) to work with students, ensuring that students are progressing, while also ensuring there are connections made to individual and collective ideas shared on behalf of the students. The last phase, affirmation, allows students to share in some way the new information they have just been taught, individually demonstrating their learning. (Murry et al., 2017).

Figure 4.1. U-C-ME – (Herrera, 2022)



When asked how the activation phase activates students' existing knowledge, Angela said that U-C-ME provides room for Q&A (Question and Answer); answers can be given in the students' native language while they also have room to draw pictures. To her, the connection phase moves students from the known to the unknown owing to its progressive questions design. Regarding the affirmation phase of U-C-ME, Angela noted that it gives room for teachers to encourage students to complete their homework through the reading materials as well as prior and unknown knowledge they found in the classroom to assess what they learned. She acknowledged that U-C-ME is a good teaching method and that she will use it in her future activities. She described the method as a mind map or a bubble, which can help students connect knowledge and memorization. She was inclined toward using U-C-ME in her reading segment, especially intensive reading.

On the other hand, Connie took note of keywords "Mayans and Olmecs" in the activation phase. These can often be written on the whiteboard, then students would be guided to brainstorm any relevant information, words, images, etc. To her, the connection phase moved students from the known to the unknown when

"The teacher provides five unfamiliar keywords to spark students' curiosity, guides students to organize and summarize their own questions and present them in question form. Groups of students read while focusing on their respective sets of questions, extracting facts and viewpoints from the text. The teacher skillfully stimulates students' curiosity, utilizing students' existing knowledge and experience to read with questions in mind."

Fundamentally, she noted that the affirmation phase celebrates students learning when the teacher asked students to review what they had learned in class and exchange with their

classmates to ascertain if their sentences are correct, reinforcing the class content. She also learned new things about U-C-ME, including vocabulary, Q&A, and tables. She further seeks to know: What topics are more suitable for U-C-ME method? How do peers evaluate each other's sentences?

U-C-ME turned out to be one of the most utilized BDI approaches by the two teachers. A careful analysis of their interviews and viewing guide responses found that both Angela and Connie said that they have adopted "use of keywords," "summary tables," "Q&A," "vocabulary learning," and "sentence evaluation."

Using keywords was majorly applied by Connie during passage reading by having students identify keywords and read them out loud to their partners. Summary tables were used by the teachers to encourage students to identify key points in the passage. For example, students would summarize "The Monkey King" in only a few words. Connie said that the Q&A sessions made it easier for the students to interact with the teacher and partners for a better comprehension of learned vocabulary, phrases, verbs, adjectives and more. Vocabulary learning was done by language translation into Chinese from English so the students could understand the words better and in context. Lastly, sentence evaluation was an interactive session where the teachers read out sentences and the students identified which one was correct based on a previously read passage or story. Unlike the GTM approach, where the teacher led and students followed instructions, BDI approaches like U-C-ME provided room for students to evaluate sentences, think in their first language, interpret information, and speak it out in the target language, which is English.

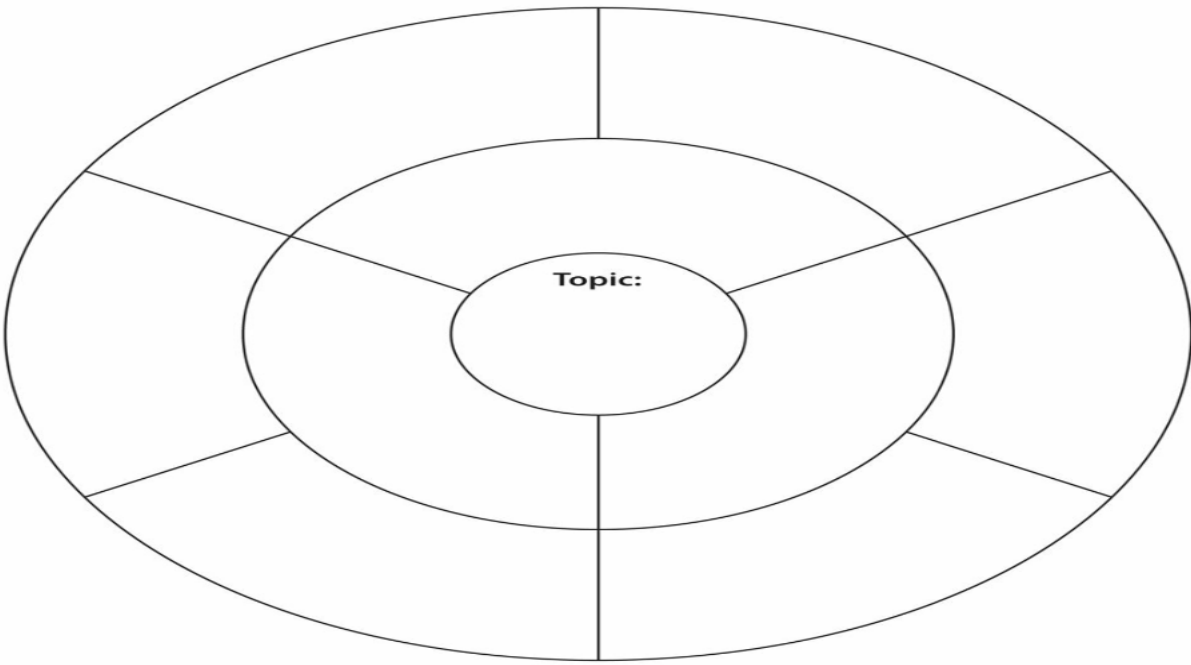
An overview of the respondents understanding of The Extension Wheel

The Extension Wheel (see Figure 4.1) focuses on key vocabulary and concepts of a topic while supporting each with evidence from the reading. The teachers help students brainstorm key words/concepts associated with the topic. Students then write three most essential words/concepts and place them in the center of the organizer, as well as find two pieces of evidence to support each word/concept. This activity extends to writing. In the last phase, students connect the information in the organizer and write their own sentences and paragraph(s).

Figure 4.2. Extension Wheel – (Herrera, 2022)

TEMPLATE: Extension Wheel

Name: _____
Date: _____

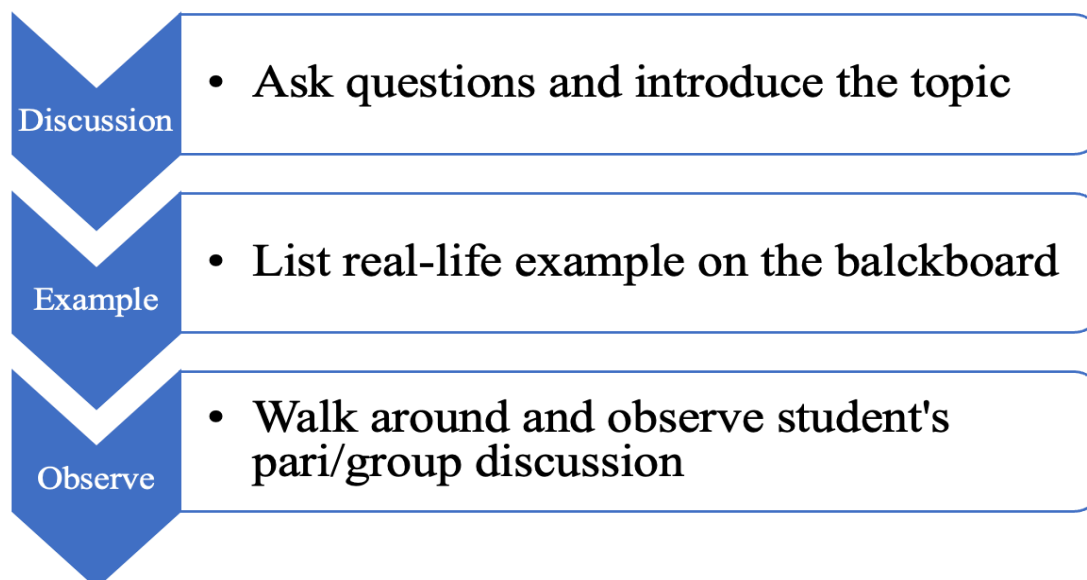


The diagram is an 'Extension Wheel' template. It consists of three concentric circles. The innermost circle is labeled 'Topic:'. The middle ring is divided into four equal segments by two perpendicular lines. The outermost ring is also divided into four equal segments by the same two perpendicular lines. This structure allows for organizing key vocabulary and concepts in the center, supported by evidence in the middle ring, and then connecting this information in the outer ring.

When asked how extension wheel can be used in the activation phase to activate students' existing knowledge, Angela stated that it allows students to explore existing knowledge and prior background by asking progressive questions. On the other hand, Connie stated that English curriculum allows for improvement of student's academic performance and about the requirements of teachers have a certain curriculum content. In terms of Instruction, it allowed the teacher to list real-life examples on the blackboard, provided language guidance, organized small group discussions, and elicited students' existing life experiences.

When asked how extension wheel can be used in the connection phase to move students from the known to the unknown, Angela responded by saying it enables teachers introduce the topic by reading materials and guide students to identify facts and effects. Angela drew the illustrative figure below:

Figure 4.3. A Flowchart of Teaching Processing



About this flow chart, Angela said extension wheel technology use in the classroom is more a matter of innovation than copy mechanically. The teacher with a growth mindset tends to explore and discover the teaching methods more confidently than others. This was because she embraced challenges and instead of giving it a chance to inhibit her learning progress, she capitalized on it for the betterment of her teaching. She was usually seeking help from methods-savvy colleagues and sometimes from knowledgeable researchers. Angela's flow chart (See Figure 4.2) is an illustration of her adoption of the new approach. By "discussion" she meant that there was an enhanced engagement between the teacher and students. For example, she would read out a passage and ask students to identify certain things like facts and key vocabulary words. By "examples" she meant that the teacher used various examples to explain the deeper meanings of vocabulary words or phrases identified in the passage to make students understand them better. For example, a newly encountered word in the English language would be explained either in the English or Chinese context for easy understanding. By "observe" she referred to the walking around the class activity to ensure active participation in the groups or student pairs.

For her part, Connie said the extension wheel can be used in the connection phase to allow teachers to provide materials and charts, guide students to read in groups, use the cause-and-effects principle to complete the chart content, encourage students to pay attention to the captions to extract information, and ultimately distinguish between narrative or expository.

When asked how the extension wheel can be used in the affirmation phase to celebrate students learning, Angela indicated that teachers create another space for students to allow them to utilize generated products to summarize content learning. On her part, Connie said that based on the teaching materials available, the teacher provides six common words that represent cause

and effect, guiding students to create three sentences using the cause-effect principle and providing scaffolding for students to express themselves and write with ease.

Regarding new information learned from the extension wheel video, Angela said that before watching the second video she had never organized her class through utilizing a culturally responsive pedagogy that guides teachers to maximize each student's potential for second language acquisition and develop content learning from sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive and academic resources. To her, teachers placing students at the center of teaching process, taking into consideration their biographies as a main aspect, was something she found surprising. Notably, she stated that she still was confused about the theory and pedagogy of the extension wheel method. On the other hand, Connie appreciated that BDI strategies are developed by following the three phases of the class, Activation, Connection, and Affirmation, to develop new foreign language structures are a little beyond where the students currently stand, and the fact that the teacher was well-prepared with teaching materials. However, she had lingering questions: How do students cooperate specifically in the learning process? What are the specific criteria for evaluating the sentences they produce?

An overview of the respondents understanding of DOTS

DOTS stands for: 1) Determine what you know about the topic; 2) Observe connections you can make about what you know and the key vocabulary; 3) Talk with a partner about your connections; 4) Summarize your learning using key words from the chart (Herrera et al., 2015). DOTS chart (see Figure 4.4) uses so-called Alphaboxes which helped teachers to encourage students to recognize what they know about the topic before and write the words in the correct boxes around the chart. Teachers then gave students key vocabulary to write along the margin. During the class, teachers gave students time to add words from reading, and encouraged them

draw lines to connect words, similar to a mind map. Teachers made sure to give them an opportunity to talk about their learning with a partner, encouraging them to use the vocabulary on the chart. Finally, teachers gave students time to summarize what they had learned, again encouraging them to use the key vocabulary to make sentence(s) or paragraph(s).

Figure 4.4. DOTS Chart – (Herrera, 2022)

TEMPLATE: DOTS	
Name: _____ DOTS Chart (<u>D</u>etermine, <u>O</u>bserve, <u>T</u>alk, <u>S</u>ummarize) Topic: _____	
A-B-C-D	E-F-G-H
I-J-K-L	M-N-O-P
Q-R-S-T-U	V-W-X-Y-Z

When asked how DOTS' activation phase activates students' existing knowledge, Angela responded by saying the classroom environment was flexible in this phase and students can be motivated to work/study together. In the connection phase, she said that DOTS could motivate

students to discuss. Regarding how the affirmation phase celebrated students' learning, Angela gave an example of how it allows classroom teachers to write a narrative essay to assess their learning outcomes. Learning about the DOTS chart was a major professional development opportunity for Angela because she thought it was an excellent method for teaching vocabulary clearly. At the moment, she includes 20 words per unit in her classes. In terms of adopting DOTS in her classroom, Angela believed the method was not friendly to students with low English vocabulary that was not solid; something that could potentially lead to confusion about words.

When asked how the activation phase activated students' existing knowledge, Connie responded by saying, "Utilizing students' familiar experiences, they work together to brainstorm, and extract known vocabulary. Students use alphabets as prompts to brainstorm based on their experiences, increasing their vocabulary through peer communication." She also gave an account of how DOTS' connection phase moved students from the known to the unknown by citing the use of vocabulary the student had already written and guiding the students to connect the two words. The teacher read the last two sentences of the article to further enhance the understanding of the article's main idea, making students aware that cooperation makes each classmate in the group feel safe and accepted. Connie described in the affirmation phase,

Students imagine themselves as disabled students or there has students with disability in classroom. They have to think about how they would complete a task or help their disabled classmates complete it. The teacher asks students to use the vocabulary and points recorded in DOTS to independently write an essay. This type of assignment helps students consolidate what they have learned today and integrate their existing experiences and newly learned vocabulary into their essays effectively."

As the quotation from Connie stated, affirmation was the phase where students showed what they learned from the lesson through a review of the new content or some form of a formative assessment. During this last phase, the teacher, as an agent of affirmation, provided the scaffolding students needed to best demonstrate their learning (Herrera et al., 2015). Students used their DOTS charts for support as they summarized, solved and synthesized their learning.

Connie acknowledged that the three phases involved both independent thinking and collaborative learning from peers and that the connection between them was seamless and natural. The arising questions from Connie's perspective were during the writing phase, when students were just starting to write: the teacher interrupted them and asked them to share before completing the rest of the text. She wondered about the purpose of interrupting students and requiring them to share in this context.

An overview of the respondents understanding of Linking Language

Linking Language helped teachers to meaningfully take advantage of students' unique perspectives to guide their learning. The teacher posted images that stimulate students' ability to link their own language and culture to the task. After activation phase, from the students' insights, a bridge was developed through peer interaction linking to the content. As Herrera et al. (Herrera et al., 2015) stated, visuals were beneficial because they "evoke emotional responses in learners" especially when they are in "color" ultimately helping students to make vivid connections (p. 14).

When asked about the impact of the Linking Language approach, Angela stated that:

The approach stimulates students' existing viewpoints or feelings through visuals/images.

The connection phase of the Linking Language approach, the teacher starts by providing each group with a blank piece of paper, which is divided into two sections. The first

section is for students to write down their initial thoughts on the topic before reading the article, while the second section is for recording their study notes on the topic after completing the article. During the classroom session, the teacher extensively uses posters to encourage students to express their feelings as much as possible. The teacher guides students to write down words related to the theme and encourages them to write additional related words. For example, in the video, the teacher guided students to write words like “snowman” and “dangerous,” which are related to the theme, on the poster. Then, the teacher leads students to predict the theme of the story.

As the quotation from Angela showed, Linking Language supports teachers in using a visual and interactive way of engaging students in the learning process. It activates prior experiences and background knowledge through visual stimulation. In the connection phase of the lesson, the teachers serve as the facilitator for student learning and allow students to predict the topic, concepts, and key vocabulary by images. Teachers promote the engagement of students, build classroom community, and support new learning materials by connecting the content and students’ biographies and background knowledge.

Angela stated that following this, the teacher conducted a close reading of the article, adding words to the poster as they went along, thereby expanding students' vocabulary. After the vocabulary expansion, the teacher invited some students to share their newly learned words. When one student mentioned a word, the teacher encouraged other students to provide further explanations using more in-depth vocabulary. so the researcher believed this segment effectively stimulated students, creating a progressively engaging learning environment in the classroom.

In the classroom connection phase, the teacher in the video continually asked students, “What does the word mean?” and encouraged students to explain in their own words as much as possible.

Next, Angela stated in the affirmation stage,

The teacher encourages students to make sense of the information and present sentences related to a snowy day. They share these sentences with their classmates, providing an opportunity for students to apply the new vocabulary they have learned. This process reinforces their understanding and application of the newly acquired words.

Referring to the quotation from Angela above, students used the words on the poster to create a rich description/paragraph of the vocabularies learned (pairs/individuals), or they created sentences based on the target word with the aid of the information on the poster. The student-created product can be used for review and authentic assessment.

According to Angela, the most surprising thing about the Linking Language method was the idea of taking a poster, expanding upon it, and encouraging students to associate some words, a practice she had never done before. Since she was learning about this approach and how it could be integrated into her usual GTM traditional methods, she had a few questions:

I have a question about Linking Language. It involves deriving target vocabulary from a picture. For example, if I have a text where I need to introduce some new vocabulary, how can I connect these newly introduced words with the previously activated words from the engagement stage? Secondly, once all the words are placed on the same poster, students might have difficulty recalling the target vocabulary because they see all the words together. They might end up thinking about their previously known words because both sets of words are on the poster.

The quotation from Angela underscored the significance of establishing connections between new and existing vocabulary while also recognizing the need for strategies to help students retain and recall the target vocabulary effectively. She suggested a need for addressing these challenges within the Linking Language approach to promote effective vocabulary learning and retention.

In response to how the activation phase activated students' existing knowledge from the video, Connie stated that, "The teacher provides students with four posters related to the theme of the lesson and asks them to write down any words they think are related to the pictures. Groups take turns completing this task, helping students recall their existing knowledge." When asked how the connection phase moved students from the known to the unknown, Connie said the students observed the pictures and verbally expressed descriptive words and their feelings. Plus, the written captions helped them understand the content of the articles. Students also built upon the existing vocabulary from the posters by adding new words. In the affirmation phase, the teacher provided students with a snowy image and guided them to create sentences using the vocabulary from the posters, encouraging them to share. That process enhanced vocabulary and language practice. Like Angela, Connie also found the use of posters and peer feedback unique and surprising. However, her concern remained "how to effectively assist students in describing more complex and rich scenes when they want to create sentences beyond simple adjectives and nouns, especially when dealing with more advanced topics or themes."

Similar to U-C-ME , the Linking Language approach was successfully adopted and integrated in the context of GTM. Perhaps, the most unique attribute of the Linking Language as cited by the teachers was the use of posters and visuals, and the incorporation of peer feedback.

Evidently, these styles do not exist in GTM approaches; a key indication that their inclusion in the teaching process would improve students’ grasp of English or any other second language.

An overview of the respondents understanding of Vocabulary Quilt

The Vocabulary Quilt (see Figure 4.5) helps students to identify new vocabulary and encourages them to use context clues to determine the meaning of the word—an essential strategy for reading comprehension. The teacher provides opportunities to help students connect with the text and tries to get them thinking deeply about particular terms/concepts and what they mean in the context of the text. As students think, they record their thinking and the visuals they associate with the words which compels them to draw on their background knowledge (Herrera, 2010).

Figure 4.5. Vocabulary Quilt – (Herrera, 2022)

TEMPLATE: Vocabulary Quilt	
Vocabulary Quilt <i>Write a vocabulary word in the center of each box.</i>	

When asked about how the activation phase activates students' existing knowledge, Angela referred to a scenario in one of the videos where the teacher begins by displaying a blanket and then asks students to use their own words, either existing English words or Spanish language, to describe it. Like in the Linking Language approach, here, the teacher also uses questions to guide students in expanding their vocabulary, including mentioning synonyms and antonyms. In affirmation, Angela reported that:

The teacher encourages students to write sentences, teaching them how to use the new words. Students are then tasked with creating sentences as a practice exercise. This approach actively involves students in the learning process throughout the lesson, rather than having the teacher solely leading the classroom.

What this means was that the activation phase depicted an elaborate activity-based learning where students wrote using new words learned in class to create sentences. In turn, that was a shift from teacher-centered learning as students could better comprehend new vocabulary and how to use them. Overall, this was a better teaching method that aims to improve SLA for EFL students. In terms of information learned and what surprised her, Angela said:

For this method, I would make an improvement by not having students fold blankets. Instead, I might provide them with different colored paper and let them create their own grid lines. This process would involve both hands-on work and encourage divergent thinking. Additionally, it would allow students to express aesthetics through drawing, providing a creative element to the exercise.

Angela had a new perspective on how the Vocabulary Quilt method could be adopted. She opined that giving students different colored papers and letting them create their own grid

lines would be a better technique than having them fold blankets. To her, students would be better placed to express aesthetics since they would directly be involved in drawing and the process would be hands-on. However, she said that instead of using blankets she would utilize different colored index cards.

On the other hand, Connie's experience with the activation phase involved a scenario in which "The teacher presents six target vocabulary words related to "How Weather Affects Us" in the format of a vocabulary quilt. The teacher uses the word "destroy" as an example, which students are relatively familiar with. Students, in groups, supplement additional related words they know and can even illustrate them."

As for the connection phase, the approach adopts the use of vocabulary as a starting point with students having an opportunity to further explore new words related to the theme of weather and how it affects us. In the affirmation phase, students used the vocabulary on the quilt to respond to two questions, a practice that expands students' vocabulary and reinforces their comprehension of word usage. Connie's main lesson from the video was the teacher's use of a more visually intuitive method to guide younger students in learning and applying vocabulary. She said the approach could also be adapted to higher-grade thematic writing to effectively tap into students' knowledge. Unlike Angela, Connie did not have any questions regarding Vocabulary Quilt.

An overview of the respondents understanding of Foldables

The foldable strategy is three-dimensional (see Figure 4.6), interactive organizer to organize, remember, review and learn vocabulary words and their meaning in explicit manner. As Herrera et al. (Herrera et al., 2015) wrote, the Foldable strategy employed throughout a lesson provides an extended focus on academic vocabulary development to support enhanced

comprehension and academic success. Students have an opportunity to document the key vocabulary of the lesson and activate their background knowledge and prior experiences with target vocabulary. After activating their prior knowledge, students were encouraged to share their initial associations with peers. In order for students to have consistent opportunities to expand on connections between their background knowledge and the new knowledge, peer interaction and group discussion were interwoven each academic term/concept throughout the lessons and practiced using the academic vocabulary of the content area.

Figure 4.6. Foldable - (Herrera, 2022)

My prediction	What I learned from teacher, text, peers	Why it is important

When asked how using a Foldable in the activation phase activated students' existing knowledge, Angela responded:

Through the video, I learned that the theme of this piece isn't very explicitly presented.

However, in the early stages of the lesson, you explore the concept of "What is poetry?"

by asking a series of questions, providing a definition, and discussing aspects related to music and lyrics. You guide and introduce the concept of poetry to the students, encouraging them to write "poetry" in the center of the cover page. Afterward, you continuously delve into the students' existing knowledge about poetry. This part of the lesson is interactive and engages students in discussions about poetry.

As the quotation from Angela acknowledged, the impact of the Foldables technique is the ability to boost the level of engagement between the teacher and the students. By saying that the method worked well for poetry classes, she understood its effectiveness as well as the ability to use it for discussions and interactions. These two attributes are the cornerstone of BDI approaches as they improve teacher-student relationship and quick grasp of learning.

When asked how using a Foldable in the connection phase helped move students from the known to the unknown, Angela responded:

In the connection phase, the teacher guides students to describe themselves through drawing or using five specific words (the fixed words from the text). Then, students are encouraged to exchange their self-descriptions with their peers and share their existing knowledge. After the exchange, the teacher selects a few students' self-descriptions to read and share in the classroom, providing some feedback. This is an innovative way to learn autobiographical writing.

What Angela means here was that the Foldables method elicited a lot of innovation in learning because it enabled students to move from the known to the unknown. For example, having students make self-descriptions using stipulated words, then exchange notes, and share existing knowledge was an interactive and innovative process that boosted learning. This method

was most applicable to autobiographical learning but can also be useful in other kinds of lessons.

Third, Angela referred to the affirmation phase video of Foldables, which involves the teacher instructing students to read their own essays aloud and share them with their partners. In the final phase, students were asked to write down some words that reflect their own feelings, ensuring that these words were their personal impressions. Towards the end of the lesson, the teacher shared a poem and encouraged students to write about their feelings regarding the poem, identifying words that resonated with them on a personal level and writing them in a Foldable (to invoke their innermost emotions). According to Angela, what surprised her was the astonishing nature of the foldable format. As for the questions she said:

Firstly, I believe having students fold in the classroom is a significant waste of class time.

Secondly, why do we need to create this particular shape? I don't think this shape is necessary. I can simply take an A4 sheet of paper and check it directly.

The above quote showed that Angela had some reservations regarding the effectiveness of the Foldables method. To her, it might not be necessary to fold papers and then have the class reveal their contents; rather, it would be better to have an A4 sheet and check it directly without concealing anything. As the coach, I understood Angela's concerns with the new method and explained to her why it was necessary to conduct the Foldables that way. I explained to her that Foldables reinforces strategies and skills fundamental for reading success and was a kinesthetic tool for organizing and assessing learning in classrooms; something that would benefit students a great deal.

Connie shared that the teacher's influence in the activation phase where she introduced poetry, its role, and the relationship between poetry and songs helped activate students' prior

knowledge on poetry, including their understanding of poetry in their native language, as well as in the context of Spanish language and poetry. The teacher encouraged students to recall any poems they remembered, further tapping into their existing knowledge. To her, when the teacher instructed students to write their own poems about themselves and provided a demonstration using personal examples, students were encouraged to use various creative tools to make their foldables more visually appealing. That process made it possible to move from the known to the unknown the connection phase. During coaching, the researcher explained to the teachers that the Foldables method does not only apply to poems but can be used for other things, especially any activities involving reading and writing. In the affirmation phase, students completed their own poems and share with their classmates, with the teacher sharing one selected student's work as an example to the rest of the class. In terms of something new learned, Connie responded by saying:

The use of foldables to break down the content and reduce students' psychological pressure is a valuable strategy. Guiding students to write about themselves and emphasizing the use of nouns, adjectives, and other elements in their poems is effective in language learning.

Fundamentally, Connie's main concern was how the foldables approach can be adapted for other topics or themes beyond poetry. Although Angela understood how the Foldables method worked, as has been elaborated in the section above, she had a few reservations about its effectiveness and why there is a need to make the foldables in the first place. In contrast, Connie understood and appreciated the need for foldables in contemporary teaching because it reduced psychological pressure on students and was an essential guide to understanding key aspects of a new language like vocabulary, adjectives, nouns, and phrases.

Major Themes

The researcher utilized the demographic survey, three in-depth semi-structured interviews, coaching sessions with viewing guides, and pre- and post-surveys to obtain relevant major themes. This involved searching key words of GTM and BDI approaches to identify any research that met the delimitations set. After a combination of the demographic survey, in-depth semi-structured interviews, viewing guides, and pre- and post-surveys were obtained, the researcher recorded the information on the Word document and Coding Form (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2). The researcher then performed a first read of the information for inclusion. After the first read, the information was selected for inclusion and the researcher performed a second close read of the texts utilizing the Word document and Coding Form (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2) to record additional information about the demographic survey, in-depth semi-structured interviews, viewing guides, and pre and post survey regarding. The researcher then analyzed the data of each research piece and developed the following 8 key themes:

- Understanding of BDI and Communicative Approaches Before the Professional Development
- Determining which BDI Methods Would be Suitable for GTM-dominant Classrooms
- Regarding Methods that Might be Challenging
- Regarding the Challenges They Think They Might Face
- Regarding How They Used and Integrated BDI Methods After Learning About Them
- Regarding the Challenges They Encountered
- Introduction of BDI Approaches
- Indicates of Change and Understanding of BDI through Analysis of Pre- and Post-Surveys

- Implementation of BDI as Evidence in the Teacher's Lesson Plan and Artifacts

After the development of the nine key themes, the researcher went through the selected research pieces and identified and validated the presence of each theme. At times, the researcher found the representation of the themes in one or two sentences and at other times the themes were represented in greater detailed passages within the research pieces. Once the researcher identified the themes, the sentence(s) and paragraphs were recorded via the Microsoft document under the specific theme.

Understanding of BDI and Communicative Approaches Before the Professional Development

Before the coaching sessions, neither of the teachers used BDI methods or communicative approaches as a part of their teaching approach application. When I asked the teachers in the interview and pre-survey about their foreign language teaching techniques and materials, the following topics emerged: grammar rules, textbook usage, vocabulary teaching, communication, examination, and reading.

Both teachers taught grammar lessons to their classes but not in line with BDI approaches. For example, Angela's lessons were aligned to teaching grammar only as a precursor to upcoming exams, not for in-depth mastery of the target language. Connie said the same thing about grammar, whereby students learned to write English phrases as predetermined by the teacher. Textbook usage was largely utilized by both teachers as students would read passages from time to time and identify key vocabulary. Although communication and reading were adopted by the two teachers, the GTM model does not cater for precise learning for EFL students. Students mechanically read the conversations from textbooks to each other. They did not like inventing conversations or playing games. They insisted on intensive reading and

grammar rules and on taking conventional exams. Perhaps, the most common theme was examination, which the teachers said is the primary objective for learning within the Chinese system. Both tailored their lesson plans and outcomes toward an ultimate test to gauge students' learning, without considering their progressive acquisition of the English language.

Before the study began, the teachers had little knowledge of communicative approach. As shown in her portrait, Angela was exposed to the communicative approach (CA) in Australia and Connie was exposed to CA by studying English Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition) that follow the education theory of “learning through experiencing, applying through practicing, and creating through skills transfer” (p. 11). Therefore, students are encouraged to look into real-life situations and issues and activate their existing knowledge so that they can participate in a series of interrelated and progressive language learning activities and practice, from learning and understanding the thematic connotation, applying and practicing what they have learned, to transferring what they have learned to create something new. Although these identified themes are GTM approaches, each teacher had attempted certain techniques that might be considered communicative approaches. These include vocabulary learning through passage reading, telling stories to partners as a form of enhanced communication, and translating from Chinese to English and English to Chinese.

Because the MoE wanted students to be more fluent in their speaking and listening, sometimes teachers were inclined to adopt language learning through grammar, reading of passages, storytelling, and use of visuals to enhance SLA. Even so, the MoE curriculum and pedagogy assessment teams still required more evidence of communicative approaches use and its benefits as well as challenges that needed addressing before a full throttle adoption into the Chinese education system. Grammar teaching was particularly desired in communicative

pedagogy because it allowed EFL students to escalate their Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Other than that, vocabulary teaching was a proven approach that enables EFL students to compare words in one language to another. For instance, both Angela and Connie taught their students bilingual vocabulary through Chinese to English translation. Reading textbooks was a key aspect of communication and language acquisition, which was further improved by the examinations given at the end of each reading lesson. Thus, the themes showed that the teachers' use of GTM approaches with an element of Communicative Approach made it easier for EFL students to learn English.

Determining which BDI Methods Would be Suitable for GTM-dominant Classrooms

As the teachers learned more about BDI through the video, they told me in the second interview which of the various methods would complement their existing GTM methods. The techniques such as U-C-ME , DOTS, Linking Language, Vocabulary Quilt, Foldables, and Extension Wheel were identified as possible techniques because encouraged student independent thinking, creativity, and engagement.

Angela stated that U-C-ME would be instrumental to her teaching because there are a lot of reading classes in Chinese classrooms. She was also inclined toward trying DOTS chart with the 26-alphabet cards that I sent her earlier during the research. Moreover, Angela said that she would be adopting the Linking Language method because it allowed her to post many things on the blackboard and let students extend their thought process, such as brainstorming and word usage. She also supported the use of Vocabulary Quilt as it would allow better comprehension of language by encouraging students to use their native language to stimulate thinking.

For her part, Connie's BDI approaches of choice were the Extension Wheel and U-C-ME . She stated that the methods might be suitable because she currently teaches junior high school students, and these methods offer enhanced practice and have strong summarization aspects. According to Connie, the two methods were more practical because they adopt direct student engagements compared to traditional GTM methods that advocate for a teacher-centric model. This means that students are more likely to gain relevant learning information and experience. For example, listening, writing, and speaking selected English vocabulary could help boost English learning as opposed to when the teacher did all the work and only asked the students to do homework, which was common with GTM. On the other hand, the Extension Wheel was a method that allowed for students to document their learning, enabling them to extend upon their ideas.

As has also been highlighted in this section, Angela and Connie demonstrated their desire and commitment to adopt and integrate BDI approaches in the context of GTM. Although they still dominantly used GTM approaches in their teaching, both the students and the teachers were beginning to appreciate BDI approaches. For instance, the use of DOTS chart with 26-alphabet was one of Angela's biggest take-homes from the professional development session.

My students showed a positive attitude towards today's lesson activity when they started creating their DOTS charts following the instruction. Throughout the vocabulary words learning process, I found every student tries the best to complete their own DOTS chart; some students demonstrated their understanding of the new words through drawings, while others wrote down the Chinese explanations. In the end, each student actively presented their learning achievements to their pairs.

As the quotation from Angela stated, BDI strategies that exist for activating students' engagement are effective for students who are not willing to raise hand or who are absent-minded during the class. This is because in the classroom activities with BDI strategies, all students have opportunities to respond and be held accountable for participation from the beginning of the lesson.

Regarding Methods that Might be Challenging

The teachers expressed significant concerns that some of the BDI methods would be challenging owing to their newness and lack of familiarity. Angela said that the foldables method would be challenging. First, because she could not understand it clearly from the video review and because it could be time consuming. She stated:

The folding process is somewhat complex, and for students, the effectiveness of their class should be focused on learning content rather than hands-on activities. It can be a waste of time. Also, during classroom learning, these hands-on activities might easily distract students, shifting their focus away from learning and onto playing with paper.

As the quotation from Angela showed, she feared that the activity of folding would be difficult from the video. With a large class, it would be even harder to monitor and direct students when they have difficulties. In addition, hands-on activities, like folding paper, were not valued as much as things like grammar instruction. Finally, the folding activity could be very distracting for students, which would make the end goal, the use of the foldable for instruction, difficult to get to.

The other challenging one was Vocabulary Quilt, which she said was another hands-on activity involving paper folding; something that might lead to students playing with the paper instead of actively participating in the discussions about the course content.

Connie stated that implementing the BDI approaches could come with challenges in China owing to the students' cultural backgrounds and vocabulary levels. For example, she cited a challenge with the Linking Language method among Chinese students who she said often lack basic vocabulary in content areas. She stated that Chinese students may have to require some cultural background knowledge on the Maya civilization; the theme upon which the Linking Language method is based. Furthermore, she questions the applicability of the Foldables method among Chinese students when discussing poetry by saying:

It emphasizes students' experiences with poetry. The topic itself is somewhat abstract. In the videos, these teachers are teaching various subjects, not just English. In the United States, they might implement these methods based on their own subjects. However, we can look at these methods from a more generic perspective rather than just focusing on the subject matter. Some methods may be challenging due to the need for hands-on activities that can take up a significant portion of class time.

As the quotation from Connie showed, the Foldables underscored the prioritizing students' background knowledge and prior experiences in the activation phase, which aims to make topics more relatable and engaging for students. She noted that the teacher taught related various subjects, not just English. This cross-disciplinary method challenged her current teaching methods (grammar rules, vocabulary, and exam-oriented). Meanwhile, Foldable involved hands-on activity that students might become so concentrated on as they create their individual Foldable, that it may consume a lot of class time and distract from the content.

Regarding the Challenges They Think They Might Face

The teachers recognized that there were three areas that might be challenging when using BDI approaches which include implementing the techniques in the context of Chinese schools, families/parents expectations, and national policy. Administratively, Angela said:

In Chinese public-school classrooms, we typically have class sizes of around 40 or more, sometimes even up to 50 students. If I were to have all of them engage in group discussions, it would be challenging to maintain control. If I use these methods in my teaching, I will spend a lot of time on discipline and organization. Therefore, these methods are more suitable for smaller class sizes or for special occasions like high-quality open classes where only around 20 students are selected. In such cases, students need to be highly motivated and clear about the tasks assigned by the teacher, and they will willingly participate.

As the quotation from Angela stated, an overcrowded classroom could create an obstacle in the teaching and learning process. The primary objective of BDI approaches was that the teacher treat each and every individual student in a proper way to transition students from their known knowledge (background knowledge) to unknown knowledge (class content), and provide rich classroom activities and develop inner personality. The teachers also gave students wide opportunities to develop their communicative competencies at an optimum level. However, in overcrowded classrooms, teachers might spend most of time in concentrating on classroom management activities and demanding students' attentiveness to regulate classroom activities.

As to what parents might think, Angela says that more focus is on the effectiveness of the class and that if the students feel they only had fun using the BDI methods rather than improve their grades, then the parents and the school may have concerns. She added that, "In most

schools, the focus is now shifting towards quality education for compulsory education, and the emphasis on exam results has decreased. So, I believe these methods can be used for students in the first and second years of junior high school.”

On the other hand, Connie had a different opinion on the role of parents and families who she believes have limited influence. Connie does not believe that parents put too much pressure on teachers regarding teaching methods:

Parents don't really care about the specific teaching methods used for a particular subject.

They either don't understand or don't care. What parents care about even more than teachers and schools is the students' grades. Parents have very clear goals, such as getting into prestigious senior high schools. What they truly care about is just the grades.

As the quotation from Connie showed, the real issue was not with what Chinese parents might think about the approaches, but rather that they demand perfect grades, test scores, and enrollments rate. If the students' grades do not improve, they might complain to the school administrators to call into question the teachers' credentials.

To Connie, the primary challenges emanate from the school and education departmental policies. She said:

There's a hierarchy, with policy at the top, followed by the school. Each school has its own set of rules and regulations. In terms of policy, it mainly affects the final assessment of students' output. Since our policies are mainly based on written exams, the policies dictate specific types of questions students must be able to answer. I couldn't see a clear evaluation component in these videos, and there was no scoring to assess what students have learned or mastered. So, in terms of policy, and including school-level policies, we are required to have exercises in each class. The so-called “exercises” must involve

practicing specific types of questions related to the core knowledge points of the day.

Even if it's not from actual exams, they must be done in class.

As the quotation from Connie stated, examination-oriented education has long been deeply embedded in Chinese *Suzhi Jiaoyu* (quality education system). Rote memorization and recitation were the standard teaching methods, and examination questions were the specific focus in content. The prescribed procedure of teaching around vocabulary words, grammar rules and practice examination questions had the status of irrefutable dogmas, and the teacher was the center of the teaching and learning process.

Lastly, Connie identified a rather unique attribute of the BDI methods that puts more pressure on teachers in the big class with about 45 students. She said that in the Affirmation phase the requirements for teachers to ensure their lesson plans have section for authentic assessment, keeping in mind the varying linguistic and academic starting points of the students (Herrera et al., 2012), added to the teaching loads and pressure in the classroom. Unlike authentic assessment, traditional assessments of taking tests seek to measure rote learning and require students to recall and restate the information. These assessments are easy to grade, to her, “Regardless of the teaching method used earlier, there must be a section at the end where students practice questions. Teachers are measured and evaluated based on clear criteria, such as scores, for assessing students’ learning abilities.” Therefore, compared with traditional assessment, authentic assessment was challenge for her to asked to perform real-word tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of what students have learned.

Regarding How They Used and Integrated BDI Methods After Learning About Them

The teachers responded by stating the specific BDI methods that worked for them. Angela said that she relied on two methods: U-C-ME and DOTS. In terms of integration, she said that in her lesson plan, which was a reading lesson, allowed her to include U-C-ME to allow students to discuss the theme of the entire article. She did this by motivating students to learn about the topics of the passage and then establish the primary idea of each paragraph. As documented in Angela's Lesson 2, the topic was identified as "The Monkey King", paragraph one as "introduction", paragraph two as "characters", and paragraph three as "spirit." That process enabled learners to identify thematic areas in the passage.

Later, Angela, together with the students, progressively looked for answers to the arising questions. This process was in keeping with the three phases: activation, connection, and affirmation. In the activation phase, Angela adopted the use of questions and guided students to respond to them in their native language or encouraged them to draw a picture. In the connection phase, Angela adopted the use of progressive questions design as is evident in her Lesson 1 and textbook (Unit 6). In the affirmation phase, Angela encouraged her students to complete homework through reading materials as new knowledge was learned to assess the extent of learning they have gone through. That way, students were able to link past information with current vocabulary to enable them to master newly learned knowledge.

Unlike the GTM method, U-C-ME allowed for enhanced teacher-student engagement, which was one of the benefits of a communicative approach. She stated that after organizing the structure of the reading article, she explained specific words to the students. That method enabled the students to learn English language in a manner that would not have been possible

within the GTM context. Thereafter, she adopted the DOTS Chart, using them interchangeably. DOTS was a proven vocabulary development strategy.

Connie preferred to use The Extension Wheel method alongside her usual GTM approaches as it involved using two reading texts provided by the teacher. She was particularly inclined to the one with the theme of disability. She applied this method in the reading teaching method because she believed it could activate students' existing vocabulary. In practice, the teacher usually provided something that resembled an index or guide for the day's lesson, and then guided the students to find from the text – having a theme or a topic. Students could learn more vocabulary around this topic and also think about developing cultural awareness from this topic. Specifically, she found the Extension Wheel, particularly the one about disability, very impressive. In the end, it was not just about knowledge; it was more about character development, thinking guidance, and guiding student qualities.

Regarding the Challenges They Encountered

The teachers were open about sharing their concerns with the BDI methods; citing key obstacles to implementing the approaches.

Angela had three challenges. First, she was confused about the English language and layout of the lesson plan in the video. Second, she could not immediately comprehend the technicalities around strategies like folding papers, BDI strategies working instruction, and drawing grid. Lastly, she stated that adopting a more practical approach hindered her students' progress since most of them were poor in craftwork and drawing skills. These challenges are unpacked below and further represented by quotes from Angela.

Like any other teacher implementing a new teaching approach, Angela encountered challenges. She cited lack of proper language and layout choice for her new lesson plans consistent with BDI approaches.

Firstly, when I was incorporating BDI into my lesson plan, I was thinking about how to write it and how to blend my existing teaching strategies with BDI. I was confused about what language to use and what layout or phrasing to use in presenting my lesson plan. Therefore, when creating this lesson plan, I integrated BDI into it based on my own understanding. For example, our lesson plan is an A4 sheet of paper with a section on the right labeled “XX Teaching.” In the past, we used to write down what activities students did in class or between groups in this section. Now, after incorporating BDI, I mainly write about how I operated in the BDI section of my lesson plan, how students demonstrated it, and I include a drawing. In terms of theory, due to time constraints, I didn't read too much literature. I mainly understood how to use these methods through your explanations and videos during the training phase. Therefore, when I created my lesson plan, I mainly relied on practical implementation based on the videos. So, I don't think the theory had a significant impact on me; I believe the practical demonstration in the videos had a greater influence on me. In other words, I followed the teacher's actions in the videos to guide my teaching.

As the quotation from Angela has revealed, aligning lessons plans to BDI approaches was a challenge that will need addressing with time. However, the videos made available to her already offer sufficient guidance on how to tailor her lesson plans to Communicative Approaches. Thus, the newly learned knowledge was a major steppingstone toward the integration of BDI methods in Angela's future classes.

Her second challenge was linked to the technicalities of using the new approaches like was the case with drawing grids, folding papers, and enhanced reading.

The second challenge, for example, was when I provided a mind map, like using the Vocabulary Quilt where students draw a grid and fold it, right? Many students may not know how to operate it. When I explain to students how to use this tool, it may take some time. The explanation in the guidance phase may take up some time, which disrupts the teaching pace because these methods are somewhat fancy. If I introduce these methods in the first lesson, I think it might slow down the class a bit. There might be a gradual process, where I initially introduce the method and then slowly start using it in subsequent lessons; this might work better.

As the quotation from Angela described, BDI strategies include hands-on tools that students use to interact in ways and foster engaged learning along each dimension of their biography. However, due to Chinese students lack of hands-on ability in the context of traditional GTM, the teachers might spend a lot of time instruct students on the individualized strategy tools developed throughout the lesson.

The next challenge related to Angela's encounter with the practicalities of the new approaches. She was confronted with the challenge of drawing. Because she teaches junior high school students, she feels like some students might have poor drawing skills. She also cited the difficulty in peer interactions during group activities, something that is not common in Chinese classrooms.

The third challenge is related to drawing. The group of students I currently teach is mainly junior high school students. Some students may feel that they are not good at drawing, and during certain interactive activities, especially peer interaction, although I

encourage them to interact, in the context of Chinese classrooms, due to students' limited language skills and their age, many students tend to chat during task activities. This can sometimes hinder the group activities I want to conduct.

As the quotation from Angela reveals, she had a challenge of enticing students into learning about the new tools for vocabulary, reading, and outputting information in a more rigorous learning environment that applies the BDI approaches. That means that she had to contend with a slow learning environment as opposed to when applying the GTM approaches that her students are more conversant with. Even so, continuous practice of the new communicative approaches will certainly improve learning outcomes. For example, teaching students to delve deeper into an article for them to uncover answers and identify viewpoints and facts is a new thing that Connie's students have to get used to in order to excel in a BDI guided classroom.

Connie's primary challenge relates to her expectations of students and her understanding of them. She says,

My resonance with students on knowledge points might not be the same. I hope I can ignite their interest in the topic and add some new vocabulary to their existing ones. I want them to carefully interpret the viewpoints contained in the text, even the logical relationships before and after reading. But the challenge is that students tend to be apprehensive about reading, and if they have a lot of vocabulary, they just want to find the answers right away. They are not willing to delve deeper into how an article is written, how it progresses from facts to viewpoints, and finally to profound emotional expressions. I think this is the challenge, and it ultimately becomes my own challenge. I'm not quite sure yet how to lead students step by step to a higher level of reading, not just inputting and outputting

information but also having their own opinions and different perspectives on the information.

As the quotation from Connie stated, in the traditional classrooms the teacher was the center of the processing of class. The teacher was the subject-matter authority, and the teaching method was the strongest example of teacher-centered instruction by directly telling students what the teacher thinks they ought to know; listen and occasionally ask questions. This method of teaching and practicing English has been ingrained in Chinese students as an introverted and passive approach to learning, making them unable to use English as a communicative tool, reluctant to engage in critical or independent thinking, and happy to be passive receivers of knowledge. Because she focused on the grammar rules, sentence structures, and vocabulary, as well as an in-depth analysis of literary texts following traditional Chinese teaching method, Connie feared that they would not know how to transfer classroom learning to the outside world.

She goes ahead to acknowledge that she might not be well conversant with handling certain details in the specific operational process. This leaves room for doubt in her adoption of BDI approaches. Even so, she expresses a lot of optimism and willingness to deploy some of these new teaching methods.

In sum, English teaching in China has focused on the academic study of grammar and sentence structures, as well as an in-depth analysis of literary texts following traditional Chinese scholarly practice. In the classroom, it is not unusual for students to keep silent throughout most of the course. When one question is asked, few students volunteer to answer, even though many may know the answer. Therefore, there is little, if any, classroom interaction among students in Chinese EFL teaching.

Indicates of Change and Understanding of BDI through Analysis of Pre- and Post-Surveys

BDI strategies have proven effective to ensure that all ESL/EFL learners are actively engaged in learning processing (Herrera et al., 2012). The use of pre- and post-survey evaluations provided the researcher an opportunity to see teachers' perceptions of their change in knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior after participation in professional development of BDI strategies. Moreover, this self-reported information not only enables the researcher to measure teachers' change, it also permits improved documentation of impact of the research design.

To better document the effectiveness of BDI strategies, the pre- and post-survey (see Appendix G and Appendix H) were used with two teachers of a professional development program designed for them in Northwest of China involved in junior high school EFL education. Before starting the coaching sessions, teacher were asked to complete a brief pre-survey that included: (1) two open-ended questions of defining the GTM and communicative approaches; (2) four multiple choice questions with GTM and BDI approaches, the teachers were allowed to select single or multiple options; and (3) five Yes-no questions such as: "Do you use students for pair/group work?" At the conclusion of the coaching sessions, teachers were asked to take the post-survey.,that added one open-ended question to the same questionnaires as before. It now included: (1) three open-ended questions with two questions of defining the GTM and communicative approaches and a question of dilemmas using BDI; (2) four multiple choice questions; and (3) five Yes-no questions. Results indicated that the teachers increased their understanding of the pedagogy of BDI strategies as a result of the videos and viewing guides.

Pre-Surveys

Angela said that she relied mostly on GTM (exam-oriented education) approaches in her 8th grade class but was quick to mention that the most active method for English learning was the Communicative Approach (BDI). Although she stated that GTM enhanced the confidence of middle school students, she opined that BDI was the best way through which middle school students can learn English. In addition to that, Angela relied on pair/group work but did not link classroom language learning activities with home or community. When asked whether student-centered classroom activity was important for language teaching, she responded “Yes.” Lastly, she acknowledged that a second language should be taught in collaboration with mother tongue.

Connie said that the Communicative Approach (BDI) was the most active method for English learning and improving English language thinking ability of students. Like Angela, Connie contended that GTM was still the best model to enhance confidence of middle school students; perhaps, an indication that the model was so entrenched in China that it has become mainstream and successful despite its limited flaws. Unlike Angela, Connie pointed out that both GTM and BDI can help students learn English easily. She linked classroom language activities with home or community, relied on students’ group work, acknowledged that student-centered classroom activity was fundamental for language teaching, and recommended inclusion of mother tongue.

These findings are overly useful in justifying the objectives of this study, which showed some of the shortcomings of GTM approaches in teaching Chinese students English in northwestern China. From the teachers’ responses, it was evident that the existing GTM approaches offered limited room for student engagement, peer review, visual learning, reading passages, and vocabulary learning. Instead, students were wired to study solely for examinations

through a rigid top-down and teacher-centered approach. Thus, the pre-survey was essential in pointing out the limitations that the BDI approaches aim to address.

Post-Surveys

Angela's understanding of the Communicative Approach remained pretty much the same, although she did bring out a new concept whereby the teacher guided students to explore questions. This was an indication that she appreciated the active role students should play in learning. During pre-survey, Angela explained that the Communicative Approach (CA) involved training students' communication ability as a subject and utilizes dialogue and interaction. In the post-survey, she said that CA encompassed the ability to conduct constructivism activities in the classroom as the teacher guided students to explore questions. Whereas her understanding of CA improved in the post-survey, there was evidence (in her definitions) that she understood the concept of CA from the beginning. Her definition of GTM was aligned to a teacher-centric model, which, according to studies already highlighted in this research, was an accurate connotation. She maintained that BDI was the most active method of learning English as well as the most capable of boosting students' confidence in middle school. In terms of the method for improving the thinking ability of students, she chose BDI, even though she stated in post-survey that GTM could also enhance English language thinking ability for students to a lesser extent. However, she attributed the ease of learning English in middle school solely to BDI. To her, linking classroom language learning activities with community as well as pairing students in groups was important in aiding knowledge transfer, boosting student confidence, and enhancing language learning. Lastly, she supported a student-centered classroom and the teaching of second language in collaboration with mother tongue. She maintained that in China GTM is primarily for passing the required examinations. When asked about what she thought was the biggest

difference between GTM and Communicative Approach, she responded, “the role of the teacher and student in the classroom is the biggest difference. In GTM, the role of the teacher is fixed and rigid, while in BDI the role of the teacher is flexible, innovative, and promote critical thinking abilities.”

As for Connie, a Communicative Approach was one in which the teachers and students had a collaborative way of exchanging knowledge and experiences. For her, GTM was a top-down approach that focusses on grammar and vocabulary rules for students; a fixated model. She posited that GTM was the best suited for active English learning. However, for the language thinking ability of students, she vouched for both GTM and BDI. Enhancing confidence level and ease of learning English were both attributed to BDI by this participant. Uniquely, Connie did not link classroom language learning with community, but believed in group/pairs, student-centered classroom activity, and teaching a second language in collaboration with mother tongue. Like Angela, Connie also thought that in China GTM was solely for passing exams. When asked about the differences between the two, she said, “In GTM the teacher plays a more dominant or controlling role while BDI is more dynamic and flexible.” To her, BDI emphasized innovation in the teaching process while GTM can be seen as lacking critical thinking, training, and is rigid.

After a review of the pre-survey responses and comparing them to the post-survey responses, it was evident that the teachers exuded more confidence in BDI approaches. For example, Connie believed that these new approaches enhanced student confidence and made them more innovative. Unlike with the GTM that is rigid and fixed, Connie attributed that BDI approaches are dynamic and flexible, allowing students time to interact at peer-level. More importantly, BDI approaches are a boost to students’ critical thinking capabilities, especially

when they are asked to interpret images, recall what was read in passages, or tell a story to their partners.

Implementation of BDI as Evidence in the Teachers' Lesson Plan and Artifacts

Besides the use of interviews as a primary source of data collection for this study, I relied on secondary sources of data as a complementary tool to understanding the status of GTM approaches and integration various BDI approaches into the Chinese education system. In terms of artifacts, I gathered available textbooks and certain lesson plans, with specific learning outcomes. The details for the two participants are discussed below:

In this section, a summary of lesson plans and artifacts is made. Findings from each participant's lesson plans and artifacts are presented. This section ends with a discussion of the lesson plans and artifacts provided during the data collection process.

Angela

For the purpose of the research, the researcher asked Angela to give more attention to BDI learning strategies, which were adapted in order to make them work for her students and her curriculum which was purposefully aligned with the communicative approach. In fact, Angela's instruction was based on the BDI model, and she employed differing methods such as DOTS charts and U-C-ME, which were chosen according to her students' needs. In this practical part, Angela would be dealing with the two selected learning strategies and how they were applied by her EFL students. Each strategy made the students' learning process visible throughout the before, during, and after phases of the class.

This was an English lesson unit 6 about the "Monkey King" (See Appendix L) The learning outcomes were: 1). Students should be able to learn about the Monkey King, 2). Learn new words: object, hide, tail, magic, stick excite, Western and more, and 3). Learn to tell stories.

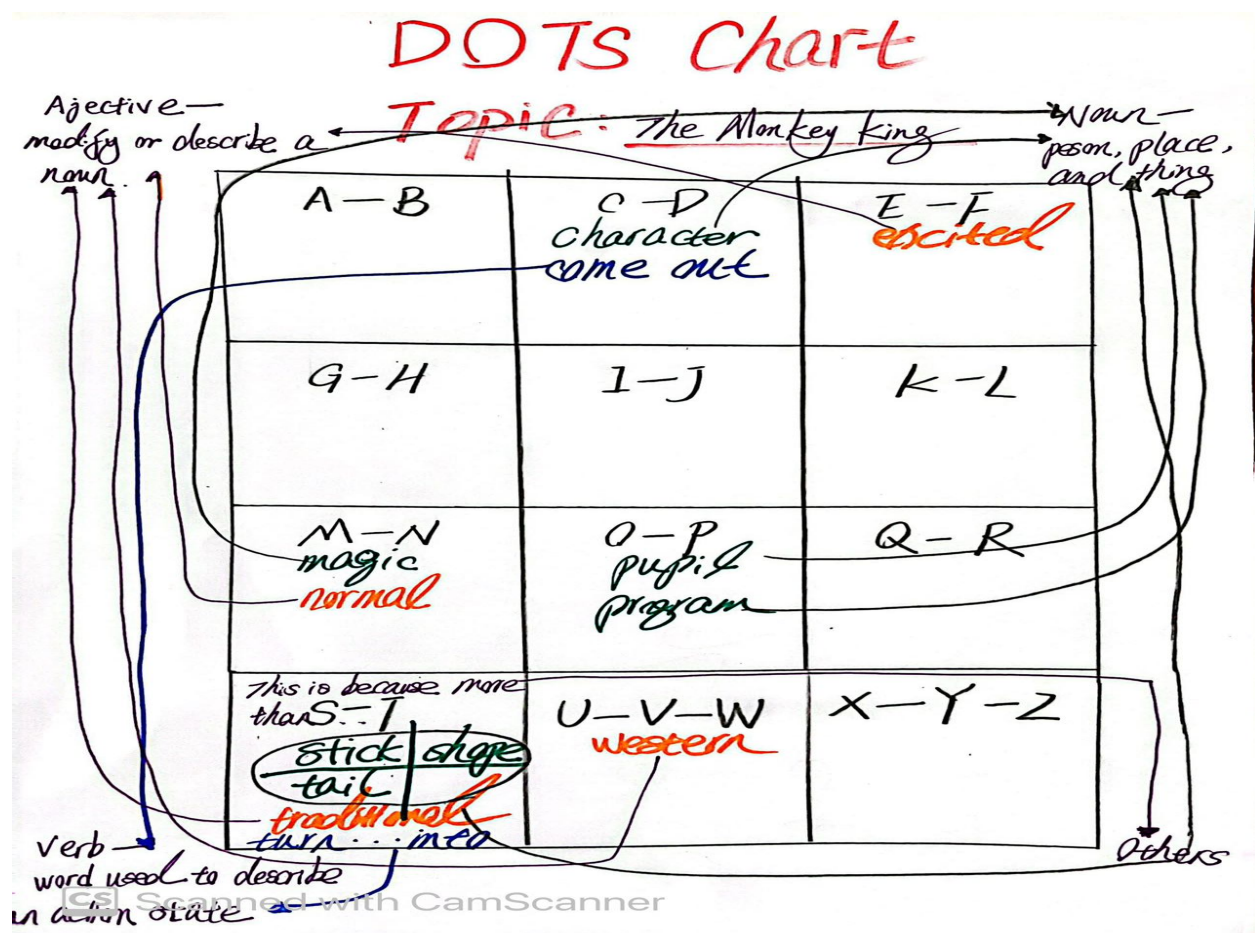
This lesson was particularly fundamental to this research because it bore the element of interaction. It was a communicative approach that demanded student engagement through reading and speaking. Students were taken through a number of sentences and sentence structures.

Activation Phase. Angela asked students draw the DOTS Chart by following briefly the instructions. Next, she explained to students that the letters of DOTS stood for ideas and showed them how the acronym works. Then, Angela placed students in pairs and she introduced the topic “Monkey King”. She asked students write on the top of the Chart “Topic – Monkey King”. Finally, she had students write whatever words with a color pencil came to their minds regarding the topic of Monkey King in the appropriately lettered boxes, as shown in Figure 4.4. Here, some students with the low level of English were allowed to use Chinese to express their ideas. After that, Angela had students discuss with their peers as well as share them with the whole class.

Connection Phase: In the teaching and learning time, it entailed reading practice and learning of new lesson vocabulary words. Students should be able to identify the adjectives, nouns, verbs, phrases, and others. First, Angela directed students to do pre-reading of a passage, while a blank U-C-ME Template was shared on the black board (there is not an image of it due to the researcher did not have the permission into the classroom). She wrote the name of the topic/concept – “Monkey King” (on the center oval) that is focus on the lesson, and asked students to write three or four ideas that used the words showed in DOTS Chart (toward the top of center oval). Then, Angela led the students’ through pre-reading the passage. After that, she asked students to take their DOTS Chart and write down new words. Then, Angela recorded one essential question on each of the spokes radiating from the center oval of the U-C-ME Chart, as shown in Figure 4.6. During instruction, students used the new words and information from the

text to answer the questions. Finally was an intensive read, involving reading the passage again and concentrating on the DOTS Chart as a tool to use throughout the lesson to facilitate exploration of the lesson content. She asked students to add the part of speech of the new vocabulary words to sides of their charts. Having student make visual connections between vocabulary words and the part of speech reinforces their schematic links (see Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7. The Pictures of Angela's DOTS Chart



Affirmation Phase: At this stage of the lesson, DOTS Chart and U-C-ME Chart became organized tools that included lessons, vocabulary words, and learning processes, and students as

thinkers, readers, and writers worked on finding connections. Angela had the students use the information in the ovals to write a narrative paragraph and answer end-of-chapter questions.

Connie

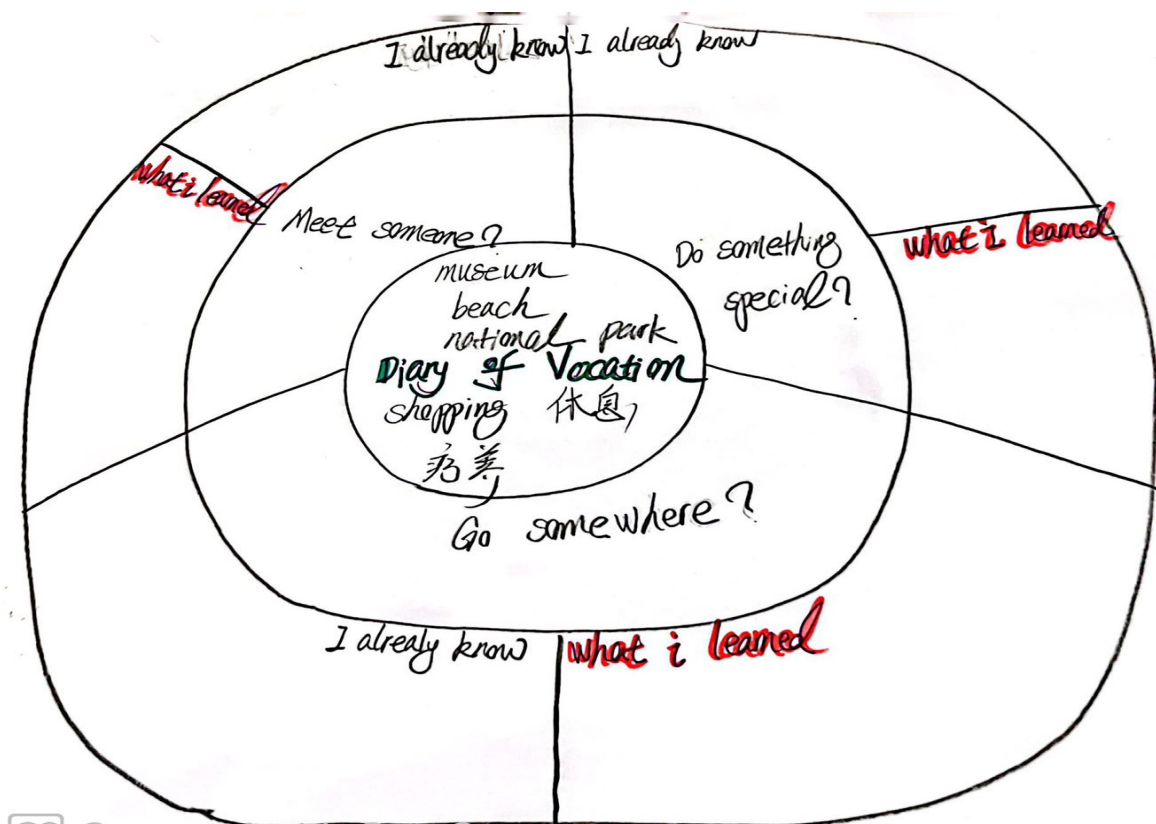
Connie's lesson plan was based on a narration of a story about Malaysia, which the students were expected to learn key words and phrases. They were also expected to read Jane's diary to learn about the vacation, take note of the format and tense, and learn to talk about vacation experiences. She promoted the Extension Wheel strategy with the theme of "Diary Entries about Vacation". Connie used the Extension Wheel which focused on key lesson vocabulary words and concepts of a topic while supporting each with evidence from the reading. Connie used this strategy to conduct an activity to help students to read, then brainstorm key words and the concepts of cause and effect associated with the topic. Connie stated that the strategy helped students extend their learning through visual demonstration, helped them connect to the lesson content from the beginning, and also added more ideas during the progression of the class. Finally, students answered the end-of-chapter questions and wrote their own diary entries about his/her vacation.

Activation Phase. At this stage of the lesson, Connie asked students to create their own Extension Wheel by following the brief instructions. First, she explained to students how to use the strategy to expand upon ideas as they proceeded through the lesson. Next, she shared the learning goals with students, and guided students to write the name of the topic in the center circle of the wheel. She then placed students in pairs and she showed the pictures (see Figure 4.8) related the topic and asked the essential questions as, "Where did you go on vacation?" "What do people usually do on vacation?" "What activities do you find enjoyable?" "Do you like

travel?” and “Why do many people want to Travel?” After that, they shared their ideas with peers.

Connection Phase. During this phase of the lesson, Connie introduced the lesson topic “Diary of Vacation” and she also explained the topic of grammar (e.g., past tense), its structures and application by whiteboard. Then, she asked students take their Extension Wheel and told them that they were ready to travel to Malaysia. After that she showed some pictures of Malaysia. It illustrated more than five interesting things to do there. Connie encouraged them to write down three extension ideas on the first ring (see Figure 4.9). She also said to the students “Where did Jane go on July 15th?” “How was the weather on July 15th?” “What did she do? And how did she feel?” “What did she eat for lunch?” Here she asked students to add two extensions ideas per one extension idea from first ring, and then wrote on outer ring.

Figure 4.8. The Picture of Connie’s Extension Wheel



Affirmation Phase. At this point in the lesson, students used the completed extension wheels as a scaffold to complete the short-answer prompt, and Connie asked students write a travel diary with past tense verbs where they use the ideas from the extension wheels and the vocabulary words.

Findings of Artifacts

The artifacts I managed to collect were two Units excerpts from a textbook that requires students to read a passage and answer questions. Angela's Unit involved completing a chart about the Monkey King, like the way it is done with DOTS Chart; Connie' Unit involved an extension ideas chart about Diary of Vacation in the connection phase of the class, like the Extension Wheel to expand upon information along with the lesson progress. Interestingly, the

textbook also required students to complete sentences/paragraph(s) using target vocabulary words and extensions ideas/concepts from the passage (See Appendix I).

How the Teachers Integrated and Combined BDI in the context of GTM

Based on my analysis of the lesson plan and other artifacts, it was evident that the teachers integrated and combined BDI in the context of GTM and inserted at least one of the BDI methods into their artifacts after professional development.

As was detailed in Chapter 2, foreign language teaching has been on the rise since the 20th century, and this has been propagated by various theoretical foundations for instruction. According to Herrera (2010), instructional design commonly adopted in classrooms encompasses three aspects as depicted by the prims model (See Figure 1.1). These are: Social and cultural processes of academic development L1+L2, cognitive development L1+L2, and language development L1+L2.

Both Angela and Connie have shown through their lessons plans and textbooks that they are integrating BDI, but in the context of GTM; meaning they are still teaching grammar rules but are incorporating communicative approaches. For example, when Angela was teaching the Monkey King one of her lesson outcomes was that students learn vocabulary words related to the topic by the alphabetical system to document these in the specific boxes of the DOTS chart. The vocabulary words on the chart would be used as means to connect to new ideas as they get into the context while encouraging the students to tell stories to their partners in both Chinese and English. Throughout the lesson, vocabulary words were seen as integral to learning, and having the DOTS chart in their hand help students to build associations between vocabulary and comprehension. On the other hand, Connie used the visual of the Extension Wheel to help students expand upon their learning following an engaging sharing session with partners in class.

This was a good activity to help students connect to the content from the very beginning, and also guided them in adding extension ideas/concepts along with the class progress. Since GTM is anchored in teaching a language based on grammar, adding the BDI aspect makes learning a foreign language much easier and seamless.

Whereas both teachers are GTM users, their artifacts show that they are keen on integrating BDI methods in their teaching. Specifically, Angela used at least three BDI methods of DOTS Chart and U-C-ME , while Connie was more inclined toward using the Extension Wheel. A close analysis of their artifacts reveals that both teachers benefited from the professional development sessions that involved viewing six videos, one each for every BDI approach.

In Angela's connection phase, she adopted the use of U-C-ME to align with the questions to motivate students to learn about the topics in "Monkey King" and help them focus on the context and finding the main idea in each paragraph. Since the lesson involved learning new vocabulary from the content, Angela used DOTS Chart to design vocabulary learning. Having students use DOTS chart as a tool to document vocabulary words reinforced the words and ideas related to the context of the day and the learning outcomes. She also drew the line that connects the words and parts-of-speech (adjective, verb, noun and phrase, and others) around edges of the charts, which provided a foundation to promote words use and writing practices. In the affirmation phases of lesson, she continued to utilize U-C-ME by motivating students to expand upon text ideas/concepts. For example, her post-reading assignment involved completing sentences with phrases from the passage; that way, students were better placed to learn the target language than mechanically recite the sentences and the phrases that contain the new words. Angela organized the pairs/group discussions to encourage students to share their individual

thoughts via speaking English, which also enhanced the students' capacity to grasp the target language.

Connie also adopted the use of BDI methods in her teaching after viewing the six videos. While teaching about the vacation to Malaysia story, Connie's entire lesson was based on the pedagogy of BDI strategies as a way of encouraging knowledge transfer, vocabulary learning, extending upon learned ideas, reviewing what has been taught, and incorporating students' ideas. She used Extension Wheel as a tool to activate ideas on what students already know from their background knowledge or prior experiences and connected with the text to extend their thoughts and ideas. For example, under Activation Phase, she asked students to discuss the question "What do people usually do on vacation?" Students respond by listing: going to the beach, climbing mountains, visiting museums, and going to summer camp. In the activation phase, she said to the students "Where did Jane go on July 15th?" "How was the weather on July 15th?" "What did she do? And how did she feel?" "What did she eat for lunch?" Here students added extensions ideas based on the text.

These examples from Angela and Connie's use of BDI methods conform to the ideas postulated by the prim model, namely: academic development, language development, and cognitive development. All three components are evident in the two teacher's use of BDI approaches as a panacea to EFL students' learning of a target language, which is English.

Discussion of the Research Questions

A discussion of the research questions is presented in this section.

Research Question One

How do selected EFL teachers in Northwest of China make meaning of BDI in the context of GTM?

The interview data showed that the two teachers were not knowledgeable of BDI before the teacher professional development. The level of knowledge on BDI and its applications was increased through professional development. The coaching sessions were effective, as the teachers became enthusiastic and eager to learn and teach using the method. In other words, their statements showed how willing they were to try and apply the new ways and techniques they learned. They even shared what they were planning to apply in terms of techniques and approaches. The findings under this question gave us an idea of whether the professional development was successful in terms of teaching the participants about BDI.

However, learning through viewing guides did not mean that it could be applied thoroughly in the real context. Things that were visually perfect in the video may not be put into practice the same as an application in real life settings. Both teachers claimed that they learned how to apply BDI approaches in EFL education and benefitted a lot from the coaching sessions, and even more importantly, they stated they applied and changed their teaching practices; their statements were verified and supported with the results of other data, such as pre- and post-survey on GTM and BDI Strategy Use, viewing guides, and lesson plans. The findings of this study supported the literature. For instance, Herrera et al., (2008) claimed that instructions on BDI-improved performance helped teachers change and improve in their profession and the intervention of BDI training to the participants made them change and apply the culturally responsive pedagogy successfully. Another study (Noom-ura, 2013) revealed that professional development could be an effective means in increasing the quality level of teachers and enhancing their teaching skills. Brouwer et al., (1999) also indicated that structured viewing guides were helpful for teachers to promote learning and teaching.

Research Question Two

How do EFL teacher navigate the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas of implementing BDI in a GTM context?

The data collected through interviews, pre- and post- surveys, viewing guides, and lesson plans showed that both participants were able to apply different BDI methods and techniques in their classroom settings successfully. However, dilemmas are an inherent part of the teaching professions (Ball, 1993) and Windschitl (2002) categorized dilemmas into conceptual, pedagogical, cultural, and political dimensions. These four dimensions of dilemmas have been used to describe the challenges EFL teachers implementing communicative approach in the context of GTM dominant classroom in China.

Windschitl (2002) defined conceptual dilemmas as teachers' difficulties with understanding the theoretical foundations of constructivism and negotiating their current beliefs and teaching philosophies. Angela and Connie defined conceptual dilemmas as tensions because they don't have the foundation knowledge of the pedagogy and theories of BDI approaches, what is important in BDI teaching practices and why it is important.

Windschitl (2002) characterized pedagogical dilemmas as teachers' difficulties with enacting facilitation practices that promote student learning in the way. Angela and Connie stated that pedagogical dilemmas were challenges that arise when teachers consider how to integrate BDI approaches in the context of GTM to teach.

According to the Windschitl's (2002) literature, cultural dilemmas arise due to the role shifts from traditional teaching that are required for teachers and students to facilitate a constructivist sense of learning. As Angela stated, she tried to implement a constructivist classroom environment, but students expect a traditional classroom environment based on

experiences in other classrooms. Connie framed cultural dilemmas as tensions connected to the roles of any actors in the classroom, i.e., teachers and students. In a pragmatic way, this dilemma can be expressed as challenges that arise around who is responsible for what in teaching and learning.

Windschitl (2002) stated political dilemmas as challenges arise when “various stakeholders” “key others” (p. 133), such as parents, administrators, or local and state politicians, impose policies and norms on teachers’ constructivist teaching. Both Angela and Connie referred they experienced a political dilemma when test-taking competencies tested in standardized tests (senior high school entrance examination and college entrance examination) do not align with what the teacher thinks is most important for students to successfully construct knowledge and improve communicative skills in EFL education. Connie also applied the definition for conflicts between administrators’ and teachers’ beliefs about assessment, that she highlighted the challenges that arise when teachers try to establish equity-oriented teaching practices within and around constraints of systems of accountability and institutional structures. As Windschitl illustrated, “Parents, as educational stakeholders, often see constructivist approaches as dangerously experimental and are skeptical about the use of such pedagogy with their children” (p.155), Angela said she feels pressure that she must adjust her instruction to expectations from parents:

Last year, in my school, one teacher developed a Shakespearian Plays unit based on the pedagogy of communicative. He grouped students into small groups and introduced a process by which their eighth-grade students could develop their own curriculum. The students made lists of questions about themselves and Shakespearian Plays, and decided on themes for exploration. Although the teachers demonstrated impressive teaching

outcomes regarding how much the students learned about themselves and others, most parents strongly disapproved of the project and presented a petition to local board of education demanding that school return to traditional classroom.

As the quotation from Angela stated, parents were suspicious of new teaching methods so different from the ones they remembered where teachers in traditional classrooms placed desks in rows and relied more heavily on textbooks. Schools conceded to parents' demands of test-taking abilities and high rates of enrollment by creating a traditional curriculum and instruction. In general, political dilemmas arise because stakeholders and policies challenge teacher beliefs or classroom cultures and practices.

The viewing guides that I took during the coaching sessions were very helpful in learning what teachers understood about BDI approaches. I noted in the researcher's fields notes any time I recalled the project provided additional support to what I found as a result of the analyses of the interviews and viewing guides and lesson plans.

Summary

The process of data analysis was presented in this chapter. The section described the participants and the settings of the study first. Brief information about the design and method was given next. Then came a description and analysis of the intervention. After that, the trustworthiness and validity issues were explained, along with the analysis and presentation of demographic survey, participant periodic interviews, pre- and post-survey, viewing guides, and lesson plans. A summary of the findings was shared with the readers. Finally, the findings were discussed in this chapter with regard to the research questions.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion

There are three main sections in this chapter: Discussion, Implication, and Conclusion. In the discussion part, the researcher discusses the findings of the study in alignment with the BDI theoretical framework as well as the previous studies in literature. What has been learned about how BDI approaches could make sense as an additional approach integrate to the current EFL teaching in Northwest of China is given in the implications section. Finally, the conclusion section provides the summary of the current chapter and the whole study, the limitations and questions for further studies.

Discussion

The theoretical lens for this study was the constructivism framework. After giving a demographic survey, interviews, coaching sessions, pre- and post-survey, and lesson plans and artifacts, I collected data in order to observe the EFL teachers' understanding of BDI and dilemmas of implementation of BDI, I tried to explore the following research questions:

1. How do EFL teachers in Northwest of China make meaning of BDI in the context of GTM?
2. How do EFL teacher navigate the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas of implementing BDI in a GTM context?

The Ministry of Education (MoE) in China made the new curriculum reform in 2001 by changing the knowledge transmission to concerned with learning and positive attitudes; changing the subject-centered curriculum to the balanced, integrated and selective curriculum; changing from the passive and rote learning to the active and problem-solving learning; changing from summative assessment (e.g. examinations) to formative; changing from centralized curriculum to make the curriculum relevance to local situations. In other words, the MoE supported the use of

Communicative Approaches like Biography Driven Instruction. However, the new education system has not been applied as successfully as planned on paper (Liu, 2009; Liu & Fang, 2006; Ji, 2011; Qi, 2015; Wang & Zhou, 2017). The findings of the current study revealed that the change was only on the official documents, not in practice.

The findings of this study also revealed several important issues regarding teacher professional development, teacher change, BDI applications, and conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas as presented below. In addition, it demonstrates how the Chinese MoE's English Language Standards guidelines can be followed while still preparing students for the important exams. In other words, how do EFL teachers in China fuse two seemingly different pedagogies in the classroom.

First and foremost, the teachers were not trained well, timely, properly, nor specifically on the pedagogy and applications of Communicative approaches. Both of the teachers, as the primary implementers in this study, stated that they were not aware of the theoretical foundations of BDI and that they had not experimented with Communicative strategies in the classroom; but they would be willing to try BDI strategies in the National Junior High School English Teaching Competition made by the MoE. As expressed in a couple studies (Alsubaie, 2016; Guskey, 2002; Thijs & van den Akker, 2009), any changes in the curriculum and methods cannot be applied successfully if the teachers do not believe and have not been involved in curriculum implementation.

Supporting the literature, one of the outcomes of this study was, with the teachers' knowledge, experiences and competencies, their identities were key to the implementation of teaching methods (Geringer, 2003; Keiler, 2018; Kirkgoz, 2009; Knauder & Koschmieder, 2019). They were central to accomplishing the educational goals and improving the quality of

education in China. In spite of the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas, the teachers in this study succeeded in integrating BDI approaches in current lesson plans in a GTM-dominant curriculum. Contrary to some literature where the findings indicated the challenges the teachers faced are connected with centralized examination-driven education system that prevent teachers from getting communicative approaches (Cheng & Wang 2004; Jin, 2008; Rao, 2013), the teachers in this study integrated BDI methods in their current teaching goals regardless of the obstacles they had. In that regard, the teachers should be given much importance in professional development. For example, the MoE should organize professional development in order to introduce the new methods to the teachers as the primary stakeholders, helping them believe in the effectiveness and the importance of communicative approaches (BDI), and convincing them that the change is vital.

This study revealed that there were some problems, such as limited teacher proficiency, insufficient resources, overcrowded classrooms, and cultural resistance that might affect the BDI applications in the public schools in the Northwest of China. Studies in the literature (Li & Baldauf, 2011; Luo & Xing, 2015; Wright & Zhang, 2016) showed that the public schools had such problems that might be obstacles in the implementation of communicative approaches.

All of the data sources in this dissertation showed that the teacher professional development given to two teachers in the Northwest of China was effective. The EFL teachers changed in their views and beliefs of the English language teaching, and both applied one or two BDI techniques in their classes. The findings of the current study on professional development supported the literature (Alfaki, 2014).

The EFL teachers indicated they were shocked that BDI approaches viewed students as assets in the classroom, and recognized their own weaknesses in being an English language

learner and teacher. This finding was parallel with Richards and Farrell's (2005) argument that teacher development had a long-term goal to help teachers grow their understanding of teaching and their selves as a teacher. One of the findings of this study was that the educational assessment system was still traditional, which, in turn, affected the BDI approaches of the EFL teachers. This was also a reason in failure of promoting communicative approach by "walking new path in old shoes" of MoE (Liu, 2009; Liu & Fang, 2006; Ji, 2011; Qi, 2015; Wang & Zhou, 2017). The MoE released the learning and teaching in the new English curriculum standards, which were process-based and included a combination of formative and summative assessment, but the assessment was still outcome-based. Teachers were still required to do traditional exams at least two times a semester. There were also nationwide standardized tests for the students to enter secondary and higher education. Due to this reality, EFL teachers had a dilemma on how to integrate BDI approaches in the context of GTM and how to evaluate what had been learned by the students.

The study suggested overall in terms of teachers' professional development and applications of BDI. In that regard, one of the outcomes of this study was that a well-prepared professional development (based on constructivist criteria) with videos and viewing guides might help the teacher study as well as internalize the new teaching methods. This finding supported the arguments in the literature (Santagata, 2014; Santagata & Guarino, 2011). Once the teacher was trained and motivated, that teacher could implement anything regardless of several obstacles and dilemmas. The teachers indicated that they frequently had coaching sessions before, but none of them left positive impacts on them. The main reasons for these coaching sessions being effective, as expressed, were the relaxed learning environment, one-on-one conversation, advocacy for critical thinking, and follow up with/by the researcher. The researcher wanted to

reach teachers easily when she needed or got stuck in insufficient data. Gilroy et al., (2003) indicated that such professional development and platforms where the researcher could research teachers' professional lives, and implementations of the new teaching methods were necessary. Such coaching sessions might be good for them to see how to overcome probable issues during the application of new methods.

One of the things gained in this study was the choice in attending the professional development. As expressed by both of the teachers in this study, the feeling of being free to elect into participation in the professional development was an important factor for their participation. Instead of forcing them, they should be convinced of the benefits of such coaching sessions. Otherwise, after watching six videos, another two teachers (Dianna and Angela) chose to drop out, due to the lack of the basic knowledge of pedagogy of BDI and did not have the confidence for their English language in the context of whole English. The professional development might not have a positive influence on the participants.

The teachers in this study indicated that before adding the BDI methods in their lesson plans, they were teaching by using traditional ways, thus their teaching activities were boring. After applying BDI methods, the teachers noticed that every phase (activation, connection, and affirmation) in the teaching process was closely linked to another, and that students participated in the teaching process more actively. The teachers started using the BDI approaches they learned during the professional development. When the teachers saw positive improvement and innovation, they were more motivated and excited, and were willing to implement those new teaching activities in their classroom.

Another finding of this study was that BDI approaches and its applications were more effective than traditional methods in teaching English. The teachers stated that some of the BDI

activities they used helped students get interested and enthusiastic in the classes and motivated them to use their background knowledge and prior experiences involved in class content. This finding supports the studies (Herrera, 2010; Herrera et al., 2015) in the literature that showed BDI approaches embrace students' diversity by incorporating students' sociocultural, cognitive and academic dimensions, making the students get very interested and enthusiastic. Further, these students were more successful in communicative competencies of English compared to the students who were taught in traditional ways.

Although the Prism Model has been overly utilized in the past, the emergence of communicative approach integration into GTM resulted in a paradigm shift in foreign language teaching. The latter enhances EFL students' confidence and capacity to master, speak, and write the foreign language. According to Benson and Voller (1997), the paradigm shifts from traditional methodologies to communicative methodologies concentrated on communicative proficiency. CA is such an approach for English language teaching that develops communicative proficiency among students in real life context according to their needs and interests. Students that are engaged in doing communicative competence illustrate the integration of grammatical and linguistic competence that is more effect than only focusing on linguistic competence while reading and writing skills are neglected. Grammar and translation are benefited in targeting language, and it increases intellectual ability when used to generate sentences in classrooms (Widdowson, 1978), reflecting a natural learning process based on prior experiences (Seidlhofer, 1999).

The teachers in this project tried to be or acted like “a facilitator of exploration and a provider of experiences” (Prater, 2001, p. 45) in their classrooms. When the teachers used BDI strategies, the students were engaged in the activities and had an active and participatory role in

their own learning process. Using BDI strategies also enhanced students' second language acquisition, innovation, and critical thinking abilities (Herrera, 2012). These findings support the studies in the literature. For instance, Murry et al., (2021, as cited in Cammarota, 2011; Denson & Chang, 2009; Herrera et al., 2017; Murry et al., 2017; Pascarella et al., 2014) found that teaching via BDI strategies could conceptualize and maximize differences among students as a better way to support communication, collaboration, cooperation, understanding, comprehension, learning, creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking.

Gay's (2002) study showed that the teachers who had prepared culturally responsive teaching situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference of students found it more easy and thorough for personally meaningful, higher interest appeal and learning. Even some other studies (Montaño-González, 2017; Sotelo, 2021) found that BDI strategies were most effective and adaptable for fostering the use of learning strategies in the classroom.

Even though the teachers were successful in many ways in applying what they learned in the professional development seminar in terms of BDI approaches applications, the implementations of them were not flawless. There were many challenges and dilemmas that sometimes prevented them from applying the BDI approaches such as examination-oriented education, dense content of the curriculum, overcrowded classrooms, the lack of support in imagining and visualizing how to work, and the shortage of theory. These findings comply with the challenges argued in the studies (Aykaç & Ulubey, 2012; Buyukduman, 2005; Ersen-Yanik, 2008; Porath, 2016; Sad, 2010; Seckin, 2011) that affected the constructivist communicative language education implementation. Even the teachers themselves had a gradual process of change in their applications. Most of the teachers' first attempts, applications, and approaches were more traditional compared to their succeeding ones. This finding supports the argument of

the literature by some scholars (Duffy & Roehler, 1986; Nolan & Meister, 2000), which showed that expecting and getting teachers to change is not easy, and it is a slow process. The teacher is the key person in EFL education. This finding is consistent with the argument of Geringer (2003) that the teachers are the most important actors compared to the other variables (i.e., motivation and classroom sizes). In that regard, if a new approach is applied, or a change is planned, again the teacher is the most critical factor of the change. In other words, if a new approach is to be applied and implemented, the teachers are the primary implementers of that new system. Even during the curricular design planning, the views of the teachers as the primary enforcers should be taken into consideration. The findings supported the study (Hargreaves et al., 2001) in the literature that without teachers, a change cannot be accomplished. After the education approaches are ready for application, the teachers should be the very first group of stakeholders to train and convince regarding the new approach. In that regard, professional development can be a valuable tool to introduce and explain the new notions, convince the teachers, and motivate them to apply the new methods in practice.

Conclusion

China made English teaching reforms in 2001, accepting and applying a new approach, namely, the communicative. In this context, the MoE updated new curriculum standards based on communicative principles every four years. Both teachers working in the public junior high schools used the same curriculum that was designed and controlled by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. The new curriculum standards (2022 Edition) looked perfect on the paper. However, for some reason, not many changes in practice have been observed in terms of language ability, cultural awareness, thinking capacity, and learning ability. First of all, the teachers, as the key implementers of this new approach, were not trained on constructivism

as a new theory in EFL education or prepared well for the change. Second, although a switch into communicative education was done by The MoE, the assessment system as an important aspect of the whole education system was changed accordingly, but teachers stayed same. Third, the physical conditions of the schools and classrooms were not designed according to the constructivist principles.

This study examined the drawbacks of the traditional GTM teaching and offered BDI as a new method in teaching English as a foreign language in Northwest of China. Professional development was given to two EFL teachers working in two public junior high schools in Shaanxi Province and Gansu Province, and the impacts of the coaching sessions on the views of teachers' change of communicative approach (BDI) were observed.

Different types of data sources, such as interviews, pre- and post-surveys, viewing guides, and lesson plans and artifacts were used and analyzed in order to obtain answers to the research questions of this dissertation. The findings showed that the professional development that was given as a training for 2 days made the teachers change in their approach, views, and classroom applications. The findings from each data set were in compliance with each other. This can be considered one of the strengths of the study in terms of trustworthiness, as it looked at the issue from different data perspectives.

The teachers were successful in applying the new approach in practice despite the fact that they faced conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas and obstacles in their applications in their schools. The main problems they experienced were insufficiency of BDI theories, time constraint due to the dense content of the curriculum, the overcrowded classrooms with 40 or more students, the challenges of cross -cultural differences, administrators' policy, parents' expectations, and the evaluation system. However, since the teachers had internalized

the pedagogy of BDI really well, these dilemmas did not prevent them from applying the BDI methods and techniques. They were dedicated teachers, and spent much more time, energy, and effort for their teaching activities in BDI approaches. In the end, both teachers adopted flexible and creative strategies to achieve a balance between the GTM and BDI approaches, it was worth it as they saw the students happier, more eager to learn, and enjoying learning English in the future.

The study revealed that the teacher was the most important key person in implementing the new educational system and policy change. In that regard, the teachers should be trained, motivated, and convinced in the importance of applying the BDI as a new method in teaching English through well-planned and well-organized teacher development seminars. They should also be provided with on-going support with the help of professional communities and study groups.

Implications and Recommendations

Some implications and recommendations can be presented as follows:

- Need for Chinese language demonstrations videos of the techniques. The researcher originally connected four teachers who volunteered for this program; however, due to there being no Chinese language subtitle shown in the video, two of teachers pulled out at the coaching sessions. While planning and organizing professional development, the quality of the way the Chinese language demonstrations video is given should be taken into coaching sessions.
- Perhaps using BDI strategies in the after-school sessions would be more freeing for teachers. Both teachers complained about the overcrowded classes, where they had difficulty in applying BDI methods and activities. It is important to have a

reasonable number of students in the classroom for more effective and efficient results in students' learning. After-school programs satisfy the need for fewer students and a flexible curriculum design.

- In the context of GTM and a culture of high-stakes testing, BDI strategies may not be fully adopted, but can be blended. In the Northwest of China, GTM is still applied even though it is a mechanical method when compared with communicative approaches, but the teacher has to know the blend of GTM and CA for their teaching and learning process as the condition, context, social culture, and MoE policies. From the previous research about the comparison between BDI and GTM method, it can be stated that BDI is more communicative and cooperative than GTM enhancing students' abilities to use language since GTM is monotonous and includes a one-way transmission. The GTM cannot be completely avoided in the context of high-stakes testing, and BDI methods have many techniques in the teaching learning process that make students happy, comfortable, and interested in the lesson.
- According to the education theory (English Curriculum Standards, 2022) of “learning through experiencing, applying through practicing, and creating through skills transfer” (p. 11), teachers are encouraged to focus on real-life situations and apply communicative approaches to activate students' existing knowledge so that they can participate in a series of interrelated and progressive language learning activities and practice, from learning and understanding the thematic connotation, applying and practicing what they have learned, to transferring what they have learned in the real word.

Limitations

No study is exempt from weaknesses. Even though the researcher was careful and planned the study to reduce the limitations that might exist during the research, there were some limitations that she could not control. Some of them are as follows:

- This study was limited to two EFL teachers working in two public junior high schools in the Shaanxi Province and Gansu Province. This qualitative study was based on their subjective evaluations, understandings and perceptions of the issue. Therefore, it does not represent the other cities in the Northwest of China.
- This study was limited to female teachers, only. It did not reflect the male views and actions. It was not intended to select the participants as females; however, the participant selection process developed that way.
- This study was limited to two EFL teachers who had overseas education experience. It was not intended to select the participants who had international experiences, however, the other two EFL teacher with domestic higher education background chose to quit because of one had ill health and another one had no confidence in watching English videos without Chinese subtitles.
- This study approached the issue from two public junior high school EFL teachers' points of view. It would have been even better if some other data had been collected from the students, administrators, and parents to look at the issue from multi-angle perspectives.
- The instrument in this study was the researcher herself. Therefore, she might have had biases and prejudices of which even she might not be aware while observing and exploring.

- Since the researcher conducted professional development via video watching or online learning, the teachers viewing, at times, was insufficient to understand the instruction and resource intensiveness during coaching sessions as limitations of online learning. Teachers also complained about lack of coaching feedback regarding understanding of BDI. Research showed that regular two-way feedback helps enhance self-efficacy and motivation (Wang & Wu, 2008). The interaction between participants and researcher along with curriculum and instruction support are essential ingredients for effective professional development.

Questions for Future Studies

This study explored certain questions. However, there are also other questions yet to be explored:

1. How could the EFL teachers be trained in balancing BDI and GTM in a constructivist way?
2. Would the professional development of BDI approaches be more effective if the training of teaching activities was face-to-face?
3. How would the study differ if conducted in the other cities or regions in China?
4. Which is more important in terms of effective and efficient teaching: A BDI method in a constructivism education system, or GTM methods in examination - oriented education system?
5. How would the results of the same study end up if the participants hold domestic higher education with Education major or English language teaching major? Put differently, would international education backgrounds make a difference in terms of teacher change and insight?

6. Would the results differ if other stakeholders, such as administrators and students in the schools, were included in the research?

Summary

This chapter provided discussion, implications, and the conclusion of the dissertation. The limitations and some future questions for further studies were also given. The target participants of this study were two EFL teachers working in two public junior high schools in Shaanxi province and Gansu province in the Northwest of China. There were two research questions in this study. The first question asked about the understanding of the EFL teachers in BDI methods in the context of GTM; and the second research question explored the conceptual, pedagogical, structural, and political dilemmas of implementing BDI. In order to find answers to these questions, the researcher used multiple data sources such as interviews, pre- and post-survey, viewing guides, and lesson plans and artifacts. Using multiple sources of data in order to answer the same questions was one of the strengths of this study.

The researcher conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews and pre-surveys with each teacher to get an overview about their knowledge of the pedagogy of BDI and its applications before the researcher did professional development. Both of the teachers attended the professional development for 2 days, which was another strength of the study. It was found that most of the teachers did not know anything about BDI before the professional developmental. Their teaching style was based mostly on a traditional approach.

During the coaching sessions, the researcher applied viewing guides to support the teachers' better understand of BDI approaches from six videos. After the coaching sessions, the researcher conducted interviews, post-surveys and collected artifacts to get the teachers' thoughts and applications of BDI. The statements showed that the teachers benefited from the seminar a

lot, learned BDI in both theory and practice, and felt that they changed in terms of their instruction views and applications. The researcher conducted three more interviews with each teacher during the whole project.

The researcher interviewed the teachers three times via WeChat to know about their academic backgrounds and thoughts to find more evidence for making sense of BDI through the professional development. The researcher organized themes after the interviews to see if BDI methods were integrated with GTM. It was concluded that the teaching styles and in-class applications of the teachers supported the idea that the teachers changed. The participants were mostly successful in putting what they had learned about BDI methods in the coaching sessions into practice. For further and stronger evidence to find out if BDI methods were inserted in the current lesson plans, the researcher collected two artifacts from each teacher. The results from the analysis of the artifacts also supported the findings of interviews, and pre- and post-survey.

The reality of the new teaching methods is that implementation comes with the more dilemmas and obstacles for teachers. However, those obstacles could not prevent the teachers from achieving their goals. Indeed, the teachers handling the problems successfully was also an indication that they internalized, applied, and believed in the importance applying BDI in teaching English as a foreign language.

In conclusion, the findings of this study revealed that the BDI approaches had a positive effect on two selected EFL teachers working in two public junior high schools in the Shaanxi province and Gansu province in the Northwest of China in changing their teaching views, approach, and applications. The impact was so substantial that the six videos and viewing guides that were formed during the professional developments have been asked to copy for the teachers’

colleagues since the end of this project. This study showed how these dedicated EFL teachers could reach their communicative (BDI) teaching goals in spite of many insufficiencies.

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Appendix A - Direct Participant Email Recruitment

Direct Participant Email Recruitment

Integrating and Combining Grammar-Translation Teaching Methods with Biography-Driven Instruction: A Case Study

Dear Participants (EFL teachers),

My name is Chen Han and I will be the principal investigator of the project named “Integration of Biography-driven Instruction Approach with Grammar Translation Method.” My advisors and the co-investigators of this project are Dr. Suzanne Porath.

As known, English as a foreign language (EFL) is still taught in traditional grammar translation method (GTM) in China. Because of the drawbacks of traditional approaches, EFL education needs new applications and methods to be more effective. Biography-driven instruction (BDI) is rooted in communicative/cognitive approach, that is offered as one of the modern approaches used in EFL teaching in this study. The main purpose of the study is to explore how four selected English teachers, mainly using GTM for teaching public middle schools in northwest China, understand BDI as a new notion in education and how they apply it into practice. In short, this study explores the teacher change in English teaching methods and approaches.

In that regard, I will do this study in public middle schools in the province of Shaanxi and Gansu. At the beginning of the study in June 2023, there will be demographic information survey and questionnaire for the EFL teachers. During the data collection process of the study, I will do three sets of interviews. The first set will be before the first coaching session in the mid-June 2023, the second one will be right after the second coaching session in the middle of July 2023; the last interview with each participant will be conducted end of the August 2023. In addition, there will be two professional development coaching sessions. During the coaching sessions, I will provide the video viewing to prompt participants reflection on the views of BDI coaching.

In this regard, I would kindly like to inform you that the first interview will be conducted in the mid-June 2023, right before the two professional development coaching sessions start.

During the whole process of the study, all information provided by you will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. You, as the research participants will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used. Therefore, instead of your real names, I will use pseudo names in the study. Identifying information will not be included in the data that you provide.

Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your health, welfare, or willingness to continue your study participation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at ch0502@ksu.edu, or WeChat heidi52, should you have any questions or concerns. You can also contact my advisors and co-investigators Dr Suzanne Porath at sporath@ksu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or complaints about the research, you can call the Kansas State University Institutional Review Board at +1-785-532-3224.

Sincerely yours,
Chen Han

Appendix B - Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter



TO: Suzanne Porath
Curriculum and Instruction
Manhattan, KS 66506

Proposal Number: IRB-11599

FROM: Lisa Rubin, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 03/13/2023

RE: Proposal Entitled, "Integrating and Combining Grammar–Translation Teaching Methods with Biography-Driven Instruction: A Case Study."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects / Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that it is EXEMPT from further IRB review. This exemption applies only to the proposal - as written – and currently on file with the IRB. Any change potentially affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation and may disqualify the proposal from exemption.

Based upon information provided to the IRB, this activity is exempt under the criteria set forth in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, **45 CFR §104(d), category:Exempt Category 1.**

Certain research is exempt from the requirements of HHS/OHRP regulations. A determination that research is exempt does not imply that investigators have no ethical responsibilities to subjects in such research; it means only that the regulatory requirements related to IRB review, informed consent, and assurance of compliance do not apply to the research.

Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, the University Research Compliance Office, and if the subjects are KSU students, to the Director of the Student Health Center.

Electronically signed by Lisa Rubin on 03/13/2023 2:32 PM ET

Appendix C - Participant Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Integrating and Combining Grammar-Translation Teaching Methods with Biography-Driven Instruction: A Case Study

Introduction

The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research study. If you decide to participate in this study, this form will also be used to record your consent.

The purpose of this study is to teach BDI to EFL teachers from Northwest China, who had experiences of the instruction of GTM and understand how they are making sense of new pedagogy. This study was meant to create a precedent study that would be followed by scholars, teaching professionals and English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers to explore, integrate, and localize biography-driven instruction (BDI) approach in EFL teaching process. In turn, EFL teachers may see in the assistance from the BDI method a new avenue for meeting their aspirations to produce higher student linguistic competence and communicative competence achievement.

What will I be asked to do?

During the study, the teachers will be asked to participate in 3 semi-structured interviews that will be last between 35-45 minutes. These interviews will be scheduled at the participants convenience. The participants will also be asked to participant in professional development. They will be provided materials learned about BDI. They will participant 2 or 3 coaching sessions with the researcher, which will last 30 minutes. These coaching sessions will be recorded. Participants may also provide artifacts such as handouts, course designing papers etc.

What are the risks involved in this study?

There are no risks involved in this study.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

There are no Benefits to the participants. The possible benefits of participation that exploring your own backgrounds and experiences through self-beliefs. Additionally, the study helps you better turn students into the leading role and promote their initiative through integrating Grammar-Translation Teaching Method with BDI. There are no compensations for this study.

Do I have to participate?

No. Your participation is completely voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits, so you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits during this study.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?

This study is confidential. Your name will not be used. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort of report that might

be published unless you specifically request otherwise. Research records will be stored in ways that only the researcher, Chen Han, will have access to the records. Electronic files will be stored on the researcher's password protected computer and the researcher is the only person privy to the password. If you choose to participate in this study, you will be audio/video recorded.

Audio/video recorder and hard copies of transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet. Audio/video recording will be saved for 2 years and then disregarded.

The researcher will maintain confidentiality regarding the participants and the collected data during and after the study as outlined below:

- a. Using a pseudonym for the participants' names, and locations, other people and institutions mentioned by the participants
- b. Removing any identifiable information
- c. Not sharing any identifiable information with any persons outside this study
- d. Ensuring privacy during interviews
- e. Storing data in ways that grant access solely to the researcher
- f. Electronic files will be stored on the researcher's password protected computer
- g. The researcher is the only person privy to the password
- h. Audio recorder and hard copies of transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet. Audio recording will be saved for 2 years and then disregarded. The paper transcripts will be kept forever.
- i. Participants' information that is collected as part of the research, even if identifiers are removed, will not be used or distributed for future research studies.

Data will be shared with Dr. Suzanne Porath, assistant professor, with the same standard of confidentiality.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Suzanne Porath, sporath@ksu.edu, 920-858-3010. Chen Han at 785-410-4445 or at ch0502@ksu.edu or WeChat: heidi52.

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at Kansas State University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact Lisa Rubin, IRB Committee Chair (785) 532-3224, rubin@k-state.edu. Brad Woods, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Signature

Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to participate in this study. You also certify that you are 18 years of age or older by signing this form.

_____ I agree to be audio/radio recorded.

_____ I do not want to be audio/radio recorded.

_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Participant	Signature	Date

Please sign two copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Appendix D - Interview Prompts

1st Interview Guided Prompts:

1. Please tell me some details about yourself, such as your personal information and educational background.

请谈一谈您自己的一些基本信息，例如您个人的基本情况，教育背景等等。

2. As an EFL learner and teacher, please give a brief summary on English language learning and teaching experience.

作为一名英语学习者和教学者，请谈一谈您的英语学习经历以及英语教学经历，它们之间有什么联系。

3. Please tell me what the goals of English language teachers at EFL classroom and whether it should aim to improve EFL students' communicative ability or teaching grammar rules and vocabulary. Please provide the reasons for your choice.

请谈一谈作为一名英语教师，您的英语教学目标是什么，是以提高 EFL 学生的交际能力，或者教授语法规则和词汇为目标。请说明您选择的理由。

4. What should be the role of teachers in teaching English in the classroom? Should it be a facilitative or authoritative role?

请谈一谈教师在英语课堂教学中的作用是什么？是促进性的还是权威性的？请详细说明您选择的理由。

2nd Interview Guided Prompts:

1. What methods of BDI do you think easier in your GTM-dominant classroom?

请谈一谈您认为哪些 BDI 教学法更容易融入到您目前的教学课堂中？

2. Which methods will be difficult?

请谈一谈您认为哪些 BDI 教学方法难以实施？

3. What challenges do you think might have? Please from family/parents, administration, and policy perspective to talk about.

请谈一谈您认为将 BDI 教学法融入到您的课堂中有哪些挑战？请从家庭/父母，学校以及政策三方面讨论。

3rd Interview Guided Prompts:

1. How do you use any BDI methods in your GTM-dominant classroom? How do you go to integrate BDI with GTM?

您将使用哪些方法/策略在您的课堂中？它们是如何与您现有有教学方法所结合的？

2. When you meet challenges, how do they happen?

当您将 BDI 教学法融入到课堂中所到一些挑战，它们是如何发生的？

Appendix E - Fellow Up Letter

Follow Up Letter I

Dear Participants,

Thank you very much again for your valuable time on the first interview. I would kindly like to inform you that the first coaching session will be conducted two weeks' time. By that time, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Please be reminded that you can withdraw from the study any time at any phase.
Sincerely yours,

Chen Han

Follow Up Letter II

Dear Participants,

Thank you very much again for your valuable time on the first coaching sessions. I would kindly like to inform you that the second coaching session will be conducted in two weeks. By that time, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Please be reminded that you can withdraw from the study any time at any phase.

Sincerely yours,

Chen Han

Follow Up Letter III

Dear Participants,

Thank you very much again for your valuable time on the second coaching session. I would kindly like to inform you that the second interview will be conducted in two weeks' time. By that time, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Please be reminded that you can withdraw from the study any time at any phase.

Sincerely yours,

Chen Han

Follow Up Letter IV

Dear Participants,

Thank you very much again for your valuable time on the second interview. I would kindly like to inform you that the final interview will be conducted in two weeks. By that time, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Please be reminded that you can withdraw from the study any time at any phase.

Sincerely yours,

Chen Han

Appendix F - The Pre-survey

The Questionnaire on GTM And BDI Strategy (Pre-Survey)

1. How would you define Communicative Approach?
2. How would you define Grammar Translation Method?
3. Which method is the most active method for English learning?
GTM Communicative Approach (BDI)
4. Which method improve English language thinking ability of students?
GTM Communicative Approach (BDI)
5. Which method enhances confidence of middle school students?
GTM Communicative Approach (BDI)
6. Which method Middle school students can easily learn English?
GTM Communicative Approach (BDI)
7. Do you link classroom language learning activities with home or community?
Yes No
8. Do you use student for pair/group work?
Yes No
9. Is a student-centered classroom activity important for language teaching?
Yes No
10. Do you think that second language should be taught in collaboration with mother language?
Yes No
11. In China GTM is only for passing required examination? Is it true?
Yes No

Appendix G - The Post-survey

The Questionnaire on GTM And BDI Strategy (Post-Survey)

1. How would you define Communicative Approach?
2. How would you define Grammar Translation Method?
3. Which method is the most active method for English learning?
GTM Communicative Approach (BDI)
4. Which method improve English language thinking ability of students?
GTM Communicative Approach (BDI)
5. Which method enhances confidence of middle school students?
GTM Communicative Approach (BDI)
6. Which method Middle school students can easily learn English?
GTM Communicative Approach (BDI)
7. Do you link classroom language learning activities with home or community?
Yes No
8. Do you use student for pair/group work?
Yes No
9. Is a student-centered classroom activity important for language teaching?
Yes No
10. Do you think that second language should be taught in collaboration with mother language?
Yes No

11. In China GTM is only for passing required examination? Is it true?

Yes

No

12. What do you think is the biggest difference between GTM and the Communicative Approach?

Appendix H - Viewing Guide

Viewing Guide I

Biography Driven Instruction (BDI) Power 6: Strategies in Action

Please watch the listed video and answer the questions below. BDI is a communicative/cognitive method for providing culturally responsive pedagogy that guides teachers to maximize each learner's potential for language acquisition and content learning by drawing upon students' sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic resources.

- Reflects standards of effective pedagogy and learning
- Promotes engagement, motivation, and learning
- Provides research-based strategies

Extension Wheel

Please go to: Activation <https://youtu.be/FZbT35477hA>

Connection <https://youtu.be/nJDWvW17bVs>

Affirmation <https://youtu.be/HHlbeth176I>

1. How does activation phase activate students' existing knowledge?
2. How does connection phase move students from the known to the unknown?
3. How does affirmation phase celebrate students learning?
4. What new information did you learn from the video, or what was something that surprised you?

5. What questions, confusions, or wonderings do you still have about developing **Extension Wheel** in your classroom?

UCME (Uncover, Concentrate, Monitor, Evaluate) Check video links.

Please go to: Activation <https://youtu.be/uF-TiZWOUZs>

Connection <https://youtu.be/GwS1ryEf2Bk>

Affirmation <https://youtu.be/49T7uwMRPvo>

1. How does activation phase activate students' existing knowledge?
2. How does connection phase move students from the known to the unknown?
3. How does affirmation phase celebrate students learning?
4. What new information did you learn from the video, or what was something that surprised you?

1. What questions, confusions, or wonderings do you still have about developing **UCME** in your classroom?

DOTS (Determine, Observe, Talk, Summarize)

Please go to: Activation <https://youtu.be/2SACPBujKS4>

Connection <https://youtu.be/zVrou7hLMTc>

Affirmation <https://youtu.be/bDdbCo7ptto>

1. How does activation phase activate students' existing knowledge?
2. How does connection phase move students from the known to the unknown?
3. How does affirmation phase celebrate students learning?
4. What new information did you learn from the video, or what was something that surprised you?
5. What questions, confusions, or wonderings do you still have about developing **DORTS** in your classroom?

Viewing Guide II

Biography Driven Instruction (BDI) Power 6: Strategies in Action

Please watch the listed video and answer the questions below. BDI is a communicative/cognitive method for providing culturally responsive pedagogy that guides teachers to maximize each learner's potential for language acquisition and content learning by drawing upon students' sociocultural, linguistic, cognitive, and academic resources.

- Reflects standards of effective pedagogy and learning
- Promotes engagement, motivation, and learning
- Provides research-based strategies

Linking Language

Please go to: Activation <https://youtu.be/WYxmJjQjF7g>

Connection <https://youtu.be/g9YjIeBTgag>

Affirmation <https://youtu.be/Ara5ABWoMn4>

6. How does activation phase activate students' existing knowledge?
7. How does connection phase move students from the known to the unknown?
8. How does affirmation phase celebrate students learning?
9. What new information did you learn from the video, or what was something that surprised you?

10. What questions, confusions, or wonderings do you still have about developing **Linking Language**

in your classroom?

Vocabulary Quilt

Please go to: Activation https://youtu.be/3oeH_EbrfN4

Connection <https://youtu.be/iwfzRuSxVU0>

Affirmation <https://youtu.be/oPE7d0vMMAY>

1. How does activation phase activate students' existing knowledge?
2. How does connection phase move students from the known to the unknown?
3. How does affirmation phase celebrate students learning?
4. What new information did you learn from the video, or what was something that surprised you?

5. What questions, confusions, or wonderings do you still have about developing **Vocabulary Quilt** in your classroom?

Foldables

Please go to: Activation https://youtu.be/6R_XdC6hhgo

Connection https://youtu.be/Cy_y6NAQtp8

Affirmation <https://youtu.be/BAiVsElw6gA>

1. How does activation phase activate students' existing knowledge?
2. How does connection phase move students from the known to the unknown?
3. How does affirmation phase celebrate students learning?
4. What new information did you learn from the video, or what was something that surprised you?

5. What questions, confusions, or wonderings do you still have about developing **Foldables**
in your classroom?

Appendix I - Demographic Information Survey

Demographic Information Survey

1. General Information

- a. Name 姓名:
- b. Age 年龄:
- c. Gender 性别:

2. Education

- a. University Graduated 毕业院校:
- b. Major 专业:
- c. Graduation Year 毕业时间:
- d. Degree (BA, MA, PhD) 学历:

3. Teaching Experience

- a. Experience in English Teaching 英语教学经历:

- b. Type of Current School 学校类型（公立或者私立）:

- e. Grades Taught 任教年级:

- f. Hours Taught per Week 每周教学时长:

Appendix J - Warm Up Activity

A Constructivist Warm Up Activity

A variety of in class activities that will be done by the teacher in the workshop:

Theory: One of the necessary constructivist conditions for learning according to Piaget (1973) is to provide for social negotiation (cooperative and socio-moral atmosphere) as an integral part of learning.

Method: Using participant-centered activities to create a warm atmosphere in the interviews

Topic: Warmers and Icebreakers for a Warm Beginning

Instructional Goal(s):

This activity is for a warm beginning, or in other words for an icebreaker. They are designed to help participants to get to know the researcher at the beginning of the program.

Materials needed: A piece of paper and a pen

Stage 1

Ask the participants and researchers to write three topics on a piece of paper that all of them likes to talk about. These can be hobbies or something they have heard in the news or a book they have been reading. For example: Ping pang, 19th Asian Games, or Food and Traveling.

Stage 2

Tell the participants talk about one of the topics on their paper for one minute. Then the researcher talks with for a minute on a favorite topic. More advanced learners can practice good listening too, making noises such as “uh huh,” “really!” and so on while another person is talking.