University of Southampton

University of Southampton Research Repository

Copyright © and Moral Rights for this thesis and, where applicable, any accompanying data are retained by the author and/or other copyright owners. A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge. This thesis and the accompanying data cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the copyright holder/s. The content of the thesis and accompanying research data (where applicable) must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holder/s.

When referring to this thesis and any accompanying data, full bibliographic details must be given, e.g.

Thesis: Christiana Gauci-Sciberras (2025) Chinese Teachers or Teachers of Chinese? A Qualitative Case Study on the Construction of the Identity of Native and Non-Native Speaker Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language in Malta, University of Southampton, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, School of Humanities, Modern Languages and Linguistics, PhD Thesis, 425.

Data: Christiana Gauci-Sciberras (2025) Chinese Teachers or Teachers of Chinese? A Qualitative Case Study on the Construction of the Identity of Native and Non-Native Speaker Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language in Malta. URI [dataset]

University of Southampton

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

School of Humanities

Chinese Teachers or Teachers of Chinese?

A Qualitative Case Study on the Construction of the Identity of Native and Non-Native Speaker Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language in Malta

by

Christiana Gauci-Sciberras

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

January 2025

ORCID ID: 0009-0001-0819-2479

University of Southampton

Abstract

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

School of Humanities

Modern Languages and Linguistics

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Chinese Teachers or Teachers of Chinese?
A Qualitative Case Study on the Construction of the Identity of Native and Non-Native Speaker Teachers of Chinese as a Foreign Language in Malta

Christiana Gauci-Sciberras

The terms native and non-native speaker are widely used in the field of foreign language teaching practice and in scholarly literature even though the meaning of such terms is unclear and debatable. This thesis considers nativeness from the point of view of identity, that is fluid and whose construction is generally thought to be influenced by several factors such as the language or languages one acquires naturally during childhood and place of birth among others. Since this thesis is about the construction of the identity of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese, this thesis also discusses the term 'Chinese'. The term Chinese encompasses a vast linguistic diversity of dialects, some of which are even classified by some linguists as distinct languages due to a lack of mutual intelligibility. In view of the linguistic diversity that the term Chinese entails and theory on identity as fluid and socially constructed, this thesis finds out how the participants within the boundary of this case study perceive the identity of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese in Malta to be constructed.

This thesis presents a case study conducted in academic year 2020/2021 and qualitative data is collected through two research instruments, interview and lesson observations. The aim of this case study research is to present a particular instance within a particular boundary, the boundary of the case study presented in this thesis is the bachelor's programme in Chinese at the University of Malta

in 2020/2021, a very particular time when all teaching was held online due to the Covid-19 pandemic, making this study a contribution to literature on teaching during the pandemic.

After analysing the data collected from the interviews, it could be concluded that the general perception of the participants is that a native speaker is one who acquired Chinese (or any other language) within one's immediate family since birth and throughout early childhood. While the participants' perceptions are quite common and at face value could be a contribution to a definition of the term 'native' speaker, upon closer consideration and in view of the literature reviewed, such perceptions are just common simplistic perceptions and do not lead to any clear definitions of the term 'native speaker' as the matter is far more complex. In view of this, the thesis presents the participants' perceptions and concludes that while such perceptions might be common, they are just perceptions and cannot be generalised to lead to any definitions.

After the findings on the participants' perceptions on factors that contribute to the construction of the identity of the so-called 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers of Chinese, the thesis moves on to describe and to analyse how the identity of the so-called 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers are manifested in their classroom practice. Several differences were noticed, mainly resulting from the teachers' cultural backgrounds, training, expectations and experience. Several similarities in classroom practice were also observed in the teaching methods used by teachers. Even though the communicative approach is the official approach that language teachers in Malta are required to use, both the so-called 'native' and 'non-native' teachers deviate from this approach at times and employ a mix of other approaches. This suggests that for the case of Chinese in Malta, the prescription of only the communicative approach might not be as effective, but rather a mix of approaches is used.

This thesis is a contribution to the teaching of Chinese in Malta as it describes how it was being taught within the boundaries of the case. It concludes that a more localised approach that takes into consideration several methods is needed. Also, this thesis concludes that while there are general perceptions of factors that contribute to the construction of the identity of the so-called 'native' speaker, a clear definition of the term is not needed as terms that refer to a person's level of proficiency in a language (irrelevant of when and how it was acquired) are more reflective of a person's proficiency as they are very often a result of measurable examination and certification.

Contents

I Introduction to this case study……10

1.1 Rationale

1.1.1 Background and personal motivation of this study ……11

1.2 Aims of the study ……11

1.3 The research questions…… 15

1.4 Contributions of this study……16

1.5 Malta: The context of this study……19

1.5.1 Background information on the language of Malta – Maltese……19

1.5.2 The introduction of Chinese as a foreign Language option in Malta……21

1.5.3 Chinese at the University of Malta……23

1.5.3.1 The boundary of this case study……25

1.6 Justification for the use of EFL literature……26

1.7 The general layout of the thesis……27

II A review of literature on native and non-native speaker teachers, language identity and language ideology……30

2.1 Introduction to the literature review chapter……30

2.2 NS and NNS foreign language teachers……30

2.3 Identity as a socio-cultural construct and foreign language education……38

2.4 The standard language and CFL education……40

2.5 First Language Acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis……42

2.6 The Multilingual Native Speaker……44

2.7 Language and ethnicity……47

2.8 Identity and language ideology……48

2.8.1 NS and NNS cultural identities and foreign language education……50

2.9 Theoretical Framework……52

2.10 Summary of the chapter……54

III Chinese, its diversity and the teaching of Chinese in China and beyond……55

3.1 The term Chinese……55

3.1.1 The National Language *guoyu* 国语……60

3.1.2 Mandarin Chinese *Putonghua* 普通话……63

3.2 My position vis-à-vis Chinese ……66

3.3 A brief outline of FL teaching methods……67

3.4 CFL education……72

3.4.1 An Introduction to CFL education……72

3.4.2 A historical overview of CFL education outside of China……74

3.4.3 CFL education in China……77

3.4.4 The traditional 'Confucian' approach to teaching and learning……79

3.4.5 The role of the Confucius Institute in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language outside of China and ideology……82

3.4.6 Western/Eastern methods of teaching and the Global North/South……85

3.5 Summary of the chapter……89

IV Methodology……90

4.1Introduction to the methodology of this case study……90

4.2 Case study research……90

4.3 The selection of the participants……93

4.3.1 The teachers who participated in the study……94

4.4 The Researcher's roles……98

4.5 The research instruments……100

4.5.1 Semi-structured interviews……100

4.5.2 Lesson observations……105

4.6 The research instruments and the data collected for this research project ……107

4.7 Data analysis……109

4.8 Ethical considerations……111

4.9 Summary of the chapter……113

V – Findings and discussion on students' and teachers' perceptions on the construction of the identity of native and non-native speakers of Chinese……114

5.1 Introduction to the chapter ……114

5.2 The possibility of the native speaker of multiple languages……115

5.3 Factors that participants perceive to contribute to the construction of the identity of the native speaker……116

5.3.1 Family background and early childhood……116

5.3.2 Birthplace and place of residence during early childhood……118

5.3.3 Native speakers and ethnicity……121

5.3.4 Native speakers and formal education……123

5.3.5 Native speakers of other languages……126
5.3.6 Immersion in a language in adulthood can make a near-native speaker……128
5.4 Native speakers' naturally acquired linguistic and cultural knowledge……131
5.4.1 Native speakers' fluency and proficiency……131
5.4.2 "The level" of proficiency of native speakers……134
5.4.3 Native speakers' spontaneity……135
5.4.4 Native Speakers' understanding of humour……137
5.4.5 Native speakers' errors……138
5.5 Native speakers and literacy……140
5.6 Native speakers and Standard Putonghua……141
5.7 Summary of the chapter……144
VI – Findings and discussions on the teaching practice of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese within the case study in Malta……145
6.1 Introduction to the chapter ……145
6.2 Teachers' fluency and proficiency in Standard Putonghua and classroom practice……146
6.3 The language(s) of instruction in the CFL classroom……150
6.4 NS and NNS teachers' practice ……152
6.4.1 Correction of errors in pronunciation and tone……152
6.4.2 The teaching of characters and of new vocabulary……152
6.4.3 The teaching of grammar structures……159
6.5 NS and NNS teachers and cultural differences……162
6.5.1 NS and NNS teachers' expectations……163
6.5.2. Non-native speakers and inclusion in the Chinese speaking community……164
6.6 Summary of the chapter……167
VII Conclusions……168
7.1 General conclusion……168
7.1.1 The first research question: what factors do students and teachers perceive to contribute to the construction of the identities of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese within this case study in Malta?……168
7.1.2 The participants' perceptions on the identity of non-native speakers of Chinese in Malta……171

7.1.3 The second research question: How is the teacher's NS or NNS identity manifested in CFL classroom practice within this case study in Malta?.....172

7.2 *Native or non-native: Who's worth more?*.....174

7.3 The implications of this case study and its contribution to CFL teaching practice in Malta.....176

7.4 The (non) generalisability of this case study.....177

7.5 Limitations of this case study.....178

7.5.1 Limitations due to the small sample size.....179

7.5.2 Limitations of collecting data online due to the pandemic lockdown.....180

7.6 Suggestions for further studies.....186

7.7 Recommendations.....192

7.8 Final Remarks.....193

References.....195

Appendices.....246

Appendix 1 – Field work plan.....247

1.1 Data to be collected according to theme.....247

1.2 Data to be collected through interviews.....248

1.2.1 Interview questions according to theme and theoretical framework.....250

1.2.2 Interview questions – English version.....257

1.2.3 Interview questions – Maltese version.....259

1.3 Data to be collected through classroom observations.....261

1.4 Classroom observation sheet.....263

1.5 Fieldwork timeline plan.....264

1.6 Timeline of the research project.....266

Appendix 2 – participant information sheet, consent form, ethics form.....267

Appendix 3 – Transcripts of the interviews and translations into English.....292

Appendix 4 – quotations from the interviews according to theme.....370

Appendix 5 – Lesson observation sheets.....383

Appendix 6 – Data Display.....407

Appendix 7 – Reflective journal during the fieldwork.....420

List of acronyms

NS – native speaker teacher

NNS – non-native speaker teacher

CFL – Chinese as a Foreign Language

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

ELF – English as a Lingua Franca

TL – Target Language

FL – Foreign Language

L1 – First Language

L2 – Second Language

Acknowledgements

Sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Dr. Rugang Lu for his guidance, patience, encouragement, support and kindness shown throughout my PhD studies. Thanks for making this journey a positive learning experience.

I am very thankful to my students and colleagues at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), at St. Margaret College (Cospicua, Malta) and at the Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability. Sincere thanks also go to the Tertiary Education Scholarship Scheme (TESS) at the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (Malta) for the scholarship awarded to me to pursue PhD studies in the UK.

Sincere thanks also go to my family, my husband Mark and my parents Joseph and Victoria.

I

Introduction to this case study

This thesis presents a case study on the teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) in Malta at a very particular time when all lessons were delivered online due to the pandemic lockdown. This case study problematises the terms 'native speaker' (NS) and 'non-native speaker' (NNS) teacher of Chinese in Malta, a context where Chinese is not commonly spoken or taught.

This case study first presents the participants' views on factors that they consider contributing to construct the identity of the so called 'native' and 'non-native' speaker teachers. Then, also considering literature on identity and in view of the linguistic diversity that the term 'Chinese' includes, this case study first presents the points of view of the participants on the matter and concludes that such views cannot provide a definition to the terms 'native' and 'non-native speaker' because apart from being representative of very few students and teachers in a very small country, in view of the fluid nature of identity, a definition of these terms is far from clear and is thus not given by this thesis.

This case study contributes to the discussion on the matter and proves that despite the perception that definitions are clear, these terms are indeed undefined and the thesis recommends that vacancies for teaching jobs do not ask for so-called 'native speakers', but rather ask for certificates and qualifications which are achieved through measurable assessment as proof of language proficiency. Despite this, this thesis follows other literature on the matter and uses the terms native speaker and non-native speaker to refer to what the participants in this case study perceive to be a NS and a NNS teacher. Thus, inverted commas for the terms native and non-native speaker are no longer used from now on.

Then, this case study moves on to document how the so-called native and non-native speaker teachers taught CFL during the very particular circumstances of online teaching during academic year

2020/2021. This contributes to research on the teaching of CFL outside of China and also to research on online teaching that was going on during the pandemic lockdown.

This chapter first outlines the case study's rationale, objectives and research questions. Then it moves on to describe the linguistic context of Malta, the context of this case study and it briefly justifies why the study refers to literature on the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This chapter concludes with a general overview of the thesis as a whole.

1.1 Rationale

1.1.1 Background and personal motivation of this study

During my time as a student at the University of Malta between 2010 and 2014, I studied both Chinese and Arabic. Notably, my Chinese language instructors were all native speakers, while the Arabic instructors comprised a mix of native and non-native speakers. As I navigated the differences between these two foreign languages, I observed distinct teaching approaches employed by so-called native and non-native speaker teachers. Interestingly, I also identified commonalities in the teaching methods used by native speakers across both languages. Upon graduating, I began teaching elementary Chinese to adults in Malta. To my surprise, I found myself diverging from the teaching practices of the native speaker teachers who had instructed me. This experience prompted my curiosity about the dynamics between native and non-native speaker teachers and their teaching methods. Consequently, I delved into relevant literature (including works by Braine 2010; Medgyes 1994 et al) to explore topics such as teaching methods, student attitudes towards native and non-native speaker teachers, and the existence of the "native speaker" concept (as discussed by Paikeday in 1985, amongst others). A substantial amount of the literature I was reading spoke about native and non-native speaker teachers, their teaching methods, and students' attitudes towards them, but I did not find the answer to a very central question: "what is a native speaker", or more precisely, "what factors make up the identity of the native speaker"? At that early stage of my research, I read about the question of the native speaker in the context of English as a global language (Crystal 1997) and I

agree with the idea that since English is a global language, it belongs to all its speakers irrelevant of their background and identity.

As a Maltese individual born and residing in Malta, a country officially bilingual where English is the official language of tertiary education, I have contemplated my linguistic context. Despite being a proficient English user, I do not consider myself a native speaker of English. My cultural identity is deeply rooted in Maltese, my mother tongue, which I regard as my native language. Driven by this introspection, I explored literature on native speakers within the framework of identity theory (as discussed by Norton (2016) and others). I realised that being a native speaker extends beyond English, the global language, and is fundamentally tied to one's identity. Moreover, in educational contexts especially in the recruitment of foreign language teachers, terms like native and non-native are commonly used in practice, challenging the notion that the concept of the native speaker is obsolete or even "dead" (as suggested by Paikeday in 1985). This background piqued my interest in conducting a case study that seeks to examine the characteristics that participants perceive to make a native Chinese speaker, to discuss whether such perceptions could lead to a definition or not, and to explore the teaching methods employed by both native and non-native teachers.

Initially, this study was going to focus on students' perceptions of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese and their teaching methods. There are many studies on students' perceptions of native and non-native speaker teachers' teaching methods especially in the teaching of EFL in different parts of the world, however, with the exception of Burns' 2014 Master's dissertation set in the US, and the chapter by Sung and Poole (2016) about students' perceptions of native and non-native speaker teachers in China, not much has been written about the identities of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese. Despite the originality of a research project examining students' perceptions of native and non-native Chinese language teachers in Malta, during the confirmation stage of my PhD studies, a change in direction was suggested. This shift arose due to the challenge of investigating students' perceptions of native and non-native speaker teachers' teaching methods in

the absence of a clear definition distinguishing native from non-native speaker teachers of Chinese. Thus, it was suggested that rather than studying students' perceptions of teaching methods, this study investigates perceptions of factors that contribute to make a NS or a NNS teacher of Chinese. In view of this, a future study with learners of different age groups, genders and socio-cultural backgrounds will address students' perceptions of native and non-native speaker teachers and their teaching methods, once the current study clarifies the following two key aspects:

1. To identify factors that participants perceive to construct the identities of native and non-native speakers of Chinese in the context of CFL in Malta.
2. To shed light on the teaching practice of what the participants perceive to be native and non-native speaker teachers within the boundary of this case study in Malta.

The chapter by Sung and Poole (2016) and Burns' (2014) MA thesis discuss native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese and students' perceptions of their pedagogies. However, despite the wide use of the terms native and non-native speaker teacher, neither of them provides a definition of what constitutes the identities of a native speaker teacher and a non-native speaker teacher of Chinese. In view of this gap, this study problematises, explores and discusses the notion of the identity of native and the non-native speaker of Chinese in a context where Chinese is not widely spoken or taught.

1.2 Aims of the study

Within the industry of foreign language (FL) teaching, the term 'native speaker' appears in various contexts, including job advertisements for teacher recruitment and promotional materials for language courses and FL schools. This term is commonly used by students, parents, teachers, school administrators, education policymakers, linguists, and others involved in FL teaching. Despite its widespread use, the term "native speaker" lacks a clear definition. Scholars have debated whether native speakers truly exist due to the absence of a precise definition, or if the concept remains vague and elusive. The complexity of defining native speakers is particularly pronounced in the context of English, which serves as a global language (Crystal, 1997) and an international lingua franca. Defining

the native speaker of English proves challenging because many individuals from diverse backgrounds exhibit high proficiency in English. However, the same argument does not necessarily hold for Chinese and other languages that lack global status. Identifying as a native speaker of a non-global language becomes an integral part of an individual's cultural identity and is not necessarily linked to proficiency in the standard variety of the language.

Given the diverse perspectives on the lack of a clear definition for the terms native and non-native speaker, theories challenging the existence of the native speaker (Paikeday, 1985), and suggestions to the use of alternative terms that are neutral of any reference to a person's identity but only describe a person's language proficiency like "proficient user" (Dewaele, 2018), this thesis contributes to the discussion on the subject through its description of the perceptions of the participants within the case. In addition to this, this case study describes a classroom of CFL in Malta, a context where there is very little written on. Much has been written on the teaching of CFL in China and in predominantly English-speaking countries such as the UK, the US, Australia and New Zealand, there is little literature on the teaching of Chinese in other non-predominantly English-speaking countries. Even though this study is a small-scaled case study when compared to other large-scale international studies, it is representative of a typical classroom of Chinese in Malta, a context where Chinese is the latest foreign language added to the repertoire of foreign languages on offer and the number of classrooms, teachers and students of Chinese is very small when compared to those of other foreign languages that have a long history in the education system in Malta. (Further information on CFL in Malta is given in section 1.5 on the context.)

The research for this case study was conducted within the European context of Malta, a multilingual setting. The context of the fieldwork is set in an adaptation of Kachru's (1985) classification of the context where a second (L2) or a foreign language (FL) is taught and learned. For the context of English, Kachru (1985) classifies the inner circle, countries where English is the L1 and the most commonly spoken language such as the UK, the US, Australia, and Canada. Kachru (1985) also classifies several

countries in the outer circle, where English is spoken as a heritage language or learned as an L2 in countries such as India, where English has a presence in daily life as an L2. Kachru (1985) also classifies countries in the expanding circle, where English has no presence except in the classroom and in textbooks, for example in China and Japan. Kachru's (1985) framework of the inner circle, the outer circle, and the expanding circle could be applied to Mandarin Chinese even though the situation of Chinese is not exactly like that of English. The inner circle is China, where Chinese is mostly spoken as an L1, and where it is the official language. The outer circle comprises of countries where Chinese is spoken or learned as a heritage language, and has quite a presence, such as Singapore and Malaysia. The expanding circle in the case of Chinese comprises of countries, like Malta, where Chinese is not widely spoken or taught, and where it is learned and taught in a classroom context as an additional foreign language. Thus, this case study and the description of the teaching methods it provides initiates the discussion on CFL teaching methods in Malta and it contributes to the research on how Chinese is being taught in contexts in the West where Chinese is in the expanding circle.

In addition to this, the fact that this case study discusses the case of Chinese in Malta is interesting in view of the linguistic diversity that the term Chinese entails. The fact that not all Chinese dialects are mutually intelligible with each other and with the standard variety makes this case study interesting because identifying as a native speaker of Chinese might not necessarily equate to one being a native speaker of the standard variety or to have proficiency in the standard variety. The third chapter on the Chinese language provides definitions and discussions on what makes Chinese, the standard variety and the dialects. In view of this, the thesis aims to shed light on nativeness in view of the standard variety and dialects of a language that is not global.

1.3 The research questions

The main theme of this case study is perceptions on factors that contribute to the construction of the identity of the native speaker and of the non-native speaker of Chinese and how such an identity is manifested in CFL classroom practice. This case study researches the abstract concept of the NS and

NNS identity through research in the concrete world – the classroom. Eventually, from data collected in the concrete; the classroom, then abstract theory could be drawn up for the case where the data was collected (Malta in 2020/2021) will be formulated.

The following are the research questions that this thesis answers through data collected from semi-structured interviews and lesson observations:

1. What factors do students and teachers perceive to contribute to the construction of the identities of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese within this case study in Malta?

2. How is the teacher's NS or NNS identity manifested in CFL classroom practice within this case study in Malta?

To answer the first research question, data was collected through semi-structured interviews with students and teachers of CFL within the boundary of the programme of Chinese Studies at the University of Malta. This is to find out about their perceptions of what constructs NS and NNS identities. In addition to semi-structured interviews, this case study also collected data from lesson observations to enable triangulation of data. Lesson observations of both NS and NNS teachers was done to observe how NS and NNS identities are manifested in CFL classroom practice. Data collected through both interviews and lesson observations were analysed against theories on language and identity, ideology and ethnicity, namely the Standard language, and the construction of NS and NNS cultural identities in foreign language education.

1.4 Contributions of this study

As a case study, this study is a contribution to research on CFL teaching and learning in Malta. It is representative of CFL classrooms in Malta and it contributes to shed light on how CFL was being taught at the University of Malta during the pandemic in 2020/2021. (The following section about the context gives more in-depth information on the small context of CFL in Malta). This study also contributes to

research on CFL in non-predominantly English-speaking countries in the west, when taking Kachru's (1985) classification, such contexts that could be classified is the expanding circle of Chinese.

This study also contributes to the research that is done on methods and approaches to CFL teaching in Malta as it describes the teaching methods employed within the case. This is because in the context of the post-communicative method, FL teaching and learning do not only consider communication in the TL, but also take issues related to identity into consideration. Following this study, further studies could be done considering the post-communicative approach to FL teaching and learning on identity in CFL teaching within and outside of China.

Shei (2020) refers to Cui (2010) who distinguishes between Teaching Chinese to Foreigners (TCTF) and Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (TCSOL). According to Cui (2010), TCTF occurs in China where students who are foreigners are 'welcomed in', while TCSOL occurs outside of China and it involves Chinese teachers 'going abroad' to teach Chinese in other countries. This thesis, along with Burns' (2014) research contribute to literature focusing on the teaching of Chinese outside of China because as a case study, it provides a snapshot of how NS and NNS teachers were teaching within the boundary of the case at the University of Malta during the lockdown period of the pandemic.

Shei (2020) refers to Gong et al. (2018) who "were able to select 1,358 articles from CNKI published in China on the subject [the subject of Chinese language teaching] from 2004 to 2016 but only 175 papers from the English based Web of Science." This implies that research on the teaching of Chinese outside of China is not enough and Shei (2020) continues by quoting Gong et al.'s (2018) suggestions to journals to "prioritize the publication of cross-border studies" and for "researchers in and outside mainland China to co-organize academic dialogues on Chinese language education." (Shei 2020:44, Gong et al. 2018:287). Shei (2020) quotes Cheng (2018) who advocates a "critical turn from teaching Chinese in the domestic context to a global one" (Cheng 2018: 299, Shei:33). Li (2019) refers to the speech of Mme Liu Yandong, chair of the council of *Hanban* delivered at the Tenth Confucius Institute Conference in Shanghai (2015) where they mentioned localisation as one of the next points leading to

further development of the Confucius Institutes into the future. This thesis, through the case study provides an understanding of how Chinese was being taught in Malta and by whom, which in turn leads to a better understanding of what is locally happening at the moment, and which could eventually lead to further research on localisation of Chinese in Malta.

Another point of originality and contribution that this research project aims to make is that of carrying out research with learners of CFL in Malta who are not heritage learners of Chinese. A lot of research on CFL in Europe is done on heritage learners: this case study listens to (through semi-structured interviews) and observes (during lesson observation) how students and teachers who are non-native speakers and not heritage learners, whose socio-cultural identity is European, construct their identity as non-native speakers of Mandarin.

Another point of contribution of this research project is that it discusses the terms native and non-native speaker in view of Chinese while most of the literature on native and non-native speaker teachers is in the context of English. English is a global language (Crystal 1997) and is no longer exclusively connected to countries in the global north that are traditionally considered to be Anglophone countries (for example the UK, the US, Canada and Australia) but it is spoken as a second language or as an international lingua franca in various contexts. Chinese is in a different situation because it is not a global language, thus perceptions of what makes a person a native speaker of Chinese could be different from those that make a person a native speaker of the global language, English. Thus, this study contributes to the discussion on factors that are perceived to make a native speaker of a language other than English.

This research project is also original because of the socio-cultural context it is set in. Malta is a European country that is officially bilingual (Maltese and English), but the majority language and native language (L1) is Maltese and where English is the second language (L2). This linguistic context makes this research project unique, because unlike most other research on CFL in the West, it is not set in a predominantly English speaking context, but rather in a context where the L1 of the majority of the

local population is Maltese, a Semitic language, where English is the L2, and where the vast majority of students and locals are multilingual and have experience in learning one or more foreign languages (mainly French, German, Italian and Spanish or other languages), and so Mandarin Chinese, as the latest addition to the list of foreign languages taught in the education system, would be their L4 or L5. This is the linguistic situation described in literature on languages in Malta before the pandemic, but with demographic changes and migration that started to take place after 2020, this linguistic situation is changing. Since the context of this case study is Malta, the following section discusses the background and the linguistic situation of Malta in more depth.

1.5 Malta: The context of this study

1.5.1 Background information on the language of Malta – Maltese

The research project is set in Malta, the smallest European Union (EU) member state. The island of Malta is in the heart of the Mediterranean and according to its constitution, both Maltese and English are official languages. Despite this, Maltese is the national language and the most widely spoken language on the island (Sciriha and Vassallo 2003, 2006). According to the study on language in Malta conducted in 2021 by the National Statistics Office and The National Council for the Maltese Language "97% of Maltese citizens aged between eighteen and eighty stated that Maltese remains their first language" (Xuereb 2022:150).

Maltese is a mixed language, its roots are Semitic and its origins are rooted in an Arabic dialect that came to Malta from Sicily. Maltese is a Semitic language but "it blends together elements from three distinct language families, the Semitic, the Romance and the Germanic." (Brincat 2011:xiii). Despite the Semitic roots of the language, it is written in the Latin alphabet, which evidences the close cultural and religious proximity Malta has always had with Italy. The earliest document that mentions the Maltese language dates to 1364, stating that a group of Sicilian monks were unable to open a monastery in Malta because they did not know the language. In a subsequent document dated 1426, the Maltese language is referred to as "lingua arabica" an Arabic language. A 1436 document refers to Maltese as "lingua Maltensi". The oldest text in Maltese is a poem that dates to 1450, but it was

not until 1912 that the national poet, Rev. Karm Psaila actually started to write in Maltese. This is because Maltese was a spoken vernacular language usually referred to as "the language of the kitchen" spoken by peasants. Official documents were written in Italian or in Latin, the language of culture, literature, education, and the church. Nowadays, Latin is still used by the church and by the University of Malta, mostly during graduation ceremonies. In the current context, official documents are bilingual, schools are also bilingual, whilst an element of code-switching between the two languages is present in our schools (Camilleri-Grima 2013), and within locals' daily communication.

The colonial period in Malta (1813-1964) established English as an official language along with Maltese. During the colonial period, the language issue was very controversial, on the one hand the British colonisers imposed English on a population whose commoners and uneducated spoke Maltese and whose academics, professionals and clergymen spoke and wrote in Italian as the language of the law, culture and the church. Following Malta's independence in 1964, Maltese was made the national language and both English and Maltese are nowadays official languages, as stated by the Constitution of Malta (1974). The general population is bilingual in Maltese and English, both languages are necessary to access higher education or a career in the civil service. In addition to proficiency in the two official languages, many Maltese people on the island also have varying degrees of proficiency in Italian because it has been widely taught as a third language in all schools, and because of the very close cultural, religious, historical and geographical proximity of Malta to Italy. In addition to this, with the introduction of television in Malta in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and for many decades following this, Italian television stations gained significant popularity among the Maltese population and thus people were generally proficient in Italian. Today's younger generations are not as proficient as with the advent of the Internet and of cable television, younger generations tend to be more exposed to English rather than to Italian (Caruana 2007; Caruana, Cremona and Vella 2013).

Since Malta's accession in the European Union (EU) in 2004, Maltese became an official language of the EU and this has had legal and social implications. Maltese is no longer considered to be "the

language of the kitchen" as it is officially used in EU institutions. This has given rise to the translation industry since all citizens have the right to communication from the EU in their language. Following Malta's accession to the EU and the fact that Maltese became an official language of the EU, the first 'Maltese Language Act' was enacted in 2005 and the 'National Council for the Maltese Language' was set up. Today, apart from being the vernacular spoken language, Maltese is even taught as a foreign language and since accession in the EU, the translation industry to and from the language is growing. In the past, the Bible and other religious texts were translated into Maltese for the peasants who were usually illiterate, and who had no knowledge of any other language, whilst nowadays, even the Analects of Confucius are available in Maltese. Thus, locally, the language is used in all domains of life, the media, education, science, culture, religion, law (Sciriha and Vassallo2003, 2006). Thus, the Maltese language has gone from a spoken vernacular of peasants to an official EU language.

1.5.2 The introduction of Chinese as a foreign Language option in Malta

In Malta, English and Maltese are taught throughout all years of compulsory schooling (4 to 16 years of age). When pupils are 11 years old, they move from primary school to middle school and choose any language from Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Italian and Spanish to study as a foreign language option. The presence of Arabic as a foreign language option has a very long history, for political reasons Arabic was compulsory during the 1970s, it was eventually removed, nonetheless it remained available for the very few pupils who chose to study it. The majority of pupils, however, choose one of the European languages available as a foreign language option.

Chinese (Mandarin) was introduced in one government college (St. Margaret College) in the academic year 2017/2018 as a pilot project with the intention of eventually making Mandarin Chinese available as a foreign language option in all government schools. The textbook *Easy Steps to Chinese* is used in all schools in Malta. Three pupils studied Chinese (Mandarin) throughout their five years at the college and teachers from the Confucius Institute taught the class for four years. No pupils chose Chinese (Mandarin) in the academic year 2018/2019. Two pupils chose Chinese (Mandarin) in the academic

year 2019/2020 and as a teacher within the local system, I took up teaching the class. (I have been teaching English in Malta since 2009). In the following year, 2020/2021, an additional class was opened with three new pupils and this class was also added to my teaching duties. Up to the academic year 2022/2023 these are the only two classes of Chinese (Mandarin) in state schools in Malta. Since March 2023, I have taken up new classes in English and a local, Maltese teacher has taken up teaching Chinese to these two-year groups. In the academic year 2019/2020 two additional state schools offered Chinese (Mandarin) (St Claire's College and Maria Regina College). Pupils in St Claire's college have continued with Chinese (Mandarin) as their foreign language option, while the class in Maria Regina College was closed. Confucius Institute teachers have taught in these two colleges.

In addition to state schools, the education system in Malta also has several Church schools and a few independent schools. Church schools and independent schools also offer foreign languages but up now, one church school (St. Aloysius College) and one independent school (Chiswick House School) offer Chinese (Mandarin) as a foreign language option. Both schools currently have native Chinese speaker teachers. These schools follow the same syllabuses and learning outcomes framework as that of state schools, referenced to above.

In addition to the schools that offer Chinese (Mandarin) as a foreign language option, Chinese (Mandarin) is also available as a foreign language to adult learners at the Directorate for Lifelong Learning at The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (MFED). This directorate is part of the Ministry, and its aim is to provide lifelong education to adults. Chinese (Mandarin) was taught by a native speaker, Confucius Institute teacher between 2010 and 2013. In 2013, a non-native local teacher taught the course for three academic years. As from the academic year 2015/2016 to the present day, I have been teaching the elementary course in Chinese (Mandarin). While Confucius Institute teachers were very instrumental in teaching Chinese (Mandarin) in schools and at the Directorate for Lifelong Learning, the requirement for teachers and for anyone to work in the public service is that the person is proficient in both Maltese and English. Thus, as a local I have

been involved in the teaching, the writing of examination papers and curricula at The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation. Due to my direct involvement in Chinese (Mandarin) at MFED, I decided not to collect any data from MFED.

In Malta, Chinese is also taught at the China Cultural Centre in the capital city of Valletta. The China Cultural Centre in Malta was established in 2003 following President Jiang Zeming's visit to Malta in 2001. China and Malta's bilateral relations date back to 1972 when China helped Malta build a dry dock which was instrumental to Malta's economy at the time. Numerous courses in Chinese are taught at the China Cultural Centre to adults, children, and also to heritage learners. Courses in the Chinese language at the China Cultural Centre are taught by both local and Chinese teachers. I have never been involved in courses at the CCC because I was always employed in public service.

1.5.3 Chinese at the University of Malta

In Malta, Chinese is also taught at the University of Malta. The Confucius Institute at the University of Malta was established in 2010 and is partnered with Xiamen University. In the academic year 2010/2011 the University of Malta offered the first programme of studies in Chinese: a two-year part-time evening diploma. Lectures were all taught by CI teachers and were held three times a week: two lessons of elementary language Mandarin and one lesson on Chinese culture. The Diploma in Chinese course starts every other year. I joined the Diploma course in academic year 2010/2011, the first time the course ran. Towards the end of academic year 2011/2012, myself and the other students were told that the University of Malta will start to offer a Bachelor of Arts (BA) programme in Chinese and that upon completion of the Diploma we could progress to the BA programme. In the academic year 2012/2013 I progressed to the BA programme and graduated in 2014. The BA programme at the University of Malta consists of 180 ECTS and students choose two areas of study[1], a main area and a subsidiary (I chose Chinese as the main area and Arabic as subsidiary area).

[1] Combinations for BA programmes at the University of Malta
https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/keyword/Undergraduate/Chinese

The BA programme's main study units [2]are Chinese (Mandarin) language and other units in Chinese culture, arts, literature, and history. The language component is the main part of the course, and the textbook *New Practical Chinese Reader* by Liu Xun (2011) is the main textbook used in the language study-units. The textbook is published by Beijing Language and Culture University Press and the second edition was being used. Books 1 to 5 are covered throughout the three-year degree programme. Books 1 and 2 are covered in the first year, books 3 and 4 in the second year and a part of book 5 in the third year. Thus, a book is generally covered in one semester, September to January or January to May. The textbook uses a mix of Chinese and English, this works well for Malta because the official language of the University of Malta is English. In lessons on countries and nationalities, teachers in Malta would teach the term 马耳他 (ma er ta – Malta) and even 意大利 (yi da li – Italy) which is also very relevant due to the cultural and geographical proximity. The language study-unit is compulsory throughout all the degree programme and it is taught by a mix of NS and NNS teachers. Students would typically receive four hours of lecture time and an additional two hours of tutorial time: during the tutorial what is covered in the lecture is further consolidated with practice. The study unit was shared between a NS teacher and a NNS teacher, this is to ensure that students are exposed to the pronunciation and to the teaching methods of both teachers. Both teachers assessed homework. The teachers agreed between themselves which chapters of the textbook each one of them will cover, and both teachers taught the lecture and the tutorial. The study-unit is assessed by a final exam at the end of the semester and also through the weekly homework tasks assigned by both teachers.

When I read for the BA programme it was all taught by CI teachers. In 2014 the University of Malta employed the first local academics. Today, the University of Malta employs a mix of local and Chinese academics and is also supported by the CI teachers who teach a number of courses. The University of Malta currently offers a part-time evening Diploma[3] course in Chinese, a Bachelor's degree and a

[2] BA course programme: https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/programme/UBAHEACFT-2022-3-O
[3] Diploma course programme https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/programme/UDCHNPTE-2021-2-O

Master's [4]degree. There is also a programme in Traditional Chinese Medicine [5]aimed at students with a background in medicine. My involvement with the Chinese programme at the University of Malta is that I was a student between 2010 and 2014 and I was engaged to teach on a casual part-time basis two study units in Chinese culture during academic years 2017/2018 and 2018/2019. The students I taught graduated in December 2019 and were not asked to participate in the data collection of this research project because by the time invitation letters were sent out, and participants were recruited, the students had already completed their course of studies in Chinese at the University of Malta.

1.5.3.1 The boundary of this case study

This case study draws its boundary at the degree programme in Chinese at the University of Malta. This boundary has been drawn because the University of Malta is the biggest institution in Malta that employs the most teachers and academics of Chinese and that offers tuition by a mix of native and non-native speaker teachers. This boundary was also drawn because the teachers who participated in this study have never taught me: when I was a student all the teachers who taught me were CI teachers who have since left Malta. Also, I was never involved in course design or in teaching in the Degree programme, my only involvement in the degree programme was limited to when I was a student between 2010 and 2014. Three teachers participated in this research project: one teacher was interviewed only, while the other two teachers were interviewed, and their lessons were observed. Only one of the NNS teachers was interviewed because at the time of data collection, these teachers were not teaching a language study-unit.

Since I am a part-time PhD student, I have always worked throughout my candidature. Since 2009 I have been employed at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) where I teach English, and since 2015 I have also been employed (part-time) at the Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability within the MFED where I teach a course of elementary Mandarin Chinese

[4] Master course programme https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/programme/PMAEACPER2-2022-3-O
[5] Traditional Chinese Medicine programme https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/programme/PMTCMPDT2-2022-3-O

to adults once a week. Since 2019 I have been involved in the introduction of Mandarin Chinese as a foreign language in local government schools in Malta, and due to the requirement that teachers in government schools should be able to communicate in Maltese, I was involved in teaching elementary classes and in promoting Chinese as a foreign language option in the government school system. I was also involved in the setting up of the examination system for government schools. In conclusion, my direct involvement in Chinese in Malta is in the work done in government schools and in adult education within the MFED, thus the boundary of this case study will be the degree programme at the University of Malta: where I am not involved.

1.6 Justification for the use of EFL literature

This thesis is about the teaching of CFL in Malta, but it draws greatly on literature and on theory on EFL. This is because the point of departure of this research project is the studies carried out in the 1990s on NS and NNS teachers (especially those carried out by Medgyes 1991, 1992, 1994 and Braine, 1999) on NS and NNS teachers of English as a second or as a foreign language or of English as a lingua franca.

Burns' (2014) research is specifically on NS and NNS teachers of CFL in the American context. Sturniolo-Baker's (2015) study is specifically on perceptions of NS and NNS teachers of Italian in the Australian context. Both studies draw on literature and theory on EFL as English is a global language (Crystal 1997), and many studies have been conducted in the context of EFL. Since English is the most widely taught foreign language, scholars who study less commonly taught languages tend to refer to theory and to literature on English, and thus, this study follows that route as well.

1.7 The general layout of the thesis

The opening chapter of the thesis introduces this case study on CFL in Malta. The initial section provides some background and a general rationale that explains the motivation behind this research project. This chapter subsequently delves into the aims of this case study, the research questions and then it highlights some of the contributions of this research project, mainly to CFL in Malta. Then the chapter moves on to a description of the cultural and linguistic context of Malta, the setting of this case study. The section about the context of Malta briefly outlines the linguistic landscape of the island and gives an overview of the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language in Malta. This chapter further justifies why literature on the teaching of English was chosen as the theoretical underpinning for this research project. Finally, it concludes with this section which outlines the structure of the thesis.

The second chapter is a review of literature and theories that were used as theoretical framework for this study. This chapter reviews literature on language and identity, language and ethnicity, language and language ideology, and it also discusses arguments that idealise the native speaker, arguments that idealise the non-native speaker as teacher, arguments that claim that the native speaker is not defined or does not even exist, and arguments that claim that nativeness is a socio-cultural construct. This research project views nativeness as a socio-cultural construct and part of a person's cultural identity. The chapter subsequently delves into the theoretical framework of this research project in light of CFL teaching and learning in today's globalised world.

The third chapter focuses on the Chinese language: what the standard variety is, and its implications in CFL education. It also discusses my position vis-à-vis the Chinese language and provides an overview of CFL education.

The fourth chapter of this thesis describes the research methodology used to collect and analyse data in this case study research. After a brief introduction, the chapter discusses case study research. The second section of the methodology chapter discusses this case in more detail, the context, and the participants. The following section discusses the research instruments used in this case study:

interviews and lesson observation. The subsequent section of the third chapter explores the researcher's role in this case study. The chapter further explains how data was reduced, coded, and analysed. Subsequently, the chapter moves on to discuss ethical issues that were taken into consideration during the fieldwork in academic year 2020/2021.

The fifth chapter presents and discusses findings on the students' and teachers' perceptions of factors that construct the identities of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese in Malta. It investigates data collected from semi-structured interviews conducted with teachers and students of Chinese and discusses results in view of literature discussed in chapters two and three. This chapter answers the first research question on the participants' perceptions of factors that construct the identities of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese in the context of Malta.

The sixth chapter presents and discusses findings related to teaching methods employed by NS and NNS teachers collected through lesson observations in Malta and analysed in view of literature discussed in chapters two and three. Data collected through the interviews was triangulated with the data collected from lesson observations. This chapter answers the second research question on the teaching methods employed by NS and NNS.

The seventh chapter concludes the thesis. After a brief general conclusion, the first sub-section of the chapter presents conclusions related to the participants' perceptions on the identities of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese in Malta. Then, chapter seven moves on to explain how, as typical of case studies, the findings of this case study document what was going on within the case at a particular point in time and are not necessarily generalisable to other contexts or other points in time. Following this, chapter seven moves on to discuss limitations and recommendations, also making recommendations for further research that could be undertaken in future. Finally, there is a list of references.

This thesis also includes seven appendices. Appendix one is related to the field work done in academic year 2020/2021, including first a general plan of the data to be collected according to theme, and subsequently a table showing what data needs to be collected through interviews. The interview

questions in both English and Maltese versions follow these plans in table form. The document proceeds to list the plans to collect data from interviews, including the plans to collect data through classroom observations and the classroom observation sheet. Following this, the fieldwork timeline plan, and the timeline of the research project are delineated. Appendix two consists of the forms given to participants. These include the participant information sheet, consent form and ethics form. Appendix three contains the transcriptions of all the data collected from interviews. All interviews were transcribed and translated into English (where relevant). Appendix four is a compilation of quotations from the interviews according to themes discussed in chapter five. Appendix five contains all the data collected from lesson observation. Appendix six consists of a table that was prepared to display the data after the fieldwork was done. Finally, appendix seven comprises a reflective journal which the researcher kept during the fieldwork.

II

A review of literature on native and non-native speaker teachers, language identity and language ideology

2.1 Introduction to the literature review chapter

This chapter first reviews literature on the identities of native and non-native foreign language teachers. This thesis follows theory in Norton (2016) and Preece (2016) and views identity as fluid, multiple and socially constructed. Thus, identity is not static, it is continuously evolving, a person could have multiple identities that are socially constructed. Identity could be in relation to a person's gender, nationality and language, relationship to different people or contexts. For example, my identity is that of a woman, a teacher, a PhD student, a citizen of Malta and a native speaker of Maltese, a non-native speaker of English with a native-like proficiency, a daughter, a wife, a sister. All these factors construct my current identity, and since identity is fluid, for example my identity as a wife could change if I get divorced. My identity is also multiple and socially constructed because identity is constructed according to the context a person finds themselves in. For example, at home I am a wife, a daughter, a sister, at work in Malta I am a teacher and at the University of Southampton I am a student. Thus, identity is indeed fluid, multiple and socially constructed. This chapter reviews literature on the identities of NS and NNS FL teachers, then it moves on to the theoretical framework of this case study research project and it concludes with a summary of the chapter. The following chapter reviews literature and problematises the term "Chinese".

2.2 NS and NNS foreign language teachers

Braine's (2004) *In Their Own Voices: Non-native Speaker Professionals in TESOL* has contributed to much research and discussion on the native and non-native speaker dichotomy especially in the field of teaching EFL. Throughout the years, EFL has brought together many teachers and learners from

different cultural backgrounds, and it has become increasingly problematic to determine who is a native speaker and who is a non-native speaker of English. Initially, following Chomsky's (1965) arguments on the native speaker as the sole authority on their native language, NS teachers were deemed to be the ideal teachers to teach their language to foreigners who aspired to sound like the native speaker. Later, in the 1990s, NNS teachers were deemed to be "worthy" by Medgyes' (1992) pioneering work on the advantages of the NNS teacher who is closer to the students as they share their first language (L1). Medgyes' (1992) work also advocates the role of the NNS speaker teacher as a figure who is a role model for the students, as similar to the teacher who is also a non-native speaker of the target language (TL), it is also possible for the students to learn and to acquire proficiency in the TL.

Following Medgyes' (1992) work that promotes the "worth" of non-native speaker FL teachers, scholars (Boyle 1997; Braine 1999; Cook 1999; Cortazzi and Jin 1996; Davies 2003; Inbar-Lourie 1999; Rajagopalan 1999; Kramsch 1998; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002; Liang 2002; Liu 1999; Llurda 2005; Llurda and Huguet 2003; Mahboob 2004; Merino 1997; Modiano 2005; Moussu 2006; Kramsch 1993; Paikeday 1985; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Reves and Medgyes 1999; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler 1999; Seidlhofer 1999; Widdowson 1994) in different cultural contexts carried out research on NS and NNS teachers, their teaching methods, students' perceptions of them and teachers' own perspectives on the issue. Several studies have been done on students' perceptions of NS and NNS teachers and their teaching methods, especially in the field of EFL. A lot of research on students' perceptions of NS and NNS teachers prove Medgyes' and their contemporaries' conclusions, mainly the idea that sharing the L1 and the socio-cultural background with students is a great advantage of the NNS teacher.

In addition to the lack of clear definitions of what makes a NS and a NNS teacher especially in the context of CFL, language and identity is "one of the main trends" (De Bot 2015: 78) in applied linguistics. Issues related to identity, race and ethnicity in foreign language education have taken centre stage in

the volume edited by Preece (2016): *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity.* In light of this, it has been thought that in order to be more consistent with new trends in research in applied linguistics, this research project will focus on what actually makes the identity of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese and how such an identity is manifested in CFL classroom practice.

Despite the arguments that the terms "native speaker" or "nativeness" have not been defined and that being a so-called native speaker does not necessarily mean that one is proficient in a particular language, or proficient in the standard variety of a particular language, many schools worldwide still give preference to native speaker teachers and many students still aspire to sound like native speakers. This suggests that despite the lack of a definition of what a native speaker is, despite the arguments that nativeness does not necessarily equate to proficiency in the standard variety of a language, the terms NS and NNS are still in use in schools and in second and foreign language education. In view of this situation, the starting point of this research project is the idea that despite the lack of a clear definition, "nativeness" exists in the real world because a number of vacancies for teachers still ask for native speakers, and many studies have been conducted on students' perceptions of NS and NNS FL teachers.

On the same lines as Paikeday's (1985) argument that "the native speaker is dead" (see section 1.1.1), other scholars also argue that "nativeness" is not defined and does not necessarily reflect linguistic proficiency but rather a socio-cultural identity (Jager 2001; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011). So, with an apology to Paikeday, the native speaker is indeed alive as so many people identify as native speakers of a language/s irrelevant of their proficiency in the standard variety of the particular language/s. Thus, the concept of nativeness and people's identification as native speakers of a particular language/s is a socio-cultural construct related to a person's identity, ethnicity and race.

Chomsky's (1965) view on the native speaker as the ideal model of language proficiency and by extension, as the ideal teacher, has been criticised by a number of scholars (Beaugrande 1998; Cook 1995; Medgyes 1992; Nayar 2002; Norton 1997; Paikeday 1985; Phillipson 1992; Rajagopalan 2005;

Widdowson 1998, 2003) who argued that the term 'native speaker' is not clearly defined and the native speaker might not necessarily be the ideal teacher. Paikeday (1985), in their *The Native Speaker is Dead!* continues the discussion on the matter to the extent of considering the term 'native speaker' to be "systematically misleading" (Paikeday 1985:11).

It could be argued that the label NS is indeed misleading as it equates the concept of being a native speaker to having an excellent command of a particular language. In fact, Paikeday (1985) suggests the term "proficient-user" (Paikeday 1985:6) and Rampton (1990) suggests the term "expert speaker" (Rampton 1990:98) rather than the term 'native speaker' as the latter term does not necessarily imply language proficiency, but rather a cultural identity. It might be the case that a person who identifies as a native speaker of a particular language indeed has an excellent command of it, but this is not necessarily the case. This is because identifying as a native speaker is more related to cultural identity and not necessarily linked to language proficiency, since this is something that one acquires or learns, through social interaction, through reading, through exposure to a language, through formal instruction in a classroom or through any means in which one learns a language. People who claim to be native speakers of a particular language or languages tend to be proficient in the language or languages they claim to be native speakers of, but in actual fact they might have varying levels of proficiency in the different language skills. One might claim to be a native speaker of a particular language that is the dominant or the official language of the country where they were born or where they lived for a long time or that they identify with culturally, but this does not necessarily mean that the person is proficient in all the aspects of the language. Thus, one could argue that being a 'native speaker' is a question of cultural identity since one claims to be a native speaker of a particular language because they identify with the language and its culture, not necessarily because of one's proficiency in the standard variety of the language.

The notion of the non-native speaker teacher came about as the demand for teachers of English as a Foreign Language increased as English became a global lingua franca (Crystal 1997, 2003) and 'native

speaker' teachers were not always available to satisfy the demand in all parts of the word. Thus, non-native speaker teachers had to be employed in the absence of native speaker teachers of EFL. This situation led to the birth of research on NNS teachers, especially in the EFL industry as the number of NNS teachers was on the rise and possibly in parts of the world even outnumbering their NS counterparts.

One of the early seminal works on NNS EFL teachers was conducted by Medgyes (1991, 1992, who discussed the "worth" (Medgyes 1992:340) of NNS teachers of EFL. Braine (2005) considers Medgyes' research to be "pioneering work" (Braine 2005:13) in the study on NNS teachers. A number of other scholars (Boyle 1997; Braine 1999; Cheung 2002; Cook 1999; Cortazzi and Jin 1996; Davies 1991; Inbar-Lourie and Rajagopalan 2001; Kramsch 1998; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002; Liang 2002; Liu 1999; Llurda 2005; Llurda and Huguet 2003; Mahboob 2003; Merino 1997; Modiano 2001; Moussu 2002; McKay and Kramsch 1993; Paikeday 1985; Rajagopalan 2003, 2005; Rampton 1990; Reves and Medgyes 1994; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler 1999; Seidlhofer 1999; Widdowson 1994) furthered the study on NNS foreign language teachers, many of whom advocated the advantages of NNS teachers who share the L1 with their students as being much closer to the learners (on a cultural and linguistic level, among other factors) than their NS counterparts. Such close proximity between teacher and students might be more affective because the NNS teachers had learned the TL as a foreign language after the age of mother tongue acquisition and they understand what students go through and what students expect in the particular cultural context where the teaching and learning is taking place.

Despite this, all the advantages a NNS teacher might have, namely that of sharing the L1 and the cultural background with the students could also be assets that a NS teacher might have, a NS might also have an excellent command of the students' L1 and could be very familiar with the students' socio-cultural context, so the issue might not be whether the teacher is a NS or a NNS, but rather about the teacher's knowledge of the students' L1 and of the country where teaching and learning are taking place and how to bridge the gap between the learners and the TL.

The majority of the studies mentioned above are on NS and NNS teachers of EFL conducted in the 1980s, 1990s or in the early 2000s and they tend to be quite stereotypical since they do not take into consideration that NS teachers might be very proficient in the L1 of the students and that they may be very much aware of the socio-cultural context of the country where they are teaching. The studies mentioned above are also stereotypical because they assume that NNS teachers share the L1 with their students and that all the students in class and the teacher share a common L1. In today's classroom, this is not always the case. In addition to these scenarios, an even bigger question emerges: what makes a native speaker?

Chomsky's (1965) idealisation of the NS has been criticised because the definition of who the native speaker actually is, and what makes a native speaker, is not clear. Such a lack of a definition of the terms NS and NNS has also been criticised and an attempt to a definition has been challenged, because the definition has been deemed to be too vague, judgemental and even racist (Beaugrande 1998; Edge 1988; Medgyes 1994; McKay 2000; Phillipson 1992; Rajagopalan 2005; Widdowson 1998). To label a person as NS or NNS has always been confusing and is becoming increasingly perplexing as such a label may suggest a number of factors such as nationality, ethnicity, birth place, language proficiency, identity, place of residence, among other factors (Kamhi-Stein 2000; Liu 1999; Medgyes 1994, 1996; Phillipson 1992, 1996; Rampton 1990; Seidlhofer 1996, 1999) which are not necessarily related to linguistic proficiency.

Other scholars (Cook 1995; Norton 1997) argue that Chomsky's idealisation of the native speaker excludes speakers of the language as a second or as a foreign language. Norton (1997) stresses that foreign language users are legitimate speakers of the language and thus have a sense of belonging in the particular language that they learned or that they are learning, so ownership of particular language is not necessarily a matter of birth or nativeness. Cook (1995), Widdowson (1998) and others argue that L2 and FL learners should not be compared to monolingual speakers of a particular language, but they could be compared to other L2 or FL users. This is because the needs and goals of L2 or FL

speakers are different to those of monolingual L1 speakers, and the multilingual or bilingual mind of an L2 or FL speaker is diverse to that of a monolingual L1 speaker. Cook (1995) also points out that L2 and FL speakers should not be labelled as failed native speakers who are constantly striving to become native-like because this is not an accurate representation. In this respect, Saniei (2011) argues that in today's globalised world, many languages no longer have geographical borders and it is very doubtful whether a purely monolingual country whose citizens are native speakers of the language they are born in actually exists.

Several scholars (Anchimbe 2006; Christoppherson 1988; Cook 1995, 1999; Jager 2001; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011) avoid the terms NS and NNS and suggest terms such as Cook's (1995) "multi-competent language users" (Cook 1995:94) to refer to foreign speakers of a language. Rampton (1990) coins the term "language expertise" (Rampton 1990:98) and Saniei (2011) introduces the term "ideal language user" (Saniei 2011:76) to refer to proficient speakers of a language. Such terms do not take one's ethnicity and identity into consideration, but merely refer to linguistic proficiency. Such terms are very positive and non-discriminatory as they refer to one's linguistic abilities rather than to one's birthplace or ethnic background. Jager (2001:52) also refers to the language proficiency of individuals rather than birthplace or ethnicity in the term "intercultural speaker" when referring to the ideal speaker of a language. This is because this term suggests that the learner does not have to leave behind their socio-cultural identity, but rather they are able to facilitate communication between diverse cultures.

The discussion about NS and NNS teachers and how worthy they are perceived by their students and how worthy they perceive themselves to be in order to teach the foreign language has its origins in the early 1990s when scholars (Medgyes 1991, 1994; McKay 1992; Pennycook 1999; Phillipson 1992; Prodromou 1992; Rampton 1990; Widdowson 1992, 1994) started to raise questions on the issue of NS and NNS in the EFL industry and they endeavoured to conduct research focusing on whether NNS teachers could be as worthy as NS teachers in ESL and EFL classrooms. A number of studies (Braine 1999; Inbar-Lourie and Rajagopalan; Liu 1999; Lasagabaster and Sierra-Basque 2002; Llurda and

Huguet 2003; Llurda 2005; Mahboob 2003; Medgyes 1991, 1994; Moussou 2002; Reves and Medgyes 1994; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler 1999) discuss how NNS teachers perceive themselves. Studies have also been conducted about learners' perceptions (Cheung 2002; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002; Liang 2002 and Moussu 2002) and employers' perceptions of NNS teachers.

Several scholars (De Angelis 2007; Hammarberg 2001; McNeill 2005; Medgyes 1992, 1994; Odlin 1989) argue that NNS teachers have a great advantage over their NS counterparts because they tend to predict learners' difficulties and errors. Other scholars (De Angelis 2007; Hammarberg 2001; McNeill 2005; James and Garrett 1991; Odlin 1989) further argue that NS teachers tend to be less aware of students' difficulties because, since they acquired the TL as native speakers, they do not consciously remember the process of learning the TL. This is very much debatable because multilingual teachers have consciously been through the process of learning foreign languages, which enables them to be aware of the challenges learners may encounter, despite the fact that they may have not learned the particular language they are teaching as a foreign language. Indeed, many experienced teachers, irrespective of their L1, are able to predict learners' difficulties and errors as a result of their extensive teaching experience.

A number of scholars who advocate the advantages related to being NNS teachers (Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005; Llurda 2005; Medgyes 1992; Pacek 2005; Reynolds-Case 2013) argue that NNS foreign language teachers tend to consider themselves to be on the interlanguage continuum (Selinker 1972) and thus learners themselves, as they still encounter and learn new words and expressions in the TL. This identity of teachers as learners leads many NNS teachers to include themselves in the same cultural community as the students, while NS teachers tend to exclude the students from the TL community. Such an argument does not necessarily hold true, especially in the case of FL teachers who are multilingual and who have been through, or who might be going through the process of learning foreign languages while teaching.

The literature discussed above on native and non-native speaker teachers suggests that nativeness is part of a person's socio-cultural identity and is related to one's ethnicity, birthplace, and identity, thus not necessarily linked to one's linguistic proficiency. The following section discusses in more detail literature on identity as a socio-cultural construct especially in the light of foreign language teaching and learning.

2.3 Identity as a socio-cultural construct and foreign language education

Most studies on ethnicity, race, and the construction of identity are predominantly conducted within the fields of sociology or anthropology, and much less has been written on the construction of identity through the perspective of second or foreign language education (Kubota and Lin 2006). The studies conducted on race and the construction of identity in language education are almost all in the fields of teaching English as a second or as a foreign language (Kubota and Lin 2006; Curtis and Romney 2006). Despite this, many other languages other than English are taught as second or as foreign languages, and the learners do not only learn grammar rules, vocabulary and pronunciation, but they also undergo a negotiation of their identity as they adapt to become speakers of an additional language. Thus, the construction of one's identity is an important aspect of FL teaching and learning, and it is an emerging area of research.

Some consider identity to simply comprise a set of inherent attributes that are used to categorise people into groups. Such essentialist ideas tend to lead to overgeneralisation and to stereotypes. On the other hand, scholars (Block 2016; Blommaert 2006; De Bot 2015; Hall 1996; Kubota and Lin 2006; Norton and Toohey 2002; Norton 2016; Preece 2016) view identity from a non-essentialist perspective and speak of it as multiple, fluid and as socially constructed. Hall (1996:4) views identity from a non-essentialist perspective and as constructed, referring to it as "the process of becoming rather than being", "not 'who we are' or 'where we came from' but rather what we might become". In view of such a non-essentialist perspective, this thesis discusses and researches the construction of NS and NNS identity from a non-essentialist perspective: identity as multiple, fluid and constructed socially.

The discussion that follows is a review of literature on identity as socially constructed from the point of view of foreign language education.

The issue of language and identity was discussed in a chapter entitled 'Identity and Language Learning' by Norton and Toohey (2002) The authors argue that language is not only a "linguistic system of signs and symbols, but also a complex social practice" (Norton: xxii, 2016). De Bot (2015: 78) argues that identity is "one of the main trends" in applied linguistics and the volume edited by Preece (2016): *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity,* takes identity as its central theme. The volume discusses issues related to identity, race, and ethnicity in foreign language education. Identity in view of FL teaching is also the central theme of this thesis.

According to Norton (1997:420), identity could be "social", "sociocultural", "cultural" or "ethnic". This is very much in line with the argument that the idea of "nativeness" does not necessarily reflect language proficiency but rather a cultural, ethnic, and social identity. This is because a person could identify as a native speaker of a particular language without actually being fully proficient in it. They may lack literacy in the language, or proficiency in its standard variety, however the person would nonetheless identify with a particular language or languages culturally and socially.

A common definition of identity is considered to be what one is: one's self (Gao, Li and Li 2002; Kanno and Norton 2003), how one relates to the world around them, and also the identities ascribed by others on one's self (Blommaert 2006; Hawkins 2005). A number of scholars studied identity in the field of foreign language education (Baker 2015; Block 2016; Bourdieu 1977; Cook 1999; Cummins 2000; Curtis and Romney 2006; Duff 2012; Inbar-Lourie 1999; Lave and Wenger 1991; Norton 1997; 2000; Preece 2016; Weedon 1987, 1997). Peirce (1995) suggests that a person might have multiple identities and that identity is not static, (Block 2016; Darvin and Norton 2015; Norton and Gao 2008; Hall 1996), it is constructed socially, it might be fragmentary, and it might change by time. Peirce (1995) also argues that there could also be power relations in one's construction of identity, for example, teacher/student, NS/NNS.

Even though identity is in a constant state of change, it "is grounded in beliefs about the past" (Joseph 2016: 19). One of the factors that play a role in one's sense of belonging to a community is the sharing of a common language (Joseph 2016; Sériot 2014) and history. The idea that a common language plays an important role in the building of a nation state, and in forming the people's identity, leads to the idea of the standard language and the issue of nativeness. Joseph (2016: 29) argues that "the concept of native speaker is historically bound up with that of the standard language" because with the rise of the European nation states and their languages, it was assumed that people who lived in a particular geographical area were also native speakers of the language of the country where they lived. Of course, this is an illusion as Preece (2010, 2016) argues that people might not necessarily speak the standard variety of the language of their country, but they might be speakers of a dialect or of both the standard and of a dialect/s. This argument that one might not be a native speaker of the Standard variety is especially relevant to Chinese, as will be discussed in the next section.

2.4 The standard language and CFL education

As discussed in more depth in the following chapter, the term Chinese includes many dialects (or even languages) that are not mutually intelligible. Despite the linguistic diversity, learning the standard Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese) is both a legal right and an obligation in China and this also has an impact on the teaching of CFL in the West. This implies that in theory, all teachers of Mandarin Chinese in the West teach and speak Standard Putonghua in class, as, whether they identify as native speakers or as non-native speakers, they have all learned Standard Putonghua through formal education. This further emphasises that nativeness is a socio-cultural construct related to a person's ethnicity and cultural identity, especially in the case of Mandarin Chinese, where both ethnically Chinese and non-ethnically Chinese teachers could have learned Standard Putonghua formally in a classroom context, and not necessarily acquired it since birth as a native language. To further emphasise that nativeness is related to cultural identity, a person might be a native speaker of one of the 130 minority languages in China (Ramsey 1987; Sun, Hu and Huang 2007; Zhou 2003), and even if their proficiency in Standard

Putonghua might not be very high or if they might be illiterate, they still identify as native speakers of Chinese because one's identification as a native speaker of a language is part of their cultural identity and not necessarily related to their linguistic proficiency.

The fact that languages and dialects in China are not all mutually intelligible suggests that NS teachers (those of Chinese ethnic origin) and NNS teachers (those of Western ethnic origin) might be in a similar situation, linguistically. This is because both NS and NNS teachers might not be native speakers of Standard Putonghua and they could have learned Standard Putonghua formally in a classroom setting and not acquired it since birth. It might be more accessible for a person to learn a language in the same language family of languages that they already know. Hence, a NS of one of the Chinese languages who had exposure to different aspects of Chinese since their birth would probably find it easier to learn standard Putonghua compared to a NS of English or a Semitic language, who had no exposure to any Chinese whatsoever in their childhood. In addition to language family, it is easier for a person to learn a language with a script that is familiar, so it would be easier for a person who is accustomed to writing in Chinese characters to learn Putonghua than those whose familiar script is the Latin or the Arabic alphabet. There are other linguistic studies that suggest that age plays a role in learning languages. So possibly, NS teachers (of ethnic Chinese origin) might have been exposed to Standard Putonghua earlier in life than a person who lived all their life in the West without much exposure to Chinese during their childhood and early adulthood. In addition to this, a person brought up in China has exposure to standard Putonghua in the society around them, at school, in the media and in other contexts, while a NNS (of Western origin) might not have such exposure to Chinese. The idea that the age when a language was acquired plays a role in making a native speaker is discussed in more depth in the following section on first language acquisition.

2.5 First Language Acquisition and the Critical Period Hypothesis

According to the Critical Period Hypothesis developed by neurologists Penfield and Roberts (1959), a human child can naturally acquire a language if they are exposed to it and if they have the necessary biological brain structures within a particular timeframe.

This timeframe has been the subject of much debate. Lenneberg, who further expanded on Penfield and Roberts (1959)'s theory in 1967 argued that the critical age starts at the age of two years and lasts until puberty. After Lenneberg (1967), others debated whether the critical age starts before the age of two years, even before birth. Lightbown and Spada (1999) opine that by the fourth year of age, children would normally have understood their native language. Studies by Mehler et al, (1988) found out that newborn babies show preference to the language or to languages they heard during gestation. Other studies by Querleu et al. (1988), Nazzi et al. (1998), Dehaene-Lambertz et al. (2006) and Dehaene-Lambertz and Pena (2001) found out that newborn babies can distinguish between languages of different rhythmic families and can also perceive differences between other phonetic properties of the language they are exposed to. Research done by Nazzi and Ramus (2003) shows that four-month-old babies can recognise the language they are regularly exposed to, that is their native language from another language that sounds similar. The ending of the timeframe when a human could naturally acquire a language is generally agreed to be puberty, as by this time, according to Penfield and Roberts (1959), the lateralization of the linguistic function in the left hemisphere of the brain occurs, thus resulting in a decrease of the brain's plasticity. After this lateralization occurs at a point during puberty, languages are no longer acquired naturally but are learned through more conscious effort. Thus, the term *acquisition* is usually used when speaking about a child's natural acquisition of their first language (or possibly languages in cases of multilingual families or multiple caregivers) that occurs as a natural process without any conscious effort, while the term *learning* is used when a person, usually post-puberty makes a conscious effort to learn a language. Such a *learning* process, usually involves effort and is not as efficient as the natural acquisition of a language/s.

It is important to note that age is not the only factor necessary for the natural acquisition of a language or of more than one language, exposure to the language and the necessary biological mechanisms are necessary. There are numerous studies on children who did not acquire language because they were not given enough exposure to a language, for example Genie's case (Curtiss et al. 1974) who was not exposed to human language during the critical age. There are other studies that show that children did not acquire language because of hearing impairment (for example Berent 1996, Friedmann and Haddad-Hanna 2014) or because they were deaf and were not exposed to sign language during the critical age. Vygotsky (1978) and others (Berko-Gleason 1982) stress the role of social interaction in language acquisition and discusses the case of Jim, a hearing child born to deaf parents whose lack of interaction in spoken language resulted in delayed language acquisition.

Following proponents of behaviourism (Lightbown and Spada 1999; Skinner 1957) scholars explain that first language acquisition is a result of sufficient exposure to and interaction in the language, imitation and positive reinforcement. Despite this, imitation of the language a child is exposed to is not enough for acquisition to take place, social interaction also has to take place (Berko-Gleason 1982; Vygotsky 1978) and as Brown (2000: 42) posits, "*interaction,* rather than exposure, is required; children do not learn language from overhearing the conversations of others or from listening to the radio, and must, instead, acquire it in the context of being spoken to." The emphasis on the word *interaction* in this quotation from Brown (2000) stresses the importance of the social dimension in the acquisition of a child's native language/s.

In addition to the social dimension and the Behaviourist theories of language acquisition, nativist theories developed by Chomsky (1981) explain how humans have an innate natural ability to acquire language as they have an innate ability to eat, for instance, if they have the necessary biological requirements. (This thesis does not delve into language acquisition and neuro-diversity, it discusses factors that make a native or a non-native speaker in predominantly neuro-typical individuals). This theory is known as Universal Grammar; what Chomsky (1981) referred to as "the little black box"; the

innate natural ability to acquire the language/s a child is spoken to during the critical time (Brown 2000; Lenneberg 1967; Penfield and Roberts 1959).

Thus, in view of the theory on language acquisition discussed above, this thesis uses the term native speaker to refer to a person who naturally acquired a language between birth and puberty through social interaction during the critical time, while a non-native speaker is someone who learned the language, usually after the critical time. Such learning of a language by a non-native speaker is done consciously, with a lot of effort, it lacks the natural acquisition of native speakers, and it could be through formal instruction in class or social interaction or through both. This concept was tested by asking participants what they think makes a native speaker and a non-native speaker of Chinese.

This discussion on language acquisition does not take into account the possibility of those who acquire more than one language natively, during the critical period. While this study presents a view of the native speaker as a person who acquired one language natively, it also acknowledges the idea that during the critical period, a child could acquire more than one language, concurrently or separately. The idea of a multilingual native speaker is discussed in more depth in the following section.

2.6 The Multilingual Native Speaker

Several studies depict the native speaker as being monolingual or to have acquired one language natively. In view of this, Dewaele (2018:236) opines that the concept of the native speaker has "a strong monolingual bias" and similarly, Kramsch (1998:80) considers the native speaker to be a "monolingual, mono-cultural abstraction", suggesting that the native speaker has one language and one culture. In view of the multilingual reality of our world, this "strong monolingual bias" of native speakers has been discussed and criticised in several studies (for example in Brutt-Griffler and Samimy 2001; Bonfiglio 2010; Cook 2016; Ortega 2016) and several scholars (Grosjean 1982, 2010; Romaine 1989; Myers-Scotton 2006, among others) argue that the linguistic reality of many people is multilingual.

To account for such a multilingual reality, some studies use terms such as L1, L2, L3 to refer to languages acquired or learned chronologically, very often the L1 being the first language a person acquires, one's native language. In this study, participants perceive themselves to be native speakers of the first language they acquired, many of them also refer to Malta as their birthplace and to Maltese as their first/native language. Hammarberg (2014:3) posits that the L2 usually "refers to (a) any non-native language in a speaker's repertoire, […] (b) the chronologically second language acquired by a speaker" while "the L3 may stand for (a) the chronologically third language (a frequent conception), or (b) the next language encountered after the simultaneous acquisition of two languages in early infancy (Cenoz, 2000), or (c) any non-native language currently being acquired by a speaker who is already familiar with one or more other non-native languages."

The view presented by Hammarberg (2014) above suggests a chronological manner in a person's acquisition or learning of languages and does not account for simultaneous language acquisition, which is a reality in many families and communities.

To raise bilingual children who acquire two languages simultaneously, Barron-Hauwaert (2004) follows Grammont's (1902) idea of "one person, one language", and presents the one-parent-one-language approach, where each parent is encouraged to speak to children in one language to ensure that children acquire a language from each of their parents. Such a strategy tends to overlook the translanguaging and code-switching that naturally occurs in bilingual speech and tends to present a view where languages are learned in isolation, which is not always necessarily the case. This is because bi/multilinguals code-switch "in order to maximize communicative potential" García (2009:140) and for multilinguals, languages are not necessarily separate.

In their (2022) chapter entitled, *The multilingual and multicompetent native speaker,* Jessner, Hofer and Malzer-Papp argue that in view of the multicultural and multilingual realities of today's globalised world, the concept of the native speaker needs to be discussed even further as a person could be a native speaker of more than one language, if they acquired the languages during the critical period.

Families that follow Barron-Hauwaert's (2004) approach would result in children identifying as native speakers of two languages, if they get equal interaction in both languages during the critical period. This is especially significant in the case of Chinese, because as discussed in more detail in the third chapter, the term Chinese encompasses many dialects or even languages, thus one could be a native speaker of more than one variety, or one could have learned another variety as an L2 or L3.

In the introduction to The Bilingualism Reader, Wei (2007) discusses code-switching and argues that bilingual persons are not necessarily equally proficient in the two languages. Since code-switching and language contact are the norm, people who acquired more than one language natively might have acquired the languages simultaneously rather than sequentially. Apart from acquiring two languages possibly by exposure in different contexts or through interaction with different people, (for example Barron-Hauwaert's (2004) one-parent one-language approach), "a bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person" (Grosjean 1989:15) but a rather more holistic person, thus switching from one language to another is normal and for people who acquired multiple native languages at the same time, translanguaging was part of their native language acquisition. Thus, one could identify as a native speaker of more than one language even if they acquired them successively or at the same time.

In view of the multilingual reality, this study acknowledges that a person could acquire more than one language natively, either successively or simultaneously and code-switch from one language to another. Despite this possibility, no data on the acquisition of multiple languages was collected during fieldwork as the participants spoke about a successive learning of languages.

Since nativeness is linked to language acquisition in childhood, exposure by the immediate family in a child's surroundings, the following section explores language and its link to ethnicity, to the country and to the people who live there.

2.7 Language and ethnicity

Language is one of the criteria that has traditionally been linked to one's ethnicity, cultural identity, and sense of belonging to a particular nation. The German philosopher Herder (1783) links language to nationality "has a nationality anything dearer than the speech of its father? In its speech resides its whole thought domain, its tradition, history, religion and basis of life, all its heart and soul. To deprive a people of its speech is to deprive it of its eternal good … With language is created the heart of the people." Herder (1783) quoted in Lytra (2007:134).

The above quotation from Herder (1783) has a strong sense of nationalism, at a time and place when the national language was a defining factor of identity in the formation of the European nation states. Despite this, even in the context of the setting up of the European nation states with their respective national languages, their populations still did not necessarily speak the chosen standard variety of the national language.

Lytra (2007) has researched the link between language and ethnic identity, arguing that the use of language is linked to beliefs about language that might be individual or societal, political, or historical. Scholars (Garcia 2010; Lytra 2007) argue that through language, individuals assert membership in a group. Harris (2011) claims that ethnicity from the perspective of applied linguistics has not been thoroughly explored. Lytra (2016) posits that ethnicity and language identity ascribed by oneself and by others is still relevant in today's world, presenting two views on ethnic identity; one that is inherited and static, while the other which is fluid and constructed socially.

The idea of language, the mother tongue, inherited through one's ethnicity does not necessarily equal to one's identity, especially in today's world. The understanding of identity has currently shifted to be more fluid and not as fixed as it was previously thought. Fishman (1999:4) argued that "although language has rarely been equated with the totality of ethnicity, it has, in certain historical, regional and disciplinary contexts, been accorded priority within that totality". In Malta, within the cultural context where this case study is set, Maltese language is the main factor that unites the nation and

makes a person Maltese. In fact, to integrate in society, immigrants are encouraged to learn the local language. Despite the fact that officially Malta is bilingual in Maltese and English, Maltese is the language mostly used in all domains, both official and domestic (Sciriha and Vassallo 2003, 2006). The research conducted by Sciriha and Vassallo in 2003 and subsequently in 2006 is quite dated because the demographics in Malta have changed significantly, especially with the migration that took place after the cessation of the lockdown measures of 2020. It is very noticeable that Malta's linguistic landscape has changed significantly since the publication by Sciriha and Vassallo (2003, 2006) as is evident in the data published by the National Statistics Office (Malta) published in January 2024 that show that nearly a quarter of Maltese children under the age of 10 years claimed that English is their L1.

In the context of CFL education, issues of ethnicity, language ownership, and nativeness are important because the Standard variety, "Putonghua did not have any native speakers in the 1950s" (Zhou 2019: 72) and "70% of Chinese population spoke Putonghua by 2016" (Zhou 2019: 72). The statistics show that ethnicity or nationality do not necessarily equate to nativeness in Putonghua, but ethnicity definitely plays a role in language ownership and belonging in the Chinese socio-cultural identity (Liebold and Chen 2014; Tsung 2014; Zhou 2016, 2019). Despite the issue whether one is a native speaker or an L2 speaker of Putonghua, ethnicity and the sense of belonging to the nation contribute to the construction of one's identity, but the construction of identity is much more complex and fluid than merely ethnicity or nationality.

2.8 Identity and language ideology

Successful foreign language learning does not only involve learning grammar, vocabulary, and linguistic structures, but it also involves learning the pragmatic norms of the TL in order to communicate effectively in a way that is socially acceptable in TL culture. The relevance of learning cultural norms is particularly manifested when a language is learned as a foreign language. This is because in this context, learners aspire to communicate with native speakers of the TL, as in the case

of Chinese, where most learners learn Chinese in order to be able to communicate with native speakers. This is different to when the aim of learning the TL is that of being used as a lingua franca, with speakers who are not necessarily native speakers and who are not necessarily aware of cultural norms relevant to the TL. At this point, English is a global language (Baker 2015; Crystal1997, 2003; Jenkins 2015, Wang 2020) because it is used as a lingua franca for international communication among people whose native languages are different, while Chinese is learned by non-Chinese people mostly to better communicate with native speakers of Chinese. Thus, understanding of cultural and pragmatic norms is relevant to CFL because most learners aim to be able to communicate with native speakers of Chinese in a way that is socially appropriate.

Language socialisation is a field of study that focuses on how second/foreign language learners learn to become "speakers of cultures" (Ochs and Schieffelin 2011:7). In addition to the language structures, learners also learn to communicate in the TL in a way that is socially acceptable (Duff 2012; Ochs and Schieffelin 2011). Language socialisation could be learned through lessons, through textbooks, and also through learning how to write Chinese characters and their meanings (He 2003). Learning and adapting to new cultural norms when speaking the TL also enhances one's cultural identity, as through learning a new language one opens up to new ways of thinking.

Silverstein (1979; 194-196) uses the term "linguistic ideology" to discuss anthropological linguistics (Gumperz 1982, 1982; Hymes 1972; Rumsey 1990); the relationship between linguistic structures and ideology. Language ideology is socially constructed (Heller 2007; Makoni and Pennycook 2007; Lytra 2016), and it relates to beliefs and attitudes on language; for example, beliefs on the Standard variety and on dialects, on nativeness, on language ownership, and on other issues that are not relevant to this case study such as gender. Language ideology and beliefs on language are fluid and may change over time (Duff and Talmy 2011) and may be conscious or unconscious (De Oliveira 2001; Zhou 2019). Zhou (2019:32) argues that "beliefs are usually the conscious aspect of ideology, but the generalization of these beliefs in language is often unconscious to the speakers". Zhou (2019: 36) defines "language

ideology as a system of ideas, presuppositions, beliefs, attitudes, and values regarding languages, their status, and their use in society."

Numerous studies have researched the link between ethnic identity and language use, the earliest studies (conducted in the 1970s and 1980s) on ethnicity and language use focused on code-switching to include or to exclude other interlocutors (Gumperz 1982). The ideology that the NS is superior to the NNS excludes non-native speakers of a foreign language as they might feel that despite their efforts to study, they will never reach the so-called native speaker ideal due to their ethnicity or cultural identity. In fact, recent research argues that in the absence of a clear definition of nativeness, the distinctions between the so-called NS and NNS are actually harmful in second and foreign language education because such labels suggests that despite the students' motivation and efforts, they can never reach the so called NS ideal, and one of the main reasons for this is their ethnicity and socio-cultural identity. Thus, due to the lack of a definition of nativeness, scholars (Beaugrande

1998; Davies 2003; Edge 1988; Kamhi-Stein 2000; Liu 1999; Medgyes 1992, 1999; McKay 2000; Phillipson 1992; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Seidlhofer 1996, 1999; Widdowson 1992, 1994) argue that the labels NS and NNS are not only linguistically inaccurate, but also unethical or even racist, and potentially harmful to students and to teachers.

2.8.1 NS and NNS cultural identities and foreign language education

Following Chomsky's (1965) view that native speakers are the only authority on their mother tongue led to the idealisation of NS teachers of English. The portrayal of NS teachers as the rightful owners of their mother tongue who teach it to non-native speakers implies a power dynamic. This implies that the NS, being the rightful owners of the language, are able to teach it to the "inferior" NNS who need to learn the TL but can never reach the ideal status of a NS. In the context of teaching EFL, such a situation reminds us of colonialism, where typically, the native monolingual English teacher of Anglophone background, who was traditionally perceived to be the owner of English, taught English to the colonised non-native peoples. Poststructuralist theories of Foucault (1979) and Bourdieu (1991)

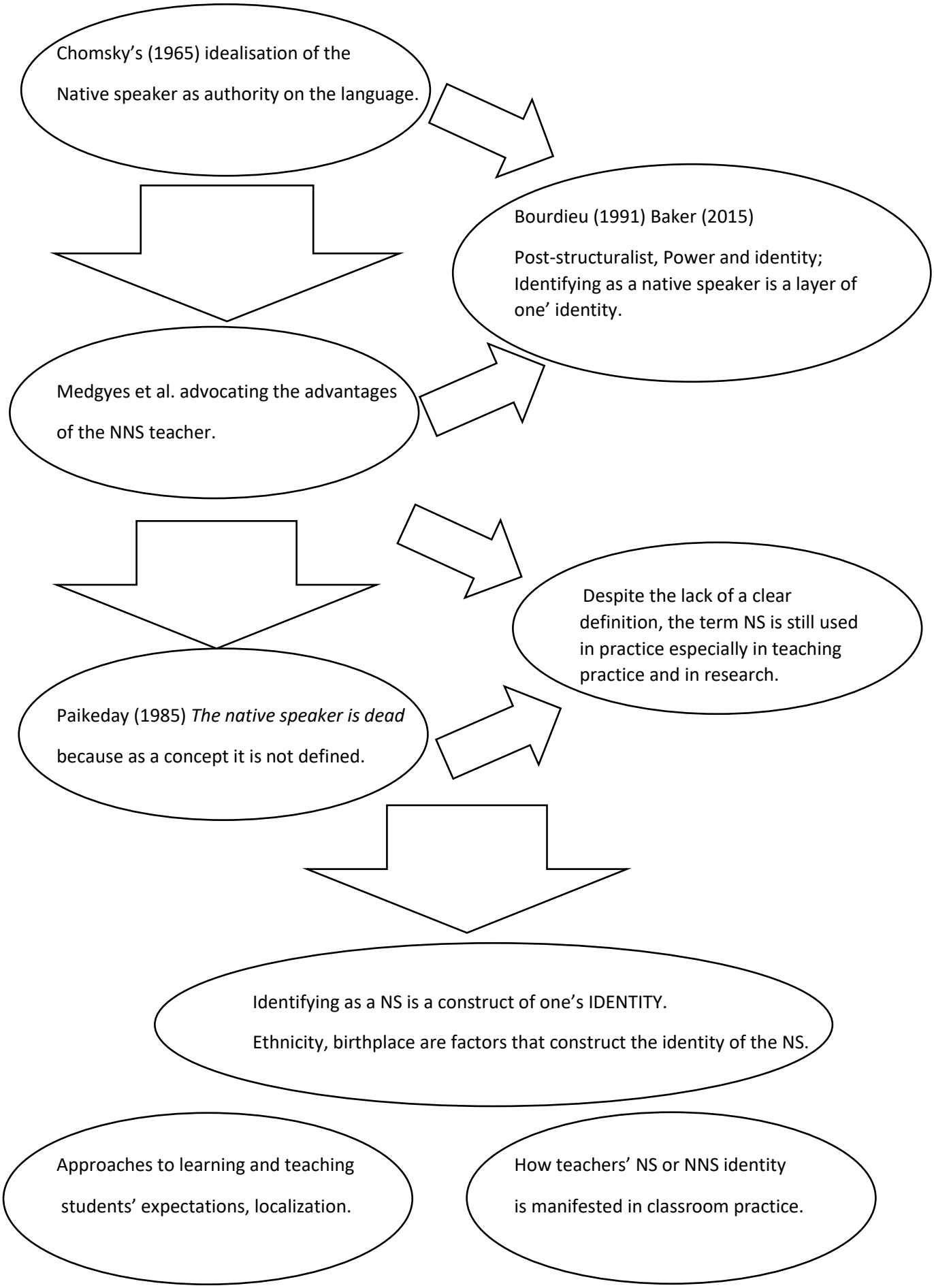
discuss identity in relation to power dynamics in society. In the context of this study, the power-relations are those between native speakers and non-native speakers and such power-relations between native and non-native speakers is relevant to this study because while the historical situation of English and colonialism is irrelevant to CFL education, similar to the monolingual English teacher of Anglophone background in the past, native speakers of Chinese are generally perceived to be the owners of the language because identifying as a native speaker of Chinese forms part of a person's identity. Despite the importance of attributes such as ethnicity, race and birthplace that construct a person's identity as a native speaker of Chinese and their effect on FL education, such topics remain on the margins of scholarship on FL teaching (Byram 2012, Fang and Baker 2017), especially in the field of CFL education.

While keeping in mind the theories and conclusions of the research of scholars mentioned above, in the post 2020 world, I believe that the classroom and the world have become more complex and that labelling teachers and people simply as NS and NNS according to their cultural identity, ethnicity or birthplace is too simplistic. This is because the vast majority of the studies listed above were mostly conducted in socio-cultural contexts where English was being taught as a second or as a foreign language in a classroom where the NNS teacher and all the students shared the same socio-cultural and linguistic background and the same L1. In the context of the studies mentioned above, the NS teacher was always the "foreigner", the one who typically came from the UK, the US or from any other predominantly English-speaking country to teach their mother tongue, probably monolingual and one whose appearance was "white" and who ticked all the boxes of a stereotypical "native" English-speaking person. Such a situation portrayed in the studies conducted throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, is very often far from the reality in today's classrooms. The quotation from Pratt's (1991:575) 'Arts of the Contact Zone', where they say that foreign language classrooms are "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other" is relevant today, more than ever. Today's classrooms are more diverse and multilingual. Students in a classroom do not necessarily share the same socio-cultural and linguistic background, the NNS teacher might not share the L1 with all

students in class, and the NS teacher might be very proficient in the L1 of the students, and nativeness is indeed constructed, fluid and complex. In view of the complexity of the multilingual situations in classrooms today, ideology surrounding native and non-native speaker teachers is still prevalent in FL teaching today both inside and outside countries where a language is spoken the most widely. Such ideas about nativeness and language ideology form the basis of the theoretical framework of this thesis, as is discussed in the following section.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

The sections above review literature on various issues related to nativeness, including Chomsky's (1965) theory on the native speaker as the sole authority on their native language which led to the idealisation of NS teachers. Subsequently, Medgyes (1994) et al. argued that NNS teachers are "worthy" and Paikeday (1985) argued that "the native speaker is dead". Other scholars advocated for terms such as "proficient user" (Christopherson 1988, Jager 2001; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011) rather than native speaker, and other scholars discussed issues related to race, ethnicity and birthplace (Baker 2015; Bourdieu 1977) and language. This case study takes the theories discussed in this chapter as theoretical framework to explore students' and teachers' perceptions about native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese in Malta. The theoretical framework is illustrated in the following page in a more visual manner.


Chomsky's (1965) idealisation of the Native speaker as authority on the language.
Bourdieu (1991) Baker (2015)
Post-structuralist, Power and identity; Identifying as a native speaker is a layer of one' identity.
Medgyes et al. advocating the advantages of the NNS teacher.
Despite the lack of a clear definition, the term NS is still used in practice especially in teaching practice and in research.
Paikeday (1985) *The native speaker is dead* because as a concept it is not defined.
Identifying as a NS is a construct of one's IDENTITY.
Ethnicity, birthplace are factors that construct the identity of the NS.
Approaches to learning and teaching students' expectations, localization.
How teachers' NS or NNS identity is manifested in classroom practice.

2.10 Summary of the chapter

This chapter reviews theory on identity as a socio-cultural construct in relation to language. Following a discussion on issues related to identity, the chapter moves on to a discussion on the standard variety and its importance particularly in CFL education. Then the chapter moves on to give an overview on the critical period hypothesis in relation to first language acquisition and on the possibility of the acquisition of multiple native languages. The chapter subsequently continues the discussion on standard language and ethnicity, and how identity is relevant to language ideology. The final section of this chapter describes the theoretical framework of this case study, and it concludes with this summary.

III

Chinese, its diversity and the teaching of Chinese in China and beyond

3.1 The term Chinese

In *Language and Nation: Crossroads and Connections*, Barstad *et al.* (2016:9), state that "It is obvious that there is a strong link between nation and language." The authors mention the building of various nation states within Europe whose individual languages contribute to the identity of the nation and its people. Scholars (Shapiro & Der Derian 1989, Bartelson 1995, Cronin 1996, Neumann 1996) have discussed the close links between a nation and its language and like the 2016 volume mentioned above, this thesis starts off with the idea that a nation is closely linked to its language, and that language is an important factor in the building the national identity.

In the case of modern China, ideas of a united nation state rose towards the beginning of the twentieth century. There are several factors such as a language, history and culture that unite a people into a nation. Meissner (2006:41-54) lists seven factors that construct the Chinese national identity, as follows:

(i) The long history of China
(ii) The shared identity of the Han people as descendants of the Yellow Emperor
(iii) The notion of a Chinese Empire continuing through different dynasties
(iv) The uniqueness of the Chinese language
(v) Shared traditions of religion and philosophy
(vi) Chinese literature, art and music,
(vii) Chinese achievements in the area of medicine, ceramics, and the invention of printing, papermaking, gunpowder, and the compass.[6]

The term "the Chinese language" listed as the fourth point, is according to Meissner (2006) one of the factors that construct the Chinese nation, but the term 'Chinese language' has a lot to unpack.

Wei (2022) states that: “Like most languages in this world, the Chinese language is a socio-political construct. It is not a monolithic system. In fact, far from it, Chinese as a linguistic system consists of multiple mutually unintelligible spoken varieties, united, to an extent, by a shared writing system.”

(Wei in Tsokalidou, Sen and Qun 2022:259)

Bloomfield (1933) states that: “Chinese is not a single language but a family of languages made up of a variety of mutually unintelligible languages. (Bloomfield 1933 quoted in Simpson 2016).”

According to Zhou (2019:44), China “has over one hundred thirty languages officially or scholarly recognized” (Sun, Hu and Huang, 2007) that are not necessarily mutually intelligible. In fact, in the Foreword to Zhou’s (2019) book, Ramsey states that “the many unintelligible varieties of that “Chinese language” are at least as diverse as all the Romance family of languages combined.” (Zhou 2019: viii).

The statements quoted above make it clear that Chinese is linguistically not a single language. Wei (2022) compares Chinese to “most languages in this world” where language is “a socio-political construct.” This is because many languages are linked to countries and nations, whose boundaries are usually socio-political and not necessarily linguistic.

Despite the linguistic diversity in China and notwithstanding the fact that not all Chinese dialects are mutually intelligible, Chinese as a unified language gives a sense of unity to the nation. Considering the linguistic diversity within China, the PRC National Common Language and Script Law, effective since 2001, recognises “Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese) as the national common language and standardised and simplified characters as the national common script.” (Zhou 2019:16, translated into English by Rohsenow, 2004). The law also “stipulates citizens’ rights and obligations to learn and use the common language and script” (Zhou 2019: 16).

Linguistically, Wheatley (2011) defines the term Chinese by way of comparison to European languages as follows: “Chinese is to the modern Chinese languages as Romance is to the modern Latin languages

French, Spanish, Italian, and so on. Finally, in its most narrow sense, it can refer to the modern standard language, often called Mandarin by English speakers." (Wheatley 2011:35)

Wheatley's (2011) definition equates the term 'Chinese' to the term 'Romance'. Thus, since the term 'Romance' is an umbrella term for the languages of the same family of languages, the term 'Chinese' is also an umbrella term for languages of the same family of languages, namely Sino-Tibetan languages within China. Wheatley's (2011) definition of the term Chinese also refers to the English term 'Mandarin' and states that the term 'Chinese' is equal to the term 'Mandarin' that refers to the Standard. Wheatley's (2011) definition is useful to define the English terms 'Chinese' and 'Mandarin': the term Chinese refers to all the Sino-Tibetan languages in China, primarily languages written in Chinese characters, what Bloomfield (1933) defines as "a family of languages", while the term Mandarin refers to the standard variety - the language that was traditionally studied by officials in the imperial court.

This thesis uses the English terms Chinese and Mandarin as defined above, but further distinctions and definitions need to be made. Below is a historical overview of the development of the terms *Zhongwen* 中文， *Hanyu* 汉语，*Guoyu* 国语，*Huayu* 华语 and *Putonghua* 普通话; terms that could all be translated into English as 'Chinese'.

Towards the beginning of the twentieth century, the notion of China as a modern nation was taking shape. As discussed above, language is closely linked to nation-building and at the end of imperial China there were various arguments on which language variety will give China its national identity. China had a long and rich culture of ancient philosophical texts written in Chinese characters, but literacy was only available to the few scholars. Thinkers who advocated the idea of China as a modern nation at the beginning of the twentieth century argued that for China to become a modern nation like the nations in the west, education needed to be more widespread.

China, as a modern nation, like modern European nations, needed a standard language that is intelligible across different geographical areas to give it a national identity. It was even suggested that

Esperanto was to be adopted as the Standard language, but such a suggestion was criticised because Esperanto is based on foreign, European languages. It was suggested to move to a Romanised way of writing Chinese in an attempt to simplify the written language. This suggestion was also criticised because like the idea of Esperanto, it is too foreign and it would have meant the loss of the ancient tradition of Chinese characters; Chinese characters being the main factor that unifies the dialects spoken in different parts of China. Actually, Chinese characters, apart from their long and rich history are also very economic because a single character "can store much more valuable information than linear language scripts" (Giuffrè 2022:306). Apart from their cultural value, Chinese characters are necessary for the language because only through characters could a distinction be made among syllables that are homophones.

Thankfully, the characters were retained and simplified. In the 1950s, to increase literacy and especially with the introduction of computers, Hanyu Pinyin was developed by Zhou You Guang 周有光 (1906-2017). The simplification of the characters and the invention of Hanyu Pinyin in the 1950s were important steps in modernisation, and contributed towards enhanced literacy.

The issue at hand was not that China had no Standard written language, but rather that the standard classical *wenyan* 文言 written language differed from any vernacular spoken at the time. China had a tradition of a classical standardised written language made up of characters that literati learned to write and to recite poetry according to the pronunciation established in the Tang Dynasty (618-907). Tang Dynasty China also saw the technology of printing, thus there was a standardised writing system.

Despite the standardisation that the classical language provided, because of the time that had passed, pronunciation varied in different parts of China, and speech was not intelligible. Leaders at the beginning of the twentieth century and advocates of the vernacular language movement wanted to educate the general population and promoted the idea of a standard language that is accessible to everyone, and that gives people a national identity. This aim is made clear in De Francis' title of the

chapter 'One State, One People, One Language' in the volume *Nationalism and Language Reform in China* (1950). Below is a brief overview of how this aim was reached throughout the years.

The use of the term *guanhua*, translated into English through Portuguese as Mandarin dates to the middle of the Ming Dynasty. European missionaries used this term to refer to the language used by Chinese officials of the time. The Portuguese used the term Mandarin to refer to the officials at court and also to the language that they spoke. This language was based on northern dialects and was the lingua franca of the educated officials. *Guanhua* is the earliest form of today's standard language, and the term Mandarin in English still survives today to refer to the Standard variety of Chinese that is distinguished from other Chinese dialects. Records of the use of the term Mandarin as the standard Chinese language, date back to the sixteenth century as quoted in South Coblin's (2000) article entitled *A Brief History of Mandarin* quotes Alessandro Vilignano (1539-1606), *Historia del Principio y progresso de la Compaia de Jesus en las Indias Orientales* (1542-1564) "The Chinese have different languages in different provinces, to such an extent that they cannot understand each other.... [They] also have another language which is like a universal and common language; this is the official language of the mandarins and of the court; it is among them like Latin among ourselves.... Two of our fathers [Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607) and Matteo Ricci] have been learning this mandarin language..."

Matteo Ricci, November 12, 1592: "The letters are common in all fifteen provinces of China. However, the language in each of the provinces is different. There is also a universal language. We call it the language of the law courts. Because this language is used in all the tribunals by all magistrates coming from different provinces, it is the one that we are learning."

The statements quoted above evidence that there was a standard official language that even foreigners were learning to communicate with people in different geographical areas. The issue was that the classical standard was different from the vernacular and was not accessible to the general population. It is also said that at the time of the First Emperor "the idea of a standard spoken Chinese

did exist, and it was called *yayan*, 'elegant speech'" (Wei, 2022:265). Of course, this language was exclusive for scholars and for the ruling class.

Kaske (2006) quotes Qiu Tingliang, "Lun Baihua wei Weixin zhi Ben" (Baihua is the Root to Reform), in "Qingmo Baihuawen Yundong Ziliao" (Materials of the Baihua Movement during the late Qing Dynasty) (1963:123) who argues that "in the West ... they first used the Egypt pictographic signs, later they switched to the new Roman writing, and still later, each country started to use its own dialect. They translated the ancient works of Greece and Rome, established educational officials and made [the translations] part of the curriculum. From this time, new books and journals were published daily without an end, and all people, knowledgeable or not, were able to read them. That is why their people are well educated and they are ruling the whole earth. This is the result of the European vernaculars."

The quotation above shows that the use of the vernacular languages in Europe resulted in more widespread literacy and education of the general population that led to the building of modern nations. Similarly, in China, literacy and education had to become more accessible to the general population to build a modern society. During the Republican Period (1912-1949), also with ideas of nationalism of the time, efforts towards standardisation of the spoken language were initiated.

3.1.1 The National Language *guoyu* 国语

In 1911, the idea of abandoning the study of the classics and the adoption of a modern, vernacular language (*baihua* 白话) was being advocated by many people involved in education. After the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911, the first Minister of Education, Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868-1940) who had lived in Germany, removed the Confucian Classics from compulsory education to free time in the curriculum that could be dedicated to the study of language. Cai Yuanpei along with Hu Shi (1891-1962) advocated the use of the vernacular, the *baihua* and advocated the importance of the use of the vernacular in *New Youth, Xin Qing Nian* 新青年 a journal of Peking University.

Hu Yilu who had studied modern linguistics in Tokyo was at the time appointed to teach 'National Language Studies' Guoyu Xue 国语学 at Peking University. They also authored the first linguistics book in China that was entitled *The Creation of National Language Studies* Guo yu xue Cao chuang (Kaske 2006). Among other topics, the book discusses the standard language and dialects and brings up the idea of a national language in relation to other foreign languages.

In 1912, the need to make literacy and education more widespread in the modern nation led the Republic to organise a conference whose aim was to unify the pronunciation. Initially, no consensus was reached between advocates of the pronunciation of the north and advocates of the pronunciation of the south, but eventually, after many debates and arguments, it was decided that *guoyu* 国语, the national language will be taught in schools. In 1932 the Commission responsible for the unification of the language published the 'Vocabulary of National Pronunciation for Everyday use' *(Guo yin chang yong zi hui).* The pronunciation in this dictionary reflected the pronunciation of the dialect spoken in Beijing. While having a standard national language unifies the nation and makes literacy more accessible to the common people, it also puts those who are not speakers of a dialect close to the national language at a disadvantage.

The May Fourth Movement was a momentous time in history, characterised by the promotion of the use of the so called 'vernacular' in popular literature over the use of the classical language. The main point of the *baihua* movement was to make the written language reflect the spoken language. One of the proponents of the use of this literary revolution, Hu Shi, who in their 1919 article entitled *A Literary Revolution in China* expressed the concept of the *baihua* as "language of everyday conversation," "plain language," "spoken tongue," "vulgate Chinese," "spoken Chinese," "popular tongue," "spoken language," "living spoken language" (Chih-P'ing Chou, (ed.) 2013). Such terms clearly show that now the written language is no longer the language of the Mandarins - the Confucian Scholars of the past, but it reflects the speech of the people. In fact, according to Xu (2002) and Guo (2004), the sense of nationalism in China among the general population started in the nineteenth century.

One of the scholars of the May Fourth movement, Cai Yuanpei (1959) argued that "on the issue of national language, the most important is the competition between *baihua* and *wenyan*" (Cai Yuanpei quoted in Lin 2020:284). Vera Schwarcz (1986) opines that the choice to write literature in the vernacular, shows how the authors at the time wanted to consciously move away from the classical tradition of literature that was only accessible to the very few literate scholars but rather to a literature accessible to the general population. The writers at the time wanted "change and poetic freedom from all fetters of tradition" (Giuffrè 2020:40) and the idea that the May Fourth writers chose to use *baihua* to write their literature instead of *wenyan* shows that *wenyan* and *baihua* are two different concepts (Lin 2020). Such a choice also shows that the May Fourth writers have made a conscious decision to write literature in a language that is more accessible to the general population.

The quotation below from the 1927 publication of the Chinese National Language Educational Association (*Guoyu Jiaoyu Cujin Hui*) entitled 'National Language Monthly' (Guoyu Yuebao) clearly shows the importance of a national language that unifies the nation.

> A unified country should have a unified spirit. Where, then, does a unified spirit exist? It exists in the connections and unity among the thinking and feelings of the people. How do the thinking and feelings of the people of the whole country become connected and united? The solution lies in a unified speech and a script that reflects speech. (Guoyu Yuebao 1927:5 quoted in Weng, 2018.)
>
> 統一的國家, 應該有統一的精神。統一的精神, 從那 [sic] 裡來呢？在於人民思想、感情的溝通 和團結。全國人民的思想感情, 怎麼會溝通和團結呢？在於由統一的語言和言文一致的文字。

The ideas that the standard language is that spoken by the common people and that which unifies the nation continued to develop with the historical and the political developments of China. *Guoyu*, the national language was promoted through education and several textbooks were published and fairs were held to promote and to spread its use (Weng 2018) especially in schools. Throughout the Republican Period (1912-1949), textbooks and schools played a very important role in spreading the national language. The Ministry of Education collaborated with local municipal education bureaus (jiaoyu ju) to set up mobile schools (liudong xuexiao) and to organise fairs and other events to promote the use of the national language especially among teachers so that they in turn would teach the

national language in their schools. Weng (2018) in their paper entitled *What Is Mandarin? The Social Project of Language Standardization in Early Republican China* refers to the Wu Zhihui Papers at Stanford (1933) that mention four fairs held in 1930 to promote the national language: two fairs were held in Shanghai and two fairs were held in Nanjing during which teachers' abilities in the national language were tested (Chinese National Language Educational Association 1930a, 1930b, 1930c, 1930d). In addition to efforts in teacher training and text-book publication, the 1920s and 1930 was a time when the media was developing, and the national language was also being used to communicate with the people through the media.

The term *guoyu* dates back to 1918 and is used in Taiwan to refer to the national language. The term *huayu* 华语 (the language of the Hua) is used in Singapore to refer to the official language, Hua is a title for the Chinese ethnic group (Wheatley 2011). The term *huayu* is also used to refer to the Chinese language by overseas Chinese who live in different parts of the world. Both the terms *guoyu* and *huayu* refer to the Chinese language and are generally used outside of mainland China. The official term used in modern China to refer to the standard language is *Putonghua.*

There are also the terms *hanyu* 汉语 and *zhongwen* 中文, the former means the language of the Han people while the latter means Chinese language. Both terms are used to refer to Chinese. According to Wei (2022:270) 90% of the population of China speak *hanyu*. The rest of the population speak languages of other language families. Despite the popular usage of the terms *hanyu* and *zhongwen*, the official term used in the PRC to refer to the standard official language is *Putonghua* 普通话.

3.1.2 Mandarin Chinese *Putonghua* 普通话

Throughout the 1950s, the term *putonghua* 普通话 was developed to reflect a more modern identity of the People's Republic where the official language that unifies the nation is that of the common people. In 1956, Zhou Enlai, as the first Premier of the People's Republic of China, explains what China's national language should be "the basis for unifying Chinese (*hanyu*) already exists; that is,

taking the pronunciation (*yuyin*) of Beijing as the standard pronunciation; taking the northern dialects as the base dialect; and taking the classics of modern vernacular (*baihuawen*) literature as the grammatical norm of the common language (*putonghua*) (Zhou Enlai 1956 quoted in Weng 2018). 汉语统一的基础已经存在了, 这就是以北京语音为标准音、以北方话为基础方言、以典范的现 代白话文著作为语法规范的普通话。”

Tam (2016) quoted in Weng (2018) opines that Mandarin is an “invention” whose aim is “to capture that which united all of China’s people” (Tam 2016:282). The ingredients that make up Putonghua that Zhou Enlai mentions in the quotation above suggest that the standard language is created to unify the nation. The creation of standard Putonghua is necessary, that is to have a standard language that unifies the nation and that gives a Chinese national identity. Putonghua is the standard language that made China like the other modern nations that have their own standard language, giving them a unified sense of national identity. Apart from national identity, a standard language also has a practical purpose; spoken information could be understood across different geographical areas.

The 1982 new constitution of the People’s Republic of China promoted the spread of Putonghua throughout the nation. Putonghua is taught in the education system, spoken on the media, entertainment, business and by officials. Even though regional dialects exist in different parts of China, with widespread education, “Putonghua has become *the* language of China.” (Kane 2006:23) The 2001 Chinese Language Law encourages the use of Putonghua and makes it the official standard version of the language. While the use of regional dialects is acceptable in informal situations, “as Putonghua has increasingly become associated with modernity and higher levels of education and socio-economic status, it has come to be used more frequently not just in those domains where it is officially promoted (education, media, and government administration) but also in informal interaction, and ever more so by urban younger generations.” (Simpson 2016:97)

This thesis uses the term ‘Chinese’ (*Hanyu* 汉语/*Zhongwen* 中文) as an umbrella term to refer to the languages and dialects of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages, written in Chinese characters and

spoken in China. This thesis uses the term Standard Putonghua to specifically refer to the standard language that is taught in schools and in formal instruction to foreigners and whose pronunciation is used in recordings for textbooks designed for the teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL). The thesis uses the term Putonghua because this is the term used in the Chinese constitution to refer to the Standard language in China. This thesis does not use the term Mandarin to refer to the standard variety of the Chinese language but uses the term Putonghua for a couple of main reasons: the first is that the term Mandarin is historically of European origin, and it is an old term that as discussed above referred to the educated elites in imperial times. The term Putonghua is the most modern term used to refer to the Standard Chinese language. Secondly, the term Mandarin can also denote a group of dialects similar to the terms Cantonese and Hokkien that refer to other dialect groups within the Chinese language. In light of this, this thesis distinguishes between the terms Chinese and Putonghua and uses both terms. Of course, Putonghua falls under the umbrella term Chinese.

This distinction is important to be made in this thesis because respondents will be asked whether they perceive a distinction between what makes a native speaker of Chinese and what makes a native speaker of Standard Putonghua (during interviews, the term used was Standard Putonghua: the term standard was used to emphasise that Putonghua is the Standard official language of China). While this thesis distinguishes between the term Chinese and the term Putonghua, in Malta, where this study is set, the term Chinese is mostly used in course descriptions of programmes offered by the University of Malta. [7]The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (MFED) [8]also uses the term Chinese in its list of subjects taught in state schools, but syllabi [9]and the Learning Outcomes Framework [10]and all examination papers [11]issued by the Ministry use the term Chinese (Mandarin). The general use of the term Chinese throughout the education system in Malta is because only

[7] https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/UBAHEACFT-2022-3-O
[8] https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/new_syllabi/Pages/year_07_08_new_syllabi.aspx
[9] https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/new_syllabi/Documents/Year_07_08/Chinese_Yr07_Syllabus_Sept_2018.pdf
[10] https://www.schoolslearningoutcomes.edu.mt/en/subjects/chinese
[11] https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1RpwlRcjhl7EAM-DeddFdIAHdvFAITeW8

Mandarin and no other Chinese dialect is taught in Malta. The section below describes my position vis-à-vis the terms described above.

3.2 My position vis-à-vis Chinese

Following the discussion on terms that are all translatable into English as 'Chinese' above, this section is a reflection on my position vis-à-vis Chinese.

Terms such as *hanyu* 汉语 and *zhongwen* 中文 that are translated into English as *Chinese* and the term *putonghua* 普通话 is translated into English as *Mandarin Chinese* because it refers to the standard variety of the language. Sociolinguistics research does not always distinguish between the terms, but this thesis makes a clear distinction between them because in fact there are distinctions and they do make a difference in CFL teaching and learning. In view of all this distinction, I position myself as a person who only studied standard *putonghua* 普通话 from Confucius Institute teachers sent to the University of Malta between 2010 and 2014. Thus, even though I am aware that the term Chinese is an umbrella term for many dialects and possibly even languages spoken in China and by Chinese heritage speakers overseas, I am very aware of the fact that I possess some knowledge of the standard variety (*Putonghua* 普通话) only. The fact that I started to learn *Putonghua* as an adult at university definitely shows that I am not a native speaker but only a learner.

My position is that to China and the Chinese, I am a foreigner, my identity is Maltese and European, my native language and identity are Maltese, and I also feel that I am a proficient speaker of English since my university education was done in English, and I have been teaching English at college in Malta for fifteen years.

My position with Chinese is that I am a learner of Chinese (specifically *putonghua* 普通话 because I only learned from textbooks and lessons) as a foreign language. Of course, I am very aware that my proficiency level is only around intermediate level in *putonghua* 普通话, thus I do not consider myself to be a speaker of Chinese, but rather still a learner, while I consider myself a speaker of English

because I have a good proficiency in English. The fact that English is an international language gives me a sense of belonging as an international, non-native speaker of English while in Chinese I feel that I am a foreigner who is only learning the standard variety of the language. Despite the fact that I am a foreigner vis-à-vis Chinese and I am happy with my Maltese European identity, as a foreigner who chose to study Mandarin Chinese in adulthood, I have an affinity for the Chinese language and culture, and I like sharing what I have learned with other Maltese people.

3.3 A brief outline of FL teaching methods

Before the ensuing discussion on CFL teaching methods, this preceding section briefly describes methods and approaches to FL teaching in view of how they developed historically and as listed by the seminal work by Richards and Rogers (1986).

The first method listed by Richards and Rogers (1986) is the grammar-translation method and this method was used to teach Latin. Literary texts were the main focus of teachers and learners of Latin, and grammar rules and vocabulary were memorised so that the learner would be able to understand, possibly recite, and translate a text in Latin into another language, for example English. Since Latin is no longer a spoken language, the first or the second language of the student and the teacher was the main language used for instruction and substantial amount of translation from Latin into the language of instruction and vice-versa took place. The purpose of learning Latin was mainly to deal with written texts, not to actually communicate orally, (one must note that Latin is still used within the Catholic Church) thus the grammar-translation method served the purpose of learning Latin or any other classical language that is no longer spoken.

The second method listed by Richards and Rogers (1986) is the direct method. This method was developed in the nineteenth century, and it was based on children's L1 acquisition, thus it was also known as the natural method. This method did not involve any translation, there was no formal explanation of grammar rules, but learners were expected to acquire grammar structures 'naturally' like children acquire their L1 through exposure to the language and the need to communicate to get

food and other basic needs. It was possible that the teacher was a monolingual speaker of the target language or if the teacher spoke other languages that the learners were familiar with, they were prohibited from using any other language other than the target language. Thus, teachers had to use pictures, realia and visual prompts, and act out during the lesson while constantly immersing the learners in the target language, and through such exposure, the learners were expected to acquire grammar rules and be able to speak to the teacher in the TL. This method was further developed by Berlitz (1909) and is also known as the Berlitz method. This method was used in the Berlitz chain of schools and by other private schools that mostly employed native speaker teachers of English.

The third method of FL teaching listed by Richards and Rogers (1986) is the audio-lingual method. This method was developed at around the time of the Second World War when the US joined the war and interpreters and speakers of different foreign languages were required. This method was based on the theory of Behaviourism developed by Skinner (1957) where language teaching is treated as a response to a stimulus. During war time the need to learn a foreign language was to actually communicate in the TL. Students were provided with model sentences by the teacher as a stimulus and learners had to respond to the stimulus by forming their own sentences modelled on the examples given by the teacher. Model sentences and patterns were drilled in class so that students would build good habits when speaking in the TL. Model dialogues were also used in class as part of the teaching process and good sentence productions by the students were positively reinforced. The use of this method based on the theory of Behaviourism declined in the 1960s with Chomsky's (1966) theory that language learning is not a habitual act.

The third method listed by Richards and Rogers (1986) is the total physical response method developed by Asher (1977) and it is based on developmental psychology. This method is based on games where the teacher uses the imperative and gives learners instructions that learners need to listen to and understand, leading to the development of learners' speaking skills in the target language.

It was thought that this method was similar to how children acquire their L1, where they are first exposed to it and after listening and understanding, they would eventually start to speak.

The fourth method listed by Richards and Rogers (1986) is the silent way which was developed by Gattegno (1972). This method focuses on learning vocabulary and grammar through the learners' independence and criteria they set for themselves. The teacher is silent, and the learners do most of the talking in class, and if learners make errors, such errors are accepted as part of the learning process. The teacher sets up situations which learners need to talk about, and the teacher's role is to monitor the learners' progress in communicating in the TL. The teacher uses aids, charts, and rods to point to objects and to elicit utterances in the TL.

The fifth method listed by Richards and Rogers (1986) is community language learning and it was developed by Curran (1972) and colleagues. This method viewed the learner as a member of society, and it focused on teaching learners what they want to learn. This method does not prescribe a set syllabus but rather it advocates the study of topics that learners deem to be important and choose to learn about. This method is mostly employed in FL conversation classes where free conversation among groups of learners takes place to enhance their spoken competence and fluency.

The sixth method of foreign language teaching listed by Richards and Rogers (1986) is Suggestopedia. This method was developed by Lozanov (1978) in Bulgaria and is based on Soviet psychology. Consciousness and the surroundings are considered to be important factors in the successful learning of a foreign language. This method considers the classroom set-up, the furniture, the lighting, and the use of soft music to be important in FL teaching and learning, to create a relaxed ambience that aids memorisation of vocabulary. Students work in pairs, adopt a name in the TL, and act out set dialogues and role-plays to practise their spoken language competences.

The seventh and final method of FL teaching and learning listed by Richards and Rogers (1986) is the communicative approach to FL teaching that was developed throughout the 1970s and 1980s in Britain and in Europe. The main aim of this method is for learners to achieve what Hymes (1972)

termed as “communicative competence”: the ability to communicate in authentic real-life situations in a foreign language. The emphasis is no longer on the learning of grammar structures or lists of vocabulary; the emphasis is now on communication. The communicative approach draws on Halliday’s (1970) theory on the function of language where language is used to communicate something, thus FL teaching needs to satisfy the learners’ needs to be able to communicate in the TL. Widdowson (1978) also advocated the relationship between language and its purpose in real-life communication.

In the communicative approach, teaching is in-context and learners are presented with authentic tasks where they need to communicate in the TL to show their progress in learning how to communicate in the TL. Realia, pictures, videos, and other visual prompts are used by teachers, and the main emphasis is to have lessons where learners practise real life communication in the TL. Set tasks are also very practical and show learners’ ability to communicate in the TL in real-life situations. Syllabuses that are based on the communicative approach identify a number of topics, for example introducing oneself, eating at a restaurant, travelling, shopping, asking for directions, daily routine and others, where lessons and assessment designed on communicating in the TL in such real-life situations.

In Malta, the context where data for this research project was collected, the communicative approach is prescribed to be used by education leaders and policy makers. In Malta, even assessment should be according to the communicative approach, and it needs to show the learners’ ability to communicate in both receptive skills: listening and reading, and in both production skills: speaking and writing. The communicative approach is student-centred rather than teacher-centred and learners are given the opportunity to actively participate in class and to speak in the TL. The students’ L1 or any other language could be used as needed. Society has changed since the communicative approach was developed in the 1970s and 1980s, however, the aim of learning a foreign language is still that of being able to communicate in it.

After 2020, the post-communicative approach started to be discussed by scholars (Margaroni and Magos 2020). The post-communicative approach is an approach to FL teaching which takes identity,

citizenship, migration, and other factors pertinent to today's world into consideration. This method "has been characterized by an emphasis on the strong power of language to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct social reality" (Margaroni and Magos 2020:1). This thesis fits in with studies in the post-communicative method because it problematises and researches the identities of native and non-native speaker teachers in view of CFL teaching and learning.

The post-communicative method does not only take foreign language teaching into consideration, but it also involves the critical analysis of texts used in FL teaching (Chapman and Hobbel 2010, Gorski and Seema 2018). In view of this, a further study that could be carried out following this one, is one that analyses the teaching materials used in CFL teaching and learning in Malta, and how the identity of different speakers of Chinese is presented in textbooks, assessment/exam papers, classroom displays and other teaching materials used in CFL classrooms in Malta.

As in the communicative approach, the post-communicative approach is also task-based and learner-centred, but it emphasises critical thinking even more than the communicative approach. The post-communicative approach uses the theory of critical discourse analysis as developed by Fairclough and Wodak (1997) and Wodak et al. (2004) as language not only creates meaning (De Saussure's (1974) signifier and the signified) to communicate a message but it also creates beliefs (Margaroni and Magos 2020:2). The post-communicative method to FL teaching also considers the learners' intercultural competence (Liddicoat et al. 2003), and other issues related to learners' identities and how identity plays an important role while learning an additional foreign language (Norton 2016; Preece 2016).

All the methods described above were developed chronologically and were used in different countries across classrooms with all learners, irrelevant of their age, needs and abilities. For example, in the context of Malta where data for this study was collected, up to now (January 2024), all language teachers are expected to use the communicative approach irrelevant of the age and needs of the learners. In the 2000s, such a position was challenged because a single method is not necessarily affective for all language learners and ideas on the post-method approach and the context approach

(Bax 2003) have been developed. The post-method approach takes into consideration the context where teaching and learning is taking place and adapts teaching according to the needs and the aspirations of the learners. Through the case study approach, that provides a snapshot of the state of affairs at a particular time within a specific boundary, this thesis describes how Chinese is being taught in Malta, in other words, it identifies which teaching methods and approaches are used and by whom. Such a description of how things stand could lead to further studies on which methods are effective to teach a particular aspect of the target language, for example, which method is effective to teach recognition of characters, which method is effective to teach writing characters, which method is effective to teach pronunciation, tone, grammar particles, and all the different aspects of Chinese.

The post-communicative approach to FL teaching is very relevant to this study because it focuses on identity in teaching and learning Chinese as a foreign language in Malta. The discussion on the main approaches to foreign language teaching as they were developed chronologically is important because following the definition of the identities of the native and the non-native speaker teacher of Chinese in chapter five, chapter six describes and discusses the teaching methods used by native and non-native speaker teachers. The following section moves on to discuss methods and approaches to teaching CFL inside and outside of China.

3.4 CFL education

3.4.1 An introduction to CFL education

Before a discussion on CFL pedagogy could start, it is important to point out that even though Sinology has quite a history in Western universities, CFL pedagogy in the West is still quite a new discipline (Wang 2020). According to Shei (2020), the term 'to-external Han-language' (Shei 2020: 32) (dui wai han yu) 对外汉语 was coined in the 1950s to refer to the teaching of Chinese to foreigners. Today, Chinese is taught as a foreign language to foreign, non-Chinese students who move to China to study Chinese, what Cui (2010) calls to 'welcome in' and to foreign students outside of China, what Cui (2010) calls 'going abroad'.

In addition to this, Han Ban and the establishment of the Confucius Institutes system does a lot of work in developing teaching pedagogy and teacher training, especially for the Western context, but still more specialised work for particular contexts is necessary as countries in the West have different educational systems and are different sociolinguistic and sociocultural contexts. Scholars (Moloney and Xu 2015; Orton 2008, 2016) have discussed CFL pedagogy and pointed out that CFL teachers and learners come from a varied background and that there is not only one definitive method how CFL should be taught, but instead, different pedagogies are appropriate for different contexts. The research presented in this thesis shows the pedagogy being used in Malta during the period of data collection, which contributes to research on CFL pedagogy used outside of China in the particular context of Malta.

Moloney and Xu (2015, 2016) argue that "expertise appropriate to different contexts must be recognised […] many new autonomous and authoritative community bases producing innovative and effective pedagogy" (Moloney and Xu 2016:3) are being researched and created, and CFL is no longer prescribed by a higher authority, but rather it is increasingly approached within a more contextual approach (Bax 2003).

Moloney and Xu (2016) argue that "CFL is facing complex new requirements in new international teaching environments and it will be enhanced by the application of better pedagogic solutions to meet those needs." (Moloney and Xu 2016:3). In fact, in 2014 Han Ban discussed 'localisation' in its conference with the aim of developing pedagogies that are more specialised and appropriate to the particular countries where Confucius Institute teachers and volunteers are dispatched for teaching. Scholars (Tsung and Cruickshank 2011; Xu and Moloney 2014) have discussed the diversity of students and their cultural and sociolinguistic backgrounds, and the different needs of different learners in light of the ever-increasing demand for courses and teachers of CFL. "Thus, it has been recognised as an important strategy to sustain CFL growth if overseas students can be trained to be qualified CFL

teachers to return to engage in teaching and developing locally suitable materials and methods in their home country." (Moloney and Xu 2016:6)

Scholars (Hu 2002; Li 1996; Liu and Lo Bianco 2007; Moloney and Xu 2012, 2015, 2016; Orton 2008, 2016; Wang et al. 2016) argue that despite the ever-growing demand for CFL teaching, CFL is still being taught through a traditional pedagogic approach modelled on how English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is taught in China (Hu 2002). Thus, many NS Chinese teachers tend to adopt the methods that worked for them when they learned EFL in China. Such methods are not necessarily effective when one learns CFL in a particular context in the West (Orton 2008; Liu and Lo Bianco 2007; Moloney and Xu 2015). In order to teach CFL in the West, Moloney and Xu (2016) argue that "CFL teachers have to sometimes un-learn previous practice, then learn how to teach effectively to local learners, gain understanding of the school system, the domestic culture, the characteristics of the students […]" (Moloney and Xu 2016:7).

3.4.2 A historical overview of CFL education outside of China

Tsung and Cruickshank (2011) attribute the teaching of Chinese to Western people to the Tang Dynasty, coinciding with the period during which Westerners started to have contacts with China. The earliest translation of Confucius' philosophy in the Analects, the *Lun Yu* appeared in Latin in 1687 when the Jesuits travelled to China to carry out their religious ministry and learned enough Chinese to be able to translate the *Lun Yu* into Latin. This study led to the birth of Sinology departments in several European universities: the Collège de France set up Chinese studies courses in 1814 and Berlin University set up a course in Chinese studies in 1833 (Chao, 2020). In the United States, Yale and Harvard were the first two universities that established a course in Chinese studies: in 1877 Samuel Wells Williams was engaged to teach Chinese at Yale (Chao, 2007, Chao 2020) and Ko Kun Hua (戈鯤化) was engaged to teach Chinese at Harvard University in 1879 (Tian 2018, Chao 2020). Williams lived and worked as a diplomat and interpreter in China for 43 years (Chao 2020), where they delivered lectures, published books on China, and a dictionary to help English-speakers learn Chinese. Despite

the fact that they had no students, Williams is known as the first professor of Chinese in the United States (Chao 2020).

Ko Kun Hua started teaching in Harvard in 1880 (Chao 2020) and their first student was Professor Lane, a professor of Latin language and literature at Harvard who also taught Ko English and guided him on life in the United States. Kunhua Ge's teaching career at Harvard lasted only three years due to their death in 1882 during which they had a total of five students (Tian 2018:55). Following their death in 1882, the teaching of Chinese in Harvard was discontinued for almost forty years (Tian 2018:55). At this early stage, the grammar-translation method was used as studies focused on the reading of classical texts (Tsu 1970, Wang and Ruan 2016, Wang, 2020).

In the 1950s CFL was taught in Eastern Europe and in the 1960s Chinese teachers were sent overseas to teach Chinese (Sun 2009; Zhao 2011). As discussed in section 3.3, the audio-lingual approach was used during WW2, thus meeting the requirements of the time for an increased emphasis on speaking, listening and understanding the TL (Wang 2020).

With China's opening up in the 1980s, CFL was made more widespread in the US (Wang and Ruan 2016, Wang 2020). Between the 1980s and 2000s, many new FL teaching approaches based on new theories of psychology were developed (as discussed above) and a mix of approaches such as the audio-lingual approach and community language learning were used (Zhou 2011, Wang 2020). 2004 saw the opening of the doors of the first Confucius Institute in Seoul. Since then, several Confucius Institutes have been set up in different parts of the world. Throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, the demand for CFL in the US has increased and "several variants of communicative language teaching […] along with various post-communicative methods, hybrid approaches, and brand-new methods including proficiency based teaching" (Wang 2020:83) were employed. The use of "hybrid approaches" and "brand-new methods" (Wang 2020:83), together with the "post-method" Kumaravadivelu's (1994) outside of China, made scholars and practitioners analyse how CFL was being taught. In view of the post-method theory, Guo and Liu (2016) opine that language teaching is a "multi-factor, multi-level,

multi-discipline and multi-dimensional process" (quoted in Shei 2020:41). Thus, "teaching should not be restricted to fixed methods or specific procedures, but should be an 'open and dynamically developing system'" (Shei 2020:41). Shei (2020:41) discusses Guo and Liu's (2016) theory which advocates teaching Chinese characters and words simultaneously by associating characters with the same radical together. In my teaching practice in Malta, I admit to using this method as well as localisation by comparing Chinese characters and their radicals to the Semitic root system of Maltese. Even though Chinese and Maltese derive from different language families, somehow certain aspects are typologically similar. For example, roots of words in the Semitic Maltese words give meaning the way radicals give meaning in Chinese characters. Such typological comparisons between Chinese as the TL and the students' language is discussed by Zhou (2014) in the study about Chinese at the University of Burundi where they proposed comparing and contrasting Chinese tones to the tones of Kirundi (the official language of Burundi). I believe that in CFL education outside of China, comparison of Chinese with the students' L1 contributes to localisation and helps students better understand the TL.

The Chinese pedagogue Bisong Lü (2005) argues that CFL used teaching methods developed for English or for other European languages without taking into consideration the substantial differences between Chinese and English, together with other European languages, and that pedagogies for such alphabetic languages might not necessarily work for Chinese. Thus, Lü (2005) advocates the development of a pedagogy that works for Chinese (Chao 2020) which I believe should also take into consideration the context in which Chinese is being taught in light of Bax's (2003) theory on the context approach. Thus, the development of a pedagogy for Chinese according to the context where Chinese is being taught is salient since what works in an English-speaking country might not necessarily work in a country where a Semitic language is spoken. Through data collected from the classroom, this thesis sheds light on which teaching approaches are being used by both NS and NNS teachers of CFL in Malta: thus this is a contribution to a description of the post-method used in CFL in Malta.

It is very important to take the context where CFL teaching and learning take place into consideration. When it takes place in a country outside of China, I believe that localisation is important because the teaching is happening within a local system of a particular country. Similarly, when CFL teaching takes place in China, then such teaching should be localised according to Chinese custom. This section discusses the approaches to the teaching of CFL outside of China in view of the chronological development of teaching approaches. The following section discusses approaches to teaching CFL in China.

3.4.3 CFL education in China

China's Reform and Opening up policy in 1978 opened up China to potential students of Chinese. Traditionally, the grammar-translation and the audio-lingual approaches were used in the teaching of Chinese to foreigners in China as such methods were used for the teaching of English as a foreign language in China (Wang 2020). According to Wang (2020:84), "Teaching comprises the transmission of knowledge from authorities (teachers) to passive receivers (learners) through a process of imitation and repetition", thus, the grammar-translation method and the audio-lingual method were very commonly used in China (Hu 2002). Of course, such methods were also used in the west.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, as students wanted to gain fluency and proficiency in communicating in Chinese in real life situations, discussions around making CFL pedagogy more communicative were quite heated as Cui (1994) argued that adopting the communicative approach was not a good idea because Chinese is different from other languages. Thus, given that Chinese is a very particular language for foreigners, a blend of teaching methods is necessary. The series *New Practical Chinese Reader* (2000) is based on the grammar-translation and the audio-lingual methods and its "preserved traditionalism" (Wang 2020:88) works very well for foreign learners. The mix of teaching methods is known as the post-methods approach and it works well for Chinese, since it is useful to set communicative tasks to learners to ensure that they can communicate in a meaningful way.

Shei (2020:40-41) mentions Chen's (2018) argument that the teaching of Chinese to foreigners in China "should combine 'classroom teaching' and 'practical teaching' making the maximum use of China's magnificent environment". According to Chen (2008) quoted in Shei (2020:41), the teaching of CFL in China is 'learner-centred' and it takes the 'context' into consideration: the 'small context' beings the classroom, and the 'big context' being the context of the country where teaching and learning are taking place (ibid.). In FL teaching, context plays a very important role, when a learner decides to go to China to study Chinese, they expect to be immersed in the TL, to experience the culture first-hand, and to be taught by a native Chinese teacher.

Corder's (1967) theory on error analysis and Selinker's (1972) theory on the interlanguage are the frameworks of several linguistic studies in the field of CFL in China (Lu 1984; Lu 1992; Song 2014, Si 2011). Such studies are very useful because they shed light on how foreigner learners are learning Chinese. In view of this, most studies on CFL focus on the teaching of vocabulary, for example Li and Wu (2005) conclude that the teaching of vocabulary based on morphological analysis works well because through understanding, learners remember more. Such studies contribute to the field because they indicate how Chinese is learned by foreigners, thus teaching methods could be built on the results of such studies.

As discussed in this section, the grammar-translation approach, the audio-lingual approach, and the communicative approach are used to teach CFL in China. Due to the peculiarity of Chinese, many teachers advocate the use of a mix of the three methods. Many believed or still believe that studying Chinese in China involves a substantial amount of rote learning, however, as discussed in this section, the teaching of CFL was modelled on the teaching of EFL; and the grammar-translation, the audio-lingual and the communicative approach are used to teach Chinese in China and abroad. The following section moves on to discuss what many consider to be the traditional Chinese 'Confucian' approach to teaching and learning.

3.4.4 The traditional 'Confucian' approach to teaching and learning

Ryan and Louie (2007) use terms such as 'Western' and 'Confucian'; 'Western' and 'Asian' ways of teaching and learning in a study that shows how the binary ideas of 'Western' and 'Asian' teaching methods are employed in the context of Australia. Their article moves on to describe students who come from Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHC) to Australia and how they are perceived. CHC countries are usually defined as Asian cultures who were influenced by the Confucian culture. According to Aoki (2008) Western and 'Confucian' education are two contrasting concepts and they opine that "in contrast to Western education in which students are encouraged to engage in debate, Confucian education tends to emphasise rote learning and memorisation" (Aoki, 2008:35). Aoki continues to describe 'Confucian education' as "finding a good teacher and imitating his words and deeds" (ibid.). This quotation from Aoki (2008) reminds me of my own primary schooling in Malta in the 1990s: Malta is not a CHC country, Malta is a European country whose culture is based on the Roman Catholic tradition which is, in fact, part of its constitution. In fact, religious studies are still present in education provided by the state to this very day. At the time of my primary schooling (the 1990s), students were never encouraged to debate issues related to religion and we were made to memorise religion textbooks and verses from the Bible. Of course, this is no longer the practice today, but it was in the past. In primary schools in Malta in the 1990s, I also remember rote-learning and memorisation of the multiplication tables in English, thus, I believe that rote learning and memorisation is not only typical of CHC countries but rather something typical of education in the past.

Scholars (Aguinis and Roth 2005; Aoki 2008 ; Dahlin and Watkins 2000; Han and Scull 2010; Hui 2005; Kember and Gow 1991; Kim 2005; Tan 2015) describe CHC education practices as based on memorisation, the teacher as the centre of the classroom, as the model of good practice and as a fountain of knowledge, discipline and obedience. It advocates no interruption of the teacher, no asking of questions, substantial amounts of homework and practice, and even more lessons after school hours. With the exception of the aspect related to the asking of questions, the points above

accurately describe my primary school education in the 1990s in Malta. (Just to clarify – children were encouraged to ask questions if they did not understand something but were discouraged from interrupting the teacher with irrelevant comments).

The common perception that 'Confucian' education involves rote learning and memorisation has evolved from the idea that scholars in ancient China learned Classical texts by heart to pass imperial examinations which in turn enabled them to secure a position in government (Tan 2015). Confucius spoke about education as a way of improving oneself and not as a way of showing-off in front of others. Confucius speaks about the importance of thinking about what one has learnt – it is useless to learn but not to reflect on the knowledge one has learnt, and it is dangerous to think without learning. In Analect, 2.15 "the Master said, if one learns from others but does not think, one will be bewildered. If, on the other hand, one thinks but does not learn from others, one will be in peril" (translation by D.C. Lau). In this Analect, Confucius stresses thinking – not just memorisation of texts and facts but also reflecting on them. In Analect 13.5 "the Master said, 'If a man who knows the three hundred Odes by heart fails when given administrative responsibilities and proves incapable of exercising their own initiative when sent to foreign states, then what use are the Odes to him, however many he may have learned?" (Translation by D.C. Lau 1979) The quotations from the Analects above show clearly that Confucius taught that education is not only memorisation, but also reflecting and forming one's opinion about knowledge that a person had learned. In the Analects, Confucius answers questions from their students and discusses with them, a kind of teaching method that Socrates also employs with their students, providing answers to questions.

In view of this, since Confucius advocated thinking and not only memorisation, the term 'Confucian education' or 'Confucian teaching method' to refer to memorisation is a misleading translation into English because its origin is the memorisation that took place in Ancient China to prepare for imperial examinations and not a method of teaching and learning that Confucius advocated. Thus, memorisation, is not necessarily a Confucian teaching method, but rather an Ancient Chinese method

of preparing for the imperial examination. Despite this, as mentioned earlier, the memorisation of texts was also a teaching method used in Europe in the past and also a teaching method used in Islamic traditions where texts from the Quran are learned by heart and recited. Thus, following the quotations from the Analects and the discussion on the Confucian approach to teaching above, an approach that emphasises thinking along with learning, this thesis will use the term *traditional method* (italics for emphasis) to refer to the traditional way of teaching that was used in the past that stressed memorisation. This thesis will additionally use the term *communicative approach* (italics for emphasis) to refer to the modern approach to foreign language teaching, where the aim is to prepare students to communicate in the target language in real-life contexts. The terms *traditional method* and *communicative approach* do not have any connotations of the East and the West, thus this makes these terms very appropriate because as discussed above, memorisation and rote-learning were also used in the West in the past.

Bax (2003:79) argues that the communicative approach might not work in cultures where the more traditional method is what learners expect, so they suggest the "context approach". This is an approach to FL teaching based on what learners expect in a particular context. This means that if learners are used to a blend of the traditional and the communicative approach in a particular country, then teachers should adapt their teaching methods accordingly. If in another country learners expect a more communicative approach to FL teaching, then teachers should adjust their pedagogies according to what is expected in such context. This method gives priority to the local context and to what teachers and students require in light of the particular socio-linguistic and cultural context. On this issue, Jin and Cortazzi (1996) argue that Western teachers of EFL working in China should adapt their lessons in a way that their learners would expect and feel that they are satisfied with the teaching taking place. The aim of this case study research is to understand what approach is being used in the CFL classroom and by whom. Following this, future research could be conducted on what approach students in Malta need to effectively learn Chinese; a language that needs a specific pedagogy because it is particularly different from any other language. Additionally, the Chinese language requires

particular teaching methods (Lü 2005) possibly even when taught in other countries, thus the formation of what Bax (2003) calls the context approach is imperative: an approach to teach foreign languages that is appropriate for the particular country where the language is being taught. Prior to analysing what teaching approaches the teachers were observing being employed in their lessons, the following section gives an overview of different teaching methods of teaching CFL.

3.4.5 The role of the Confucius Institute in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language outside of China

Since the establishment of the Confucius Institute in 2004, Mandarin Chinese is being promoted on an international level. According to Zhou (2019:50) "through global promotion of Chinese, this ideology is attempting to reshape the global language order and envisioning Chinese among the top global languages, if not the super language like English, in the global language order." Even though Zhou suggests the possibility of Mandarin Chinese becoming a global language akin to English sometime in the future, the demand for CFL in the West will nonetheless increase, especially because of China's economic rise, requiring more people to become what Orton (2008:26) calls "Asia literate" in the future. Despite this increase in demand for CFL in the West, Mandarin Chinese will be more widely learned and used as a foreign language by those who wish to better communicate with L1 speakers of Chinese, especially those who wish to better understand the Chinese mind-set (Sun 2010), but not as a global lingua franca among those who are non-native speakers of Chinese. I agree with Zhou (2019:50) in "envisioning Chinese among the top global languages", but I believe that non-native speakers of Mandarin Chinese learn the language to better communicate with the native speakers of Chinese.

Foreign language teaching is not only a process of teaching and learning, but it also has ideological implications. Issues such as which languages are taught, to whom, by whom, where and why they are taught are issues worthy of consideration when discussing foreign language teaching.

To spread their national language and culture globally, several countries set up organisations that promote their national language and culture overseas. One of the oldest of such organisations is the British Council, founded in 1934 and originally called the British Committee for Relations with Other Countries. It was granted a Royal Charter in 1940 which set the mission of the organisation, as written on their website, "promoting a wider knowledge of [the UK] and the English language abroad and developing closer cultural relations between [the UK] and other countries." Today, the British Council is celebrating 90 years of language teaching, collaboration and other cultural events. According to the British Council official website, the annual report for 1940-1941 states that their aim was "to create in a country overseas a basis of friendly knowledge and understanding of the people of this country, of their philosophy and way of life, which will lead to a sympathetic appreciation of British foreign policy […]"

In a similar vein, the ideology to promote the national language and culture abroad, the Alliance Française was founded in Paris in 1883. One of its aims back then was to close the gap between the French colonisers and the native Algerian and Tunisian population by promoting French language and culture in these countries. In the context of the French colonisation of Algeria, in 1841 General Franciade Fleurus Duvivier stated that "Language […] is the only means to transmit and exchange thoughts and feelings […] Not to spread our language among the indigenous subjects of Algeria would be to maintain the barrier that separates us." (Duvivier, Solution de la question de l'Algérie, 8–9 quoted in Horne, 2017: 100). Thus, the ideology of the teaching of French in this context was to bring the colonisers and the colonised closer together. Today, the Alliance Française has over 800 centres in over 130 countries worldwide (source: https://alliancefrmalta.com/the-alliance-francaise/) where French and Francophonie culture are taught.

Other national organisations with similar missions to those of the British Council and the Alliance Française are the Instituto Cervantes (Spain, founded in 1991) tasked with the promotion of Spanish,

the Instituto Camões (Portugal, founded in 1924) that promotes Portuguese, the Goethe Institut (Germany, founded in 1951) that promotes German, the Società Dante Alighieri (Italy, founded in 1889) that promotes Italian and the Confucius Institute (China, founded in 2004) that promotes Chinese. All these organizations have centres in several countries worldwide and their common aim is to spread their national language and culture globally. All these centres teach their national language to enable foreign learners to communicate in it and to familiarise themselves with the culture. Apart from the British Council and the Alliance Française, the Confucius Institute whose name is that of the famous classical Chinese philosopher, these organisations are named after famous figures in the literary canon of the countries they represent and have a very similar aim, that of promoting their language and culture overseas. While these organisations have a very similar aim, that of promoting their language and culture in other countries, Confucius Institutes in different parts of the world are partnered with a Chinese university and are housed within local universities and even have a presence in some schools through the Confucius Classroom initiative. Other such organisations are housed within buildings in major cities which are usually independent from schools and universities. The fact that Confucius Institutes are housed within local universities and in several cases (for example in Malta) their teachers contribute to teaching in said universities and even schools is not without controversy. This is because generally teachers avoid discussing controversial topics (often relating to politics and history) and issues relating to academic freedom have arisen in the past, but ultimately, this could happen in the teaching of any foreign language in various contexts (for example in the teaching of certain European foreign languages in some contexts) as such topics related to history and politics are usually beyond the scope of the language and cultural courses offered. Thus, while the Confucius Institute has been a subject of criticism in the West, such criticism is often a result of a 'them' vs. 'us' attitude or an attitude where the so-called West, often referring to countries in the Global North perceive countries traditionally considered to be in the Global South as inferior. This is also in view of Said's (1978) theory of Orientalism where the representation of the so-called 'other' is not very realistic due to a lack of understanding.

While colonisation is something that occurred in history and nowadays most countries that were colonised (mostly located in the global south) have gained independence from the colonisers (mostly European countries in the global north) coloniality is very much part of daily life. Coloniality, defined in simple terms as 'colonisation of the mind' (Assante 2006, Matthews 2017, Nandy 1997) is the idea that the way of life represented by the previous colonisers (countries in the global north) is perceived to be modern and superior. This has led to a Eurocentric outlook in several fields, including in education, where methods developed and implemented by countries in the global north are perceived to be superior to those of countries in the global south.

The perception that western ways, the ways of countries considered to be in the so-called global north is a form of mental coloniality and in view of decolonial theory, such perceptions are Eurocentric and could cause bias. Research could also be biased towards a more Eurocentric, western way, and this thesis could be biased in such a way as it presents a case study set in Malta, a country that despite its geographical proximity to North Africa, is European culturally, and since it is part of the European Union is considered to be in the so-called Global North. The perceptions of the participants, most of whom are Maltese and European could be biassed towards a more Eurocentric outlook. The data was also analysed by a European Maltese researcher, who was objective as much as possible in the data processing process, but their background could have influenced how they collected and analysed data. The post-colonial context of Malta where the data was collected is worthy of mention because even though Malta gained independence from Britain in 1964, mental colonialism, especially in education, is still very visible on the islands, despite the attempts to decolonise (Xuereb 2022).

3.4.6 Western/Eastern methods of teaching and the Global North/South

While this thesis acknowledges that the term the 'West' is very broad and diverse, it uses the general definition of the 'West' to refer to countries in the global north and whose thought, according to Nisbett (2003) originates from Ancient Greek philosophy. Diamond (1999) considers Westerners to refer to those in European societies and also to those in the modern United States because such

societies were modelled on European societies. This thesis takes the East to refer to East-Asian societies whose thought traditionally came from Confucianist and Daoist tradition. The thesis acknowledges that these definitions are rather simplistic because in both Western and Eastern societies there is a lot of diversity and with globalisation, societies that are geographically distant, are becoming more interconnected (Albrow et.al 1990, Held et. al 1999, Jones, 2006). This thesis also acknowledges that such a distinction between the East and the West is not only simplistic, but it also suggests that the East is part of the global south, a term that was coined in the 1950s by Oglesby (1969) in their observations on how the United States dominated over other developing countries.

Despite the fact that the term global north and global south are in use, it is now reasonable to opine that this state of affairs is no longer necessarily always the case as BRICS countries (originally Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and since August 2022 the association also includes Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, according to the official BRICS website https://brics-russia2024.ru/en/ accessed on 12 September 2024), originally in the global south are gaining more economic and technological strength and in future, perceptions of the global north/south might change. It is also reasonable to opine that in terms of decolonisation theory, the perceived superiority of countries in the global north is far from necessary and this thesis does not aim to show any superiority or inferiority, but rather aims to shed some light on how Chinese is being taught within the case under study in Malta. Since the case study presented in this thesis is set in Malta, as already explained above, Malta is a country in the global north, a country that due to its colonial heritage tends to look up to the education system of its previous colonisers as well as to the education models of countries in the global north which are perceived to be modern and the way to follow. While in Malta language teachers are instructed to use the communicative approach (approaches to foreign language teaching are discussed in chapter 2) and to be learner-centred, unlike this, Chinese education is traditionally thought to be teacher-centred (He 2021). Within the boundary of the case study presented in this thesis, Mandarin Chinese is taught by a mix of Western and Eastern (Chinese) teachers and a number of lessons were observed to collect data to find out whether the

view presented by He (2021) is the case in the lessons observed with the aim of shedding some light on how CFL is being taught in Malta. (Findings about data collected from lesson observations is discussed in chapter six).

In his 2020 book, Pae[12] mentions several factors that are different in the West and in the East and categorises them as either extrinsic or intrinsic, the former being visible in daily life while the latter being of a more abstract nature. For the extrinsic category, Pae (2020) lists factors such as the different architecture of the West and the East, for example church architecture in the West and temple architecture in the East which are different. In the category of extrinsic factors, Pae (2020) also lists clothing, daily life social practice where Western societies are known to be individualistic while Eastern societies are more collective (Hofstede, Bond and Minkov 2010; Nisbett 2003) and the different writing system. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis put simply states that one's thought is shaped by one's language, thus, one could argue that Western and Eastern thought is different due to the different languages that shape the thought. Other scholars opine that there is a strong link between thought and language (Lenneberg 1967, Levinson 2003). A difference in the languages of the West and of the East is that the languages of the West use an alphabetic writing system while those of the east traditionally used a more graphical system. This is today seen in Chinese *hanzi,* Japanese *kanji* and Korean *hanmun* (it is important to note that Japanese and Korean also have alphabetic writing systems). In addition to the different writing systems, in the East one tends to start from the bigger concept to the smaller concept (for example when writing an address or the date) while in the West it's done the other way around.

In addition to the extrinsic factors mentioned above, Pae (2020) also mentions a few intrinsic factors that are different in the West and in the East. The first factor that Pae (2020) mentions is the value system of being part of the collective in the East where the benefit of the collective is given importance over any individual benefit, that is typical of Western societies. While in the West freedom and

independence are usually regarded to be positive values, in the East, being part of the group and working for the group is seen in a more positive light. This leads to a more analytic attitude to individual factors in the West while in the East there is a more holistic attitude where the whole context is given consideration (Masuda and Nisbett 2001, Miyamoto, Nisbett and Masuda 2006, Nisbett, Peng, Choi and Norenzayan 2001).

Differences in language and outlook in life also lead to how one speaks. According to Kaplan (1966), in the West speakers tend to be very direct with their interlocutors while in the East, speakers tend to avoid direct statements and to consider the context in a more holistic manner. This holistic manner of speaking and of evaluating things could be a result of the nature of the Chinese characters that are processed as a whole while words written in the alphabets used in the West are processed in a more serial manner (Coltheart et al. 2001, White, Johnson, Liversedge and Rayner 2008, Whitney 2001).

These two sub-sections reviewed literature on the role of the Confucius Institute in the teaching of CFL outside of China and despite the differences between the so-called East and West in view of the global north/south divide, one could conclude that there is a very common factor, that all of the organisations that are tasked with the teaching of their national language and culture outside of their country do their best to maintain a positive imagine of their country and to promote their language and culture as much as possible. In addition to this, despite the divide between the so-called global north and global south, in the world that we are living in today that is in a constant state of change and that is increasingly globalised and multicultural, such divisions are not as relevant as they used to be in the past. Also, as discussed in the section about the global north and the global south, several countries that were originally classified to be in the global south are developing at very fast rates technologically, economically and in many other aspects. In view of this, the aim of this thesis is not to create any division between anyone, but rather to describe how Chinese is being taught within the case in Malta.

3.5 Summary of the chapter

This chapter comprises two main sections. The first main section focuses on the Chinese language; primarily it discusses words such as *Zhongwen* 中文， *Hanyu* 汉语，*Guoyu* 国语，*Huayu* 华语 and *Putonghua* 普通话; terms that could all be translated into English as 'Chinese'. The chapter subsequently moves on to a brief section on how I, as the researcher, position myself in view of these terms. Following this short section, this chapter further discusses approaches to FL teaching and it describes approaches such as the grammar-translation approach, the audio-lingual approach, and the communicative approach. Subsequently, this chapter proceeds to problematise the term 'Confucian education' and concludes that the 'Confucian' approach is not Confucian at all but rather a cultural mistranslation. Then the section moves on to discuss the role of the Confucius Institute in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language outside of China and ideology related to institutions who, like the Confucius Institute teach their national language and culture overseas. Following this, the section uses ideology on the global north/south to discuss western and eastern methods of teaching and the chapter concludes with this summary.

Following chapters two and three that reviewed literature about language and identity and about Chinese, chapter four will delve into the methodology used to collected data for this case study.

IV

Methodology

4.1 Introduction to the methodology of this case study

This chapter introduces the research methodology used to collect data for this study. Section 4.2 starts by giving an overview of case study research, and why it was deemed the appropriate method for this research project. Subsequently, section 4.3 discusses the selection of the participants and section 4.4 discusses my roles as researcher. Section 4.5 focuses on the research instruments used to collect data for this thesis and it includes two sub-sections: sub-section 4.5.1 which discusses semi-structured interviews, and sub-section 4.5.2 which delves into lesson observation. Section 4.6 explores the research instruments used in this case study. Section 4.7 follows with an explanation on how data was analysed. Section 4.8 highlights ethical issues that were taken into consideration during data collection and analysis for this research project and section 4.9 comprises a summary of this chapter.

4.2 Case study research

Following the formation of the research questions and the objectives of this study, different research methods and instruments were taken into consideration. Initially, it was thought that quantitative methods were not appropriate for this research project about CFL in Malta, because the number of potential participants is not large. Thus, from the very start it was decided that qualitative methods will be used to collect data for this research project. Ethnographic research was ruled out because the aim of this research project is not to observe people especially those in a sub-group in a particular environment. The Bibliographical study approach was also deemed inappropriate for this research project because this study is about classroom practice that is happening in the present, not about texts that have already been written. Grounded Theory was also deemed not appropriate because since the very start, the researcher had hypotheses through experience as a student and through

reading literature by Medgyes (1992) and their contemporaries about native and non-native speaker teachers. In view of this, it was decided that the case study approach is the most suited to this research project because through interviews and lesson observations, thick data would be collected while giving the participants the opportunity to express their views during the interviews. The case study approach is also appropriate for this research project because it is bound, the boundaries of this case lie within the BA programme in Chinese at the University of Malta. In retrospect, a comparative case study could also have been suitable for this research project, allowing the exploration of differences and similarities between NS and NNS teachers at the University of Malta and another university outside Malta, providing further insights into their classroom practices.

Case study is one of many approaches used in qualitative research, especially in the field of the social sciences (Yin 2014). Case study describes an "instance in action" (Simons 2009:4) in "its real-world context" (Yin 2014:2) with the aim of finding out the "how" and the "why". The purpose of conducting case study research is to "explore the particularity, the uniqueness, of the single case." (Simons 2009:3) A case study is bounded (Yin 2014); on particular persons, organisations, programmes, or on a particular country. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007:5) "the data collected have been termed *soft*, that is, rich in descriptions of people, places and conversations, and not easily handled by statistical procedures".

The present research project is a bounded case study and all the students and teachers within the boundary of the programme in Chinese Studies were invited to participate in this case study research. The aim of this case study is to document "the lived experience of particular individuals" (Simons 2009:4) within the programme in Chinese Studies at the University of Malta, so the programme in Chinese Studies at the University of Malta is the case through which the construction of the identity of nativeness in CFL education in Malta was researched.

Case study is an "instance in action" (Simons 2009:4) as it focuses on a very particular context. This is the aim of this case study, namely, to find out about the participants' perceptions on what makes the

identities of NS and NNS teachers of CFL in Malta and to investigate what teaching methods are employed by the teachers at a particular time within the boundaries of the case.

This study on CFL in Malta is qualitative in nature, this is mainly because a quantitative study on CFL in Malta is not very feasible at this point in time. This is because Mandarin is not widely taught in Malta and therefore there aren't enough students and teachers to be able to carry out a substantial quantitative study at this point. Apart from the rather small number of students and teachers of Mandarin in Malta that make quantitative studies very difficult or almost impossible to carry out, qualitative research was carried out for this project to gather rich data from participants. Qualitative data, especially data collected from interviews gave the participants a voice since they had the opportunity to talk and to express their views. This opportunity to express their views was much welcomed by the participants as they were all eager to participate in the research project.

Another reason for adopting a qualitative approach for this study is because qualitative case studies investigate a specific case at a particular point in time. This case study gives a snapshot of what is happening in the Bachelor's programme in Chinese at the University of Malta at a particular point in time, it focuses on the particular in order to draw conclusions that could eventually provide valuable insight to teachers, students and policymakers involved in CFL in Malta. The results of this case study provide insights about the teaching of CFL at the University of Malta, such results could provide valuable insights to other contexts where CFL is taught in Malta, for example to young learners who choose Chinese as their foreign language option in schools in Malta.

As typical of case study research, this case study uses multiple sources of data, it collects data from interviews with students and with native and non-native speaker teachers. Data collected from interviews with students was triangulated with data collected from interviews with teachers. Following the interviews, lesson observations were carried out to further triangulate data. Data collected from interviews shows the students' and teachers' perceptions of what constructs the

identity of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese while data collected from lesson observations shows how NS and NNS teachers teach.

4.3 Selection of the participants

The participants in this case study are students and teachers within the boundary of the Bachelor's programme in Chinese Studies at the University of Malta. Following ERGO ethics approval, I asked permission from the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Malta to collect data through interviews with students and teachers of Chinese and to conduct lesson observations. I was instructed to forward information about the research project, interview questions and lesson observation sheet to the ethics board of the University of Malta so that they could ensure that there are no ethical concerns. Upon receipt of approval from the ethics board at the University of Malta, I sent out two separate invitation letters to prospective participants: one to students the other one to teachers. I emailed both invitation letters to the secretary of the Department, and subsequently the secretary emailed the letter to all prospective participants, all teachers and all students enrolled in the Bachelor's course at the time. I do not know how many prospective participants received the invitation letter. The invitation letter stated my name, information about the research project and my official University of Southampton email address, and potential participants who were interested in being part of the research project contacted me via email. A total of 10 potential participants contacted me and expressed interest in taking part in the research project: 7 students and 3 teachers. Data was collected in academic year 2020/2021. All interviews were transcribed and anonymised and each participant was given a code name in order to maintain anonymity while distinguishing between participants. A total of 7 students participated in the research project and were named S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6 and S7. All students who participated were Maltese or European, and they were all learning Mandarin as an additional foreign language, thus they were all non-native speakers of Chinese.

4.3.1 The teachers who participated in the study

A total of three teachers participated in the research project, one of the teachers is a native speaker of Chinese and their data is named T2 NS (Teacher 2, native speaker). The native speaker teacher was born in China and lived most of their life in China. The NS teacher attended compulsory schooling in China and read for Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in Linguistics and Teaching Chinese for Foreigners in China. The NS teacher also studied English in China. The NS teacher completed teacher training in China and possesses over a decade's experience in teaching Chinese to foreigners in Africa and in Europe. The teacher was trained to teach through English as medium of instruction and to expect a teacher-centred classroom where the target language is at the centre. The NS teacher expects students to be disciplined, to complete all work assigned to them. Additionally, the NS teacher was trained to expect students to review and to preview on their own outside of the classroom, and to come to class well prepared so that new material is covered in class and no time is wasted on reviewing. The teacher was also trained to give learners time during the lesson to absorb new knowledge (new vocabulary, for example) and to subsequently test students on how well they remember the knowledge they just taught. The teacher was trained to act as a good role model to the students, for example demonstrating proficiency in Standard pronunciation.

The other two teachers who participated in the research project are non-native speakers of Chinese and their data is named T1 NNS and T3 NNS, meaning Teacher 1 non-native speaker, and teacher 3 non-native speaker respectively. T1 NNS is Maltese and they received education up to Bachelor's degree in Malta. T1 NNS read for MA in Chinese History in an English-speaking country in the West. The thesis does not disclose where the teachers who participated in the study gained their academic qualifications to avoid possibilities of identification of the participants by any possible future readers. T1 NNS has been teaching Chinese in Malta for over 10 years. T1 NNS received teacher-training in Malta and is expected to have a plurilingual classroom where the students are at the centre of learning, and where their cultural and linguistic background are embraced and used to enhance the teaching

and learning of the TL. In Malta FL teachers are trained to teach through a bilingual medium in Maltese and English, even though the textbooks use English as a medium of instruction. This is because learners have various levels of proficiency in English which is usually the second language of most students. Since this teacher teaches at the University of Malta, their students are proficient in English, which is the language of tertiary education, where students are expected to be fully proficient in the language to be admitted in a course of studies at university. In Malta teachers are trained to scaffold new knowledge on previously learned knowledge, and to constantly connect new material with what was previously learned, or that learners already have, for example other languages in the teachers' and the students' repertoire. (Chinese tends to be the fourth or the fifth language for many students who choose to study Chinese at undergraduate level at the University of Malta). In Malta, teachers are also trained to conclude each lesson with a review of what was learned during this lesson, and to ensure that learners can summarise what they have learned at the end of each lesson.

T3 NNS is not Maltese and comes from an English-speaking country in the West. They have a Bachelor's, a Master's, and a PhD from English speaking universities in the West and they have been teaching Chinese language and literature for around 5 years. This teacher was trained outside of Malta in an English-speaking country, but they regularly receive professional development in Malta since they now teach in Malta.

Native and non-native speaker teachers were trained differently and have different experiences in learning foreign languages. T1 NNS is fluent and proficient in several languages in addition to Chinese and has extensive experience in learning foreign languages. T2 NS studied English as a foreign language in China and was exposed to other languages while teaching Chinese in Europe and in Africa. The teachers' experiences in learning foreign languages might have an impact on the way they teach, and hence it would be interesting for a study to be done in future on how teachers' past experiences in learning foreign languages influence their teaching practice. It would be interesting to explore how NS teachers' experience in learning English as a second or as a foreign language affects how they teach

Chinese to foreigners, and how NNS teachers' experience in learning Chinese impacts the way they teach it now. It would also be interesting to investigate NNS teachers' linguistic background, how this linguistic repertoire is used in their lessons, (for example, my colleague who is not a participant in this study is a NNS teacher of Chinese and knows around twenty languages) what languages they know and why they decided to study Chinese and to eventually teach it. For example, I decided to start studying Chinese at a time when as a teacher of English in Malta, I was assigned a class of adult learners who were native speakers of Arabic, and who had never learned a language written in the Latin alphabet before. Thus, to understand the situation my students were in, I decided to study Chinese, a foreign language that has a different script to the scripts I was familiar with back then. The fact that I was studying (Chinese) and teaching a foreign language (English) at the same time, I was experiencing what my students were going through, which must have affected my classroom practice. Lately, I have started to learn Greek and the first question I asked my teacher was whether there is a particular order to write letters in Greek as I was thinking about the importance of stroke order when writing Chinese characters. Such experiences of language transfer suggest that it would be interesting to carry out future studies about how teachers' and students' linguistic repertoires affect the classroom, how teachers teach, and how students learn.

Since I am not employed at the University of Malta, the teachers interviewed are not my colleagues, I know T1 NNS because we were classmates at the University of Malta between 2010 and 2012, but we had not seen each other for years before this teacher contacted me to volunteer to take part in the research project. I met T3 NNS and T2 NS briefly at a cultural event organised by the China Cultural Centre in Malta before they volunteered to participate in the research project. Below is a table that displays demographical information about the teachers who participated, their background, their area of specialisation, and their years of teaching experience.

Teacher	Teacher's identity and native language	Years of teaching experience	Gender	Age	Qualifications	Area of specialisation
T1 NNS	Maltese L1: Maltese L2: English	Over 10 years	Male	45-50 years	Bachelor's degree from the University of Malta. Master's degree from an English speaking country in the West.	Chinese History
T3 NNS	Western L1: English	5 years	Female	35-40 years	Bachelor's, Master's and PhD from an English-speaking university in the West.	Chinese Literature
T2 NS	Chinese L1: Chinese	10 years	Female	35-40 years	Bachelor's and Master's degrees from China.	Chinese Linguistics, Teaching Chinese to Foreigners

As discussed earlier, I do not have any close relationship with the teachers who participated in the research project and I do not collaborate with them at work. I am employed at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) where I most of my teaching load is in technical English and as from February 2024 I started teaching a class of elementary Mandarin Chinese for staff and students at the college. As part of my job at MCAST, I collaborate with the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (Malta) in teaching elementary Mandarin Chinese class to adult learners (as part of the Ministry's strategy for lifelong learning education) and in introducing Mandarin Chinese as a regular foreign language option in state schools where I am engaged in promoting Chinese language

and culture to potential learners who are in the compulsory education cycle. Between 2019 and 2023 I also taught elementary Mandarin at a local state school (St Margaret College).

I am not currently involved in Chinese (or in anything else) at the University of Malta. Apart from being a past student at the University of Malta (2004-2007: BA English and Linguistics, 2007-2010: MA Translation Studies, 2010-2014: BA (Hons.) Chinese), I taught two study units in Chinese culture in the Diploma in Chinese programme where I collaborated with another colleague who did not participate in this research project because we are close friends and we work together on Chinese in state schools, adults' courses and the examination system within the Ministry for Education. In view of my position, there was no conflict of interest at all with any of the participants because I do not know most of them and I do not have any personal relationships with any of them.

The participants were asked which language they wished their interview to be carried out in. 6 participants decided to have their interview conducted in English (S1, S4, S6, S7, T2 NS and T3 NNS) and 4 participants decided to hold their interview in Maltese (S2, S3, T1 NNS and S5). Participants were given choice of language to ensure that they are comfortable and confident in expressing their views in the language of their choice. The interviews in Maltese were translated into English and the following chapters on data analysis quote data from the translated interviews. The original Maltese transcriptions are available in Appendix three and quotations from the interviews according to theme are available in appendix four.

4.4 The Researcher's roles

"Subjective data are an integral part of the case" (Simons 2009:4) as case study researches the particular, how the participants within the boundary feel and act and eventually the data is analysed and interpreted by the researcher. Thus, case study research tends to be subjective, as it is interpreted by the researcher and not necessarily backed by statistics. Therefore, the researcher should continuously reflect on their position and how they could affect the collection and interpretation of the data. Simons (2009) lists the subjectivity and the personal involvement of the researcher as one

of the inevitable disadvantages of case study research. The multiple 'selves' and how the researcher affects case study research have been discussed by several scholars (Simons 2009; Clandinin and Connelly 1994; Peshkin 1988). Researchers need to examine themselves because they are part of the case being researched. I feel that I am part of the case, firstly as a researcher and as a past student in the programme in Chinese Studies at the University of Malta. I feel that I should continuously reflect on my position as a researcher and to observe objectively and without becoming emotionally attached to what I see (Bentz and Shapiro 1996; Coffey 1999; Denzin 1997; Fine 1994; Peshkin 1988; Richardson 1997; Simons 2009; Holly 1993).

Several scholars (Bochner 1997; Denzin 1997; Ellingson 1998; Ellis 1996; Richardson 1997; Simons 2009; Woods 2006) suggest that researchers keep a reflective journal to record and to reflect on their feelings during the field work. Simons (2009) argues that "this personal exploration of the 'self' in research" (Simons 2009: 94) is essential. Throughout the field work I reflected on the different subjective 'I's that make up myself and that might influence the interpretation of the data. During fieldwork I kept a reflective journal to reflect on my position as a researcher within the field.

Given that I did not have a personal relationship with any of the participants, and in effect, did not even know the majority of them, I maintained impartiality and formality on both my part and theirs. Apart from this, all the teachers and students who participated in this research are adults who freely consented and who did not feel obliged in any way to take part in this study. The participants showed interest in the project because they are all teaching or studying Chinese, but since I am not involved in Chinese at the University of Malta, they did not feel any pressure to participate, but those who participated, simply replied to the invitation email they received from the secretary of the department. I replied to all the teachers and students who wrote to me to express their interest in participating in the research project and we subsequently fixed an appointment for an interview.

4.5 The research instruments

Simons (2009) lists three methods used in qualitative case study research: interview, observation, and document analysis. This case study employs two research instruments to collect qualitative data: semi-structured interviews and lesson observations. Interviews were done with all the participants to find out about their perceptions of various factors that contribute to the construction of the identity of native and of non-native speakers of Chinese. After the interviews were conducted in the first semester of academic year 2020/2021, teachers were asked if they would be willing to have their lessons observed for the second part of the case study, that is about how native and non-native speaker teachers' identities are manifested in CFL classroom practice and to find out what teaching methods NS and NNS teachers were using. Two research instruments were used so that data collected through the semi-structured interviews was triangulated with data collected through the classroom observations. Thus, by triangulating data collected through both research instruments, this case study would yield more reliable results. The sub-sections below discuss both research instruments in more depth.

4.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

Three main types of interviews are generally used to collect data: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. Structured interviews are those where the interviewer develops a set of predetermined questions to ask to all participants in the same order. The questions are standardised and often closed-ended, therefore, the interviewer has a substantial amount of control over the interviews, ensuring consistency throughout. Unstructured interviews are those where the interviewer does not have a set of predetermined questions and the conversation between the interviewer and the participant flows naturally. The result of this is that not all participants get the same open-ended questions, and the interviewer may probe deeper based on the interviewee's responses. Participants are free to express their thoughts, feelings and experiences.

For this research project, the semi-structured interview was deemed to be the most appropriate option because to ensure that enough thick data is collected to answer the first research question, a set of questions had to be prepared in advance while keeping in mind the literature reviewed. However, when some participants elaborated further or spoke about their experience in teaching/learning Chinese or other foreign languages, or provided additional details, the interviewer/researcher listened to them. This is in line with case study research which in addition to collecting data, also gives the opportunity to participants to voice out their views. A semi-structured interview schedule ensures that the interview is kept on track, preventing too much diversion into topics that fall outside the intended scope of the interview, whilst nonetheless still allowing opportunities for further topical trajectories. For this research project, semi-structured interviews were conducted because the interviewer/researcher had designed a set of questions in advance and sent them to the participants in advance, but at various points during interviews, the participants were allowed to deviate or repeat the same thing or state that a particular question had already been discussed. Thus, all in all, there was a degree of flexibility during the interviews while ensuring that enough data was collected to answer the first research question.

The semi-structured interview actively engages participants in speaking about the topic while ensuring flexibility. Given that the researcher could probe further, the participants may elaborate further or possibly even direct the interview to another direction. Semi-structured interviews also have the potential to gather data that would not have been gathered by observation only, since during semi-structured interviews participants engage in conversation and say things that might be difficult to notice merely through observation. The semi-structured interview gives participants the opportunity to speak, at times after interviews participants may realise that they might have disclosed something that if they were not participating in an interview they would not have said. This is a possibility, but it did not happen in this research project.

Following interviews, participants were given the data collected from their interview once it was transcribed and where applicable, translated into English (participants who did their interview in Maltese were given both the transcription in Maltese and the English translation). Participants were reassured that they have full control over their data, and if they wanted to remove anything from their interview or to withdraw from the study, they could have done that without any consequences. None of the participants asked to withdraw or to remove parts of their interviews, so all data collected was coded and analysed. Such "member checking" by the participants ensures that data is validated, and it really reflects what the participant wanted to say (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, and Walter 2016).

Since during semi-structured interviews participants spoke about their ideas, opinions or experiences, the relationship participants built with the researcher is also worthy of discussion. Even though some authors suggest to researchers to break the ice and to make the participant feel at ease, as the researcher, I felt that this might lead to unnecessary delays or possibly the participant feeling that the interview is somewhat intrusive or a waste of time. Upon meeting the participant, rapport was built by introducing the research project and by explaining the purpose of the research project very clearly rather than engage in unnecessary conversation. Then, after the introduction through which the participant would understand the purpose of the research project, "active listening" (Simons 2009:47) is key. This is so that participants could describe their ideas freely. As the researcher, I was careful to bring the interview back on track if participants digressed. To prevent the interview from going astray, the interview questions were sent to each participant via email prior to the set date of the interview to give time to the participant to prepare.

Despite the long list of questions that I had initially prepared, during the actual interviews as already explained, there were deviations, and at times participants told me that the next question had already been discussed and that it was time to move on to the following question. Upon reflection, I prepared a long list of question to ensure that sufficient thick data is collected from the interviews, but now I

feel that there were too many questions. Despite this, the interviews were kept on track and thick data was collected.

At the beginning of each interview, I introduced the research project. Most of the interviews with the students deviated right from the start because nearly all students asked me if I read for the BA in Chinese at the University of Malta in the past, what my current profession is, and if my past studies at the University of Malta led me to pursue PhD studies in the UK. I answered all their questions about my experience as a past student of the course they are currently studying, and any other questions they had about my career in Malta. I did not record or transcribe any of this, I started the recording with the first question. The interviews with the teachers did not deviate as much as the interviews with the students at the beginning. The interviews with T2 NS and with T3 NNS started with a formal greeting and we subsequently moved on to the first question. Given that as specified earlier, T1 NNS and I were classmates for two years (2010-2012) at the University of Malta, the interview with this participant started with a greeting, which was followed by a brief chat about our studies and work. The participant told me about the MA programme they studied in in another country and I spoke about my PhD studies at the University of Southampton. This was not recorded or transcribed. Even though I know T1 NNS because we were classmates in the past, this did not affect the interview because we had not seen each other in years and there was never a close personal relationship.

Interviews were conducted between December 2020 and February 2021. At that point in time, Malta was under partial lock-down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. During 2020 and 2021, I was never quarantined because I did not come into contact with anyone who was infected with Covid, nor did I have Covid myself at that time, so I could physically go to the University of Malta campus at that time. I asked participants whether they wished to have their interviews conducted online or in person. Eight participants chose to hold the interview online due to the Covid restrictions, and two participants (two students) chose to do the interview in person on the campus of the University of Malta, where all health and safety measures at the time were adhered to. Due to the health situation at the time and

due to the fact that lectures and meetings and other activities were being held online, I felt that the interviews that were held online went well, as participants were used to attending lectures or meetings online due to Covid restrictions. Actually, I felt that the two interviews done in person took less time, possibly because the participants wanted to return to the safety of their homes. I feel that in view of the health situation during that period, the fact that most interviews were done online did not affect the responses of the participants, because online interaction was the normal at the time. If I were to undertake another research project in the future, I would opt for holding interviews in person given that the situation has now shifted back to in-person, however, at that time, online meetings were the norm, and I do not believe that the fact that interviews were held online affected the participants' responses in any way.

Most of the students who were interviewed were initially following the questions that I had sent them via email prior to the interview. A particular interview (T2 NS) deviated from the questions and the participant was giving me so much information and I did not interrupt or bring the interview back on track. I did this because I was aware that I had collected the data I needed from this interview and let the participant talk about their qualifications and teaching experience even though this was irrelevant to the interview. Another participant (T1 NNS) spoke a lot about their native language and identity, even though this was not entirely relevant to the interview, I let the participant express themselves as one of the aims of the interview is to give voice to the participants. So even though the list of questions was very long to ensure that the data needed for the case study would be collected, when answers were given by participants in questions asked earlier, no more questions were asked. Thus, the interviews were very flexible. Upon reflection on the interviews, in future research projects I would prepare a shorter list of questions for interviews because in most interviews, most of the answers were given in the first few questions anyways. The following section moves on to discuss the second research instrument used to collect data for this project: lesson observations.

4.5.2 Lesson observations

Following semi-structured interviews, observation is usually the next research instrument used to collect data in case study research. Observation starts as soon as the researcher steps within the boundary of the case. Through formal observation, the researcher gains insight on the culture and the norms of the organisation or department that is within the boundary of the case. Through "documenting observed incidents" (Simons 2009:55), the researcher gains a "rich description" (Simons 2009:55) to triangulate the data collected in interviews and eventually ensure more reliable results. Observation could be structured or unstructured, and usually structured observation tends to be used in classroom observation so that the researcher is guided on what is relevant to observe in a particular lesson within the case study. In the case of this research project, lesson observations were structured, this is because a form was prepared from before with points to be observed during the lessons. This is so that specific data necessary to triangulate the data gathered from the interviews was collected from lesson observations. Before lessons were observed, teachers were sent the lesson observation sheet that was filled in by the researcher during the lessons observed. All the lesson observations sheets that were filled-in for each lesson observed are available in appendix five.

Yin (2014) states that observations "are invaluable aids" (Yin 2014:114) to understand what is happening within the boundaries of the case and they "add dimensions for understanding either the context or the phenomenon being studied" (Yin 2014:114). This is one of the advantages of observations, through them the researcher could see what is really going on "inside" (Yin 2014:117) the case under research. Despite the advantage of being in the actual situation of the participants, observation could be very subjective as the researcher observes phenomena through their own eyes. The presence of the researcher who, in this case is observing the lesson might be a disadvantage in itself, the teacher and students whose lesson is being observed might feel anxious or under pressure and might not behave as they normally do. Previous researchers have tried to overcome this disadvantage by placing video cameras or audio recorders in the classrooms under observation so that

the researcher is not physically present in class. Despite this, recording devices in the classroom might also lead to the teacher and students to feel tense knowing that they are being recorded.

Lesson observations for this case study were done between February and May 2021. Due to the Covid restrictions, lectures were done online at that time and since the situation of the pandemic was unprecedented and unpredictable, there was no clarity on how long the situation was going to last and when lessons should return to the usual face-to-face mode. In view of this, to keep up with the timeline of this research project I had no choice but to observe lessons online. The data collected from lesson observations was impacted with the fact that due to the pandemic restrictions, the lessons observed were conducted online and a lot of the interaction especially between students that occurs during face-to-face lessons was missed out. Despite the limitations of collecting data from online lessons that are discussed at length in the section on limitations in the concluding chapter of this thesis, as a case study, this thesis presents what was happening within the boundaries of the case at a particular time, thus, this thesis shows how Chinese was being taught online during the lockdown that resulted from the pandemic in 2020/2021. Now that teaching has gone back to face-to-face, it would be interesting to have a future study on CFL in Malta where face-to-face lessons are observed and then the results would be compared.

During observations I took notes on the lesson observation sheet that I had prepared before to make sure that during each lesson observed I watch out for the same aspects. Apart from the points listed in the lesson observation sheet that I had prepared, I also took note of other interesting points that I observed which evidenced flexibility from my end. Lesson observation was flexible because I took notes of additional points; for example, I noticed that the local NNS teachers started most of their lessons 5 minutes late, as is normal in Malta to make sure that all students have joined the virtual classroom. This is normal practice in Malta as events tend to start a few minutes later than scheduled to make sure that the attendees have arrived. I noticed that the NS teacher started the lesson exactly on time, but they continued with the lesson after the scheduled end-time. This is not normal in the

Maltese context and it shows that the NS teacher is not familiar with local customs. This is one of the things that I noticed that was not listed on the lesson observation sheet, but I nonetheless felt the need to discuss it in the thesis.

The lessons observed were of the same language study unit that is taught by a NS and a NNS teacher. Both teachers share this study-unit, and both have the same role. They decide between themselves which chapters each teacher will be covering from the textbook 'New Practical Chinese Reader', and each teacher is responsible for delivering the formal lecture on the chapter and also for the delivery of the tutorial related to that particular lesson. The tutorial is to further consolidate what is taught during the lecture and to give students more opportunity to practice what they have learned. Thus, teachers have an equal role, they both set and assess homework, and collaborate in setting and marking the final exam paper. The teachers do not cover the same lessons, each of them covers a whole lesson from the textbook.

4.6 The research instruments and the data collected for this research project

Through interviews and lesson observation within case study research, data on how NS and NNS identities are constructed in CFL teaching and learning was collected. During semi-structured interviews, participants were asked questions on what factors they perceive construct native and non-native speaker identities, whether ethnicity, birthplace, socio-cultural identity and language ideology construct the native speaker. In the light of theory on nativeness, race, identity and language, participants were asked about factors they perceived to construct the identity of native and non-native speakers of Chinese. The participants were also asked questions on what they think makes a native speaker teacher of Chinese and how they perceive nativeness in Chinese vis-à-vis the fact that being a native speaker of Chinese does not necessarily mean being a native speaker of Standard Putonghua. Participants were also asked whether factors such as ethnicity, birthplace, socio-cultural identity or education construct the identities of native and non-native speakers of Chinese.

In light of the lack of a clear definition of what the native speaker is, participants were asked whether they agree with Paikeday's (1985) argument that the native speaker is dead, or whether they believe that the native speaker exists as part of a person's socio-cultural identity, but that it does not necessarily reflect linguistic proficiency. Participants were also asked to react to terms such as 'expert speaker' suggested by scholars (Jager 2001; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011) that reflect a person's linguistic abilities especially in the Standard Putonghua rather than the term 'native speaker' that reflects a person's socio-cultural identity. Such questions on nativeness as a socio-cultural construct that is part of a person's identity and not necessarily linguistic proficiency will lead to data that answers the first research question: "What constructs the identity of the native speaker of Chinese?".

In addition to building theory on the construction of identity of nativeness through researching the participants' thoughts and words in the semi-structured interviews, this research project also explores how NS and NNS teach. During lesson observation the researcher also observed whether Standard Putonghua is exclusively used by all teachers all the time while in class. This is important to observe in the case of CFL because being a native speaker of Chinese does not necessarily equate to being a native speaker of Standard Putonghua, as discussed in more depth in chapter three on Chinese, the linguistic diversity that this term encompasses, and the relationship between Standard Putonghua and the dialects, NS and NNS teachers might be in a similar situation had they learned Standard Putonghua in a formal classroom setting.

During lesson observations, the researcher observed whether the students' L1, L2 and cultural background are acknowledged, or even used as pedagogical tools, or whether they are ignored or even considered to be obstacles to learning the TL. During lesson observations the researcher observed whether the L1 and the shared cultural background of the NNS teacher are actually useful to scaffold new knowledge in the TL, or whether they make NNS teachers and students rely too much on the shared L1 and not make enough effort to speak the TL. Data collected from observing whether the students' identity and languages (L1, L2, L3…) is visible or even embraced in the classroom, or

whether it is invisible will shed light on how students' identity is constructed as speakers of the TL. During lesson observation the researcher observed how teachers correct students' errors in tones and pronunciation. The researcher was open to observe any other occurrences that were not listed in the lesson observation sheet and took notes accordingly.

4.7 Data analysis

Data was analysed thematically because common patterns were observed in all the data collected from interviews and lesson observations. Thematic analysis enabled me to identify common themes and to draw conclusions on the case under study from them. Thematic analysis is also typically used to analyse data collected through qualitative methods. That way themes emerged from data collected through two different research instruments (interviews and lesson observations), data collected through both research instruments were triangulated to ensure more reliability of the results.

Scholars (Denzin 1997; Simons 2009; Walker 1974) argue that the data itself does not "speak" (Wolcott 2009) but it must be thematically structured and analysed in order to eventually report on the findings. Miles and Huberman (1994:10-12) list "data reduction", "data display" and "conclusion drawing and verification" as the three processes through which data is analysed in qualitative research projects. The initial stage is what they term "data reduction", which entails the selection of key points. Subsequently, the next stage is "data display" which involves the creation of a sort of chart that displays the data according to themes. Eventually, the third phase is "data conclusion and verification". This is the stage where patterns that emerge from the data are observed and verified. This model was used to analyse the data collected for this research project, the transcriptions of the interviews were thoroughly read, and key recurring themes were highlighted. Data collected through lesson observation was also reduced in this manner and the main themes emerged. After the main themes that emerged from the data were established, the data was displayed (available in appendix six) and patterns were observed, verified, and eventually interpreted.

All interviews were transcribed manually by the researcher. I listened to the recordings and transcribed each word uttered by the researcher and the participants. There were instances where the participants laughed, for example, when participants were asked whether they are native or non-native speakers of Chinese, all the non-native speakers (teachers and students) laughed to signify that it is very obvious that they were non-native speakers of Chinese. Such laughs were recorded in the transcriptions by a note exactly at which point the participant laughed stating that the participant laughed. This is important because the participants' laughter at that particular moment in the interview suggests that it is very obvious that they are not native speakers of Chinese, or that it is impossible for them to ever become native speakers of Chinese. After all interviews were transcribed and the Maltese interviews were translated into English, data was processed manually and coded. Despite the access to data processing software such as NVIVO, I decided to process the data manually. This is because I do not feel confident enough to use such software and also because by going through the data manually several times I familiarised myself even more with the data. In addition to this, while going through the data I also looked at the transcriptions of the interviews done in Maltese in the original Maltese, and as far as I know, data processing software does not analyse text in Maltese. (To date, February 2024, there isn't even spell-checking software for Maltese). The transcriptions of the interviews were read by the researcher and key terms that were common across interviews were highlighted. A mixture of the deductive and the inductive approaches was used. The deductive approach was used in the initial stage of coding because themes observed in the literature discussed in the second chapter were also observed in the data collected from the interviews. Following this initial stage of coding, the interview transcripts were read again for a deeper content analysis and to identify emergent themes. This stage used the inductive method because new themes that are specific to the local context have emerged. In other words, the themes that emerged from the interviews came up in a mixture of inductive and deductive ways, initially themes that were commonly discussed in the existing literature emerged, then following a more thorough reading of the interview transcripts, new themes that are more relevant to the context of CFL in Malta arose. After the interview

transcripts were coded and the main themes emerged, the data was reduced, categorised and patterns that explain the data were observed. Then, from the coded data, themes were generated so that the story of the case could be told.

After the story is told, the aim of case study research is to create knowledge that contributes to decision making. This is because even though the case is very particular, according to Simons (2009), "by studying the uniqueness of the case in-depth, in all its particularity, we come to understand the universal" Simons (2009: 167). At this point, I believe that this case study gives a credible view of what is going on within the boundaries of the case in Malta, there is transferability because this case study could be carried out in a similar environment (for example in CFL classrooms in compulsory education in Malta). This case study also has confirmability as the results reported and discussed in the chapters five and six are a result of what the participants said during interviews or what resulted from lesson observations (Lincoln and Guba 1985, 1986).

4.8 Ethical considerations

The fundamental principle of ethics in research is to do no harm. The nature of case study research involves people sharing their experiences and feelings. In this respect, following Simons (2009), I strongly believe that this case study research project should conduct "research *with* people rather than avoiding doing harm *to* them" (Simons 2009:97).

Trust between the participants and the researcher is very important during the fieldwork phase (Simons 2009; MacDonald and Walker 1975). Trust was built by actively involving the participants, by giving them a sense of belonging in the research project, and by ensuring that confidentiality was always respected during the data collection process and afterwards. The fact that only consenting adults participated in this research project is important in the context of Malta.

The participants who decided, out of their own free will, to participate in the case study were asked to sign a consent form in order to ensure that the data collection conforms to the Data Protection

laws and GDPR laws in both the UK and Malta. Consent of all participants was ongoing and confirmed throughout the whole data collection process (Simons 2009; Ramcharan and Cutcliffe 2001; Flewitt 2005). The participants were also informed that prior to the start of the fieldwork, the research project had received ethical clearance by ERGO at the University of Southampton, and also by the University of Malta since the fieldwork was carried out at the University of Malta.

The participants were also informed that their personal information will remain anonymous, that confidentiality is ensured, and that all materials related to their data will be stored in a password protected laptop that is the property of the University of Southampton. The participants were also informed very clearly that they had full control over their data, and that they would have access to the thesis before any possible publication in future. All participants were given the opportunity to review, delete, or change any parts of the data they felt uncomfortable with. This is because the participants have the right to know how their data is being processed and how their voice is being recorded in the case study (Richards 2009; Louw, Todd and Jimarkon 2011). All prospective participants were also told that they could withdraw from the research project at any time without any need for justification. The participants were informed about the precise main theme of the research project, in order to make it very clear from the start that participating in such research would not require the disclosure of any personal information, and that all questions would be solely related to their experience of teaching and learning CFL in Malta. The only recorded data in the possession of the researcher are the recordings of the interviews, which were destroyed once transcriptions were made.

4.9 Summary of the chapter

This chapter discusses the methodology employed in this case study research project. First, the chapter introduces the case and justifies why case study research was deemed the most appropriate methodology to research this case. Subsequently, the chapter discusses the selection of the participants and the researcher's roles. The chapter further moves on to discuss the research instruments, namely semi-structured interviews and lesson observations, and how through these two research instruments the data was collected during academic year 2020/2021. Then the chapter discusses how the data was analysed and ethical considerations that were taken related to the data collection for this research project. Finally, the chapter is concluded with this general summary.

Following the current methodology chapter, the following two chapters move on to present and to discuss data on identity and pedagogy collected from interviews and lesson observations respectively.

V

Findings and discussion on students' and teachers' perceptions on the construction of the identity of native and non-native speakers of Chinese

5.1 Introduction to the chapter

This chapter discusses findings on how the participants perceive the identities of native and non-native speakers of Chinese to be constructed also considering literature on identity, foreign language teaching and learning, Chinese as a foreign language, and a discussion of terms such as Hanyu, Zhongwen and Putonghua. This chapter answers the first research question listed in chapter one, section 1.3, What factors do students and teachers perceive to contribute to the construction of the identities of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese in Malta? This chapter discusses themes that emerged from the data collected from interviews with teachers and students of Chinese in Malta. While all the participants are multilingual, the possibility that a person could be a native speaker of two or more languages, did not come up during the interviews, thus, apart from the following section that discusses this matter in more detail, the rest of the chapter presents the participants' perceptions of factors that construct the identities of native and non-native speakers.

The aim of this chapter is not to create any fixed definitions of the terms 'native' and 'non-native' speakers, but to present the participants' perceptions and to contribute to the discussion on the topic while presenting a case study in a context (Malta) where Chinese is a minority language (as discussed previously, in Kachru's framework, Chinese in Malta would be in the expanding circle). Since Chinese is not a global language in the way that English is, many teachers of CFL use English (or other languages) as a medium of instruction in their lessons, thus, they are bilingual or possibly even multilingual; languages which they could have acquired natively or learned through formal education later in life.

5.2 The possibility of the native speaker of multiple languages

As explained above briefly, something that did not come up in the interviews is the possibility of multiple languages acquired natively. This is a very possible scenario especially in view of the reality of multilingual families, multiculturalism and immigration among other factors that promote multiculturalism and multilingualism. A simple example of a person who acquired more than one language natively is when a child is born to parents who individually speak to the child in different languages and who speak to each other and to the child in another language (a sort of home lingua franca). In such cases, a child would be exposed to more than one language during the critical period generally thought to be before puberty (Penfield and Roberts 1959) and if the input in each language is sufficient and if the child has all the neurological requirements for language acquisition, such a child would acquire the languages they are exposed to naturally during early childhood. Since sign language is classified as a language, it could also be that a child (irrelevant whether they are hearing or not) acquires sign language natively, if they are exposed to it during the critical age and they have the biological requirements (for example sight).

When asked what a native speaker is, none of the participants mentioned the possibility of a person who identifies as a native speaker of more than one language. The participants' general perception is that the native speaker is either monolingual or to have acquired only one language natively, and then, like themselves, learned other languages and become multilingual later in life. For example, T1 NNS said that they are native speakers of Maltese "and English came later" (they said that English was introduced to them in primary school, but never at home) and they later learned other foreign languages, including Mandarin. All in all, this thesis acknowledges that if a person was exposed to more than one language during the critical age of childhood and they had all the necessary biological requirements to acquire language, they could be native speakers of multiple languages, but, as already explained in the introduction above, the possibility of being a native speaker of multiple languages did not come up during the interviews and there is no data about it in the current study. In view of this,

the rest of this chapter discusses the themes that emerged from the data about factors that the participants perceive to make a native speaker.

5.3 Factors that participants perceive to contribute to the construction of the identity of the native speaker

This section discusses themes such as family background, language and ethnicity, nationality, language and place of birth and nativeness in view of the rich diversity of dialects and languages that are included in the umbrella term Chinese (discussed in more depth in chapter 3). The second section of this chapter presents the points of view of the participants on issues related to their perceptions on the linguistic proficiency and cultural knowledge of native and non-native speakers of Chinese. Such themes emerged from the data coding and analysis process of the interviews.

5.3.1 Family background and early childhood

In view of theory on first language acquisition (discussed in chapter two) the first interview question to the participants was "what is a native speaker?" To answer this question, participants mentioned factors such as birthplace, family background and language exposed to during early childhood as some of the factors that construct the identities of native and non-native speakers.

The excerpts from the data and collected in appendix four show that participants' perceptions are that native speakers (of any language) are those who were exposed to a language (irrelevant of the dialect) since birth and during early childhood by their immediate family. S1 says that for them, native speakers are "people who were brought up listening to this language and speaking it throughout their childhood years. A native speaker is a person who speaks the language throughout childhood." S6 also mentions childhood and says that to them, "a native speaker is person who has learned and spoken a particular language since childhood." T1 NNS also mentions family and says that to them, "a native speaker is a person who speaks in Chinese in their daily life with their family."

The excerpts from the data collected from interviews quoted above (and available in appendix four) are very much in line with the Critical Period Hypothesis developed by Penfield and Roberts (1959) as exposure to language within the age before puberty is a key factor in making a person a native speaker of a language. Some participants (S5, S7 and T2) also mention the word "naturally" suggesting that a person who acquires a language in early childhood is a 'natural' speaker of it, they had the biological requirements to acquire the language. The quotations from the data in appendix four also mention family, suggesting that a native language is the language (participants do not mention the possibility of the acquisition of multiple native languages, as was discussed in the section above) a child is exposed to by their closest family and caregivers. In fact, the native language is sometimes also referred to as the "mother tongue", especially in older literature to refer to the language a child is exposed to the most by their primary caregiver. The term "mother" does not feature in the data collected, possibly because of the shift in Maltese society to use the term 'parent' and it could also be because what matters is that the child is exposed to the language, by any of their immediate caregivers (whoever they may be) as long as it occurs before puberty, and it is regular continuous exposure.

In addition to exposure to language within the family, excerpts from the data in appendix four (S5, S6, S7, T1 NNS, T3 NNS) also mention China or a place where the language is mostly spoken. This suggests that in addition to exposure from the immediate family, further exposure to Chinese from society at large contributes to a child's natural acquisition of Chinese. It could be that a child acquires a language from society or from school or from friends if they are adequately exposed to a language in the critical age and they have the neurological requirements, for example babies in migrant families who also acquire the major language of the society they are living in because they are exposed to it within the critical age. It is important to note that the general perception of the participants that the native speaker is one who "naturally" acquired the language through exposure during the critical age does not necessarily apply to neurodiverse children, as they usually tend to acquire languages differently. For example children on the autism spectrum acquire language differently.

Since many participants mentioned being born in China and living in China during early childhood, participants were asked about whether it is possible for a person to identify as a native speaker of Chinese who was born and raised within a Chinese community in the west rather than in China. This will be discussed in more depth in the following section.

5.3.2 Birthplace and place of residence during early childhood

In addition to the neurological requirements for language acquisition, the Critical Period Hypothesis developed by Penfield and Roberts (1959) mentions exposure to and communication in a language or languages during the critical period, usually considered to be prior to puberty. Since being born in a country or being moved to a country at a young age most probably also involves being exposed to the language mostly spoken there, especially if a child goes to school and communicates with other children and teachers. In view of this, the participants were asked if native speakers of Chinese were necessarily born and raised in China or whether one could be a native speaker of Chinese if they were born elsewhere.

One of the participants, S2 stated "yes, if they lived in China for quite some time". Another participant, S7 stated that "Yes, if they have Chinese parents, or even if they have one Chinese parent, if they grow up speaking Chinese at home or within their family, they can be considered as native speakers." T1 NNS stated that "if there is someone, for example, who was born in Beijing, [...] if they spoke in Chinese, that is a native speaker of Chinese." The data collected and excerpts quoted here show that the participants' general perception is that being born in a particular place where a language is predominantly spoken is not enough to make a person a native speaker of that language, but rather, the language spoken to a child by the family is what they believe to be one of the factors that contribute to make a native speaker. T3 NNS also mentions the language spoken within the family and not only exposure to a language, but also being spoken to in Chinese and being able to answer back in Chinese, irrelevant of geographical location, would contribute to the native speaker identity. T3 NNS said "yes, but that it also depends on family. A lot of people, second generation people, they

often classify themselves as non-native speakers. So, I would say it depends on their parents and how much they really used the language at home, and how much they used it growing up, but, many people say they used it on me but I didn't use it back, so I'm not a native speaker." Thus, it could be argued that geographical location itself does not make a person a native speaker of the language predominantly spoken there, but rather exposure and communication in the language. When asked about their own native language, one of the participants said that even though they are Maltese and they have lived in Malta all their life, exposed to the Maltese language, they are a native speaker of English because they were brought up speaking English. Thus, the language a child is spoken to (irrelevant of the language spoken outside of their home) is what most participants perceive to contribute to the native speaker identity.

Even though it is possible to acquire Chinese (whatever variety that is) natively outside of China, some participants opine that the language of those who did not acquire Chinese in China is somewhat different from the language of native speakers who acquired Chinese in China. S3 argues that "No, the accent is different. There is something missing. It depends on the exposure of the language at home." S5 said that "Chinese parents who are not in China might not be speaking Putonghua, they speak a variety of Chinese that they speak at home, very often this is a dialect, but they are still native speakers of a Chinese language that might not exist in China, because now there is also a mixture of English and Chinese, but they are native speakers of a language that is not English and sometimes that is not even Chinese also." The idea of identifying as a native speaker of a dialect could happen in Chinese or in any other language, but in Chinese it is particularly more significant because, as discussed in the third chapter, different dialects are not necessarily mutually intelligible with each other and with the standard. S5 mentions the possibility of identifying as a native speaker "of a Chinese language that might not exist in China, […] but they are native speakers of a language that is not English and sometimes that is not even Chinese also." This suggests that outside of China, Chinese could be mixed with English (or possibly with other languages) that is different from the standard variety. Thus, this

further emphasises the general perception that the language spoken within the family contributes to construct the idea of those perceived to be native speakers.

The general perception of the participants is that a native speaker is someone who was exposed to the language during early childhood, this is very much in line with the Critical Period Hypothesis (Penfield and Roberts 1959). Regarding birthplace and place of residence during the critical age, participants have varying opinions. One of the participants opines that children of Chinese parents born and raised outside of China could be considered as native speakers of Chinese, "if they have Chinese parents, or even if they have one Chinese parent, if they grow up speaking Chinese at home or within their family, they can be considered as native speakers (S7)." Many of the participants argue that if a child was born and raised overseas, "probably there would be a bit of a difference I guess in the language skills to someone who was born in China and who was constantly hearing Chinese spoken wherever they go (S1)," thus constant exposure is necessary in the identity of a native speaker. Another participant also mentions exposure at home as one of the factors that makes a native speaker of Chinese and goes on to say that in the case of those born outside of China, "the accent is different. There is something missing. It depends on the exposure of the language at home (S3, Translation)," further emphasising the importance of exposure to Chinese during the critical age. Another participant mentions the people raised in big Chinatowns around the world and opines that "Chinese parents who are not in China might not be speaking Putonghua, […] very often this is a dialect, but they are still native speakers of a Chinese language that might not exist in China, because now there is also a mixture of English and Chinese, but they are native speakers of a language that is not English and sometimes that is not even Chinese also (S5, Translation)," further emphasising that even though overseas Chinese could still identify as native speakers of Chinese, usually the variety of Chinese they are native speakers of is different from the standard.

In view of the linguistic diversity in China and in the Chinese diaspora, being a native speaker of Chinese does not necessarily equate to being a native speaker of the standard variety, officially known

as Putonghua. (See chapter 3 on the term Chinese and what it denotes). Being a native speaker of a Chinese dialect that is not the standard (as discussed in chapter 3, Standard Putonghua is considered to be a very standardised variety) is a very common occurrence, in China and in the diaspora. The fact that all the participants mentioned family, childhood and birth when asked about what makes a native speaker of Chinese, led to a question on whether they think that native speakers of Chinese are necessarily ethnically Chinese, as discussed in the following section.

5.3.3 Native speakers and ethnicity

Traditionally, it is thought that the national language is one of the factors that unites a nation, the national language gives a people their identity and it is often seen as a symbol of national pride in several countries. A common language could also grant individuals membership in a group (Garcia 2010, Lytra 2007) and make it easier for a person to integrate in a society. Lytra (2016) also argues that ethnicity and language identity are ascribed by oneself and also by others, is also fluid because it could change by time as people move to other countries or learn languages. It is also socially constructed because it is not only a matter of how one identifies oneself, but it is also a matter of how one is perceived by others in the society around them. Thus, language is not only a medium through which people communicate, but it is also an aspect of their identity and a way how to integrate with others. Identity is fluid as people move countries and learn languages for practical purposes as well as to form new identities in new groups. Fishman (1999), a pioneer in the study on language and ethnicity, argued that "although language has rarely been equated with the totality of ethnicity, it has, in certain historical, regional and disciplinary contexts, been accorded priority within that totality" Fishman (1999:4).

In view of the idea that Chinese, and all the linguistic diversity that the term Chinese includes (this matter is discussed in chapter three on Chinese), Chinese is a language that unites many people to whom it gives a sense of national identity. Since Chinese is not a global language in the way that English is, Chinese is also very connected to China and to the Chinese diaspora around the world. Since the

participants mentioned family, childhood acquisition and birthplace, they were asked whether they think that native speakers of Chinese are usually ethnically Chinese. This is to shed some light on the participants' perceptions on language and ethnicity especially in relation to Chinese (for a discussion on the complex term 'Chinese' see chapter three), a language (in all its diversity) that is commonly associated with China and is a source of national pride to its people.

The data collected (quotations from the data on language and ethnicity is available in appendix four) shows that the general perception of both students and teachers interviewed is that ethnicity alone is not enough to make a person a native speaker of Chinese, but as discussed in the previous section, one must be exposed to Chinese (whatever that variety is) during early childhood as that is the time when one would acquire the language naturally from their immediate surroundings. Both teachers mention exposure to Chinese through one's surroundings and age; the more one is immersed in the language and the earlier the age, the more likely it is for a person to identify as a native speaker of Chinese. It is not necessarily a question of ethnicity, it is more a question of being immersed in the Chinese language at an early age in life.

One of the participants, S1 opines that "if a Chinese person was born in Malta they can definitely not be a native Chinese speaker", thus ethnicity is not a factor perceived by the participants to make a person a native speaker, in this case, of Chinese. S1 continues to say that "I met children and they say, the parents say that their Chinese is not very good," possibly because in Malta, they have not had enough exposure to acquire Chinese (irrelevant of the variety) natively.

S3 said that "it's nurture. […] Where one grew up – childhood is what makes a native speaker. Not birth, but where one was brought up" and S6 said that "maybe adopted by Chinese parents or within an environment where Chinese is the main language", suggesting that rather the general perception is that the language spoken to during childhood is perceived to be a factor that contributes to the construction of the native speaker identity not ethnicity. Similarly, T1 NNS opines that "there are cases in China of Chinese families who adopt children for example from Cambodia or who adopt

children from Vietnam, and these children have become Chinese, and they are native speakers of Chinese" suggesting that ethnicity is not a necessary factor to make a native speaker, but rather exposure is. T1 NNS continues to state that "any human being can become a native speaker of any language if they are brought up in that circumstance," further emphasising the importance of exposure during childhood to make a person a native speaker. This finding is very much in line with Fishman's (1999) theory that ethnicity does not equate to language. Thus, the association of a language with an ethnicity does not necessarily reflect the truth and it is also quite stereotypical.

After the question on whether being ethnically Chinese will make a person a native speaker of Chinese, participants were also asked if a person could become a native speaker of Chinese after studying Chinese formally at school or at university.

5.3.4 Native speakers and formal education

Acquiring a language/s that a child is exposed to is a natural process that occurs in early childhood when a child can hear and they have the neurological connections required for language acquisition, irrelevant of ethnicity or geographical location, a child will acquire the language/s they are exposed to in the critical age before puberty in order to communicate their basic needs, such as a need to eat or drink or to express any discomfort they might have. Such a natural process of acquisition happens much earlier than when children start attending school and, in the past, when not all children were formally educated, they still acquired a native language/s even if they were only able to communicate orally and were not literate. In view of this, participants were asked if native speakers must study their language formally at school and whether a person who only studies a language formally at school could become a native speaker of it.

S6 said that "there's a huge gap between learning Chinese in a school and living within a Chinese environment. […] there's a difference between being fluent and proficient, because university or the institution teaches a student proficiency, which is the ability to comprehend and speak, practice by writing and reading, so I think one wouldn't be fluent in the dialect, but can still be a skilful speaker. I

think that fluency is impossible to attain without engaging in dialogue." T1 NNS answered "no, especially if they have only studied formally. No. If they lived in the country for a long time, or else if they are in a very Chinese environment, for example if their spouse is Chinese, or if suddenly they start living in a Chinese family, even if it is in America, there they could approach native speaker level, one could approach native speaker level, but one wouldn't really be a native speaker."

Both the students and the teachers interviewed opine that being spoken to in Chinese (any variety or dialect) and using Chinese in daily life are important factors to really acquire proficiency in the language, thus, it is impossible for a person to become a native speaker of a language only after studying it formally at school or at university, because to be a native speaker one must be exposed to Chinese during childhood and acquire it without any effort but by a natural biological process. Formally learning a language at school, even if it is learned during the critical age before puberty, involves consciously learning vocabulary, grammar structures and that would not make a native speaker, it would make a very proficient user of a language.

For example, a child who studies a second language at school and their only exposure to it is a formal lesson, that would not be a native speaker essentially because they learned the language formally and not acquired it naturally. Despite this, children who are still within the critical age and who are not neurologically diverse and who have no hearing impairments find it easier to learn a foreign or a second language than for an adult, whose mind is already set due to age. For example, in my childhood in Malta, I was not exposed to English except for the English lesson at school and through books (I had no access to the internet at that time). Thus, I am not a native speaker of English because I learned English formally in a classroom environment. Despite this, because I started studying English during very early childhood, my learning was more effective than when I started studying Chinese and Arabic in adulthood at university. Thus, a native speaker is when a person acquired a language (or more than one language) through a natural biological process of acquisition in early childhood, while a "proficient user" (Christopherson 1988, Jager 2001; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011) is someone who learned a

language (or more than one language) after the critical period of early childhood, either through formal classroom instruction or through exposure by their surroundings.

Thus, a native speaker teacher is someone who acquired the language naturally in childhood and then went on to study the language formally at school to be able to understand how the language works so that then they could explain such rules. Native speakers do not need to study the language formally to be able to communicate, they need to study to be literate and to understand how the language works. Without such formal studying, a native speaker can communicate orally just as well as anyone who studied formally, the difference if a person studies formally is that in addition to communicating orally, they are literate and they can also explain how the language works.

Since a human child could acquire more than one language natively, native speakers of Chinese, like native speakers of any other language, could have acquired more than one language natively. As discussed in chapter three about Chinese, what is politically considered to be one language that unites China, is actually diverse and comprises dialects that are not necessarily mutually intelligible. Thus, a person could be a native speaker of a non-standard variety of Chinese who then, studies the standard variety formally through formal education. (This could also happen in other languages) In view of this, the issue of native speakerism in the recruitment of foreign language teachers does not necessarily hold because what should matter is a teacher's proficiency of the standard variety that is taught (irrelevant of their native language), their qualifications and experience among other factors that are related to the job.

Since identity is fluid, multiple and socially constructed (Norton 2016), a person who had sufficient exposure during the critical age and who had no biological impediments to language acquisition, they would have one or more native languages and they can add more languages to their repertoire as they grow older. For example, I am a native speaker of Maltese, I learned English formally at school in childhood and today I consider myself to be a "proficient user" (Christopherson 1988, Jager 2001; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011) of English, I also have some knowledge of Italian as a foreign language

due to exposure and in adulthood I formally studied Chinese (Mandarin) and Arabic (Modern Standard) at university and I might learn other languages in the future. Thus, linguistic identity is fluid and multiple, it could change if a person learns another language/s or moves countries. Identity is also socially constructed because it is constructed according to how a person sees themselves and the way others see them. In view of this, since most of the participants said that they are not native speakers of Chinese, because essentially, they are native speakers of other languages. Thus, after participants said that they are native speakers of Maltese or English, they were asked what makes them a native speaker of that language and whether they could actually 'become' native speakers of Chinese in the future.

5.3.5 Native speakers of other languages

All of the participants except for one (T2 NS) claimed to be non-native speakers of Chinese. This is because most of them are students, and they are learning Chinese as an additional foreign language or else they are non-native speaker teachers of Chinese who learned Chinese in adulthood and who are now qualified to teach it. Several participants who are non-native speakers of Chinese also spoke about themselves as native speakers of Maltese or English to better explain that a native speaker, and they gave an example of themselves as native speakers of Maltese or English because that is the first language they were exposed to in childhood. The participants who claimed to be native speakers of Maltese (the vast majority) also said that they were born in Malta where they lived, this shows that there is a connection between the Maltese language and Malta, where the language is most widely spoken. Studies (Sciriha and Vassallo 2003, 2006, Xuereb 2022) show that Maltese is the native language of most people in Malta, and this is reflected in this study as well. (Despite this, there are Maltese migrant communities in Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada and the United States where Maltese is spoken and taught.) Thus, exposure to the language/s during the critical age is one of the factors that constructs the identity of a native speaker of any language. Something that participants mention is the link between a language and the country where it is mostly spoken, of course, living in

a country where a language is widely spoken increases the exposure one has to that language and thus increases the chance of a child naturally acquiring that language natively.

In view of this, S2 stated (in Maltese): “Maltese is my native language because I was born and raised in Malta. I learned Maltese from the environment I was born in.” Similarly, S7 included the researcher and in their statement, in English “I’m Maltese. I’ve lived in Malta all my life. The fact that we were raised speaking Maltese, we have spoken Maltese since birth, even our hand gestures are typically Maltese. Even our English is Maltese-English.” Such statements show the participants link the Maltese language with Malta, thus in the case of languages that are not global, there is some sort of link between a language and where it is spoken. Such a link is not necessarily with the country where the language is mostly spoken, it could also be with the diaspora, for example one of the participants mentioned they know native speakers of Maltese who live in Maltese communities in Australia. (Historically, in the 1940s and 1950s, many Maltese emigrated to Australia to seek better employment opportunities. Such an endeavour was facilitated by the fact that both Australia and Malta are members of the Commonwealth). S7 also mentioned Maltese-English, a very under-researched area and except from very brief descriptions of its sound system (Vella 1994) (for example the lack of pronunciation of the sound /th/, so the words ‘tanks’ and ‘thanks’ would be pronounced in an identical way) that is worthy of further study, especially because nowadays there are people who acquire this variety of English natively.

One of the participants (S1) stated that English is their native language but “I wish it were Maltese, sometimes I struggle with Maltese and it upsets me a lot.” In fact, at the beginning of the interview, when participants were asked which language they wish their interview to be conducted in, S1 immediately stated that they only speak English and unlike what happened during all the interviews with Maltese speakers, they did not switch to Maltese at any time and spoke English throughout.

S1 makes it very clear that they are Maltese and they have lived in Malta all their lives but “was brought up listening to English. My parents, my family always spoke to me in English”. This quotation

from the data shows that even though a person was born and brought up in a particular country where a language is very widely spoken, to be a native speaker one needs to be exposed to the language at home since birth and to use the particular language to communicate since birth. This quotation also shows that being a native speaker is part of a person's identity because this participant says "I wish it were Maltese, sometimes I struggle with Maltese and it upsets me a lot" suggesting that being a native speaker of Maltese and the ability to speak the language is part of the identity of being Maltese. It also confirms that in the case of languages that are not global, there is a link between a language and the country, or countries and diasporas where it is spoken, and that language is part of a person's identity. Despite this, as already explained above, there is no link between language and ethnicity. A future study on the link between language and nationality and ethnicity would be interesting in the context of Malta, especially in view of the trend that nowadays there are children in Malta who are native speakers of Maltese-English.

All in all, it could be concluded that factors that contribute to the construction of the identity of native speakers of Chinese could also be applied to other non-global languages such as Maltese. Following the question on what makes them a native speaker of Maltese or English, participants were asked whether a non-native speaker could ever become a native speaker of a language after the critical period had elapsed, for example through moving to China in adulthood or through living in a Chinese-speaking environment where a person is immersed in the language that is not their native language.

5.3.6 Immersion in a language in adulthood can make a near-native speaker

Several participants raised the point that a native speaker of Chinese might be a person who was not born and raised in China but, who was exposed to Chinese (from family or care givers or the community) during childhood and who acquired the language naturally, irrelevant of the geographical location where the acquisition took place. In view of the importance of exposure to a language/s as one of the factors that makes a person a native speaker, participants were asked if a person moves to

China in adulthood and is exposed to the language in adulthood, could they ever become a native speaker of Chinese?

Penfield and Roberts' (1959) Critical Period Hypothesis posits that age, exposure and neurological and biological requirements are met for a child to acquire a language naturally. In view of this, a native speaker is a person who meets these three requirements, thus learning a language (either through formal instruction or through immersion) in adulthood is not considered native speaker acquisition but rather learning, because certain structures in the mind would have already been set after the critical age. The following quotation from the interview with S1 shows the general perception of the participants, that after the critical age one could learn the language (also as discussed in the section on formal education) but one would not acquire it natively. "Later on in life? I don't think they would fully become native speakers. I think they would be very high level, but they still wouldn't be native speakers, I feel there are so many, so much to learn in Chinese, it's such a rich language, like, there's so much to it, even if they spend years there, everyone would be like wow, you sound like a native speaker, but still they are not a native speaker because they weren't brought up speaking that language."

The quotation above shows that according to this participant, shows that immersion in the language, life and culture can make an adult "approximate native speaker level" (T1 NNS) but that would not make a person a native speaker. Similarly, S2 claims that they have a sense of belonging in English even though they are not native speakers of English, but they lived in London for ten years. In view of migration (which happened in this case), the participant constructs their linguistic identity not only in their native language, but also in a language they are very proficient users of as a result of exposure in a country where it is very widely spoken.

Regarding the possibility of non-native speakers reaching the so-called native speaker level, Christiansen (2022:497-498) quotes Bloomfield (1933) and argues that a learner "could progress up the levels" of the CEFR and reach what they put in inverted-commas "native speaker level" but actually

claiming that they have reached the so called “native speaker level” is often a misconception. The findings of this study confirm that this is also the general perception of the participants, that non-native speakers could not reach the level of native speakers. This matter will be discussed in more depth in the following section.

Thus, to be a native speaker one must acquire a language naturally during the critical age. Thus, terms such as “proficient-user” (Paikeday 1985:6) and “expert user” coined by scholars (Rampton 1990:98) who suggested that such terms should be used instead of the term native speaker are misleading because the meaning of the term **native speaker** and the term **proficient user** differs (in bold for emphasis). A native speaker is a person who **acquired** the language naturally while a proficient user is a person who **learned** the language consciously through immersion or formal tuition. The terms **acquire** and **learn** are in bold for emphasis; acquisition is not necessarily a conscious process while learning is a more conscious form, usually of formal education. Thus, learning a language (through immersion or through formal learning) will not make a native speaker, but it will make someone sound like a native speaker, or a near-native speaker because such a person will be fluent and able to communicate orally very well.

In view of this, the two non-native speaker teachers interviewed could be considered to be “proficient-users” (Paikeday 1985:6) and “expert users” (Rampton 1990:98) because they both **learned** Chinese after the critical period, in a formal way through education and also through exposure by living in China. Thus, even though the non-native speaker teachers are very fluent and proficient (in Mandarin) and have experience in speaking Mandarin in various situations, they still stressed that they are non-native speakers, and when asked whether they are native or non-native speakers of Chinese, they both giggled to suggest that they are absolutely not native speakers and not as fluent and proficient as native speakers of Chinese (the way participants perceive fluency and proficiency of native and non-native speakers is discussed in the following section). Their giggling could be for modesty’s sake, or it could be the result of an inferiority complex, but many other participants who are students spoke

about the proficiency and the "level" of native speakers that non-native speakers could "approximate" but could not gain. Even non-native speaker teachers commented on the "level" of native speakers, and T3 who is a non-native speaker stated that they "wouldn't even say that I'm native level. There are different degrees of fluency, […] I'm fluent in some degree, […] but I'm definitely not native level".

In view of the general perception of the participants that those who are considered to be native speakers have a "high level", the following section discusses in more depth the participants' perceptions on the fluency and proficiency of native speakers.

5.4 Native speakers' naturally acquired linguistic and cultural knowledge

5.4.1 Native speakers' fluency and proficiency

The previous section posits that a non-native speaker could be a "proficient-user" (Paikeday 1985:6) or an "expert user" (Rampton 1990:98) and they might have sufficient knowledge to decide if an utterance is grammatical or if it is not and could also be able to explain why, but still, they would not be considered to be native speakers. Such processes are common practice for teachers (irrelevant whether they are native or non-native speakers).

Chomsky's (1965) theory on the sole authority of the native speaker who can determine what is grammatical and what is not even though a native speaker is not always able to explain why a structure is ungrammatical, has been criticised by linguists (Beaugrande 1998; Cook 1995; Medgyes 1992; Nayar 1994; Norton 1997; Paikeday 2003; Phillipson 1992; Rajagopalan 2005; Widdowson 1998, 2003). According to Chomsky (1965), while native speakers can judge whether an utterance is grammatical or not, non-native speakers who are very proficient, what Paikeday (1985:6) and Rampton (1990:98) call "proficient-user" and "expert user" respectively, would also be able to take such decisions, if they are proficient enough. Thus, being able to judge the grammaticality of a sentence is not a feat exclusive to native speakers, but rather to those who have acquired enough knowledge through education or exposure (irrelevant if they are native or non-native speakers). One of the participants, S5 comments

on this, and while they acknowledge that “a native speaker would have a certain level”, they continue to state that because they, as a non-native speaker, “study Chinese in too much depth” are able to detect a grammatical error and to explain why a certain utterance is erroneous. S5 also states that “a native speaker would feel if there is an error even if they cannot explain what it is. Sometimes when one is able to explain why something is wrong, that shows that one is not a native speaker.” S5’s perception that a native speaker would, almost instinctively detect an error even though they cannot necessarily explain why a structure is erroneous is very much in line with Chomsky’s (1965) theory on the detection of errors by native speakers, even though they are not necessarily able to explain why a structure is erroneous. (the interview with S5 was held in Maltese and is available in English in the appendix).

This study shows that the participants interviewed have a general perception that native speakers have a certain high “level” of proficiency and since identity is socially constructed, there are what Norton (2016:475) very aptly calls “the social mechanisms of power” that come into play between native and non-native speakers, a topic that was also very well explored by Bourdieu (1991) and Weedon (1987). In their study on how native and non-native speakers construct their identity in view of language proficiency, Ikeda (2005), Kurhila (2000) and Nimabuchi (2008) posit that native speakers are perceived to be more proficient, and their opinions are perceived to be more authoritative than those of non-native speakers. This is very much in line with Chomsky’s (1965) idea that the native speaker is the authority on the language. Nimabuchi’s (2008) research on how native and non-native speakers’ identities are constructed in relation to proficiency shows that in the conversations between a number of native and non-native speakers of English set in Hawaii and studied by Nimabuchi in 2008, native speakers were the ones who were asked about precise meanings of words. They were also the ones who took the responsibility of repairing the inaccurate utterances of non-native speakers. In view of the research by Ikeda (2005), Kurhila (2000) and Nimabuchi (2008) that show how native speakers are perceived to be more proficient, the data collected from the interviews for this project shows that one of the factors that contributes to the construction of the identity of native speakers is what all of

the participants of this study referred to as “the level” of native speakers; that is the “high level” of fluency and proficiency that they perceive that native speakers have and that non-native speakers are traditionally known to strive for but they often find impossible to reach.

S7 opines that “the level of Chinese makes a native speaker; native speakers have a high level of Chinese” and refers to themselves as being Maltese, suggesting that as a person who is Maltese, who has lived in Malta all their life and who was raised speaking Maltese could not reach the “high level of Chinese” that native speakers have, because essentially, they are not native speakers of Chinese.

In their comment, S4 starts their utterance with the word “obviously, I am a non-native speaker” suggesting that they are “obviously” not as fluent as native speakers. (This could be that because S4 is a student and still learning Mandarin). S4 says that they were not born and raised in China, so they can never be native speakers of Chinese. The participant (S4) also mentions the possibility of becoming a “near native speaker” if they “get immersed in the community, go and live in China” suggesting that it is possible to reach near native speaker proficiency if an individual lives in an environment where they are totally immersed in the language, but they can never become native speakers or reach native speaker level.

The participant (S4) stressed the word **near**, suggesting that it is possible for a non-native speaker to gain fluency and proficiency, for example if they move to China and immerse themselves in the language, but still, at the end of the utterance the participant laughs, suggesting that it is impossible to gain native speaker level of Chinese because essentially, they are not native speakers.

Like previous quotations from the data, the following quotation also states that birthplace, culture and the level of proficiency are attributes that are commonly perceived to contribute to the construction of the identity of native speakers of Chinese. This participant (S6) also raises the point that they are “still learning” the target language, thus they are not proficient enough.

Many of the participants who are students said that they are still learning Chinese (Mandarin), thus their lack of proficiency is a factor that makes them not "near-native" speakers. While this is understandable, because students at undergraduate level are still learning Chinese, the non-native speaker teachers also said that they still feel that they do not have "native level". This is very much in line with Selinker's (1972) theory on the interlanguage where it could be argued that all speakers, especially non-native speakers are on the interlanguage continuum as the process of learning and of improving one's proficiency never ends, even if they are very qualified and experienced in speaking in Chinese, like the non-native speaker teachers who were interviewed. T3 NNS goes on to speak about how at times, they think in English (their native language) and translate into Chinese. This is also in line with Selinker's (1972) theory on the interlanguage as non-native speakers tend to "use" their native language or other languages in their repertoire to produce an utterance or a written sentence in the target language.

This suggests that the tendency to think in the first or second language and then translate into Chinese is something that is done by non-native speakers and it could result in errors. Such errors are classified by linguists as transfer errors, errors in the target language because of the influence of the L1. Transfer errors from Maltese L1 to Chinese target language has not been researched yet and it is a subject worthy of future research. A further study could also be done on the code-switching that occurs between Maltese and English as the languages of instruction in CFL classes in Malta. Such a study was done by Camilleri-Grima (2013) in the context of the teaching of Italian as a foreign language in schools in Malta but it was never done on CFL in Malta.

5.4.2 "The level" of proficiency of native speakers

Even though all the participants in this study mentioned a certain "level" that native speakers have, what this "level" exactly is, is still unclear. When asked what they think "the level" of native speakers is, S4 stated that it is "the highest level […] obviously the tones […]" and S5 mentioned that one who has such a "high level" is "able to read and write Chinese characters, one needs to know collocation,

meaning, where a word should be placed one needs to know structures and syntax." S6 considers this "level" to be "what one has to learn to basically hold a conversation, […] and importantly one could understand what other people say, […] whereas maybe a non-native speaker would get confused about what was being said." While S5 stresses grammatical knowledge and characters, S6 mentions oral skills, similar to S7 who opines that "a very high level of the language, a native speaker is very confident when they speak their native language. They don't need to think to speak."

The idea that native speakers have "a high level of Chinese" and the confidence to speak without having to think or to translate from another language is one of the factors that participants perceive to contribute to the construction of the identity of the native speaker of Chinese. The idea that native speakers do not need to think to speak or to translate from their native language to the target language, thus they tend to speak more naturally and spontaneously. Spontaneity was also mentioned by participants in this study and it is another factor that contributes to the construction of the native speaker identity as is discussed in the next section.

5.4.3 Native speakers' spontaneity

Another factor that the participants of this study perceive to contribute to the construction of the identity of the native speaker of Chinese is that the native speaker would be very proficient to the extent that the language comes naturally to them, native speakers don't need to think to express themselves in their native language but rather express themselves with a certain spontaneity while non-native speakers might not necessarily speak with such naturalness, authenticity and spontaneity.

Another observation from data collected from interviews is that some participants think that non-native speakers tend to think in their native language (or in another language, possibly the L2 – this is not clear from the data, future research on whether people think in their native language or in their second language or maybe in another foreign language is necessary) and then translate to Chinese, thus lengthening the process between thought and speech. From the data collected for this study, it seems that non-native speakers tend to go through such a process of translation, rather than native

speakers. Because such a mental translation process takes time, non-native speakers might not sound as fluent as native speakers as it often takes non-native speakers longer to speak in Chinese. One of the participants says that "a non-native speaker thinks to speak, but it depends on their level." This suggests that this participant perceives that not all non-native speakers have to go through the process of translation, but very proficient, near-native speakers do not need to go through the process. Further future research is necessary to find out whether non-native speakers think to speak in Chinese or in a foreign language and whether they always mentally translate from their L1 or from another language and if such a process depends on a person's proficiency in the language.

The fact that both students and a non-native speaker teacher (who, of course is qualified to teach Chinese), suggests that the process of mental translation is possibly, not only a process that beginner learners go through. T3, who is a non-native speaker teacher of Chinese and a native speaker of English states that "there are times when I'm thinking in English and translating into Chinese, so I get the grammar wrong or I don't say it in a way native speakers would generally automatically say, sometimes I really think about it." This suggests that even "proficient-users" Paikeday (1985:6) and "expert users" Rampton (1990:98) like the non-native speaker teacher are still in the process of learning the target language. (It could be argued that even native speakers are in process of learning their L1, for example they learn a new word or the connotation of a word that they were not familiar with).

In the theory on the Interlanguage, Selinker (1972) refers to a sort of intermediate phase, a bridge that learners build between the knowledge of their native language and that of the second language. In the context of this case study in Malta, for the participants, Chinese is not their L2 and it most probably it is not even their first foreign language, thus the participants who are also learners of Chinese as a foreign language have more than two languages in their repertoire to "bridge with" while learning Chinese.

In addition to speaking without thinking or translating, thus perceived to speak more spontaneously, another factor that contributes to the construction of the identity of the native speaker of Chinese is

that the native speaker is so proficient that they can understand sarcasm, humour, and other metaphorical underlying meanings and nuances that non-native speakers might not always be able to understand. The next section describes data on native speakers and how they understand sarcasm, humour, and the underlying meanings of utterances.

5.4.4 Native Speakers' understanding of humour

Several of the participants in this study stated that native speakers have a "high level" of Chinese to the extent that they could even understand metaphorical use of the language, jokes, sarcasm and humour. This ability is not only due to their linguistic proficiency, but also cultural knowledge and also knowledge of newly coined expressions or words.

S1 opined that the "understanding of jokes and humour also makes a native speaker […] they understand all conversations and understand all scenarios in Chinese." S1 here stresses understanding as an important factor, similarly, S4 opines that "what really makes a native speaker is the fact that one can detect sarcasm, even certain meanings of words that go beyond the dictionary definitions, humour, rhythm of the language, the accent, filler words […] I think that being able to understand and use colloquialisms, idioms, slang language, even understand puns." S3 also mentions the cultural knowledge that native speakers are thought to have "there are certain words and expressions that are used in the Chinese cultural context, there are certain things that only native speakers know."

The understanding of jokes, sarcasm, humour, and poetry suggests that one is very proficient to the extent that they could understand the metaphorical meaning of language. It also shows that one has been socialised in the language, and that one is familiar with the socio-cultural context of where the language is spoken.

One of the non-native speaker teachers who is a native speaker of English, mentions humour but in a totally different way. The NNS teacher was speaking about how they believe that it is important to expose students to the TL, but that they would have to switch to English at times during lessons. T3

said that during their lesson, " humour comes out in English" and "funny things happen in English", even though English is not the L1 of most of the students in the classroom, (during interviews many of the students in class claimed to be native speakers of Maltese) but they can nonetheless understand humour in English, most probably their L2. Thus, in the case of English, which is a global language (Crystal 2007) and not linked to the culture of any one particular country only, humour is accessible to anyone who is proficient, but this might not be the case in Chinese which is not a global language. It could also be the case that since in Malta, English is the L2, and it is very present in daily life on the island, some of our humour is also in English. It could also be that since students are very proficient in English more than they are in Chinese, they could understand humour in English but not in Chinese because they are not proficient enough.

Despite the fluency, proficiency, authentic production of the language and spontaneity while speaking and understanding the metaphorical meaning of their native language, when asked whether native speakers make errors, all participants, including the native speaker teacher, agreed that native speakers do make errors. Such errors that are typically made by native speakers are another factor that the participants perceive to contribute to the construction of the identity of native speakers. The following section describes data on errors that are perceived by the participants to be typically made by native speakers and that make native speakers' production more authentic, and thus more typically, native speaker-like.

5.4.5 Native speakers' errors

The data collected for this project shows that the participants' general perception is that despite the "high level", discussed in section 5.4.2 of this chapter, native speakers make errors in their spoken and written language production. The lack of accuracy could be in their written output, for example in written characters, stroke order, grammar, and in spoken output, for example in pronunciation of tones. There are certain errors that are typical of native speakers and such errors contribute to the construction of the native speaker identity.

S4 and S5 both opine that “the main aim of a speaker is to get a message across” (both S4 and S5 utter this) and S4 continues their argument by referring to themselves as “a native speaker of Maltese” who “as a linguist I often realise that sometimes I make errors, but these errors do not cause any lack of communication, meaning that despite the errors, I still get the message across.” S7 also refers to themselves as “a native speaker of Maltese […] my grammar when I speak is not always correct, it depends on one’s level of education.” The fact that S4 says that as a “linguist” and S7 mentions “one’s level of education” show that the participants are aware that knowledge learned formally plays an important role in avoiding errors. (the role formal education plays in constructing the identity of native and non-native speakers is discussed in section 5.5 below on literacy). Several of the participants opine that non-native speakers tend to have a more standard accent, this could also be a result of the probability that non-native speakers learned only the standard variety formally (the issues of the standard in relation to nativeness is discussed in section 5.6 below).

In addition to errors in their spoken production, the data shows that native speakers are perceived by the participants to also make errors in their written production. S5 even mentions native speakers of Maltese and says that they also make errors in their written production in Maltese, giving a sense of universality of the perception that native speakers (irrelevant of which is their native language) tend to make errors. S2 and T1 NNS also mention literacy and level of education respectively, which is indicative of the fact that being literate is not necessarily linked to being a native or a non-native speaker, but rather to formal education.

S5 says that “no one is perfect”, suggesting that it is only human to make errors. S6 laughs, suggesting that it is obvious that native speakers make errors. Future research would be useful to find out exactly what the errors that native speakers typically make are, and whether or not such errors are similar or different from errors done by non-native speakers. A number of the participants link the use of the standard variety of the language and the lack of errors to be inextricably linked to a person’s level of education. In view of this, participants were asked whether native speakers have to study their native

language formally at school in order to be considered native speakers. Two main themes emerged from this question, one on literacy and the other on the standard language in view of nativeness, as discussed in the following two sections.

5.5 Native speakers and literacy

The data presented in the previous section shows that native speakers' spoken and written production is not always accurate and actually, native speakers are not necessarily literate. In view of this, one could identify as a native speaker of Chinese (or of any other language) and be illiterate, because literacy is a process of conscious learning synonymous with formal education and not part of the natural acquisition process that a child gets through exposure during the early years if they have the necessary biological requirements.

The general perception of the participants is that illiteracy among native speakers is not only in the case of Chinese, but there could also be illiterate native speakers of any language. S2 said that "there are illiterate people who are native speakers of Chinese." S4 said that they "think so, it could be. Especially those who live in villages and haven't had an education, I think they only rely on speaking. There could be native speakers who are illiterate, but there are very few." Similarly, S5 said that "Yes, yes this is what most of the cases are, but today there is less of this situation, there are illiterate people in Putonghua, there are people who work in the fields, who work in industry, or people who don't need to communicate with others in this form, or who don't watch television, or who haven't studied at school, […] who speak their own dialect, their variety and who cannot express themselves in Putonghua." Thus literacy is associated with formal education and not with the natural acquisition of language.

Some of the participants mentioned native speakers of Maltese who despite the fact that they fit in the perceptions of what makes a native speaker, are illiterate or have difficulty with writing their native language. S3 said that "both Malta and China. There are many illiterate people." Similarly, S5 said that "if we consider native speakers of Maltese, then there would be a problem because the

Maltese are not that good at writing their language." Here S5 uses the word "their" that connects the people to "their" language, possibly because Maltese is not a global language and it is generally linked to its native speakers. S6 agrees with the views of the other participants and said that "I think it's possible, yes. Even here in Malta there are many native speakers of Maltese who cannot write in Maltese. It's normal. I learned to write in Maltese at school." Here S6 refers to formal education linking literacy very closely with formal education.

S4, S5 and S6 and even T1 NNS mentioned education that is necessary to make a person literate, thus literacy is associated with education and not necessarily with identifying as a native speaker because identifying as a native speaker is more related to a person's identity and not education. S3, S5 and S6 mention native speakers of Maltese and the fact that there are native speakers of Maltese who cannot write their language, but they still identify as native speakers of Maltese because being a native speaker is more relevant to one's ability to communicate, especially spontaneously, and not necessarily being able to write. This is also because the ability to write is more related to the use of the standard variety of the language, as is discussed in the next section.

5.6 Native speakers and Standard Putonghua

A point that was raised continuously during field work pertains to native speakers of Chinese in relation to Standard Putonghua and the dialects/languages of Chinese that are not necessarily all mutually intelligible. Due to this, chapter three of this thesis discusses the term 'Chinese' and what it entails.

Generally, native speakers tend to speak both dialect and the Standard, while non-native speakers generally tend to speak Standard Putonghua as most non-native speakers learn the Standard variety through formal tuition in class and through textbooks. Of course, the latter is not always necessarily the case as there might be foreigners who move to China and learn the variety spoken in the area where they live by immersion. This might also be similar in the case of other languages where native speakers might have acquired a dialect or a non-standard variety and then learned the standard

variety through formal education, but the link (or lack of) between the Standard and dialects is more of an issue in Chinese than in other languages because not all dialects are mutually intelligible with the Standard and with each other, as discussed in detail in the third chapter. In fact, some linguistic literature classifies Chinese dialects into distinct languages, as discussed in the third chapter, but Chinese as one language unifies China culturally, socially and politically.

As already discussed, the excerpts from the data on the standard language and nativeness (available in appendix four) show that the perception of the participants is that native speakers of Chinese are not necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua, and in theory, one could be a native speaker of Chinese without any knowledge of Standard Putonghua. Such a situation might not be very common today because education is widespread and native speakers of Chinese learn Standard Putonghua at school, but still, it is a possibility. Putonghua is also very widely used in the media and today, many people would have access to that as well. There is also the possibility of being a native speaker of a Chinese dialect with varying degrees of fluency of standard Putonghua, often depending on the person's level of education and exposure to the standard variety.

For example, S5 said that "Putonghua is the language used in the media, native speakers don't normally speak that sort of Chinese, native speakers tend to speak in their dialect, so as long as one wasn't born in Beijing, and not even in Beijing, they don't speak Putonghua, they speak /r/ hua […]". S7 and T2 NS respectively also mentioned dialects that are spoken and usually acquired natively, "parents might not necessarily speak to them in standard Mandarin, so they would not be native speakers of the standard, […] one might be a native speaker of a dialect or of another language." and "Native speaker, […] in different places, actually we talk a lot of dialects, so not everybody is speaking the standard Mandarin. There are many dialects in Chinese that vary from the standard Putonghua."

In contrast to native speakers, non-native speakers who learned Chinese in a formal classroom context in either China or overseas learned standard Putonghua and most probably do not have knowledge of any other dialect, unless they lived in a particular area of China or in a Chinese community in the

diaspora and were exposed to the dialect there. S2 said that “non-native speakers speak standard Putonghua. No accent, they don’t speak fast, they are more careful not to make mistakes” to refer to the formal way through which many non-native speakers learn Chinese. The participants’ general perception is that non-native speakers tend to speak only standard Putonghua as most probably that the only Chinese variety that they know. The tendency to speak only standard Putonghua that tends to sound too formal and that might lack a certain natural authenticity and spontaneity at times is typical of non-native speakers and it is one of the factors that contribute to the construction of the identity of non-native speakers. In view of this, T3, who is a non-native speaker, very aptly said, “education can lead someone to the standard language, but that wouldn’t make them a native speaker” as essentially, native and non-native speakers learned the language in different ways and their identities are constructed differently.

Formal education also leads speakers (irrelevant whether they are native or non-native) to become teachers, if they so wish. The following chapter focuses on the issue of nativeness from the point of view of education and through data collected from lesson observations of the bounded case in Malta, aspects of the teaching methods of native and non-native speaker teachers are described and discussed.

5.7 Summary of the chapter

This chapter presents and discusses findings on the participants' perceptions of factors that contribute to the construction of the identities of native and non-native speakers. Following a brief introduction, this chapter first discusses the possibility of being a native speaker of multiple languages, a normal occurrence in real life that did not feature in the data collected for this study.

Following this, the chapter moves on to one of its major sections, that which describes the factors that participants perceive to contribute to the construction of the identity of the native speaker. This major section comprises several subsections that discuss issues such as family background and early childhood, birthplace and place of residence during early childhood, ethnicity and formal education and their role to contribute to make a person a native speaker of a language. This major section also discusses native speakers of other languages and their identity and the issue of whether immersion in a language in adulthood can make a near-native speaker.

Following the discussion on factors that the participants perceive to construct the identity of native and non-native speakers, the chapter moves on to another major section that discusses native speakers' linguistic and cultural knowledge. This major section comprises five sub-sections that discuss native speakers' fluency and proficiency, "the level" of proficiency of native speakers, native speakers' spontaneity, native speakers' understanding of humour and native speakers' errors respectively.

Then, the chapter moves on to the next two sections, one on native speakers and literacy and another on native speakers and standard Putonghua respectively. Since these final two sections are about aspects of the language that are typically learned through formal education, the following chapter will continue to discuss the formal teaching of CFL by presenting findings that resulted from lesson observations.

VI

Findings and discussions on the teaching practice of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese within the case study in Malta

6.1 Introduction to the chapter

Following the discussion on factors that the participants perceive to contribute to the construction of the identities of native and non-native speakers of Chinese in the context of CFL in Malta, this chapter moves on to present findings on the teaching methods of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese in Malta. This is to answer the third research question listed in chapter one, section 1.3, How is the teacher's NS or NNS identity manifested in CFL classroom practice within this case study in Malta? To answer this question, this chapter discusses data collected from lesson observations in academic year 2020/2021. Due to the restrictions that resulted from the pandemic, in 2020/2021 teaching was generally done online and thus, the lessons observed to collect data for this thesis were also conducted online. For this study, a total of 12 lessons were observed – one language study unit shared by a NS and a NNS teacher that is a major part of the BA programme of studies in Chinese. A checklist with several themes to be observed was prepared and filled in for every lesson observed. The form used for lesson observations is available in appendix five, along with all the forms filled in for each lesson observed. Despite the checklist prepared previously, additional notes were taken by the researcher while observing lessons. All lessons were conducted on Zoom, which is the official software used by the University of Malta and as a researcher, I was given access to the online lesson by the teachers who sent the link to the lessons via email to their students and to me. Students were expected to join online lessons as they would have attended lessons in person on-campus, and no recording was made available for students or for myself as researcher. I did not ask to record lessons being observed, I felt that this would have been too much of an intrusion. Prior to observing lessons, I sent the lesson observation sheet to the teachers whose lessons were going to be observed.

At the beginning of the lesson, the NNS teacher introduced me as “a visitor” to the lesson and the NS teacher did not comment on my presence. All the students could see my presence because my name was listed as one of the participants. During the time of the pandemic when lessons were done online, in Malta it was customary to keep the camera switched on all the time during the lesson as teachers wanted to see that students were actually there and were listening. Thus, as was customary in Malta at the time, I also had my camera on all the time. Of course, my microphone was always muted, and I did not interact with the teacher or with the students in any way. The students’ microphone was also nearly always muted except for when the teacher asked them questions or to work in breakout rooms. The teachers whose lessons were observed are T2 NS and T3 NNS and information about their background is available in the table in the methodology chapter section 4.3.1.

6.2 Teachers’ fluency and proficiency in Standard Putonghua and classroom practice

Throughout lesson observations, all teachers (irrelevant of whether they identify as NS or as NNS) whose lessons were observed spoke Standard Putonghua very fluently and conducted the lessons mostly in the target language: Mandarin Chinese (the terms Mandarin Chinese and Putonghua are discussed in more depth in chapter three about Chinese and the varieties/languages that this word incorporates) Thus, in the context of this case study, it could be said that both native and non-native speaker teachers’ pronunciation is in Standard Putonghua and if they knew any other non-standard variety of Chinese, it did not feature in any of the lessons observed.

While the target language (Putonghua) was used as much as possible, English was used as lingua franca at particular times during lessons, mostly to translate when students could not get the meaning of something in Mandarin. During their interviews, the teachers said that they use the target language as much as possible during their lessons, and this could be corroborated through lesson observations. The predominant L1 in Malta, Maltese was not used by any of the teachers observed. This is most probably because the students in class were not all native speakers of Maltese or not all students in class even had knowledge of Maltese. The group of students in class included Maltese and

international students, so as is normal in classes at the University of Malta, English is used as the language of instruction and as a lingua franca to enable communication in an international setting. Such a multilingual and multicultural group of students in the same class suggests that Medgyes' (1992) theory on the "worth" (Medgyes 1992:340) of the NNS teacher because they share the L1 with their students does not necessarily hold in many classrooms nowadays because classrooms are very diverse. Actually, nowadays it is quite a common situation in several countries (Malta included) to have students whose proficiency in the language of instruction is quite limited, (such a situation is not present in this case study in the context of the University of Malta because all students must meet English language requirements before they are admitted to a course of studies) thus the idea of having a classroom where all students and the teacher share a common L1 is not as probable as was in the past, for example in the context of studies conducted by Medgyes et. al in the 1990s. A further study on CFL teaching in culturally diverse classrooms where learners have varying proficiency levels in the language of instruction would shed light on the methods employed by teachers who not only do not share the L1 with their students, but who might not have any knowledge of the students' L1 and where the students might not be very proficient in the language being used as a lingua franca for instruction.

In the past, scholars (Boyle 1997; Braine 1999; Cheung 2002; Cook 1999; Cortazzi and Jin 1996; Davies 1991; Inbar-Lourie and Rajagopalan 2001; Kramsch 1998; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002; Liang 2002; Liu 1999; Llurda 2005; Llurda and Huguet 2003; Mahboob 2003; Merino 1997; Modiano 2001; Moussu 2002; McKay and Kramsch 1993; Paikeday 1985; Rajagopalan 2003, 2005; Rampton 1990; Reves and Medgyes 1994; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler 1999; Seidlhofer 1999; Widdowson 1994) discussed the advantages of the NNS teacher because they not only shared the L1 with their students, but they were closer to the students on a cultural level than the foreign NS teacher. As already discussed, currently in Malta this is not always the case because Malta is becoming more culturally and linguistically diverse and a NNS teacher of Chinese might not necessarily be local or be trained locally, as is the case in this case study where the NNS teacher who participated in the study is a native speaker of English, comes from an Anglophone country and was trained in an Anglophone country in the west, not in Malta.

While this thesis acknowledges the vast diversity that the term 'the west' encompasses, as discussed in sub-section 3.4.6 of chapter three on Western/Eastern methods of teaching in view of the Global North/South dichotomy, anglophone countries are considered to be in the West. In addition to the possibility that the NNS teacher does not share the L1 with the students, a NS teacher of Chinese might actually have knowledge of Maltese, even though this is something rare, and the NS teacher is also very fluent and proficient in English, the language generally used for instruction at the University of Malta. In addition to this, even NNS teachers who are native speakers of Maltese or who have good knowledge of Maltese tend to use English during lessons because the group of students is generally a mix of Maltese locals and international students. Thus, the idea that the NNS teacher is at an advantage for sharing the L1 with students no longer holds in this context today. There are in effect NNS teachers of Chinese who are not NS of Maltese but who have a very good command of Maltese, groups of students are generally mixed, and there is also the possibility of a NS teacher who also has knowledge of Maltese. What is important is proficiency and fluency in English, the official language of instruction of the University of Malta and of course, the target language that is Standard Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese).

Most of the students in the classroom under observation are native speakers of Maltese, one is a native speaker of English and others are native speakers of Italian or of other European languages. The concept of superdiversity that Vertovec (2007) discusses in the context of the UK is very relevant to Malta today as due to migration and globalisation, the country, and consequently its classrooms have become increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse. In view of this, research about the linguistic and cultural diversity in CFL classrooms in Malta would shed light on who is teaching and who is learning Mandarin Chinese in Malta, and it could also be compared to literature on diversity, multilingualism and multiculturalism in schools or in tertiary education.

Data from lesson observations shows that all teachers whose lessons were observed, irrelevant of their identity as NS or NNS of Chinese, were all fluent in Standard Putonghua and in English, the official

language of instruction of the University of Malta. This shows that identifying as a NS or as a NNS is a part of one's socio-cultural identity and is not necessarily linked to one's proficiency in the Standard variety of the language. Scholars (Vanlier 1996; Harmer 2012; Boekaerts 2011; Dörnyei 1994, 1998; Dörnyei and Otto 1998; Figueiredo, Martins and Silva 2008; Gardner 1985, 2001; Jarvela 2003; Juriševič 2006; Pintrich and Schrauben 1992; Pintrich and Schunk 1996; Stipek 1998; Weinstein 1998; Masgoret and Gardner 2003) argue that despite the difficulty to learn a foreign language, a person who is motivated to learn the target language will learn successfully if they put enough time and effort to it. Thus, even though Chinese might be distant from their L1 or from other languages that NNS teachers know, the NNS teacher whose lesson was observed is fluent in Mandarin and is indeed a model to their students. Similarly, the NS teacher is also very fluent in English, a language that is a foreign language to them and they are also multilingual individuals who are also a good model of foreign language learning to their students. Thus, the theory that NNS teachers are good models to their students because they are multilinguals who have successfully learned the TL also does not necessarily hold true nowadays, because the NS teacher of Chinese is also usually a multilingual individual and an example of successful FL learning as they have learned English as a foreign language successfully. Thus, irrelevant of the teacher's identity as NS or NNS of Chinese, what matters is their fluency and proficiency in Standard Putonghua and in the language of instruction, in this case, English.

The findings regarding fluency and proficiency presented in sub-section 5.4.1 of chapter five show that the general perception of the participants of this case study is that one of the characteristics that constructs the identity of native speakers of Chinese is their fluency and proficiency to the extent that they could even understand humour and the metaphorical meaning of utterances. As already discussed above, all teachers whose lessons were observed (irrelevant whether they identify as NS or as NNS) were very fluent and proficient in Mandarin Chinese and the data from the lesson observations (in the appendix) shows that all teachers conduct their lessons mostly in Mandarin. This indicates that despite the perception that native speakers are more fluent and proficient, during lessons all teachers were very fluent and proficient in the target language. In other words, the data

presented in chapter 5 on fluency and proficiency as characteristics of the native speaker applies to the native speaker in general, who might be more fluent and proficient in their language than a non-native speaker who is not a teacher, but this does not necessarily apply to non-native foreign language teachers who are qualified and experienced in speaking Chinese in various contexts.

The difference between NS and NNS teachers that emerged from the data collected from lesson observation is that the NNS teacher is only fluent in Standard Putonghua and they never switch to a non-standard variety or accent. In other words, during all lessons, the NNS teacher only speaks Standard Putonghua as the target language. The utterances of the NS teacher are also generally in Standard Putonghua but sound more natural and authentic as the NS teacher has an accent and their pronunciation is not exclusively standard, but overall, all teachers are very fluent and proficient in Standard Putonghua. As an observer of the lesson, most of the time I felt that if I did not consider the teachers' ethnicity based on appearance, the Chinese language delivery still sounded very similar, with the only difference being that the NS teacher had a non-standard accent at times, and that the NNS teacher sounded too standard, possibly artificial, unlike the way Chinese is spoken in real everyday life.

Despite the slight difference between NS and NNS teachers, given that the former had a non-standard accent at times, while the latter's Chinese is exclusively Standard Putonghua since that, most probably, is the only variety of Chinese that they know, the main language of instruction of both teachers was Mandarin with switches to English at times. The following section describes data collected from lesson observations on the language of instruction.

6.3 The Language(s) of instruction in the CFL classroom

The language of instruction in the lessons of both NS and NNS teachers is, most of the time, the target language, Standard Putonghua and English where necessary. During their interviews, both NS and NNS teachers state that as much as possible, during lessons they expose their students to the target language, and in fact, this was also seen in the lessons observed. Despite this, students addressed the

teachers in English most of the time, and only spoke Mandarin when the teacher explicitly asked them to read or to give an example of a grammar point that was being taught in the target language. The students did not speak Mandarin among themselves, they either spoke Maltese, English or Italian and only spoke Mandarin when they were specifically asked to do so by the teacher. This happened in both the lessons of the NS and of the NNS teacher.

In addition to delivering the content of the lesson in Mandarin, even the filler words uttered by both NS and NNS teachers were in Mandarin, for example both teachers used Mandarin to ask if students had understood or if they had any questions. Also, all instructions given by both teachers were in Mandarin.

Despite the fact that Mandarin was the language mostly used in class, at times both NS and NNS teachers switched to English. The NS teacher nominated students to read or to answer a question and to ensure that students understood, the teacher gave instructions in English. The NS teacher's English was not always fluent and at times it was difficult for students to understand their English (in Malta, people tend to be used to Maltese-English pronunciation. Maltese-English varies from Standard Received Pronunciation, for example the /th/ sound in words like 'thanks' is pronounced as /t/ and this sometimes causes misunderstandings in international communication). The NNS teacher only spoke in English when students asked the teacher to explain in English because they could not understand the instruction in Mandarin. The NNS teacher did not speak in Maltese during lessons because not all the students in class could speak and understand Maltese, and because the teacher themselves did not have any knowledge of Maltese.

During the lessons of the NNS teachers, students' languages were acknowledged and embraced in the classroom. The NNS teacher and students compared the sound of /qu/ (去) to French, a common language that students and the NNS teacher have knowledge of. Despite the occasional use of other languages to compare and contrast structures or sounds, the NNS teacher spoke mostly in Mandarin "to expose the students to the TL as much as possible" (according to data collected from the interview

with the NNS teacher). This comparison with other languages did not occur during the lessons of the NS teacher.

The lesson of the NNS teacher used the students' linguistic repertoire to facilitate the learning of the TL while the lessons of the NS teacher did not do this. Apart from this being a conclusion of this research project, I reflected on this conclusion vis-à-vis my teaching practice and discussion with colleagues (who were not participants in this research project) in Malta. I realised that during lessons, I often find myself comparing Chinese to the Semitic Maltese or Arabic, or otherwise notice my colleague comparing Chinese to Russian or German with learners who are proficient in these languages. In view of this conclusion, further research is necessary to find out exactly how languages in the students' and teachers' repertoire are used to facilitate the learning of the TL. The use of languages in the students' and teachers' repertoire is part of the plurilingual pedagogy used by language teachers who tend to be plurilingual individuals.

6.4 NS and NNS teachers' practice

This section describes data collected from lesson observations on NS and NNS teachers' teaching methods. The first sub-section describes data on how NS and NNS teachers correct errors in pronunciation and tone, the second sub-section describes data on the teaching of characters and new vocabulary, and the third sub-section describes data on the teaching of grammar structures. The following section discusses data on cultural differences observed during lessons of NS and NNS teachers.

6.4.1 Correction of errors in pronunciation and tone

Apart from different pedagogies, the data collected from lesson observations evidences a difference in the ways NS and NNS teachers correct students' errors. NNS teachers continuously correct the pronunciation of tones; when the NNS teacher hears a tone being mispronounced, they would repeat the utterance after the student in the correct tone and encourage the student to repeat after them in

the correct tone. The NS teacher observed tends to only correct students' tones when the mispronounced tones hinder communication. When a student uttered something in a non-standard way during one of the lessons of the NS teacher, the NS teacher did not comment unless as a result of the non-standard pronunciation, the teacher could not understand what the student said. The NS teacher always corrected students' utterances when communication did not take place. This has also emerged from the data collected from the interview with the NS teacher because they stated that they correct students' pronunciation if the error in pronunciation results in a barrier to communication.

Following Chomsky's (1965) theory on the native speaker as the model speaker of their language and following data collected from the semi-structured interviews, it could be the case that NS teachers feel that as non-native speakers, the students will never reach the so-called native speaker ideal, and what is important for non-native speaker students is that they could communicate well in the target language. On the other hand, the NNS teacher has a higher expectation of the students, since the NNS teacher feels that since they themselves have achieved a very good level of Chinese, they expect their students to follow in their footsteps and also achieve such a high level. During a lesson, the NNS teacher reminded students about the importance of good pronunciation of tones stating, "you will practise and get used to it like myself, I learned how to pronounce tones, so will you." As discussed earlier, further research is needed to find out what this high level is for non-native speakers.

This also follows Medgyes' (1992) argument that the NNS teacher is a model of successful foreign language learning to the non-native speaker students. Thus, NNS teachers tend to correct the slightest of errors and have very high expectations of their students because they themselves have been through the task of learning Chinese as a foreign language. Since they were successful at it, they view themselves as role models for their students, thus expecting them to also become successful learners of Chinese as a foreign language.

Apart from different expectations, teachers' aims diverge during different parts of the lesson. During lesson observations, I noticed that both NS and NNS teachers' frequency at which they correct errors

in pronunciation and tone depends on their aim during a particular part of the lesson. For instance, both teachers always corrected pronunciation and tone during the part of the lesson where they were explicitly teaching pronunciation, and while students were asked to repeat after the teacher to practise and to improve their pronunciation. During other parts of the lesson, for example while both teachers were teaching grammar, they did not always correct students' incorrect pronunciation because their aim for that particular part of the lesson was to teach a grammar structure.

In summary, the NNS teacher corrected pronunciation and tone more than the NS teacher, but there were times when the NNS teacher did not correct pronunciation and tone because the aim of the lesson at the time was to teach a grammar structure and so the teacher accepted inaccuracies in pronunciation and tone and focused on the grammar structure. This also happened during lessons of the NS teacher. Thus, both NS and NNS teachers correct pronunciation and tone but the NNS teacher corrects pronunciation more frequently than the NS teacher because for the NS teacher effective communication, and not necessarily accuracy is prioritised. Despite this difference, both NS and NNS teachers accept minor errors in pronunciation and tone during a time in the lesson when the teaching of a grammar structure was the main focus.

6.4.2 The teaching of characters and of new vocabulary

The NS and NNS teachers observed for this case study also had different strategies to teach characters and vocabulary. Similar to what was discussed in the previous section on how the NS and the NNS teachers observed to collect data for this case study correct errors in pronunciation and tone, the teachers observed for this case study were observed to employ different strategies to teach vocabulary and characters, and they also have different expectations from their students even though teachers used the same textbook.

The findings from data collected from lesson observations indicate that the NS teacher emphasises memorisation to teach new vocabulary item and characters, while the NNS teacher links new vocabulary to other words learned previously and also to characters with the same radical. The NNS

teacher gives importance to radicals and ensures that students understand the new characters by understanding the meaning of the radicals. The method of the NS teacher is more related to memorisation as a strategy for learning, while the NNS teacher uses understanding as a strategy for learning. In the context of CFL education, Zhang et al. (2014) argue that repeated reading might help improve character recognition, but on the other hand, Shrum and Glisan (2010) argue that repetition must be innovative, not simply a recitation of a particular text in order to result in effective learning.

The NS teacher under observation showed typed characters on a PowerPoint presentation while the NNS teacher under observation wrote characters on a small board and explained radicals and stroke order. The NNS teacher gave a lot of importance to stroke order and to the writing of characters. When teaching new vocabulary, in addition to teaching stroke order, the NNS teacher explained radicals and linked new vocabulary to previously learned vocabulary with the same radical. The NS teacher did not link new vocabulary to previously learned material while the NNS teacher continually referred to material learned previously. This difference in approach could be due to cultural differences, different training background or different expectations from students. For example, the NS teacher expects students to review and preview material on their own, while the NNS teacher reviews during lessons and does not expect students to preview material on their own. This might also be due to local teacher training that emphasises the scaffolding of new knowledge on previously learned knowledge, while such a practice might be considered to be a waste of time by the NS teacher, because certain material would have already been covered during previous lessons. The data collected from lesson observations of NS teachers' lessons, shows that no scaffolding on previous knowledge and during each lesson, the NS teacher introduced new material right from the beginning of the lesson. On the other hand, the NNS teacher frequently engaged in revision, especially at the beginning of the lesson. Towards the end of the lesson, the NNS teacher summarised the new content of the lesson while the NS teacher uttered "that's all for today". This suggests that for the NNS teachers, constant revision and linking to previously learned knowledge is very important, while the NS teachers' focus is to introduce new material.

To introduce new vocabulary, the NS teacher read the vocabulary list twice. The NS teacher subsequently asked the students to “try to memorise the characters, meaning and pronunciation”. After two minutes the NS teacher quizzed students on the new vocabulary. This method is based on memory rather than on understanding. The NNS teacher went through the new vocabulary, linked with previously learned knowledge, and explained stroke order and radicals as understanding radicals is a way of remembering characters and their meaning. The NNS teacher also told students that memorisation has an important role when learning characters, and that a way of learning characters is by writing them in the correct stroke order many times. In addition to memorising characters and how they are pronounced, the NNS teacher emphasised understanding by explaining radicals and by connecting characters with a common radical to aid memorisation and the learning of new vocabulary.

At a point during one of the lessons observed, the NS teacher asked the students to “try to memorise this character”. Then the teacher paused for two minutes so students had time to look at it. The NS teacher continued, “after class you need to memorise characters more … after class you practise more … after class review at least 1 word 3 times.” The main emphasis of the NS teacher is on learning by memorising. The NS teacher also said, “we need to practise reading after class and preview before class … practice is important, try to memorise.”

At a point during one of the lessons, the class encountered a phrase and students felt unsure about its meaning. The NS teacher said, “we learned this a long time ago” and the NS teacher did not explain it again. It felt as though in the classroom of the NS teacher there was no room for revision, only for the introduction of new material. On the other hand, the NNS teacher always started the lesson with revision. During a particular lesson, the NNS teacher informed the students that the plan for that day was to start a new lesson, but since students had concerns and questions, the NNS teacher decided to revise instead. The NNS teacher is very flexible and does not always stick to the plan and revises if the students need it. The NS teacher sticks to the plan, as it is their belief that reviewing and previewing should be done outside of the classroom.

The NS teacher acknowledged the fact that “some characters are not easy to memorise, with a lot of strokes”, but yet they did not explain stroke order and radicals. The NS teacher suggested “if you can’t remember the word write Pinyin so next time you remember it.” The NS teacher uses Pinyin more than the NNS teacher, the NNS teacher mostly writes Chinese characters on the board to expose students to stroke order. At a point during a lesson, the NS teacher said, “memorise it so I don’t need to explain it again.” This suggests that the class of the NS teacher is teacher-centred while the NNS teacher’s class is more learner-centred, and the teacher revises and repeats as necessary.

The difference was noted in the observations of lessons within this case study in Malta could be because the teachers under observation were trained and experienced education in different countries as the NS teacher was trained in China while the NNS teacher was trained in the West. As explained in section 3.4.4 of chapter 3 about education in Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHC), that traditionally used memorisation and imitation as strategies for learning (Aguinis and Roth 2005; Aoki 2008 ; Dahlin and Watkins 2000; Han and Scull 2010; Hui 2005; Kember and Gow 1991; Kim 2005; Tan 2015), but such methods of memorisation were also used in the West, especially in the past, and the teacher from the west also mentions memorisation at different points during lessons, thus memorisation as a strategy of learning is not necessarily only present in CHC countries.

While it is true that in the lessons observed for this case study in Malta the native Chinese teacher asked learners to memorise without much explanation while the non-native (Western) teacher tended to explain and reason things out more, this is only the case within the boundaries of this case study at the University of Malta during the lessons observed within the time-frame of 2020/2021. While this finding corroborates with the findings listed above, this finding could not be generalisable to other cases, not even within Malta at a different time, let alone in other contexts.

Thus, even though the data collected from lesson observations done for this particular case study shows that the native Chinese teacher uses memorisation, an approach typical of CHC countries, while the non-native teacher who comes from an Anglophone country in the west (the teacher’s nationality

is not disclosed for the sake of anonymity) uses a more communicative approach, it does not mean that this is generalisable to other cases, not even within Malta today.

Despite the lack of generalisability of this finding, a recommendation that arises from this finding from this particular case study is to offer pre-service and in-service teachers training on the approach to teaching that is usually employed in the particular country. This would lead to what Bax (2003:79) terms the "context approach", an approach to FL teaching based on what learners expect in the particular context where teaching is taking place. Such an approach that is based on the expectations of students in the particular context also contributes to localisation of CFL, one of the points mentioned by Liu Yandong, chair of the council of *Hanban* at the Tenth Confucius Institute Conference in Shanghai in 2015 Li (2019).

The classroom of the NNS teacher is more student-centred, in fact, at a point during one of the lessons observed the NNS teacher even justified their teaching methods and explained to students why it works. The NNS teacher used drills to teach tone and intonation; the teacher read sentences from the textbook and students repeated. They practised in class together, where the NNS teacher explained how to practise and how to study tones and intonation. The NNS teacher also explained why they were going to work on drills, highlighting the effectiveness of this teaching strategy despite its potentially boring nature. This strategy involves students in how the target language is being taught. Conversely, the NS teacher did not justify or discuss their pedagogy with students as the class is more teacher-centred and during several lessons observed, the NS teacher told students to review and preview, so they would not need to repeat things that were explained previously.

As discussed in sub-section 3.4.6 about what are traditionally termed 'western' and 'eastern' methods of teaching, education in CHC countries is traditionally thought to be teacher-centred while western education is thought to be more student-centred (He 2021). Of course, in today's world this could be an over-generalisation or an assumption, but it is corroborated by findings of this study. In the context of this case study in Malta, it could be that the teachers were conducting their teaching according to

how they were trained and also similar to how they remember learning foreign languages in their respective cultural contexts. Of course, both ways are legitimate and have their own strengths and teachers (irrelevant of their cultural and linguistic background) might employ a mix of methods or opt for a method that is different from the one traditionally ascribed to their cultural background. Thus the finding that the native Chinese speaker teacher's lesson is teacher-centred and that the non-native western teacher's lesson is more student-centred could be said for this particular case study at the University of Malta at the time of data collection, and like the point made above about the use of memorisation, it could not be generalisable to other cases within Malta or in other countries.

In addition to using different strategies to teach new vocabulary, the NS and NNS teachers observed in this case study employ different methods to teach grammar structures, as is discussed in the following section.

6.4.3 The teaching of grammar structures

Following the previous sections on NS and NNS teachers' teaching methods of pronunciation, tone, vocabulary, and characters, this section discusses data collected from lesson observations on NS and NNS teachers' methods of the teaching of grammar structures within this case study in Malta.

Throughout the lessons observed, the NS teacher expected students to memorise sentence patterns in the textbook in order to learn a grammar structure. The NS teacher uttered phrases such as "read these sentences for a while, try to memorise, ok?" The NS teacher later quizzed students on whether they had memorised the set phrases in the textbook. So here, similar to what was said in the previous sections, the NS teacher used memorisation as a teaching strategy, in this case memorising a set of phrases to teach grammar structures. The NNS teacher used a different strategy to teach a grammar structure. They explained the particular grammar structure and to ensure that students have understood the particular grammar structure, they tested students by eliciting sentences that students had created themselves using that particular grammar structure. Thus, like the NS, the NNS teacher used the set phrases in the textbook as a model, but the NNS teacher expected students to

create their own sentences, rather than to memorise and to recite the model phrases in the textbook as evidence of learning. Thus, the NS teacher used a more traditional approach and expected students to memorise what was in the textbook, while the NNS teacher expected students to apply the knowledge they learned to produce a sentence, to understand the model sentences in the textbook and to come up with their own original sentences. Thus, within the boundaries of this case study at the University of Malta, NS and NNS teachers have different expectations of their students.

At this point, one cannot determine what students' expectations are because these were not researched in the context of CFL in Malta, but since all the students in class are European, they might question their teacher and their methods. It would be interesting to research students' expectations in order to eventually create the context approach for CFL in Malta. As discussed earlier, the context approach (Bax 2003) is an approach to FL teaching that is according to students' expectations in the particular context where the teaching and learning is taking place.

Another strategy that the NS teacher uses to teach grammar is when they give many examples of sentences that use the grammar structure they want to teach, then encourage students to practise and repeat the sentences. The NS teacher does not explain grammar using linguistically technical terms, such as noun, verb, subject, object, but rather gives many examples so that students get the structure by being exposed to model sentences. The NNS teacher first explains a grammar structure in English using linguistically technical terms, such as noun, verb, subject, object, then gives examples of sentences with the particular grammar structure they want to teach. The NNS teacher makes the teaching of a grammar structure more conscious since they explain the grammar structure. After that, the NNS teacher elicits more examples from students and encourages students to create their own sentences with the particular grammar structure. NS and NNS teachers use different methodologies to teach grammar structures, the NS teacher teaches grammar in an inductive way where rules are observed to learn the rule, while the NNS teacher uses a deductive method where they present rules very clearly and students create their own examples.

The NS teacher used a PowerPoint presentation to explain a grammar structure. The NS teacher gave a substantial amount of examples of the grammar structure but did not consciously explain the structure. This is typical of the communicative approach where grammar structures are not taught consciously, but rather, students learn by exposure to model sentences of a particular grammar structure. The emphasis was on learning by practice and memorisation. The NNS teacher did not use a PowerPoint presentation, they wrote on the board and used colours to mark words of different grammatical categories to explain the structure and ensured that students had first understood the structure, then they went on to give examples and subsequently elicited examples from students. The NNS teacher explained grammar structures by writing on the board so that students were also exposed to characters and to stroke order, as well as the grammar structure they wanted to teach during the particular lesson. The NS teacher used a PowerPoint presentation, so characters were all typed and the main emphasis at that point was on the particular grammar structure. The following quotations are from utterances of the NS teacher during lesson observation when the aim was to teach a grammar structure:

“try to memorise and repeat from your memory”

“I don’t want you to repeat now … it will be deeply in your memory.”

“try to memorise what you said.”

For the NS teacher memorising the model sentences in the textbook is important to learn grammar structures. A difference in the pedagogies of NS and NNS teachers is that while the former emphasises memorisation, the latter stresses understanding and creative language use. The NS teacher frequently tells students “this character, try to memorise it” and “try to memorise what we learned”, but they do not consciously explain the grammar structure. To teach a particular grammar structure, the NNS teacher gave students a character and encouraged students to make up their own sentences including the character they were assigned. The NNS teacher wanted students to understand the grammar structure and to make up their own sentences rather than memorise the sentences in the textbook.

When teaching a grammar structure, the NNS teacher does not ask students to repeat, the NNS teacher encourages students to “come up with your own sentences.” No memorisation is involved, but rather the creative use of language to ensure that students have understood the grammar structure.

During lessons, both NS and NNS teachers encouraged students to read and to repeat sentences from the textbook. During the lesson of the NS teacher, they did so to acquire grammar, while during the lesson of the NNS teacher they did so to practise tones and intonation. This shows that NS and NNS teachers use teaching materials in different ways. Differences in the use of teaching materials and in teaching methods suggest that the teachers’ cultural background and training is different, as will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

6.5 NS and NNS teachers and cultural differences

The NS teacher started the lesson precisely on the hour, they were not aware that lectures officially start 5 minutes late so that students have time to go from one class to the next. As explained earlier, all lessons were conducted online in academic year 2020/2021 due to the pandemic, but the 5 minute later norm still applied to online lessons and meetings. The NS teacher was also not aware of the Mediterranean culture, that being five minutes late is perfectly normal in this cultural context and that there should be a ten-minute break between two-hour lectures. The NS teacher exceeded the lecture time by around thirty minutes, some students had to leave because they had another lecture, and they would otherwise miss out on material covered. A student logged in to the online lesson five minutes late, a normal occurrence in Malta’s Mediterranean culture, and the NS remarked that the student was late most probably because the NS teacher was not familiar with local customs.

The NS teacher tried to relate to the students and attempted to include Malta in their lesson, but they do not possess enough information to do this effectively. Even though the NS teacher tried to acknowledge Malta and the local customs, the language repertoire of the students was ignored in the classroom. The target language was at the centre of the class, with no space for diversity and

multilingualism/multiculturalism. The L1 of the majority of the students (Maltese) was not used in the classroom, which did not seem to cause any problems during lessons, as a few students also could not speak nor understand Maltese, so English was used as a lingua franca. The NNS teacher also spoke in English rather than Maltese as there were students who did not speak nor understand Maltese, but the NNS teacher acknowledged the linguistic repertoire of the students and even used it to compare and contrast grammar structures in the target language to those of other languages that students knew. The use of the students' and the teachers' linguistic repertoire is in line with the plurilingual and multilingual practice in Malta and it also facilitates students' understanding of the target language.

Both NS and NNS teachers included Chinese cultural awareness in their lessons, for example how to accept a gift in the Chinese cultural context and how to receive a business card. Both teachers compared and contrasted cultural norms in Malta/Europe and China. The NS teacher spoke about their experiences growing up and living in China, while the NNS teacher spoke about their visits to China. Both NS and NNS teachers made students aware of cultural differences between China and Europe in order to ensure that students not only learn the target language, but also learn how to communicate in ways that are socially acceptable in the target language culture. Despite the fact that all teachers explained how to behave in the Chinese socio-cultural context, teachers had different expectations of their students, as will be discussed in more depth in the following section.

6.5.1 NS and NNS teachers' expectations

Within the boundaries of this case study, it was observed that NS and NNS teachers have different expectations of their students. During lesson observations, it was noticed that during every lesson the NS teacher expected the students to "preview" before class. The following is one of the utterances of the NS teacher: "we need to practise reading after class and preview before class."

Preview before class is very alien to the Maltese/Mediterranean culture because throughout the education system, Malta has a culture of revising what was covered in class while ignoring material that has not yet been covered in class. The NS teacher expects students to preview before class and

to look up new words in the dictionary, this idea is very alien to Maltese culture and students might not necessarily understand what it entails. Students giggled when the NS teacher told them to preview – they either did not understand, or this concept was unfamiliar to them. Otherwise, they may have understood its meaning but were aware of the fact that they had not previewed before the lecture.

The NNS teacher expected students to practise writing characters and suggested ways of studying Chinese (the NNS teacher gave tips on how to study Chinese, how they themselves used to study and how they had learned the target language). The NNS teacher expected students to practise writing characters from one lesson to the next and expected students to write in characters rather than in Pinyin. The biggest difference in the expectations of the NS and NNS teachers observed is that the former expected students to remember and to recite things out of memorisation while the latter expected students to learn and to be able to show evidence of learning by creating new sentences. As discussed earlier, the differences described in this section could also be a reflection of 'eastern' and 'western' ways respectively, but as already reiterated before, such findings only describe the lessons observed in this case study and are not necessarily generalisable.

6.5.2. Non-native speakers and inclusion in the Chinese speaking community.

The second chapter discusses the concept of the native speaker of Chinese in light of identity. The data collected from lesson observations shows that NS and NNS teachers in this case study are different in the way they present Chinese as belonging to whom. The NS teacher speaks of "we" and excludes the students from the Chinese speaking community. The NNS teacher speaks about their experience in China and tries to close the gap between themselves and the target language. This could be because as a non-native speaker, the NNS teacher might feel they are still learning Chinese and on the interlanguage continuum (Selinker 1972) and thus, they do not include themselves and the students in the Chinese speaking community, possibly as they believe that they are all learners.

As discussed in the second chapter about the native speaker and identity, the sharing of a common language and history gives people a sense of belonging in a community (Joseph 2016; Sériot 2014). In

light of theory on language and identity, the NS teacher most probably does not include the non-native speaker students in the community of speakers of Chinese because the students have a European ethnic identity and irrelevant of their linguistic knowledge, they can never have a sense of belonging in Chinese because, essentially, they are not Chinese. In addition to this, the students are still learners of the target language, so they are definitely on the interlanguage continuum (Selinker 1972) as they still cannot communicate fluently in Chinese. Despite the level of proficiency, even the NNS teacher feels that they are not and can never be native speakers of Chinese, because essentially, they are not Chinese. Thus, in light of the literature and the data collected from both the semi-structured interviews and the lesson observations, the general perception of the participants of this case study is that being a native speaker of Chinese is related to a person's identity and not necessarily to proficiency in Standard Putonghua, and non-native speakers, despite their fluency and proficiency cannot become native speakers.

The NS teacher did not include the students in the Chinese speaking community, giving the impression that Chinese belongs solely to the native Chinese speaking community, and not to the non-native speaker students. One of the lessons observed fell on the Chinese lantern festival. The NS teacher spoke about the lantern festival traditions and said, "in lantern festival we eat…", the NS teacher also stated, "in China we have…" and "for us we say…".

During lessons observed, the NNS teacher, to a certain extent, included non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community possibly because they themselves are non-native speakers of Chinese, and after visiting China so many times, and being able to speak and teach Chinese, they feel part of the Chinese speaking community. During one of the lessons observed, the NNS teacher showed students a short video clip of a non-native speaker speaking Chinese in Beijing, and explained how the students, like the non-native speaker in the video clip and like their NNS teachers, could also learn and be able to speak Chinese. The NNS teacher acts like a bridge over the gap between the non-native speaker students and the target language. On the one hand, NNS teachers are, like their students,

non-native speakers of Chinese while on the other hand, they are qualified, fluent and have travelled to China, so they feel a sense of belonging within the Chinese speaking community. Of course, more research is necessary on the sense of belonging of non-native speakers within the Chinese speaking community.

At a point during one of the lessons observed, the NS teacher stated, “for Maltese people China is too far”. This is true for many people in Malta, but not for the NNS teachers who have been to China several times and for whom Chinese culture is very familiar. During lessons observed, NNS teachers included the students and other non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community. The data shows that NNS teachers are indeed bridging the gap between the Western students and the target language by sharing a western background, which students can identify with, whilst concurrently teaching Chinese. By being Westerners, NNS teachers also act as role models to their students as students identify with them and possibly aspire to be fluent like them. NNS teachers also give students tips on how they themselves successfully learned Mandarin. Therefore, in addition to teaching Mandarin as a foreign language, NNS teachers are also closing the gap between the target language and the familiar, the culture, and language students are familiar with. This signifies that NS and NNS teachers teach from different positions and hence, notwithstanding the fact that they use the same textbook, their classroom practice diverges on many levels. Their teaching of the language is different, and their cultural practices are also different.

6.6 Summary of the chapter

This chapter presents and discusses data collected from lesson observations on the classroom practice of NS and NNS teachers within the boundaries of this case study. While the findings presented in this chapter could be corroborated by findings of other studies on teaching practices that are typically used in CHC countries and in the west, they are not necessarily generalisable but rather they "add knowledge" (Lincoln and Guba 1985) on the CFL practices as they document what was going on within the boundaries of the case at that particular point in time.

This chapter starts with an introduction and gives background information on the teachers and the classes observed. The chapter subsequently moves on to discuss NS and NNS teachers, proficiency, and the use of Standard Putonghua in the CFL classroom. The chapter extends to discuss data on the language of instruction in the CFL classroom. Following this, the chapter moves on to present data on NS and NNS teachers' pedagogies, describing data on several aspects related to NS and NNS teachers' pedagogies, correction of errors in pronunciation and tone, teaching of characters and new vocabulary, and on the teaching of grammar structures. Following this, the chapter presents data on NS and NNS teachers related to cultural differences and includes two sub-sections: NS and NNS teachers' expectations, and non-native speakers and inclusion in the Chinese speaking community. Finally, this chapter concludes with this summary. Now that the results of this case study were presented and discussed in chapters five and six, the following chapter starts by answering the research questions and then the thesis is concluded by some final remarks.

VII

Conclusions

7.1 General conclusion

In this final chapter, conclusions are drawn from the findings of this case study in view of the literature reviewed in the second and third chapters. The following sub-sections discuss the answers to the research questions listed in section 1.3 of the introductory chapter on the participants' perceptions on the construction of the identity of native and non-native speakers of Chinese in Malta and on the teaching practice observed within the case study in Malta. After the chapter draws conclusions and answers the research questions, the chapter moves on to discuss the implications of this case study and its contribution to the field of CFL in Malta. Subsequently, the following section of this chapter discusses different points of view on generalisability (or the lack of) in researching case studies. After this, the following section of the chapter discusses limitations of this case study research project, mainly resulting from the small sample size of the participants, and limitations that resulting from collecting data online due to the pandemic lockdown. Then, this chapter proposes further studies that could be carried out in the future, concluding the thesis with recommendations and with some final remarks. Following this, there is a reference list and the appendices.

7.1.1 The first research question: what factors do students and teachers perceive to contribute to the construction of the identities of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese within this case study in Malta?

As discussed in the fifth chapter which presents findings on factors that the participants perceive to contribute to the identity of the native speaker of Chinese, the common perception of the participants is that a native speaker of Chinese acquired a variety/dialect of Chinese during what Penfield and Roberts (1959) term the critical period from their immediate family, irrelevant of the geographical

location. In contrast to this, according to the general perception of the participants of this study, the non-native speaker of Chinese is thought to be the opposite, a person who did not acquire Chinese (irrelevant of which variety/dialect) during what Penfield and Roberts (1959) call the critical period, but rather learned Chinese (usually standard Putonghua) after the critical period, usually through formal education or through exposure by living in China.

Apart from this main difference in the way native and non-native speakers acquired or learned Chinese (irrelevant of which dialect/variety), the participants perceived other factors that contribute to the construction of the identity of native and non-native speakers. They perceived native speakers to be more fluent and spontaneous in their language use, but not necessarily literate as literacy depends on formal education.

In view of the simple definitions above that were extrapolated from the findings on the participants' perceptions, a very simplistic argument could be that the native speaker of Chinese is a person who acquired Chinese during the critical period, but as discussed in Chapter three, the term 'Chinese' is so broad and it includes so much linguistic diversity that this definition is overly simplistic as there are situations of people who acquired a variety or dialect that is close to standard Putonghua and there are others who acquired varieties that are linguistically more distant. Thus, even though the data collected about the participants' perceptions provides clear definitions of who the native speaker of Chinese is to them, namely that the native speaker acquired the language during the critical period while the non-native speaker learned it after the critical period, such definitions are quite simplistic, do not necessarily reflect one's proficiency, literacy or knowledge of and about the language. In addition to this, globalisation, migration and frequent travel has made the world much closer, and identity is fluid, thus, such rigid definitions provided by the participants are just their perceptions.

Thus, rather than defining what makes a native speaker of Chinese, this thesis offers a case study that presents the perceptions of a number of learners of Chinese in Malta and shows that even though it seems to be very easy to provide a clear definition of who the native speaker is and who is not a native

speaker, in fact, the situation is even more complex and the perceptions of the participants, are essentially perceptions and do not lead to any generalisation or to any definitions of the terms native and non-native speaker.

In view of the complexity and the lack of a clear definition of the terms native and non-native, language schools who only employ so-called native speaker teachers or who issue calls of applications for teachers that show preference to applicants who are native speakers are guilty of native speakerism, an ideology that started in the EFL industry where those who are perceived to be native speakers who usually hold passports of Anglophone countries, are usually of a white background were viewed as ideal speakers of English and as the best examples of western culture. This also echoes the idea that countries in the global north were viewed to be more modern and advanced than those in the global south, of course, such ideas are not only misleading but also damaging, and by presenting the simplistic perceptions of the participants within this case study and by showing how such simplistic views do not lead to any definition of the term 'native speaker' and how by time it is increasingly more difficult to define such a term, this thesis concludes that such a term is best avoided in the field of foreign language teaching because despite the lack of a definition, this term could give unnecessary privilege or a disadvantage to anyone who applies for a teaching job. Rather than the use of the term 'native speaker', this thesis recommends to those who recruit teachers to require a level of proficiency in the standard variety of the language that is being taught. Such a level could be measured by examinations and certification that shows that the candidate has achieved a particular level and has proficiency in the standard language, irrelevant of their background and the other factors such as birthplace, nationality, family background and ethnicity that the participants perceived to contribute to the construction of the identity of the native speaker.

Thus, to answer the question in the title of the thesis, what are the people who go to the classroom to teach Chinese called, Chinese teachers or teachers of Chinese? I believe that rigid labels are unnecessary, especially in the fluid world we live in today and that what really matters is that such

people are proficient in Standard Putonghua, if that is the variety they are teaching, they are qualified, trained and meet the needs and expectations of their students and employers.

7.1.2 The participants' perceptions on the identity of non-native speakers of Chinese in Malta

According to the general perception of the participants, a non-native speaker of Chinese is a native speaker of another language as during the critical period from birth to puberty they were spoken to in another language, for example, many of the participants said that they are native speakers of Maltese or of English because they were spoken to in either one of those languages during the critical period. Many participants also mentioned exposure to the language they claimed to be native speakers of through the family and society at large. Some of the participants also said that for them Chinese is a language they learned later on in life. This is very much in line with the successive learning of languages and the practice of referring to languages one knows in a successive way, for example L1, L2, L3, L4… While such a practice is very widely used, this does not take into account the simultaneous acquisition of more than one language, either during the critical age or even in adulthood, which happens in multilingual realities, increasingly more of a common practice in the globalised world of today.

The participants' general perception is that a person cannot change their identity from native speaker to non-native speaker of a language or vice-versa. In view of the simplistic definition that the participants gave, this argument holds because if a person was brought up speaking a particular language or dialect in childhood they cannot change what happened in the past, the language they were spoken to during childhood. Despite this, the term 'native speaker' is extremely complex and remains undefined, thus, if in an ideal world such a term is not used, especially in foreign language teaching, all that matters is that a person is proficient in a language, irrelevant of where and when they learned that particular language. Thus, while several participants remarked that native speakers usually have "a high level" (quotation from the interviews) of Chinese because they are very fluent

and proficient, this could also be the case for a person who is a so-called non-native speaker who learned Chinese after the critical period. This could be corroborated with the fact that the NNS teacher whose lesson was observed spoke standard Putonghua very fluently and in view of their qualifications (PhD in Chinese literature) is surely very proficient in Chinese (at least in Standard Putonghua). The same could be said for the NS teacher, who spoke English very fluently. Thus, learning a language after the critical period does not mean that one is not as proficient or as spontaneous as a so-called native speaker. Also, there are so-called 'native' speakers who are not as proficient or as literate as others who would be classified as 'non-native' speakers by the definitions that emerge from the perceptions of the participants of this case study. Thus, terms such as "proficient-user" (Paikeday 1985:6) and "expert speaker" (Rampton 1990:98) work very well to describe anyone who is fluent and proficient in a language irrelevant of the person's background and without causing any possible discrimination especially in job applications.

7.1.3 The second research question: How is the teacher's NS or NNS identity manifested in CFL classroom practice within this case study in Malta?

This thesis concludes that in the context where data for this case study was collected, there are differences in the teaching practice of the so-called native and non-native speaker teachers. Such differences could be a result of the different cultural background of the teachers, of the training they received, and of their experience as learners in the past.

One of the main points of difference in the teaching methods employed by the so-called 'native' and 'non-native' teachers within this particular case study is that the former used memorisation as a teaching and learning strategy while the latter made more emphasis on understanding, reasoning and on students' creative language use rather than learning by heart. In view of the literature reviewed, memorisation is more typical of CHC countries that value memorisation and imitating the good example set by the teacher (Aoki 2008) while involving students in using the language more creatively tends to be a more western way. Thus, in this case study, the teachers' identity is manifested in their

teaching practice as the native Chinese teacher was more in line with the traditional teaching of CHC countries while the non-native western teacher was more in line with ways traditionally associated with the west. Despite this, such is the situation within this particular case study and is not necessarily the case in other contexts or in the same context of Malta at another time. It also does not mean that memorisation is only used as a strategy by the so-called 'native' Chinese speaker teachers, it only means that such was the state of affairs when data was collected and is by no means necessarily generalisable. Apart from the difference, there were points during the lessons observed where both teachers observed taught certain language aspects in the same manner. For example, both teachers used drilling at different points during their lessons even though drilling is not a task typical of the communicative approach. Thus, a teacher's native or non-native identity is not always manifested in their teaching practice as there are times when both the NS and the NNS teacher used the same method (for example drilling).

This also suggests that for the case of CFL in Malta, the communicative approach that teachers are told to use in Malta does not always work at all times. Therefore, in view of the literature reviewed, moving on from the communicative approach to more flexible "hybrid approaches" and "brand-new methods" (Wang 2020:83) that work for the teaching of CFL in Malta are to be explored and developed. Foreign language teaching is a "multi-factor, multi-level, multi-discipline and multi-dimensional process" (Guo and Liu (2016) quoted in Shei 2020:41) and thus "teaching should not be restricted to fixed methods or specific procedures but should be an 'open and dynamically developing system'" (Shei 2020:41). In view of this, another point of conclusion is that for CFL in Malta, "hybrid approaches" (Wang 2020:83) are necessary for affective teaching. The results of lesson observations indicate that teachers are already using hybrid approaches even though the communicative approach is the approach teachers are told to use in Malta.

The conclusion that this thesis wishes to make on the different approaches employed by the teachers observed is that policy makers should not simply prescribe or impose a teaching method on teachers,

but rather, carry out more studies that collect data from lesson observations to find out about what methods teachers of Chinese are using in Malta. Communities of practice should also be formed where teaching methods are shared and discussed by teachers with policy makers. Further research should also be carried out among students to find out about their expectations of their teachers. Eventually, data collected from lesson observations on how Chinese is being taught and from students about their expectations and perceptions of the methods employed by their teachers would provide triangulated data from which eventually a context approach (Bax 2003) would emerge, an approach that satisfies the needs and expectations of the students thus maximising effectiveness.

7.2 *Native or non-native: Who's worth more?*

One of the texts that inspired this research project was Medgyes' (1992) article entitled *Native or non-native: Who's worth more?* This article challenged traditional ideas that perceived the so-called native speaker to be the ideal teacher in extension of Chomsky's (1965) theory that the native speaker can instinctively decide whether an utterance is grammatical or not even if they cannot explain why. This created a perception that native speakers are the most proficient and by extension, perceived to be ideal teachers. As discussed in chapter two, Medgyes (1992) argues that in his context, non-native speaker teachers of English have several advantages mainly because they share their native language and background with their students. As is evident in the data collected for this case study, this is not the case in this case study as the non-native speaker teacher of Chinese is not a native speaker of the native language of the majority of the students in class, as the students don't share a native language, a common reality in today's globalised world, language diversity and even the acquisition of multiple languages natively is very common. Despite this, in view of Medgyes' (1992) argument, during the interviews, participants were asked whether they think that native speaker teachers are ideal teachers and if they perceive non-native speaker teachers to be "worth" more.

One of the participants said that "a native speaker does not necessarily know why things are as they are or how to explain things as their acquisition is natural, born into it." This echoes Chomsky's (1965)

argument that native speakers can detect errors but not necessarily explain why they are so, this is not necessarily the case as teachers are proficient and qualified and should be able to explain why an utterance is erroneous, irrelevant of whether they consider themselves or are perceived to be native or non-native speakers of the language they are teaching. Another participant said that "in Malta/ Europe, they (native speaker teachers) are not ideal. They need to communicate in Maltese." This echoes Medgyes' (1992) argument that the non-native speaker teacher is at an advantage because they share the L1 with their students, this argument also does not hold because a native Chinese speaker teacher could learn and be fluent in Maltese (or any other language) and use it as a language of instruction according to the country they are teaching in. Also, one could acquire multiple languages natively, so a teacher could have acquired Maltese and Chinese natively, or any other languages. Thus, Medgyes' (1992) argument also does not hold in today's globalised world where multilingualism is prevalent.

Many participants opined that non-native speaker teachers are more suited to teach at beginners' level if the teaching is taking place in Malta or Europe because, they argue that "their English pronunciation is not standard. We might not understand the English of native (Chinese) speaker teachers." This is not necessarily the case, because as already stated before, anyone could learn a language formally and be very fluent and proficient or one could have acquired both English and Chinese simultaneously. The particular issue with English in Malta is that a variety of Maltese-English is usually spoken in Malta and those who are only used to that variety might find it difficult to understand a different variety of English.

An opinion of one of the students who participated in this case study is that "there's a place for both. I don't think there is an ideal at all. I think ideally you (learners) would have access to both." In conclusion, this comment closes this discussion well, as having a mix of the so-called native and non-native speaker teachers, provides schools and language departments diversity. Despite this, in view of the arguments posed in this thesis, this thesis proves that there are general perceptions of factors that

contribute to make a native and a non-native speaker, but they are just general perceptions (within this case study) and in fact, there are no clear definitions of who is a native and who is a non-native speaker. Like other literature, this thesis uses the terms 'native' and 'non-native' to refer to the concepts as they are generally perceived to mean, but it advocates against native speakerism that could, in fact, be racist.

Thus, in Medgyes' (1992) context the non-native speaker teacher of English who shared the L1 and the cultural background with their students in opposition to the native speaker teacher who typically came from an Anglophone country and was typically monolingual was indeed very worthy, but such a situation is not generalisable to this case study or to others especially in view of multilingualism, multiculturalism and globalisation. In response to Medgyes' (1992) article, what is really worth the most in today's world is diversity in language departments and multilingual teachers, who are proficient and qualified to teach.

7.3 The implications of this case study and its contribution to CFL teaching practice in Malta

As previously explained, this case study contributes to CFL in Malta as it sheds light on how both native and non-native speaker teachers teach within the boundary of the case. This study is the first of its kind in Malta and it will make an impact on CFL education in Malta. This PhD study was sponsored by the Tertiary Education Scholarship Scheme (TESS) at the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (Malta) and hence, the thesis will contribute to Malta's education system in two ways: policy making and classroom practice. It will contribute to policy making because it documents how Chinese was taught at that particular point in time within the boundary of the case and along with other research that collects data from lesson observation it can show how CFL is being taught in Malta. Such research from the classroom, could contribute to policy making and to the creation of an approach to CFL teaching that is localised especially for Malta. Such research could also contribute to design training for both in-service and pre-service teachers of CFL in Malta.

Apart from showing how Chinese was taught within the case that this thesis documents, this thesis also has implications on the use of the terms 'native' and 'non-native' speaker. As discussed in the two sub-sections above, by showing the participants' general perceptions that are rather simplistic on what makes a native and a non-native speaker, this thesis aims to draw the attention of those who are involved in the recruitment of teachers that the term 'native speaker' does not necessarily equate to being an ideal teacher, or to being proficient, especially in the standard variety that is generally taught, but rather creates ambiguity and further propagates native-speakerism, an outdated practice (that could be discriminatory) that regards certain people to be superior to others due to their background.

7.4 The (non) generalisability of this case study

The research methodology used for this thesis is the case study approach and it uses two research instruments to collect qualitative data, interviews and lesson observations. Thus, as discussed previously in the methodology chapter sections 4.5 and 4.6 about the research instruments used to collect data for this research project, as typical of case study research, this research project focuses on a very particular case and the results and conclusions drawn from it shed light on how CFL was being taught within the boundaries of time and place of the case study. Thus, the aim of this case study is to "maximise information" (Lincoln and Guba 1985) on how Chinese was being taught in 2020/2021 at the University of Malta and to provide insights that may be beneficial to teachers, students, policy makers, teacher educators and may also be a catalyst for future research on CFL in Malta.

There are two main opposing points of view that argue the generalisability (or lack of) of case study research. One is by Yin (2014) where they argue that findings on a particular case study could be generalised to explain phenomena outside of the particular case and generate theory resulting from the particularity of case studies. On the other hand, Stake (1995) argues that the nature of case study research is to focus on very particular cases and that generalisation is not really the purpose of case

study research. Similarly, Thomas (2010:576) argues that the aim of case studies "should be exemplary knowledge" that emerges from a particular case rather than generalisability. In view of Stake's (1995) and Thomas' (2010) arguments, by recording the particularities, this case study adds knowledge on the teaching of CFL at the University of Malta at that particular time, but findings cannot be generalisable to other contexts both within and outside of Malta, not even within the same course of studies at the University of Malta at the present time because the conditions have changed completely. This is because presently, lectures at the University of Malta are now in-person on campus, as they were before the pandemic and if the study is replicated now, the findings might be different. This case study is also not generalisable because of a number of limitations, mostly because it is focused on a very particular case and even though as typical of qualitative data, the data is rich, the number of participants is limited and collected under the very particular circumstances of the pandemic, as is discussed in more depth in the following section.

7.5 Limitations of this case study

This thesis reports findings from a case study whose boundaries lie at the University of Malta in academic year 2020/2021. As discussed in the introductory chapter, in Malta, Chinese is taught as a foreign language at the China Cultural Centre in Valletta, at the Directorate for Lifelong Learning within the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (Malta) at the University of Malta, and as a foreign language option in two colleges within the state schools system, one church school and one independent school.

At the time when I started PhD studies in 2016, the University of Malta and the Confucius Institute at the University of Malta were the major providers of CFL tuition in Malta and it was decided that the boundaries of this case study will lie at the University of Malta because it was, and it still is the only institution which employs a mix of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese, and where I am not involved in any way (my role as researcher was discussed in the introductory chapter). Thus, while this case study is limited because it presents data collected from only one institution, it was the only feasible way to

conduct research on CFL in Malta because I am involved in the teaching and the examination process at the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (Malta).

The fact that this case study research project presents and discusses data collected from the University of Malta has another limitation that is the age of the participants. All the students who participated in this research project were adult students who are reading for a degree in Chinese, and it does not listen to the voices of the pupils (whose ages range from 11 to 16) who chose Chinese as a foreign language option in compulsory education. It would be interesting to conduct a similar case study in the future about the pedagogies of NS and NNS teachers of Chinese who teach pupils in compulsory education. Such a case study would also include the pupils' and the parents' points of view: what the expectations of pupils and their parents are and it would also include the point of view of policy makers or school management teams on their expectations of CFL education in the compulsory school system.

In addition to the limitations mentioned above, this case study has two main limitations, one is that the number of participants is limited due to its small size and the other because data was collected online due to the pandemic lockdown that occurred in 2020/2021. The limitation that is a result of the small sample size does not make the study generalisable, but this is often typical of case studies whose aim is typically to document what was going on within the case rather than to create a lot of generalisability, as will be discussed in more depth in the following section.

7.5.1 Limitations due to the small sample size

The number of potential participants for this study in Malta is very limited as the number of students and teachers of Chinese is very limited. In fact, since the inception of the study programmes in Chinese in 2010, the University of Malta has employed less than 5 teachers (a mix of local Maltese and native Chinese) in total, and generally, less than 10 students on average are in each year group of the bachelor's programme. Despite the good turnout from the potential participants who were invited to participate in this study, the number of participants is still limited due to the small size of the case under study. The result of this was that the size of the data was very limited and thus, this affects

generalisability. While the findings might be representative of the potential participants (students and teachers) of Chinese at the University of Malta since there was quite a good turnout from potential participants, the limited size of the data does not make findings generalisable to other contexts where Chinese is taught as a foreign language. Due to the limited size of the data, this study cannot make generalisations about all contexts where Chinese is taught as a foreign language, but it rather "adds knowledge" (Lincoln and Guba 1985) about students' and teachers' perceptions of what makes the identity of a native and a non-native speaker teacher of Chinese in the context of CFL in Malta. In addition to the small sample size resulting from the small number of learners and teachers of Chinese in Malta, another major limitation of this study is that data was collected at the time of the pandemic.

7.5.2 Limitations of collecting data online due to the pandemic lockdown

The data collection for this research project was highly impacted by the pandemic measures at the time. Despite this, one of the characteristics of case study research is that it presents a case at a particular point in time and in a particular location, this case study occurred at the hight of the pandemic when due to the ensuing lockdown, lessons were being held online, thus, despite the limitations that resulted from collecting data online, this study is also a contribution to research on education that was carried out online during the lockdown.

Due to the peculiar time when the data was collected and the fact that lessons are now being held in person as they were before the pandemic in Malta, a future further study that collects data through lesson observations (which are now being conducted in-person, in class) could be conducted to find out whether the main findings are the same or otherwise. Such a future study would also be able to answer questions about other matters, which due to the limitations of collecting data online, especially from lesson observations, were not answered.

The participants chose to be interviewed online, as the interviewer, I always had my camera on throughout all the interviews and did not comment on the usage of the camera of the participants. Despite this, all the participants voluntarily kept their cameras on throughout all interviews. This was

a very positive point as we could see each other and build some rapport. There were no internet connectivity issues, thus keeping the camera on posed no technical difficulty during the interviews. Despite this, not being able to shake the participants' hand and not being able to offer a coffee or water to the participants was a disadvantage, this would have built more rapport and a sense of trust between the interviewer and the participants. Another disadvantage of conducting interviews online is the distractions that could have occurred in the background. Even though the camera was on throughout all interviews, and I was alone in the room during all interviews, participants could have possibly felt unsafe sharing certain thoughts online because even though I told them that I was alone and that no-one was overhearing the interview, they might have felt that someone else was hearing the conversation either on my end, or on their end. There could have been other people present in their residence and due to this, participants might have felt uncomfortable to express themselves freely.

Possible distractions in the participants' background (for example children, pets, phone calls, other people in their presence) were limitations during interviews. Despite this, I feel that only one interview was 'lost' due to distractions in the background of a potential participant. This is because one prospective participant joined the online meeting on the agreed date and time but after I introduced the study, they said that they need to go because they were busy because someone else was calling them online and had to give priority to the other online meeting. This participant did not reply to my email to reschedule the interview. This could have happened during an in-person interview as a participant could leave upon receiving a phone call or a message, but it might be easier to leave an online interview rather than a meeting in-person. Bratcher (2020) opines that during the pandemic, many prospective participants did not take part in research projects for several different reasons. This is also a limitation in this study, as most probably, if data was not collected during the lockdown, more participants would have volunteered to participate in the study and to meet me in person. Another limitation to conducting interviews online was the 'screen fatigue' participants could have had. As discussed above, due to the geographical size of Malta, the switch to online meetings was very abrupt

and the software was not familiar. The advantage is that the interviews were not held at the onset of the pandemic, so by the time participants were interviewed, they were used to online meetings.

The interviews were done by January 2021. Usually, the University of Malta has an exam period between the end of January and the beginning of February, during which usually no lessons held. In view of this, lesson observations started with the onset of the second semester at the beginning of 2021. At this point, schools in Malta were open with lots of restrictions on distancing, but the University of Malta and other higher education institutions were conducing lessons online mainly because of space restrictions. As the number of COVID cases were increasing in Malta, all schools and educational institutions closed their physical doors on 15 March 2021. Due to the restrictions, lessons of Chinese were being held online, and since the situation with the pandemic was very unpredictable, data was collected from observing lessons held online. Since this was the second lockdown in Malta, at this point teachers were prepared to teach online and the digital platforms were already selected by the university. By then, students were also more familiar with how to access their lessons online and how to use the software. The fact that lesson observations were done during the second lockdown, not the first one that occurred in March 2020 is a slight advantage because both students and teachers (and the researcher) were more prepared for the online environment. Napier (2021), as cited in Berger, (2021) put it very well, the "emergency-situation" of 2020 had become "education in times of an emergency" in 2021 as people were better prepared.

Despite such preparations, collecting data from online lessons posed several limitations. Possibly, if lessons were conducted in person, more teachers could have accepted to participate in the study and to have their lessons observed. Accepting an 'outsider' to observe lessons in the physical classroom might be easier for a teacher because they are in their workspace and not in their personal space at home. One of the challenges of many teachers during the pandemic was to "create space (both physical and mental) when home and work are increasingly fused" (Uleanya and Yu 2023:1). The fact that the participants participated in the study in their own personal space, most probably at home

was not ideal because they have felt that their personal space was somehow exposed to the researcher. Apart from this, a teacher who is being observed in a physical classroom might feel more in control of the situation as they could see the researcher physically and what they are doing, while during online observations, teachers have limited access to what they can see from the researcher and their background. Of course, during lesson observations the researcher behaved ethically, no recordings of lessons were made, and the researcher only took notes on the lesson observation sheet that the teachers received by email prior to the observations.

Even though my camera was always switched on throughout the lessons I observed, observing lessons online could have concerns regarding the privacy of the subjects under observation (Dyke, Harding, and Liddon 2008; Marsh and Mitchell 2014; Van Boxtel 2017). If lessons were conducted in person during the time of the fieldwork, possibly more teachers could have accepted to participate as the researcher would have built a more personal rapport with them, among other possible reasons. In fact, one of the limitations with observing lessons online is that rapport was not established on a personal level as all interaction occurred online.

Another limitation of observing lessons online is that the researcher was limited to what they could see on the camera only. Even though all the students and the teachers had their cameras on throughout all the lessons, the researcher was limited to observe what the camera showed me. The students had to put their microphones on mute except when they were asked to speak by the teacher. This is for technical reasons because when they did not mute their microphones, there was a lot of noise and distraction and even internet connectivity issues. Due to this, this project missed on observing students' comments, interactions and reactions as during in-person lessons, students are freer to talk, ask questions, to comment and to discuss with the teacher and also among themselves. The students could have communicated among themselves on private chat groups, even on other apps, which the researcher had no access to. Thus, collecting data from online lesson observations, missed out all the interactions students usually have between each other during lessons and even

during breaktime. Lessons were two hours long, and as usual practice at the University of Malta, students were given a 5-to-10-minute break half-way through the lesson. When the teacher announced the break, students switched off their cameras and kept themselves on mute. If the researcher were to observe lessons in person on campus, they would have also observed the interactions of the students with each other and also with the teacher during the break. During one such break, the researcher observed that two students were discussing something related to the lesson very briefly in Italian, but other than that, all the informal interaction that would occur during an in-person lesson was lost. During the lessons observed, one of the teachers acknowledged my presence and said that I was a "visitor", but I, as the researcher was always on mute. If the lessons were in person, students could have interacted with me, possibly ask questions about my presence even before or after the lessons, but all this possible informal interaction was lost.

In addition to the limitation of missing out on all the informal interactions of a typical lesson conducted in-class, the dynamic during online lessons is different from that during lessons done in person. This is because the teacher and the students were at home, where they might have been distracted by various people or things that were going on at home. It was also a very particular time and the teachers had to adapt their teaching in a very significant way, in the classroom they could have had equipment and space that they did not necessarily have at home, thus the lessons that were conducted at the time of observation could have been heavily adapted in view of the limitations of the time. An example of this is when one of the teachers observed used a very small whiteboard or a piece of paper to explain stroke order when writing Chinese characters. Physical classrooms are equipped with large whiteboards and other equipment (for example good quality speakers, computers, interactive whiteboards) that facilitate lesson delivery and not observing how such equipment is used during lessons is a limitation, because what was observed online, might not have been the teachers' usual practice when teaching in a physical classroom.

Apart from limitations discussed above, this study also missed out on observing the general atmosphere at the university and the setting of the classroom, how students sit, the physical classroom and the dynamics students form with each other. At times, during the lessons observed teachers split students into smaller breakout rooms and the researcher was always put in one of the breakout rooms and the teacher would go from one group to another. This gave the researcher a limited view of what was being discussed in only one of the breakout rooms, if in-person lessons were observed, the researcher would have had a wider view of what all the small groups were discussing. Apart from this, during online lessons, groupwork and collaboration among students during lessons was limited and possibly also affected by the background of the location where the students were residing in, thus what was observed during online lessons is not always a reflection of what happens in a physical classroom. According to Constantinou and Carroll's (2023) report on teacher's experiences during the pandemic, "teaching methods had to be adapted to remote teaching, with fewer opportunities for collaborative tasks but more opportunities to develop independent learning." (Constantinou and Carroll 2023:5) Thus, especially the data collected from lesson observations presents an "adapted" view of what typically occurs in a physical classroom, but as already discussed above, fieldwork was undertaken as per the timeline of the project (Paula 2020 discusses the impact of the pandemic on postgraduate students' research projects).

In addition to the limitations discussed above, at the time when data was collected, many people were going through several issues that were particularly related to the unprecedented situation of the pandemic. Factors such as screen fatigue, uncertainty, the fusion of work and the personal space at home, anxieties related to physical and mental health and well-being, among other factors could have affected the participants as well as the researcher. Anxieties related to emotional and mental health (Haleem et al. 2020, Uleanya and Yu 2023) increased at the time of the pandemic and many students (including myself) felt anxious due to the uncertainties caused by the pandemic (Yasmin et al. 2020, Rattanawan and Pakdee 2024). Teachers were equally affected by the pandemic and the changes it brought with it (González et al., 2023) and many claimed that their workload increased due to the

transition to working online (Ruiz-Frutos et al. 2021). Most probably, if data were to be collected at another time when there were no restrictions, possibly more prospective participants would have volunteered to take part in the study, lessons would have been observed in person and more data would have been collected.

7.6 Suggestions for further studies

Now that this thesis sheds light on how the identities of the so-called native and non-native speaker teachers are constructed and on their teaching methods, the first study that could potentially be done in the future would focus on students' perceptions of native and non-native speaker teachers' teaching methods. As stated earlier, originally this research project was going to explore this, but before such a research project could be undertaken, it was deemed necessary to first find out what factors are perceived to contribute to make the identity of native and non-native speaker teachers and a thorough description of their teaching methods. Since this study was done through case study research in Malta, a future research project could also be undertaken as a case study in Malta and results could be compared with other similar studies done in another country or even with similar studies done with Chinese learners of English in China. In such a research project, data could be collected from both adult learners and pupils in schools so that the results of each control group could be compared. As part of this potential future study, teachers' attitudes towards different teaching methods and towards the communicative approach could be researched to find out which approach teachers believe works best for the teaching of CFL in Malta.

Research done in the past shows that in practice, teachers do not necessarily use the teaching method they claim to be using or that they are told to use (Kumaravadivelu 1993; Nunan 1987; Thornbury 1996). It would be interesting to carry out another case study research project on CFL in Malta, a context where the communicative approach is recommended to be used by teachers of all languages, to find out whether in practice, teachers in different levels of the system are in effect using this advocated approach or any other approach. Such a study would collect data through lesson

observations of several lessons, possibly of different foreign languages with the aim of results being triangulated. Such a potential future study would be very useful to explore whether teachers reflect on the methods they are using, and whether the teachers are using the method (the communicative approach) they are told to use in Malta. Such a study would also take into account the perceptions on the identity of native and the non-native speaker teachers that resulted from the current study and it would fit in well with literature on native and non-native speaker teachers and their teaching methods.

A part of this potential future study or maybe another separate study could include an analysis of the teaching materials used by teachers in their practice, and whether such materials are in line with the communicative approach. Such research projects would contribute to a better understanding of the methods that are used by teachers and to eventually organise professional development for teachers based on research.

A further study could be conducted on the assessment and examination of CFL in Malta and possibly this could be compared with the assessment of CFL in other countries in the West. In local schools, Chinese and all the other foreign languages are assessed formatively with in-class assessments held throughout the academic year and summatively, at the end of the academic year and at the end of the five-year cycle of FL learning in secondary school (this is equivalent to the GCSE in the UK). It would be interesting to carry out future research on the errors done by candidates in exams so that teachers would be trained on how such errors could be prevented in the future, and to also find out the effectiveness of the assessment method.

Another possible future study is about online learning and in-person learning. As discussed earlier in the methodology chapter, lesson observations to collect data were conducted online due to the measures related to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020/2021. It could be that data collected from online lessons might have yielded different results from data that could have been collected from in-person classes. The case study done for this thesis could be repeated in a few years in the future and lessons and interviews would be observed in-person on campus. The results of this present study would be

compared with the results collected in person to find out whether the results converge or diverge. Such a study would fit in with research that is being conducted post-pandemic on how the lockdown measures affected teaching and learning. Such a study would contribute to CFL teaching and learning in Malta because decisions that are based on research could be taken when designing courses in person, online, or hybrid.

Following this present research project, I personally wish to conduct a similar research project to find out what constructs the identity of NS and NNS of Maltese and how NS and NNS teachers of Maltese teach. Such a research project could be done in collaboration with colleagues specialised in teaching Maltese as a foreign language, and data could be collected in Malta or abroad. I am particularly interested in conducting research with learners of Maltese who are considered to be native speakers of Chinese and who are of Chinese heritage who live in Malta and who have learned or are learning Maltese to better integrate in society and at work. Data for such a study could also be collected in China from learners of Maltese as foreign language in China (Maltese is taught in Beijing and in Shanghai universities). Such a study would be useful especially for children of Chinese heritage who are considered to be native speakers of Chinese who live and who attend school in Malta and thus are legally required to learn Maltese at school. (I personally met a few native Chinese pupils who live in Malta and who attend state schools and are very proficient in Mandarin, Maltese and English and who also learn another foreign language (French, German, Italian or Spanish) at school.) Such a study on how Maltese is being taught to so-called native Chinese speakers would also be useful for Chinese adults who live in Malta and who are learning Maltese. Another study on these pupils' identity would also be very interesting to find out which language or possibly languages give them their identity and about their sense of belonging in which language.

Since learning a language is not only learning new knowledge but also the creation of a new identity as a learner or as a speaker of an additional language, it would be interesting to have further research on the creation of a new of identity as learners or as speakers of Chinese as a foreign language and

how such identity develops throughout the course of time. Such a study would be longitudinal in nature, from the point learners start attending the course in Chinese to the time they graduate university or complete the five years in compulsory education. It would be interesting to have two control groups for such a study: one of university students who are reading for a Bachelor's degree, and the other group of pupils in school who chose Chinese as their foreign language option at school. This study on the students' identity could be further enhanced by collecting data on students' attitudes towards being given or adopting a Chinese name as they learn Chinese as a foreign language in Malta or in a country outside of China. The results of such a study could be compared to a similar study with heritage learners of Chinese or with Western learners who study Chinese in China. Such a potential future study could also be conducted with learners of Maltese who are of Chinese heritage, who live in Malta, and who have adopted English or European names to better integrate in Maltese society. A future research project could also be done on the presence of Chinese names of businesses in Malta, how such names contribute to the linguistic landscape of Malta.

In the context of teaching CFL outside of China to multilingual learners, it would be interesting to conduct further research on the language/s of instruction in CFL to find out in addition to the target language, what language/s are used for instruction? When and why are such languages used? Following the study by Gauci and Camilleri-Grima (2012) entitled 'Code-switching as a tool in teaching Italian in Malta', a further study on the same lines could be conducted in CFL classrooms in Malta to find out how Maltese, English and Chinese are used in the classroom. It would also be interesting to conduct a study about the process of learning Chinese as a foreign language through the L2 as a medium of instruction. Does it make a difference to learners if they learn CFL through their L1 or through their L2? As is reported in this case study, does it make a difference to learners if their L1 is not used in the CFL classroom in Malta? A number of studies have been conducted on the languages of instruction in schools in Malta, but such a study was never done specifically on CFL classrooms. It would be interesting to carry out such a study and to compare the results with those of other studies conducted in other foreign language classrooms. On the same lines, such a potential study would also

investigate how the students' and the teachers' linguistic repertoire is used to facilitate the learning of the target language.

Since Maltese is the language of instruction in state schools in Malta, it would be interesting to have a book on language typology that compares the grammar structures of both languages. Such a book would be interesting for linguists and for teachers and learners. It is interesting to read how two languages from two distinct language families and which are not in contact with each other are similar in some ways. Such a book that compares the two languages would help Maltese learners of Chinese and Chinese learners of Maltese to understand the target language better. Such a study would help linguists, learners, teachers, translators, and anyone else who uses Chinese and Maltese at work. Such a study in the field of language typology and universals would help in the teaching of Chinese and Maltese as foreign languages and to the translation that is done from Chinese to Maltese and vice versa. In addition to this, with the advent of literary works and other texts that are translated from Chinese into Maltese and vice-versa, a list of terminology of words in Chinese and their equivalent in Maltese is needed to ensure that there is consistency in the translations being produced by different translators. Apart from this, due to the increasing demand for the translation of texts of literary, cultural and even official nature from Chinese into Maltese or vice-versa, certain new words need to be coined and standardised. For example, words related to food that are typical of the two countries.

The results of the data collected from the interviews for the present research project show that the vast majority of the participants said that native speakers have a certain "level" of Chinese that non-native speakers do not have. Both the students (who are still learning Chinese) and the teachers (who are very fluent and proficient in Chinese) mention this "level" that native speakers have but the data does not give a clear definition of what exactly this "level" is. It would be very interesting to have future research that explains what the level of a native speaker is and what the level of a near native speaker is. It would also be interesting to have a potential research project about students' or teachers' perceptions of different speakers of Chinese. Participants would listen to different people (a mix of

native and non-native speakers) saying something in Chinese and they would judge whether the speaker is a native or a non-native speaker and why.

In addition to defining what these levels are, further studies could be done to find out when a person stops identifying as a learner and starts to identify as a speaker of a language as a foreign language. Such a study could be done with Selinker's (1972) theory on the interlanguage as the theoretical framework because essentially, everyone is on the interlanguage continuum, even native speakers. One of the results of this research project is that both native and non-native speakers make errors. In view of Selinker's (1972) theory on the interlanguage, it would also be interesting to have future research on the nature of native and non-native speakers' errors and the reason behind such errors. Are the errors transfer (as a result of their L1) or are they developmental (as a result of a lack of knowledge)?

Further studies could also be done to investigate the mental processing that the so-called native and non-native speakers go through to express themselves. Do native speakers think to express themselves in Chinese as their L1? Do speakers of Chinese dialects think more to express themselves in Standard Putonghua? Do non-native speakers think more to express themselves in Chinese? Do non-native speakers first think in their L1 (or maybe in their L2 or any other foreign language) and then translate into Chinese? What mental processing happens in the CFL classroom at the initial stages of learning Chinese as a foreign language? What mental processing goes on in the mind of learner who only knows alphabetical languages and is now learning Chinese as a foreign language, that is character based? What processing do non-native speakers of Chinese go through to produce tones and to write in Chinese characters?

Apart from potential research projects on the process of teaching and learning Chinese in Malta, a further study is necessary about learners' motivation to choose to learn Chinese in Malta, a small island in the heart of the Mediterranean that is geographically, far away from China. I am asked this question often and my answer is very simple, I wanted to open my eyes to a whole new world. I would

definitely recommend to any Maltese or 'western' person to also open their minds to Chinese or to another culture to realise that after all, we are all human and similar in many ways.

7.7 Recommendations

After the suggestions for further studies (some of which I am personally looking forward to doing in the near future) proposed in the section above, this thesis makes the following recommendations about CFL in Malta.

The design of a localised pedagogy for CFL in Malta. Such a pedagogy would be based on research, according to what is happening in classrooms and according to the needs and expectations of students and teachers locally. Such a localised pedagogy needs to be appropriate for CFL and for Malta, it needs to be according to students' needs and expectations in Malta and it needs to be affective for the teaching of Chinese. Currently, foreign language teachers in Malta are instructed to use the communicative approach, but this might not necessarily work for Chinese because repetition (to master the Chinese tone system and the writing system) are necessary. Thus, especially for the case of Chinese, this thesis recommends that the post-methods approach is employed. This would give teachers the flexibility to use whichever methods work best to teach different aspects of Chinese according to the needs of their classes.

Following this change in approach to the teaching of CFL in Malta, this thesis makes another recommendation. To design teacher training for all pre-service and in-service teachers in the local system (for example the system of assessment in Malta) and in the post-methods approach recommended in the paragraph above. This would ensure that all teachers, irrespective of their identity understand how CFL is taught in Malta. This also entails the design and the setting up of a teacher training programme for potential teachers that will lead them to achieve a permanent teaching warrant from the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation. (This programme of studies already exists for the most-commonly taught foreign languages in Malta: French, German, Italian and Spanish. The stream for Mandarin Chinese is still not available.)

In addition to a localised pedagogy and teacher training, this thesis recommends that localised teaching materials are created. Malta already has syllabuses and examinations for Mandarin Chinese equivalent to those of the other foreign languages on offer in schools, but up to now, there is no local textbook or teaching materials. A localised textbook and other teaching materials will be useful because they would be relevant to the local context.

This thesis also strongly recommends that the terms 'native' and 'non-native' speaker do not feature in calls for applications for teaching positions and in material that promotes foreign language courses or schools. As is evident in this thesis, in addition to being misleading and ambiguous, these terms tend to cause unnecessary division rather than collaboration between colleagues. Thus it is highly recommended that terms that refer to the linguistic proficiency or qualifications of a person that really measure their proficiency are required by potential recruiters in order to ensure that the process does not give advantage or a disadvantage to any prospective applicants.

7.8 Final Remarks

The objective of this thesis was not to create distinctions or to say who is better than whom, the objective was to describe how CFL was being taught within a particular case to shed more light on how Chinese is being taught in Malta, a country that is so small, geographically very far away from China and where Chinese is still not very widely taught, even though the first formal course of studies in Chinese at the University of Malta dates back to 2010. This is to create more understanding and communication between what seem to be very distinct cultures (China and Malta). Despite the geographical distance between China and Malta, this thesis on the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language in Malta shows how the two countries have good relations to the extent that we try to understand each other by learning each other's languages. This shows that what connects us is greater than our diversity and that we are all humans on a journey of understanding.

When I started studying Chinese at the University of Malta in 2010, I embarked on a journey that changed my life. Back then I had a choice – to either solely focus on my teaching job (which I still do

and cherish to this very day), or to spend the weekend studying Chinese characters whilst juggling work and studies. Clearly, I chose the second option and as Robert Frost's (1916) poem goes

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –

I took the one less travelled by,

And that has made all the difference.

My choice clearly made all the difference, I learned so much valuable knowledge that in collaboration with my friend and colleague in Malta, we share with our students, young and old, as we endeavour to bring China, its language and its wisdom closer to our students in Malta. I am very thankful for where the journey on this road "less travelled by" has brought me and I look forward to a bright future of more understanding, collaboration and friendship.

Above: the official logo of the *Malta-China Friendship Society,* a society established in 1973 a year after diplomatic relations between Malta and China were established. The society was a teenager when I was born in 1986, but today I am a member of the committee and an active member of the society where I enjoy the cultural activities that bridge the two countries closer together.

References

Aboshiha, P. (2013) 'Native Speaker' English Language Teachers: Disengaged from the Changing International Landscape of their Profession. In Ushioda, E. (eds) *International Perspectives on Motivation. International Perspectives on English Language Teaching.* Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Aguinis, H. and Roth, H.A. (2005) Teaching in China: Culture-based challenges in Alon, I. and MacIntyre, J.R. (Eds.), *Business and Management Education in China: Transition, Pedagogy, and Training*, Hakensack, NJ, World Scientific Publishing Co. Ltd. 141-164.

Albrow, M. and King, E. (1990) *Globalization, Knowledge and Society. Readings from International Sociology.* SAGE Publications.

Alliance Française Malte-Méditerranée official website. https://alliancefrmalta.com/ retrieved on 3 September 2024.

Aoki, K. (2008). Confucius vs. Socrates: The impact of educational traditions of East and West in a global age in *The International Journal of Learning*, 14,11, 35-40.

Asher, J. (1977) *Learning Another Language through Actions: The Complete Teacher's Guidebook.* Los Gatos, Calif.: Sky Oakes Productions.

Assante, M. (2006). Forward. In G.J. Sefa Dei and A. Kempf (Eds.), *Anti-colonialism and education: The politics of resistance* Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Baker, W. (2015). *Culture and identity through English as a lingua franca: Rethinking concepts and goals in intercultural communication.* Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Baker, W. (2016). *English as an academic lingua franca and intercultural awareness: Student mobility in the transcultural university.* Language and Intercultural Communication, 16, 437–451.

Ballard, B., and Clanchy, J. (1991). *Teaching Students from Overseas: A Brief Guide for Lecturers and Supervisors.* Melbourne: Longman Chesire.

Barron-Hauwaert, S. (2004) *Language Strategies for Bilingual Families: The One-Parent-One-Language Approach.* Multilingual Matters. Clevedon, England, 15-219.

Barstad, G.E., Hjelde, A., Kvam, S., Parianou, A. and Todd, J. (eds.) (2016) *Language and Nation: Crossroads and Connections*. Münster, Waxmann.

Bartelson, J. (1995) *A Genealogy of Sovereignty.* Cambridge University Press.

Bartolo, S., Grech, V. and Grech, E. (2022) Safe school reopening after COVID-19 restrictions- measures implemented in San Andrea Independent School in Malta. in *Malta Medical Journal,* 34,1, 5-16. Available at https://www.mmsjournals.org/index.php/mmj/article/ view/500 retrieved on 09 September 2024.

Bax, S. (2003). The end of CLT: A context approach to language teaching. In *ELT Journal*, 57, 278-287.

Baxter, J. (2016). Positioning language and identity: Poststructuralist perspectives. In Preece, S. (ed.) (2016). *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity.* Routledge. New York. 34-49.

Beaugrande, R. de (1998) Performative Speech Acts in Linguistic Theory: The Rationality of Noam Chomsky in *Journal of Pragmatics*, 29: 765-803.

Beaugrande, R. de (1998) Corpus and Controversy: Ideal Language versus Real Language, in *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics.*

Bentz, V.M. and Shapiro, J.J. (1996) *Mindful Inquiry in Social Research.* Thousand Oaks, CA. SAGE.

Berent, P. (1996) Learnability constraints on deaf learners' acquisition of English wh-questions in J Speech Hear Res, 39:625-643.

Berger, S. (2021, October, 24). COVID-19: School attendance rate has 'returned to normal'- Head of School. in The Malta Independent. Available at https://www.independent.com.mt/artcles/2021-10-24/local-news/Covid-19-School-atendance-rate-has-returned-to-normal-head-of-school-6736237760 retrieved on 09 September 2024.

Berko-Gleason, J. (1982*)* Insights from Child Acquisition for Second Language Loss. in Lambert, R.D. and Freed, B.F. (eds.) *The loss of language skills.* Rowley. MA Newbury House: 13-23.

Berlitz, M.D. (1909) *The Berlitz Method for Teaching Modern Languages.* New York.

Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C. and Walter, F. (2016). *Member checking: a tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation?* In *Qualitative health research,* 26,13, 1802-1811.

Block, D. (2016). Class in language and identity research. In Preece, S. (ed.) (2016). *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity.* Routledge. New York. 241-254.

Blommaert, J. (2006) Language policy and national identity. In Ricento, T. (ed.) (2006) *Language policy: theory and method.* Oxford. Blackwell. 238-254.

Bloomfield, L. (1927) *Literate and Illiterate Speech* in *Language in Culture and Society.* New York, Harper and Row. 291-296.

Bloomfield, L. (1933) *Language.* New York. Holt Rinehart. Winston.

Bochner, A.P. (1997) It's about time: Narrative and the divided self. In *Qualitative Inquiry,* 3, 4,

418-438.

Boekaerts M. (2011), Emotions, emotion regulation, and self-regulation of learning. In: Zimmerman B., Schunk D. (Eds.) *Handbook of self-regulation of learning and performance.* New York: Routledge. 408-425.

Boekaerts M. (2011), What have we learned about the social context-student engagement link? In *Teachers College Record* 113,2, 375-393.

Bogdan, R.C. and Biklen, S.K. (2007) *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods.* (5th Ed.) Allyn and Bacon. Boston.

Bonello, C., Camilleri, R., Deguara, J., Milton, J. and Muscat, T. (2022) The COVID-19 and Education in Malta (Cov-EM) study: Perspectives of early childhood educators. Research report 2. Malta University Publishing. Available at https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/103699 retrieved on 09 September 2024.

Bonfiglio, T. P. (2010). *Mother Tongues and Nations: The Invention of the Native Speaker.* Berlin, De Gruyter.

Borg-Marks, C. (2003) *Is-Sejħa.* SKS Publishers, Malta.

Borg-Marks, C. (2010) Dao De Jing, *Il-Ktieb tat-Triq u tal-Virtù.* PIN Publications, Malta.

Bosker, H.R., Quené, H., Sanders, T. and De Jong, N.H. (2014) The Perception of Fluency in Native and Nonnative Speech in Language Learning. in *Language Learning Research Club,* University of Michigan. 64,3, 579-614.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *The economics of linguistic exchanges.* Social Sciences Information. 16, 645-668.

Bourdieu (1991) (fifth printing) *Language & Symbolic Power.* Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Boyle, J. (1997). Imperialism and the English language in Hong Kong. in *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development.* 18, 169-181.

Braine, G. (ed.) (1999). *Non-Native Educators in English Language Teaching.* New York. Routledge.

Braine, G. (2010). *Nonnative Speaker English Teachers. Research, Pedagogy, and Professional Growth.* London and New York. Routledge.

Bratcher, Z. (2020) Implementing alternative modes of data collection to overcome Covid-19 challenges. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, UNECE Virtual Data Collection Workshop. Available at https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.58/2020/mtg4/DC2020_D16_USBLS_-_Bratcher_P.pdf accessed on 1 August 2024.

BRICS official website https://brics-russia2024.ru/en/ accessed on 12 September 2024.

Brincat, J.M. (2011) *Maltese and Other Languages: A Linguistic History of Malta.* Malta, Midsea Books.

British Council, Our History, British Council official website. Retrieved on 3 September 2024. https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/history

Brown, H. D. (2000) *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. *(4th ed.)* White Plains. Longman.

Brutt-Griffler, J., and Samimy, K. K. (2001). Transcending the nativeness paradigm. in *World Englishes.* 20, 99–106.

Burns, T. (2014) *An Investigation of Native and Non-Native Chinese Language Teachers and their*

Pedagogical Advantages. Unpublished Master dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Busuttil, L. and Farrugia, R. C. (2020). Teachers' response to the sudden shift to online learning during COVID-19 pandemic: implications for policy and practice in *Malta Review of Educational Research,* 14(2), 211-241.

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (2009). Intercultural competence in foreign languages: The intercultural speaker and the pedagogy of foreign language education in *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence.* 321-332.

Byram, M. (2012a) Intercultural competence. in Chapelle, C. A. (Ed.) *The Encyclopaedia of applied linguistics.* Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Byram, M. (2012b) Language awareness and (critical) cultural awareness – Relationships, comparisons and contrasts in *Language Awareness,* 21 (1–2), 5–13.

Byram, M. (2012c). Reflecting on teachers' 'culture' in foreign language education. In Newby, D. (Ed.), *Insights into the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages* (EPOSTL) 83–99. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Cai, Y. (1959) "Guowen zhij jianglai" 國文之將來 (The Future of National language) in Cai Yuanpei xuanji 蔡元培選集 (Selected Works of Cai Yuanpei), 103. Beijing, Zhonghua shuju.

Camilleri-Grima, A. (2013) Challenging code-switching in Malta in *Revue Française de Linguistique Appliquèe,* 2, 45-61.

Camilleri-Grima, A. and Caruana, S. (2016) Interaction and Approximation to the Target Language During Italian Lessons in Malta. in *Malta Review of Educational Research (MRER)* University of Malta. Vol 10, No.2, 253-275.

Camilleri-Grima, A. (2018) Globalization and Education: what future for the Maltese-speaking child? *i*n *Éducation et sociétés plurilingues*, (44), 31-43).

Canagarajah, S. (2004) *Reclaiming the Local in Language Policy and Practice.* (1st ed.) Routledge. New York.

Canagarajah, S. (2005). Reconstructing local knowledge, reconfiguring language studies. in Canagarajah, S. (Ed.), *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice* (3–24). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Carrillo, C. and Flores, M.A. (2020) COVID-19 and teacher education: a literature review of online teaching and learning practices in *European Journal of Teacher Education,* 43,4, 466-487.

Caruana, S. (2007). Language Use and Language Attitudes in Malta. In A. Huguet (ed.) *Multilingualism in European bilingual contexts: Language use and attitudes* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 135, 184 – 207.

Caruana, S., Cremona, G. and Vella, A., (2013). Language use, perception and attitudes amongst Maltese primary school children. In Caruana, S., Coposescu, L. and Scaglione, S. (Eds.), *Migration, Multilingualism and Schooling in Southern Europe* Newcastle/ Cambridge: Scholar Publishers. 304-342.

Cefai, C., Skryzpiec, G., and Galea, N. (2021) The resilience of Maltese children during COVID-19. Centre for Resilience and Socio-Emotional Health, University of Malta. Available at https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/70282/3/The%20resilience%20o

f%20Maltese%20children%20during%20COVID%2019%202021.pdf accessed on 09 September 2024.

Cenoz, J. and Jessner, U. (eds.) (2000) *English in Europe: The Acquisition of a Third Language* Multilingual Matters.

Chao, D.L. (2020) The Beginning of Chinese Professorship and Chinese Language Instruction in the United States: History and Implications in Shei, C., McLellan Ziklp, Chao, D.L. (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Chinese Language Teaching* Routledge, London and New York, 47-63.

Chao, D. (2007) Samuel Wells Williams (1812-1884): A pioneer student and a scholar of Chinese'. In *The Journal of Chinese Language Teachers Association* 42,1, 1-16.

Chapman, T., and Hobbel, N. (2010). Introduction: Conversations, Problems, and Action in Chapman, Th., and Hobbel, N. (Eds). *Social Justice Pedagogy across the Curriculum: The Practice of Freedom.* New York, NY: Routledge. 1-6.

Chen, W. (2018) 国内近十年 TCSL 研究现状与思考 (A review of the domestic studies on TCSL in the past decade). 云南师范大学学报（对外汉语与研究版）Journal of Yunnan Normal University – Teaching and Research on Chinese as a Foreign Language. 16,4, 19-31.

Chen, X. and Xiaoling, B. (2018) 面向东南亚的汉语教师培养及汉语教学实贱基地建设研究 (A study of Southeast Asia based Chinese teacher development and Chinese language teaching practice establishment.) 教育观察 (Survey of Education) 2018,9, 90-113.

Chen, Y. (2015) 基于建构主义理论的对外汉语学模式的改革与实践 （Reform and implementation of Chinese for foreigners teaching model based on constructivism. 科技风 (Technology Wind) 18,239-240.

Cheng, A. (2015) Teaching Chinese in the global context: Challenges and strategies in *European Review* 23,2, 297-308.

Chi, R. (1989) Observations on the Past, Present, and Future of Teaching Mandarin Chinese as a Foreign Language. in *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association.* 24,2, 109-22.

Chih-P'ing Chou, (ed.) (2013) *English Writings of Hu Shih: Literature and Society* (1) Heidelberg, Springer Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press 3–12.

Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. MIT Research Laboratory of Electronics Special Technical Report 11. Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT.

Chomsky, N. (1966). Linguistic theory. Reprinted in Allen, J. P. B. and Van Buren, P. (eds.), *Chomsky: Selected Readings.* London: Oxford University Press. 152–159.

Chomsky, N. (1981) *Lectures on Government and Binding.* Dordrecht, Foris.

Christiansen, T.W. (2022) The native speaker teacher. Theoretical considerations and practical implications. In *CercleS* 12,2, 495-512. De Gruyter Mouton.

Christopherson, P. (1988). *Native speakers and world English.* English Today, 4, 3, 15–18.

Clachar, A. (2000) Opposition and Accommodation: An examination of Turkish Teachers' attitudes toward Western approaches to the teaching of writing in *Research in the Teaching of English*, 35, 1, 66-97.

Clandinin, D.J. and Connelly, M.F. (1994) Personal experience methods. In Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds.) *The Handbook of Qualitative Research,* pp. 413-427. Thousand Oaks, CA. SAGE.

Codó, E. and Sunyol, A. (2019) 'A plus for our students': the construction of Mandarin Chinese as an

elite language in an international school in Barcelona. in *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development,* 40,5, 436-452.

Coffey, A. (1999) *The Ethnographic Self: Fieldwork and the Representation of Identity.* London. SAGE.

Constantinou, F. and Carroll, M. (2023) Teachers' experiences of teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic in *Research Report, Cambridge University Press and Assessment*. Available at https://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/Images/682359-teacherexperiences-of-teaching-during-the-covid-19-pandemic.pdf accessed on 09 September 2024.

Coltheart, M., et al. (2001) DRC: A Dual Route Cascaded Model of Visual Word Recognition and Reading Aloud in *Psychological Review,* 108,1, 204-256.

Constitution of the Republic of Malta (1974), Department of Information, Malta.

Confucius Institute official website. https://ci.cn/en/gywm/pp accessed on 3 September 2024.

Cook, V. (1988) *Chomsky's Universal Grammar*. London: Basil Blackwell.

Cook, V. (1995) *Multi-competence and the learning of many languages* in *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, *8*(2), 93–98.

Cook V. (1999) Going Beyond the Native Speaker in Language Teaching. In *TESOL Quarterly,* 33. 185-209.

Cook, V. (2001) Using the first language in the classroom. in *The Canadian Modern Language Review,* 57, 402-423.

Cook, V. and Bassetti, B. (2005) (eds.) *Second Language Writing Systems.* Multilingual Matters.

Cook, V. (2008). Multi-competence: black hole or wormhole for second language acquisition research?

in Han, Z. and Park, E.S. (eds.) *Second Language Acquisition* (Vol. 25) *Understanding Second Language Process*. Bristol, Multilingual Matters, 16–26.

Cook, V. (2016). Premises of multi-competence in Cook, V. and Wei, L. (eds.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Multi-Competence.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1–25.

Corder, S.P. (1967) The Significance of Learners' Errors in International Review of Applied Linguistics *in Language Teaching*, 5, 161-170.

Cortazzi, M. and Jin, L. (1996) Cultures of Learning: Language classroom in China in H. Coleman (ed.) *Society and the Language Classroom.* Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 169-206.

Cronin, M. (1996) *Translating Ireland. Translation, Languages, Culture.* Cork University Press. 229.

Crystal, D. (1997 1st ed., 2003 2nded.) *English as a Global Language.* Cambridge University Press. UK.

Csizer, K. and Dornyei, Z. (2005) Language Learners' Motivational Profiles and Their Motivated Learning Behavior. In *Language Learning,* 55, 4, 613-659.

Cucchiarini, C., Strik, H., and Boves, L. (2000) Quantitative assessment of second language learners fluency by means of automatic speech recognition technology. In *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America,* 107, 989–999.

Cui, S.R. (1994) Taking ACTFL guidelines as curriculum objectives: Some considerations in *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association.* 29(2): 47-69.

Cui, X. (2010) The development and prospect of teaching Chinese as a second language and international Chinese education in *Applied Linguistics* 2,2, 2-11.

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, Power, and Pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire.* Clevedon.

England. Multilingual Matters.

Curran, C. A. (1972) *Counseling-Learning: A Whole-Person Model for Education*. New York, Grune and Stratton.

Curtis, A. and Romney, M (2006). *Color, race and English language teaching: Shades of meaning.* Mahwah NJ. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Curtiss, S., Fromkin, V., Krashen, S., Rigler, D., Rigler, M. (1974) The development of language in Genie: a case of language acquisition beyond the "critical period" in *Brain Lang,* 1:81-107.

Curtiss, S., Fromkin, V., Krashen, S., Rigler, D., Rigler, M. (1974) The linguistic development of Genie in Language, 50,528-554.

Cutri, R.M., Mena, J. and Whiting, E.F. (2020) Faculty readiness for online crisis teaching: transitioning to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic in *European Journal of Teacher Education,* 43:4, 523-541.

Dahlin, B., and Watkins, D. (2000) The role of repetition in the processes of memorising and understanding: A comparison of the views of Western and Chinese secondary school students in Hong Kong in *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 70, 65-84.

Darvin, R. and Norton, B. (2015). *Identity and a Model of Investment in Applied Linguistics.* Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 35, 36-56.

Davies, A. (1991) *The native speaker in applied linguistics.* Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

Davies, A. (2003). *The native speaker: Myth and reality.* Clevedon, England, Multilingual Matters.

Deardorff, D.K. (Ed.) (2009) *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

De Bot, K. (2015). *A history of applied linguistics: from 1980 to the present.* London and New York. Routledge. New York, Plenum.

De Francis, J. (1950) *Nationalism and Language Reform in China.* Princeton, N.J. Princeton University Press.

De Francis, J. (1984) *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Dehaene-Lambertz, G. and Pena, M. (2001) Electrophysiological evidence for automatic phonetic processing *in neonates* in *Neuroreport,* 12:3155-3158.

Dehaene-Lambertz, G., Hertz-Pannier, L. and Dubois, J. (2006) Nature and nurture in language acquisition: anatomical and functional brain-imaging studies in infants in *Trends Neurosci, 29:367-373.*

Denzin, N.K. (1997) *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century.* Thousand Oaks. CA. SAGE.

De Oliveira, P. (2001) Language and ideology: An interview with George Lakoff. In Dirven, R. Hawkins, B. and Sandikcioglu, E. (eds.) *Language and ideology: Theoretical cognitive approaches* (1, 23–47). Amsterdam. John Benjamins.

De Saussure, F. (1974). *Course in General Linguistics.* The Philosophical Library. New York.

Gottdiener, M., Boklund-Lagopoulou, K. and Lagopoulos, A.P. (2003). *Semiotics.* London, Sage Publications.

Dewaele, J.M. (2018) Why the Dichotomy 'L1 versus LX User' is better than 'native versus non-native speaker' in *Applied Linguistics* 39, 2, 236-240.

Dewaele, J., Bak, T. H. and Ortega, L. (2022) Why the mythical "native speaker" has mud on its face in

Slavkov, N., Melo-Pfeifer, S. and Kerschhofer-Puhalo, N. (eds.) *The Changing Face of the "Native Speaker" Perspectives from Multilingualism and Globalization.* De Gruyter Mouton, 25-45.

Diamond, L. (1999) *Developing Democracy; Toward Consolidation.* The John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore and London.

Dörnyei, Z. (1994) Understanding L2 Motivation: On with the Challenge! In *Modern Language Journal,* 78,iv, 515-523.

Dörnyei, Z. and Otto, I. (1998) Motivation in Action: A Process Model of L2 Motivation. In *Working Papers in Applied Linguistics*, 4, 43-69.

Dörnyei, Z. (2006) Individual differences in second language acquisition. In AILA Review 19, 42-68.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009) The L2 Motivational Self System. In Dörnyei, Z. and Ushioda, E. (eds.), *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 9-42.

Duff, P. (2002) The discursive co-construction of knowledge, identity, and difference: an ethnography of communication in the high school mainstream. In *Applied Linguistics*, 23, 289-322.

Duff, P. (2012) Identity, agency, and second language acquisition. In Gass, S.M. and Mackey, A. (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of second language acquisition.* Abingdon. Routledge. 410-426.

Duff, P., and Polio, C. (1990) How much foreign language is there in the foreign language classroom? in *Modern Language Journal*, 74, 154-166.

Duff, P.A. and Talmy, S. (2011). Language socialization approaches to second language acquisition. In

Atkinson, D. (ed.) *Alternative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition.* Routledge. 95-116.

Dunbar, R. (1988) Culture-based learning problems of Asian students: Some implications for Australian distance educators, ASPESA Papers, 5, 10-21.

Duszak, A. (ed.) *Us and Others: Social Identities Across Languages, Discourses and Cultures,* John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Duvivier, Général Franciade Fleurus. (1841) Solution de la question de l'Algérie quoted in Horne, J. (2017) *"To Spread the French Language Is to Extend the Patrie" The Colonial Mission of the Alliance Française* in *French Historical Studies,* 40, 1, 100.

Dyke, M., Harding, A. and Liddon, S. (2008) How Can Online Observation Support the Assessment and Feedback, on Classroom Performance, to Trainee Teachers at a Distance and in Real Time? In *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 32, 1, 37–46.

Dzau, Y.F. (1990) Historical Background in Dzau, Y.F. (ed.) *English in China* 11-39. Hong Kong, CN:API.

Edge, J. (1988) Applying linguistics in English language teacher training for speakers of other languages. In *ELT Journal* 42,1, 9–13.

Ellis, C. (1996) Evocative autoethnography: Writing emotionally about our lives. In Lincoln, Y.S. and Tierney, W.G. (eds.) *Representation and the Text: Reframing the Narrative Voice.* Albany, NY, State of New York Press. 115-142.

Ellingson, L.L. (1998) Then you know how I feel: Empathy, identification, and reflexivity in fieldwork. In *Qualitative Inquiry,* 4, 4, 492-514.

Elyas, T. and Alghofaili, N.M. (2017) Decoding the Myths of the Native and Non-Native English

Speakers Teachers (NESTs & NNESTs) on Saudi EFL Tertiary Students. In *English Language Teaching,* 10, 6, 1-11.

Fairclough, N., and Wodak, R. (1997) *Critical Discourse Analysis* in Van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction* (Vol. 2, pp. 258-284). London: Sage.

Fairclough, N., Graham, P., Lemke, J. and Wodak, R. (2004) *Critical Discourse Studies* Vol 1, 1-7. Taylor and Francis Ltd.

Fang, F. and Baker, W. (2017) 'A more inclusive mind towards the world': English language teaching and study abroad in China from intercultural citizenship and English as a lingua franca perspectives. In *Language Teaching Research*, 1-17.

Figueiredo, S., Martins, M.A. and Silva, C. (2008) Second language education context and home language effect: language dissimilarities and variation in immigrant students' outcomes. In *International Journal of Multilingualism,* 13, 2, 1-29.

Fine, M. (1994) Working the hyphens: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds) *The Handbook of Qualitative Research,* London. SAGE. pp. 70-82.

Fishman, J. (1972). *The sociology of language: An interdisciplinary social science approach to language in society.* Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House.

Fishman, J. (1999). *Handbook of Language and ethnic identity.* Oxford. Oxford University Press.

Flewitt, R. (2005) Conducting research with young children: some ethical considerations. In *Early Child Development and Care,* 175, 6, 553-565.

Foucault, M. (1979) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Vintage Books, New York.

Freed, B. F. (2000) Is fluency, like beauty, in the eyes (and ears) of the beholder? In Riggenbach, H.

(Ed.), *Perspectives on fluency* (243–265). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Friedmann, N. and Haddad-Hanna, M. (2014) The comprehension on sentences derived by syntactic movement in Palestinian Arabic-speaking children with hearing impairment in *Applied Psycholinguist,* 25: 473-513.

Frost, R. (1916) *The Road Not Taken* in *The Mountain Interval.*

Gao, Y.H., Li, Y.X., and Li, W.N. (2002) EFL learning and self-identity construction: Three cases of Chinese college English majors. In *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching.* 12, 95-119.

García, O. (2009) Education, multilingualism and translanguaging in the 21st century in Mohanty, A., Panda, M., Phillipson, R. and Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (eds). *Multilingual Education for Social Justice: Globalising the local*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 128-145.

Garcia, O. (2010). Languaging and ethnifying. In Fishman, J.A. and Garcia, O. (eds.) *Handbook of language and ethnicity: disciplinary and regional perspectives.* Oxford. Oxford University Press.

Garcia, O. (2012). Ethnic identity and language policy. In Spolsky, B. (ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of language policy.* Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. 79-99.

Garcia, O and Li Wei. (2014). *Translanguaging.* Hampshire. Palgrave Macmillan.

Gardner, R. and Lambert, W. (1972). *Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning.* Rowley, Massachusetts, Newbury House.

Gardner, R.C. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The role of attitudes and motivation.* London: Edward Arnold.

Gardner, R. C. (2001). Integrative motivation and second language acquisition. In Dörnyei, Z. and

Schmidt, R. (Eds.), Motivation and Second Language Acquisition (pp. 1-19). Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press.

Gardner, R. C. (2001). Language learning motivation: The student, the teacher, and the researcher. In *Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education*, 6, 1–18.

Gardner, R. C. (2000). Correlation, causation, motivation and second language acquisition. In *Canadian Psychology*, 41, 1-24.

Gardner, R.C. (2007). Motivation and Second Language Acquisition. In *Porta Linguarum* 8, 9-20.

Gattegno, C. (1972) *Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools: The Silent Way.* (2nd ed.). New York Educational Solutions.

Gauci, H. and Camilleri-Grima, A. (2012) Code-switching as a tool in teaching Italian in Malta. in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 1-17.

Ginther, A., Dimova, S. and Yang, R. (2010). Conceptual and empirical relationships between temporal measures of fluency and oral English proficiency with implications for automated scoring in *Language Testing,* 27, 379–399.

Giuffrè, S. (2022) *L-Analetti: Konfuċju.* SKS Publishers, Malta.

Giuffrè, S. (2022) Chinese Characters: Stories, Beliefs and Unity across Centuries in Tsokalidou, R., Sen, C. and Qun, Z. (eds.) *Introduction to the World of the Chinese Language.* Zygos, A.U.Th., Confucius Institute A.U.Th: Zhongwen Series.

Goethe Institut official website.

https://www.goethe.de/ins/de/en/kur.html?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw59q2BhBOEiwAKc0ijf--a0uUmAZZw2yQL3jsq7FW3i2VhUa3lGTZ6Mr054TesCT52ltYwxoCYEcQAvD_BwE accessed on 03 September 2024.

Gong, et.al (2018) Research on teaching Chinese as a second or foreign language in and outside Mainland China: A bibliometric analysis in *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher* 27, 4, 277-289.

González, C., Ponce, D., and Fernández, V. (2023). Teachers' experiences of teaching online during COVID-19: implications for postpandemic professional development. in *Educ. Technol. Res. Dev.* 71, 55–78.

Gorski, P.C. and Seema, G.P. (2018) *Diversity and Social Justice Education (2nd ed.)* Routledge. Taylor and Francis.

Grádaigh, S.O., Connolly, C., Mac Mahon, B., Agnew, A. and Poole, W. (2021) An investigation of emergency virtual observation (EVO) in initial teacher education, in Australia and Ireland during the COVID-19 pandemic, in *Irish Educational Studies,* 40,2, 303-310.

Grammont, M. (1902) Observations sur le langage des enfants. in Barbelent, D., Dottin, G., Gauthiot, R., Grammont, M., Laronde, A., Niedermann, M. and Vendreyes, J. (Eds.), *Mélanges linguistiques.* Offerts à M. Antoine Meillet par ses élèves. Paris, Klincksieck, 61-82.

Grenfell, M. (ed.). 2011. *Bourdieu, Language and Linguistics.* London: Continuum.

Grosjean, F. (1982) *Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism.* Harvard University Press. USA.

Grosjean, F. (1989) Neurolinguists, beware! The bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person. in *Brain and Language,* 36, 15-30.

Grosjean, F. (2010). *Bilingual: Life and Reality*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press.

Gumperz, J. (1982). (ed.) *Language and social identity*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Guo, Y. (2004) *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary China.* Routledge. London and New York.

Guo, Y. and Beckett, G,H. (2007) The Hegemony of English as a Global Language: Reclaiming Local Knowledge and Culture in China in ERIC, 40, 1-2, 117-132.

Guo, X. and Liu, C. (2016). Exploration of Chinese character-word dual-dynamic teaching model based on the postmethod theory in *Academic Forum* 304,177-180.

Guoyu Yuebao 國語月報 (National Language Monthly (1927). "Quanguo Guoyu Jiaoyu Cujin Hui Mujuan Qi" 全國國語教育促進會募捐啟 A Call for Donations for the Committee for the Promotion of National Language Education.

Hackert, S. (2012) *The Emergence of the English Native Speaker. A Chapter in nineteenth-century linguistic thought.* Boston, Berlin, De Gruyter M.

Haleem, A., Javaid, M., and Vaishya, R. (2020) Effects of COVID-19 pandemic in daily life. in *Curr. Med. Res. Pract. 10, 78–79*

Hall, S. (1996) The question of cultural identity. In Hall, S., Held, D. and McGrew, T. (Eds.) *Modernity and its futures* (273-325). Cambridge, England. Polity Press.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1970) Language Structure and Language Function in Lyons, J. (ed.) *New Horizons in Linguistics.* Harmondsworth. Penguin. 140-465.

Hammarberg, B. (2014) Problems in Defining the Concepts of L1, L2 and L3 in Otwinowska, A. and De Angelis, G. (eds.) *Teaching and Learning in Multilingual Contexts: Sociolinguistic and Educational Perspectives.* Multilingual Matters.

Han, K. and Scull, W. (2010). Confucian culture in the mainstream classroom: A case study of an Asian American student *in The International Journal of Learning,* 17(1), 601-616.

Harmer, J. (2012). *Essential teacher knowledge*. London: Pearson Longman.

Harris, R. (2011) Ethnicity. In Simpson, J. (ed.) *The Routledge handbook of applied linguistics.* Abingdon. Routledge, 344-458.

He, Y. (2021) Analysis on the Comparison Between Chinese and Western Classroom Teaching in *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, Vol. 554, 63-66.

He, A.E. (2002*)* Learning English in different linguistic and socio-cultural contexts. In *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics* 7,2, 107-121.

He, A. (2003) Linguistic Anthropology and language socialization. In Wortham, S. and Rymes, B. (eds.) *Linguistic Anthropology of Education.* Westport. CT Praeger. 93-119.

Held, D. et al. (1999) *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture. Cambridge.* Polity Press.

Heller, M. (2007) Bilingualism as ideology and practice. In Heller, M. (ed.) *Bilingualism: a social approach.* London. Palgrave Macmillan, 1-22.

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. and Minkov, M. (2010*) Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind: Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival*. (2nd Ed.) McGraw-Hill, London.

Holliday, A. (2006) *Native-speakerism.* ELT, 60(4). 385–387.

Holliday, A. and Aboshiha, P.A. (2009) The denial of ideology in perceptions of 'nonnative speaker' teachers in *TESOL Quarterly* 43,4, 669–689.

Holliday, A. (2015) Native-speakerism: Taking the Concept Forward and Achieving Cultural Belief. In Swan, A., Aboshiha, P., Holliday, A. (eds) *(En)Countering Native-speakerism.* Palgrave Advances in Language and Linguistics. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Holliday, A. (2018) *Native-Speakerism* in *The TESOL Encyclopaedia of English Language Teaching.* New York, Wiley.

Holly, M.L. (1993) Educational research and professional development: On minds that watch themselves. In Burgess, R.G. (ed.) *Educational Research and Evaluation: for Policy and Practice?* London. The Falmer Press, 157-179.

Horne, J. (2017) "To Spread the French Language Is to Extend the Patrie" The Colonial Mission of the Alliance Française in *French Historical Studies,* 40 (1) 95-127.

Horwitz, E.K. (1985) Using student beliefs about language learning and teaching in the foreign language methods course. in *Foreign Language Annals,* 18, 4, 333-40.

Horwitz, E.K. (1987) Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In Wenden, A. and Rubin, J. Learner strategies in language learning. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Horwitz, E.K. (1988) The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students in Modern Language Journal, 72, 3, 283-294.

Horwitz, E.K. (1999). Cultural and situational influences on foreign language learners' beliefs about language learning: A review of BALLI studies in *System,* 27, 4, 557-576.

Houghton, S. A. (2012). *Intercultural dialogue in practice: Managing value judgment through foreign language education.* Bristol, Buffalo, Multilingual Matters.

Houghton, S. A. and Yamada, E. (2012). *Developing criticality in practice through foreign language*

education. Oxford.

Houghton, S. A., Furumura, Y., Lebed'ko, M. G., and Li, S. (Eds.). (2013). *Critical cultural awareness: Managing stereotypes through intercultural (language) education.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Houghton, S.A. and Rivers, D.J. (2013). *Native-speakerism in Japan: Intergroup dynamics in foreign language education.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Hu, S. (1917) "Wenxue Gailiang Chuyi" 文學改良芻議 [A Modest Proposal for the Reform of Literature]. Xin Qingnian 新青年 2,5, 6–36.

Hu, G.W. (2002) English Language Teaching in the People's Republic of China in Silver, R.E., Hu, G.W., Iino, M. (eds.) *English Language Education in China, Japan, Singapore.* National Institute of Education. Singapore 1-77.

Huajun, Z. and Garrison, J. (2022) (eds.) *John Dewey and Chinese Education: A Centennial Reflection.* BRILL, Leiden and Boston.

Hui, L. (2005) Chinese cultural schema of Education: Implications for communication between Chinese students and Australian educators in *Issues in Educational Research*, 15, 1, 17-36.

Hymes, D. (1972) Models of the interaction of language and social life. In Gumperz, J. and Hymes, D. (eds.) *Directions in Sociolinguistics: the ethnography of communication.* London. Blackwell. 35-71.

Ikeda, T. (2005) The interactional achievement of being "native" and "nonnative" speakers: An analysis of multiparty interactions between Japanese and international students. In *CLIC Crossroads of Language,* 6,60-79.

Inbar-Lourie, O. (1999) *The native speaker construct: Investigation by perceptions.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The School of Education, Tel Aviv University, Israel.

Instituto Camões official website. https://www.instituto-camoes.pt/ retrieved on 3 September 2024.

Instituto Cervantes official website. https://cervantes.org/es retrieved on 3 September 2024.

Jager, G. (2001) Topic-Comment Structure and the Contrast Between Stage Level and Individual Level Predicates. in *Journal of Semantics.* 18:2, 83-126. Oxford University Press.

Jarvela, S. (2003) Shifting research on motivation and cognition to an integrated approach on learning and motivation in context, in S. Volet and S. Jarvela (eds.), *Motivation in Learning Context: Theoretical Advances and Methodological Implications*. Amsterdam: Pergamon, 3-14.

Jenkins, J. (2007). *English as a lingua franca: Attitude and identity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2012) English as a Lingua Franca from the classroom to the classroom in *ELT Journal.* Volume 66/4 Special issue October 2012; 486 Oxford University Press.

Jenkins, J. (2015). Repositioning English and multilingualism in English as a Lingua Franca. In *Englishes in Practice,* 2, 49–85.

Jessner, U., Hofer, B. and Malzer-Papp, E. (2022) The multilingual and multicompetent native speaker in Slavkov, N., Melo-Pfeifer, S. and Kerschhofer-Puhalo, N. (eds.) *The Changing Face of the "Native Speaker" Perspectives from Multilingualism and Globalization.* De Gruyter Mouton, 47-70.

Jones, A. (2006) *Dictionary of Globalization.* Polity.

Joseph, J.E. (2016) Historical perspectives on language and identity. In Preece, S. (ed.) (2016).

The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity. Routledge. New York. 19-33.

Juriševič, M. (2006) Motivation to Learn and Individual Differences among Students. Ljubljana University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education.

Kachru, B. (1985) Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk and H. Widowson (Eds.), *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 11-36.

Kamhi-Stein, L.D. (2000). *Looking to the Future of TESOL Teacher Education: Web-Based Bulletin Board Discussions in a Methods Course* 34:3, 423-455.

Kane, D. (2006) *The Chinese Language: Its History and Current Usage.* Tuttle. Tokyo, Rutland Vermont, Singapore.

Kanno, Y. and Norton, B. (2003). Imagined communities and educational possibilities: Introduction. In *Journal of Language, Identity and Education.* 2,4, 241-249.

Kaplan, R.B. (ed.) (2002) *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics.* Oxford University Press. New York.

Kaplan, R. B. (1966) *Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education* in *Language Learning,* 16, 1-20.

Kaske, E. (2006) Cultural Identity, Education, and Language Politics in China and Japan, 1870-1920 in Hoyt, D.L. and Oslund, K (eds.) *The Study of Language and the Politics of Community in Global Context.* Lexington Books.

Kayman, M.A. (2004) *The State of English as a Global Language: Communicating Culture* in *Textual Practice* 18,1, 1-22.

Kember, D. and Gow, L. (1991) A challenge to the anecdotal stereotype of the Asian student in *Studies in Higher Education,* 16,2, 117-128

Kim, J. and Duff, P.A. (2012) The Language Socialization and Identity Negotiations of Generation 1.5 Korean – Canadian University Students. In *TESL Canada Journal,* 29, 6, 81-102.

Kim, H.K. (2005) Cultural influence on creativity: The relationship between creativity and Confucianism. In *Roeper Review*, 27, 186.

Kim, H.K. (2005) Learning from each other: Creativity in East Asian and American education. In *Creativity Research Journal*, 17(4), 337-347.

Kramsch, C. (1993) *Context and Culture in Language Teaching.* Oxford University Press.

Kramsch, C. (1998) *Language and culture.* Oxford University Press. UK.

Kramsch, C. (2003) Teaching language along the cultural Faultline in Lange, D. L. and Paige, R.M. (Eds.) *Culture as the core: perspectives son culture in second language learning* Greenwich, Connecticut Information age publishing.

Krashen, S. (1982) *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford. Pergamon.

Kubota, R. (2004) Critical multiculturalism and second language education. In Norton, B. and Toohey, K. (Eds.), *Critical pedagogies and language learning* New York, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 30-52.

Kubota, R. and Lin, A. (2006) Race and TESOL: Introduction to Concepts and Theories in *TESOL Quarterly*, 40, 3, 471-494.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (1994) The postmethod condition: (E)merging strategies for second/foreign

language teaching. In *TESOL Quarterly* 28,1, 27-48.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006) *Understanding Language Teaching: From Method to Postmethod.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers. New Jersey.

Kurhila, S. (2000) Correction in talk between native and non-native speaker. In *Journal of Pragmatics.* 33, 1083-1110.

L-Università ta' Malta course information Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Cultures (Chinese) https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/UBAHEACFT-2022-3-O Accessed on 14 July 2023.

L-Università ta' Malta course programme Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Cultures (Chinese) https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/programme/UBAHEACFT-2022-3-O accessed on 14 July 2023.

L-Università ta' Malta combinations of subjects: https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/keyword/Undergraduate/Chinese accessed on 14 July 2023.

L-Università ta' Malta course programme Diploma in Chinese https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/programme/UDCHNPTE-2021-2-O accessed on 14 July 2023.

L-Università ta' Malta course programme Master course programme https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/programme/PMAEACPER2-2022-3-O accessed on 14 July 2023.

L-Università ta' Malta course programme Traditional Chinese Medicine programme https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/programme/PMTCMPDT2-2022-3-O accessed on 14 July 2023.

Lambert, W. (1967) *A social psychology of bilingualism.* in *Journal of Social Issues*, 23, 91-109.

Laoire, M. (2010) Motivation, language identity, and the L2 Self. in *Language, Culture and Curriculum,* 23, 1, 90-93.

Lasagabaster, D. and Sierra, J.M. (2002*)* University students' perceptions of native versus non-native speaker teachers. in *Language Awareness,* 11, 132- 142.

Lau, D.C., (trans.) (1979). *Confucius: The Analects* Harmondsworth, Middlesex, English: Penguin Books.

Lave J. and Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation.* Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

Lazzaro-Salazar (2013) Diving into the depths of identity construction and motivation of a foreign language learner. in *Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics,* 1, 1, 6-23.

Lennartsson, F. (2008) S*tudents' motivation and attitudes towards learning a second language: British and Swedish students' points of view.* (Bachelor's degree thesis) Växjö University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, School of Humanities.

Lenneberg, E.H. (1967) *Biological Foundations of Language.* Wiley. New York.

Levinson, S. C. (2003) Language and mind: Let's get the issues straight! In Gentner, D. and Goldin-Meadow, S. (Eds.), *Language in mind: Advances in the study of language and thought*, 25–46, Boston Review.

Li, L. M. (2019) *Language Management and its Impact: The Policies and Practices of Confucius Institutes.* Routledge. New York and London.

Li, Z. (2016) CFL Teacher Identity Construction: A Core Element of Future Innovative Practice in Moloney, R. and Xu, H.L. (eds) *Exploring Innovative Pedagogy in the Teaching and Learning of Chinese as a Foreign Language.* Springer.

Li, R. and Wu, M. (2005) 略论对外汉语词汇教学的两个原则 (On the two principles of teaching vocabulary in TCSL) 语言教学与研究 (Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies) 2, 41-47.

Liang, K. (2002) *English as a second language (ESL) students' attitude towards non-native English-speaking teachers' accentedness.* Unpublished M.A. thesis. California State University, Los Angeles, CA.

Liang, S. (2015) *Language Attitudes and Identities in Multilingual China; A Linguistic Ethnography.* Springer.

Liddicoat, A. J., Papademetre, L., Scarino, A., and Kohler, M. (2003) *Intercultural Language Learning.* Canberra, DEST.

Liebold, J. and Chen, Y. (eds.) (2014) *Introduction Minority Education in China*; *Balancing Unity and Diversity in an Era of Critical Pluralism.* Hong Kong University Press.

Lightbown, P. and Spada, N. (1999) *How Languages are Learned.* (2nd ed.) New York. Oxford University Press.

Lin, C.Y.K. (2020) *A Historical and Bilingual Perspective on the Concept of Vernacular in Remembering May Fourth*. *The Movement and its Centennial Legacy.* Brill.

Lin, A., Wang, W., Akamatsu, N., Riazi, M. (2005) Transnational TESOL professionals and teaching English for globalized communication (TEGCOM) in Canagarajah, A.S. (Ed.) *Reclaiming the locals in language policy and practice* New Jersey. Routledge. 197-222.

Lincoln, Y. S. and Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, California, Sage.

Lincoln, Y. S. and Guba, E. G. (1986) But is it rigorous? Trustworthiness and authenticity in naturalistic evaluation. in *New directions for program evaluation,* 1986, 30, 73-84.

Liu, J. (1999) *Non-native-English-speaking professionals in TESOL.* In *TESOL Quarterly*, 33, 85-102.

Liu, S. (2015) Reflections on Communicative Language teaching and its Application in China in *Theory and Practise in Language Studies* 5(5):1047-1052.

Liu, X. (2010) *New Practical Chinese Reader*. (2nd ed.) Beijing Language and Culture University Press. Beijing.

Liu, GQ., and Lo Bianco, J. (2007) Teaching Chinese, Teaching in Chinese, and Teaching the Chinese. in *Language Policy* 6: 95–117.

Llurda, E. and Huguet, A. (2003) Self-awareness in NNS EFL primary and secondary school teachers. in *Language Awareness,* 12, 3-4, 220-233.

Llurda, E. (2004) Non-native-speaker teachers and English as an International Language. in *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 14, 3, 314-323.

Llurda E. (ed.) (2005) *Non-Native Language Teachers. Perceptions, Challenges and Contributions to the Profession.* New York. Springer.

Lo Bianco, J. (2007) Emergent China and Chinese: Language Planning Categories. in *Language Policy* 6,3.

Louw, S., Todd, R. W. and Jimarkon, P. (2011). Active listening in qualitative research interviews. In Proceedings of the International Conference: Research in Applied Linguistics.

Lozanov, G. (1978) *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy.* New York. Gordon and Breach.

Lü, B. (2005) 语言教育与对外汉语教学 (Language Education and Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language). Beijing. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Lu, R. (2017) Problematising identity work in CFL teaching materials. In Lu, Y. (ed.) *Teaching and Learning Chinese in Higher Education; theoretical and practical issues.* Routledge.

Lu, J. (1984) 中介语理论与外国人学习汉语的语言偏误分析 (Interlanguage theory and the error analysis of foreigners learning Chinese phonetics) 语言教学与研究 (Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies) 3, 44-56.

Lu, J. (1992) 偏误分析与对外汉语教学 (Error analysis and teaching Chinese as a foreign language) 语言文字应用 (Applied Linguistics) 1, 69-73.

Lu, Y. (ed.) (2017) *Teaching and Learning Chinese in Higher Education; theoretical and practical issues.* Routledge.

Lytra, V. (2007) *Play Frames and Social Identities: Contact Encounters in a Greek Primary School in Athens.* Amsterdam. Benjamins.

Lytra, V. (2016) Language and Ethnic Identity. In Preece, S. (ed.) *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity.* Routledge. New York, 131-145.

MacDonald, B. and Walker, R. (1975) Case study and the social philosophy of educational research.

In *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 5, 1, 2-12.

Mahboob, A. (2004) Native or non-native: What do the students think? In Kamhi-Stein, L. (Ed.) *Learning and Teaching from Experience: Perspectives on Nonnative English-speaking Professionals* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 121-147.

Mahboob, A. (ed.) 2010 *The NNEST Lens: Non-Native English Speakers in TESOL.* Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Newcastle upon Tyne.

Makoni, S. and Pennycook, A. (eds.) (2007) *Disinventing and Reconstituting Languages.* Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Maley, A. (1990) Xanadu – a miracle of rare device: The teaching of English in China. in Larson, E. Judd and Messerschmitt, D. (eds), *English in China*, (95-105). Hong Kong, API Press.

Mansoor, S. (1993) *Punjabi, Urdu, English in Pakistan: A sociolinguistic study.* Lahore, Pakistan Vanguard Books.

Margaroni, M. and Magos, K. (2020) L2 Teaching in the post-communicative era: Developing intercultural consciousness, critical awareness and consistent attitudes for social inclusion. In *Global Education Review,* 7,4, 1-8.

Marsh, B., and Mitchell, N. (2014) The Role of Video in Teacher Professional Development. in *Teacher Development* 18, 3, 403–417.

Masgoret, A. M. and Gardner, R. C. (2003) Attitudes, motivation, and second language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and associates. In *Language Learning,* 53, 167-210.

Masuda, T. and Nisbett, R. (2001) Attending holistically vs. analytically: Comparing the context

sensitivity of Japanese and Americans. in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 81, 922-934.

Matalene, C. (1985) Contrastive Rhetoric: An American Writing Teacher in China. in *College English* 47, 8, 789-808.

Matthews, S. (2017) Colonised minds? Post-development theory and the desirability of development in Africa in *Third World Quarterly,* 38, 12, 2650-2663.

McKay, S.L. (2000) Teaching English as an international language: Implications for cultural materials in the classroom. in *TESOL Journal*, Winter, 7-1 1.

Medgyes, P. (1992) Native or non-native: Who's worth more? in *ELT Journal*, 46,4, Oxford University Press.

Medgyes, P. (1994) *The non-native teacher.* London. Macmillan.

Medgyes, P. (1999) *The Non-native Teacher*. (Revised 2nd ed.) Ismaning, Germany. Hueber Verlag.

Mehler, J., Jusczyk, P., Lambertz, G., Halsted, N. Bertoncini, J., Amieltison, C. (1988) A Precursor of Language Acquisition in Young Infants in *Cognition* 29: 143-178.

Meissner, W. (2006) China's Search for Cultural and National Identity from the Nineteenth Century to the Present in *China Perspectives* 68, 41-54.

Merino, IG. (1997) Native English Speaking Teachers Versus Non-Native English Speaking Teachers. in *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*. Universidad de Alicante. Departamento de Filología Inglesa.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1994) *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook.* Thousand Oaks. CA. Sage.

Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (MFED): Directorate for Learning and

Assessment Programmes (DLAP) syllabi https://curriculum.gov.mt/en/new_syllabi/Pages/year_07_08_new_syllabi.aspx accessed on 14 July 2023

Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (MFED): The Learning Outcomes Framework (Chinese) accessed on 14 July 2023 https://www.schoolslearningoutcomes.edu.mt/en/subjects/chinese

Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation (MFED):): Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes (DLAP) past exam papers (Chinese) accessed on 14 July 2023 https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1RpwlRcjhl7EAM-DeddFdIAHdvFAITeW8

Miyamoto, Y. Nisbett, R. E. and Masuda, T. (2006) Culture and the Physical Environment: Holistic versus analytic perceptual affordances in *Psychological Science*, 17,2, 113-119.

Modiano, M. (2005) Cultural Studies, foreign language teaching and learning practices, and the NNS practitioner in Llurda E. (ed.) (2005) *Non-Native Language Teachers. Perceptions, Challenges and Contributions to the Profession.* New York. Springer 25-44.

Moloney, R. (2008) You just want to be like that: Teacher modelling and intercultural competence in young language learners. in *Babel, Journal of Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers' Association,* 43, 1, 14–19.

Moloney, R. (2013) Providing a bridge to intercultural pedagogy for native speaker teachers of Chinese in Australia. in *Journal of Language Culture and Curriculum,* 26,3, 213-228.

Moloney, R. and Xu, H.L. (eds.) (2016) *Exploring Innovative Pedagogy in the Teaching and Learning of Chinese as a Foreign Language.* Springer.

Moloney, R. and Xu, H.L. (2018) *Teaching and Learning Chinese in Schools; Case Studies in Quality Language Education.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Moussu, L. (2006). *Native and nonnative English-speaking English as a second language teachers: Student attitudes, teacher self-perceptions, and intensive English administration beliefs and practices.* Purdue University. Purdue.

Moussu, L. and Llurda, E. (2008). *Non-Native English-speaking English language teachers: History and Research.* Language Teaching. Cambridge University Press.

Muysken, P. (2016) *Creole Languages.* Linguistics Oxford Research Encyclopedias. Available at: *https://oxfordre.com/linguistics/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.001.0001/acrefore-9780199384655-e-68* accessed on 10.08.2024

Myers-Scotton, C. (2006). *Multiple Voices. An Introduction to Bilingualism.* Malden, Massachusetts, Blackwell.

Nandy, A. (1997) Colonization of the Mind In *The Post-Development Reader,* Rahnema, M. and Bawtree, V. (eds.) 168-178. London and New Jersey, Zed Books.

National Statistics Office (NSO) Malta website. https://metadata.nso.gov.mt/default.aspx accessed on 10 January 2024.

Nayar, P. B. (2002) Ideological binarism in the identities of native and non-native English speakers. in Duszac, A. (ed.) *Us and Others: Social Identities Across Languages, Discourse and Cultures* John Benjamins, Amsterdam, 463–480.

Nazzi, T. Bertoncini, J. and Mahler, J. (1998) Language Discrimination by newborns: toward an understanding of the role of rhythm in *Exp Psychol Hum Percept Perform,* 24,756.

Nazzi, T. and Ramus, F. (2003) Perception and Acquisition of linguistic rhythm by infants in *Speech Commun*, 41,233-243.

Neumann, I.B. (1996) Self and Other in International Relations. In *European Journal of International Relations,* 2,2, 139-174.

Nimabuchi, (2008) The Construction of Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker Identities in English Conversation. In *Hawaii Pacific University TESOL Working Paper Series* 6,1, 11-22.

Nisbett, R. E. (2003). *The geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently ... and why.* Free Press.

Nisbett, R.E., Peng, K., Choi, I. and Norenzayan, A. (2001) Culture and systems of thought: Holistic versus analytic cognition. In *Psychological Review*, 108, 291–310.

Norton, B. (1997) Language, identity, and the ownership of English. In *TESOL Quarterly*, 31,3, 409-429.

Norton, B. (2000) *Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity and educational change.* Harlow. England. Longman.

Norton, B., and Toohey, K. (2002) Identity and language learning. In Kaplan, R.B. (Ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Linguistics*. Oxford. Oxford University Press, 115-123.

Norton, B. and Gao, Y. (2008). Identity, investment, and Chinese learners of English. In *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication,* 18,1, 109-120.

Norton, B. (2013) *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation (2nd ed.).* Bristol, England. Multilingual Matters.

Norton, B. (2016) Identity and Language Learning: Back to the Future. In *TESOL Quarterly*, 50,2, 475-479.

Nunan, D. (1987) Communicative language teaching: Making it work. In *ELT Journal*, 41, 136–145.

Ochs, E. and Schieffelin, B.B. (2011) The Theory of Language Socialization. In Duranti, A., Ochs, E. and Schieffelin, B.B. (eds.) (2011) *The Handbook of Language Socialization.* Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Oglesby, C. (1969) *Containment and Change.* Macmillan.

Ortega, L. (2009). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition.* London, Hodder Education.

Ortega, L. (2016) Multi-competence in second language acquisition: inroads into the mainstream? in *The Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Multi-Competence* Cook, V. and Wei, L. (eds.) Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 50–76.

Orton, J. and Cui, X. (2016) Principles and Innovation Design: CLIL Units in Chinese in Moloney and Xu (2016) (eds.) *Exploring Innovative Pedagogy in the Teaching and Learning of Chinese as a Foreign Language,* Multilingual Education. Springer, Singapore.

Orton, J. (2008). *Chinese language education in Australian school*. Melbourne University of Melbourne.

Orton, J. (2016). *Building Chinese language capacity in Australia.* Australia China Relations Institute (ACRI): Sydney.

Pae, H.K. (2020) The East and the West. In: Script Effects as the Hidden Drive of the Mind, Cognition, and Culture. In *Literacy Studies,* vol 21. Springer, Cham.

Paikeday, T.M. (1985). *The native speaker is dead!* Toronto: Paikeday Publishing Inc.

Paula, J. R. (2020) Lockdowns due to COVID-19 threaten PhD students' and early-career researchers' careers. In *Nature Ecology and Evolution,* 4,8, 999.

Peirce, B. N. (1995) Social Identity, Investment, and Language Learning. in *TESOL Quarterly.* 29,1, 9-31.

Penfield, W. and Roberts, L. (1959) *Speech and Braine Mechanisms.* Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Peshkin, A. (1988) In search of subjectivity – one's own. In *Educational Researcher,* 17,7, 17-22.

Phillipson, R. (1992) *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pintrich, P. R. and Schrauben, B. (1992) Student's motivational beliefs and their cognitive engagement in classroom academic tasks in Schunk, D.H. and Meece, J.L. (eds.) *Student Perceptions in the Classroom.* Hillsdale, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 149-184.

Pintrich, P. R. and Schunk, D. H. (1996) *Motivation in Education: Theory, Research, and Applications.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.

Pratt, M.L. (1991) Arts of the Contact Zone. in *Profession*, 33-40.

Preece, S. (ed.) (2016) *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity.* Routledge. New York.

Prodromou, L. (1992) What culture? Which culture? Cross-cultural factors in language learning in *ELT Journal* 46,1, 39-50.

Querleu, D., Renard, X., Versyp, F., Paris-Delrue, L. and Crèpin, G. (1988) Foetal hearing in *Eur J Obst Gynecol Reprod Biol,* 28:191-212.

Rajagopalan, K. (1999) Of EFL teachers, conscience, and cowardice. In *ELT Journal* 53, 3, 200-206.

Rajagopalan, K. (2004) The Concept of 'World English' and its implications for ELT. In *ELT Journal* 58, 2, 111-117.

Ramcharan, P. and Cutcliffe, J. (2001) Judging the ethics of qualitative research: Considering the "ethics as process" model. In *Social Care in the Community*, 9,6, 358-366.

Rampton, M. B. H. (1990) Displacing the 'native speaker': Expertise, affiliation and inheritance. In *ELT Journal*, 44, 2, 97- 101.

Rattanawan, P. and Pakdee, S. (2024) Perspectives of teachers and students on the impact of online classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic. In *Frontiers in Education 9:1335001. 10.3389/feduc.2024.1335001*

Reves, T. and Medgyes, P. (1994) The non-native English speaking EFL/ESL teacher's self-image: an international survey. In *System*, 33,2, 353-367.

Ricci, M. (1953) *China in the Sixteenth Century: The Journals of Matthew Ricci: 1583-1610.* Translated by Louis J. Gallagher, S.J. New York, Random House.

Richardson, L. (1997) *Fields of Play (Constructing an Academic Life).* New Brunswick, NJ. Rutgers University Press.

Richards, M. (2009) Interviews. In Heigham, J. and Croker, R. (Eds.), *Qualitative research in applied linguistics: A practical introduction,* Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 182-199.

Richards, J., and Rodgers, T. (1982) Method: Approach, design, procedure in *TESOL Quarterly,* 16, 153–168.

Richards, J. C., and Rodgers, T. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching.* Cambridge, England, Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J.C. and Rogers, T.S. (2001) (2nd ed.) *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching.* Cambridge University Press.

Riggenbach, H. (1991) Toward an understanding of fluency: A microanalysis of nonnative speaker

conversations. in *Discourse Processes,* 14, 423–441.

Rohsenow, J. S. (2004). Fifty years of script and written language reform in the P.R.C.: The genesis of the language law of 2001. In Zhou, M. and Sun, H.K. (eds.). *Language policy in the People's Republic of China: Theory and practice since 1949* Boston, Kluwer, 21–43.

Romaine, S. (1989). *Bilingualism.* Oxford, Basil Blackwell.

Romaine, S. (1994) *Language in Society: An Introduction to Sociolinguistics.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Ruiz-Frutos C., Ortega-Moreno M., Allande-Cussó R., Domínguez-Salas S., Dias A. and Gómez-Salgado J. (2021) Health-related factors of psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic among non-health workers in Spain. In *Safety Science* 133, 104996.

Rumsey, A. (1990) Wording, meaning, and linguistic ideology. in *American Anthropologist,* 92,2, 346–361.

Ryan, J. and Louie, K. (2007) False dichotomy? 'Western' and 'Confucian' concepts of scholarship and learning. in *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 39,4, 404-417.

Samimy, K.K. and Brutt-Griffler, J. (1999) To be a native or non-native speaker: Perceptions of 'non-native' students in a graduate TESOL program. In Braine, G. (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 127-144.

Saniei, A. (2011) Who Is An Ideal Native Speaker?! International Conference on Languages, Literature and Linguistics IPEDR vol.26 (2011) © IACSIT Press, Singapore.

Sapir, E. (1949) *Language. An introduction to the Study of Speech,* (8th ed.), New York; Harcourt, Brace and Co.

Scarino, A. (2014) Learning as reciprocal, interpretative meaning-making: A view from collaborative research into the professional learning of teachers of languages. in *The Modern Language Journal,* 98,1, 386-401.

Sciriha, L. and Vassallo, M. (2003) *Malta – a Linguistic Landscape*. Caxton Printshop, Malta.

Sciriha, L. and Vassallo, M. (2006) *Living Languages in Malta*. Print It Printing Services, Malta.

Schrier, L. (2009) Teaching Chinese Orthography and Discourse: Knowledge and Pedagogy in Everson, M.E. and Xiao, Y. (eds.) *Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language: Theories and Applications.* Boston. Cheng & Tsui, 227-249.

Schumann, J. (1978) The acculturation model for second-language acquisition. In Gingras, R.C. (ed.) *Second-language acquisition and foreign language teaching:* 27-50. Arlington, Virginia, Center for Applied Linguistics.

Schwarcz, V. (1986) *The Chinese Enlightenment.* Berkley and California. University of California Press.

Seidlhofer, B. (1999). *Double standards: Teacher education in the expanding circle*. World Englishes, 18, 2, 233-245.

Selinker, L. (1972) Interlanguage. In *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching.* 10,3, 209-231.

Sériot, P. (2014) Language and nation: two models. In Vihman, V.A. and Praakli, K. (eds.) *Negotiating linguistic identity: Language and belonging in Europe.* Oxford and Bern, Peter Lang, 255-274.

Shapiro, M. and Der Derian, J. (1989) (eds.) *International/Inter-textual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics.* Lexington Books, 377.

Shei, C. McLellan Zikpli, M.E. and Chao, D. (2020) (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Chinese*

Language Teaching. Routledge. London and New York.

Shei, C. (2020) From 'Chinese to Foreigners' to 'Chinese International Education': China's Efforts in Promoting Its Language Worldwide in Shei, C., et. Al. *The Routledge Handbook of Chinese Language Teaching.* Routledge. London and New York, 32-46.

Shi, F. (2009) Future Perception of New Technology in *Journal of Chinese Education*, 12, 59-67.

Shrum, J.L. and Glisan, E.W. (2010) (5th ed.) *Teacher's Handbook; Contextualized Language Instruction.* Cengage Learning. USA.

Si, Y. (2011) 近三十年来对外汉语偏误分析研究综述 (An overview of research on error analysis in teaching Chinese to foreigners for the past 30 years) 聊城大学学报 (Journal of Liaocheng University) 2, 148-149.

Silverstein, M. (1979) Language structure and linguistic ideology. In Clyne, P. R., Hanks, W. F. and Hofbauer, C.L. (eds.) *The elements: A para-session on linguistic units and levels* Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society, 193–247.

Simons, H. (2009) *Case Study Research in Practice.* SAGE.

Simpson, A. (2016) Chinese Language and National Identity in Sin-Wai, C. (ed.) (2016) *The Routledge Encyclopaedia of the Chinese Language.* Routledge. London and New York, 90-103.

Singh, P., and Doherty, C. (2004) Global cultural flows and pedagogic dilemmas: Teaching in the global university contact zone. in *TESOL Quarterly*, 38, 9-42.

Singh, R. (ed.). (1998). *The native speaker. Multilingual perspectives, language and development* London: Sage.

Sin-Wai, C. (ed.) (2016) *The Routledge Encyclopaedia of the Chinese Language.* Routledge.

London and New York.

Skinner, B. F. (1957) *Verbal Behavior.* New York Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Società Dante Alighieri official website. https://www.dante.global/en accessed on 03 September 2024.

Song, Y. (2014) 汉语作为第二语言习得研究述评 (A summary review of the ten-year researches on CSL acquisition) 云南师范大学学服（对外汉语教学与研究版 (Journal of Yunnan Normal University – Teaching and Research on Chinese as a Foreign Language Edition) 12,2, 51-60.

Soubelet-Fagoaga, I., Arnoso-Martínez, M., Guerendiain-Gabás, I., Martínez-Moreno, E. and Ortiz, G. (2021) (Tele)Work and Care during Lockdown: Labour and Socio-Familial Restructuring in Times of COVID-19 in International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18,22,12087.

South-Coblin, W. (2000) A Brief History of Mandarin in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 120, 4, 537-552.

Spolsky, B. (1969) Attitudinal aspects of second language. In *Language Learning,* 19, 271-283.

Spolsky, B. (1989) Communicative Competence, Language Proficiency, and Beyond. in *Applied Linguistics* 10,138-156.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Stipek, D. (1998). *Motivation to Learn: From Theory to Practice*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Sturniolo-Baker, R. (2015) *Native and non-native speaking teachers of Italian: an exploration of differences in students' and teachers' perceptions.* Unpublished PhD thesis. The University of Western Australia.

Sun, H. K., Hu, Z. Y., and Huang, X. (2007). *The Languages of China.* Beijing, Commercial Press.

Sun, T. (2010). *Inside the Chinese Business Mind; A Tactical Guide for Managers.* Praeger, USA.

Sun, D. (2009). 五十余年对外汉语教学研究纵览 (An overview of TCFL study in the past fifty years) 语言教学与研究 (Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies), 2, 45–53.

Sung, K.Y. and Poole, F. (2016) in Chou, C.P. and Spangler, J. (eds.) *Chinese Education Models in a Global Age.* Springer.

Tam, G. A. (2016) 'Orbiting the Core': Politics and the Meaning of Dialect in Chinese Linguistics, 1927–1957 in *Twentieth-Century China* 41,3,280–303.

Tam, G.A. (2016) *Sounding the Nation: Dialect and the Making of Modern China.* PhD dissertation, Stanford University.

Tan, C. (2015) Beyond rote-memorisation: Confucius' concept of thinking In *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 47,5, 428-439.

Tian, Y. (2018) *From Greek/Latin to Chinese: What We can Learn From The First Chinese Teacher At Harvard*. University of Pennsylvania.

Thomas, G. (2010) Doing case study: Abduction not induction, phronesis not theory. In *Qualitative Inquiry*, *16*,7, 575–582.

Thornbury, S. (1996) Teachers research teacher talk. In *English Language Teaching*, 50, 279–288.

Towell, R., Hawkins, R. and Bazergui, N. (1996) The development of fluency in advanced learners of French in *Applied Linguistics*. 17, 84–119.

Tsokalidou, R., Sen, C. and Qun, Z. (eds.) (2022) *Introduction to the World of the Chinese Language.* Zygos, A.U.Th., Confucius Institute A.U.Th, Zhongwen Series.

Tsu, J.B. (1970) The Teaching of Chinese in Colleges and Schools of the United States. in *The Modern Language Journal.* 54,8, 562-578.

Tsung, L. and Cruickshank, K. (eds.) (2011) *Teaching and Learning Chinese in Global Contexts; CFL Worldwide.* Continuum International Publishing Group. Great Britain.

Tsung, L. (2014). *Language power and hierarchy*: *Multilingual education in China.* London. Bloomsbury Academic.

Tymoczko, M. and Ireland, C.A. (2003) *Language and Tradition in Ireland: continuities and displacements.* Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press.

Uleanya, C. and Yu, K. (2023) Data Collection in Times of Pandemic: A Self-Study and Revisit Research Practices During a Crisis. In *SAGE Open* January-March 2023, 1-18.

Van Boxtel, J. M. (2017) Seeing is Believing: Innovating the Clinical Practice Experience for Education Specialist Teacher Candidat es with Video-Based Remote Supervision. in *Rural Special Education Quarterly* 36, 4, 180–190.

Vanlier, L. (1996). *Interaction in the language curriculum: Awareness, autonomy, and authenticity.* London, Longman.

Vella, A. (1994) *Prosodic Structure and Intonation in Maltese and its influence on Maltese English.* Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Edinburgh.

Vertovec, S. (2007) Super-diversity and its implications, *in Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 30(6), 1024-1054.

Vulchanova, M., Vulchanov, V., Sorace, A., Suarez-Gomez, C. and Guijarro-Fuentes, P. (2022) Editorial:

The Notion of the Native Speaker Put to the Test: Recent Research Advances. in *Front. Psychol.* 13, 740-875.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978) *Mind in Society*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press.

Walker, R. (1974) The conduct of educational case study. In MacDonald, B. and Walker, R. (eds.) *Safari I: Innovation, Evaluation and the Problem of control.* Norwich, University of East Anglia, Centre for Applied Research in Education, 75-115.

Wan, X. (2017) '一带一路' 进程中汉语国际推广问题探究 (Exploring the issue of the international promotion of Chinese language in the process of one belt, one road) 江西社会科学 (Jiangxi Social Sciences) 4,236-241.

Wang, J. (2015) 汉语国际教育本科转业海外实习模式构建研究 (Research in construction of TCFL internship model overseas) 新疆师范大学学服暂学社会科学版 (Journal of Xinjiang Normal University, Edition of Philosophy and Social Sciences) 3, 129-133.

Wang, D. (2016) Fostering Effective CFL Education Through Autonomous Learning: Learners' Perspectives in Moloney and Xu (2016) (eds.) *Exploring Innovative Pedagogy in the Teaching and Learning of Chinese as a Foreign Language,* Multilingual Education. Springer, Singapore.

Wang, Y. (2020) *Language Ideologies in the Chinese Context.* De Gruyter Mouton.

Wang, H. (2020) Methods of Teaching Chinese: Evolution and Emerging Trends in Shei, C., et. Al. *The Routledge Handbook of Chinese Language Teaching.* Routledge. London and New York, 81-96.

Wang, W. and Ruan, J. (2016) Historical overview of Chinese language education for speakers of other languages in China and the United States in Ruan, J., Zhang, J. and Leung, C.B. (eds.) *Chinese Language Education in the United States.* New York. Springer, 1-28.

Wanyu, A. O. and Mingyue, M. G. (2021) Language socialization and identity in intercultural communication: experience of Chinese students in a transnational university in China. in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 24,3,419-434.

Weedon, C. (1987 (1st ed./1997 2nd ed.). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory*. London. Blackwell.

Wei, L. (ed.) (2007) *The Bilingualism Reader* (2nd ed.) Routledge. Taylor and Francis Group.

Wei, L. (2022) Chinese Sociolinguistics and Culture in Tsokalidou, R., Sen, C. and Qun, Z. (eds.) *Introduction to the World of the Chinese Language.* Zygos, A.U.Th., Confucius Institute A.U.Th, Zhongwen Series.

Weinstein, R. S. (1998) Promoting positive expectations in schooling, in Lambert, N.M. and. McCombs, B. L. (eds.), *How Students Learn: Reforming Schools Through Learner-centered Education.* Washington, DC, APA, 81-112.

Weng, J. (2018) What is Mandarin? The Social Project of Language Standardisation in Early Republican China in *The Journal of Asian Studies,* The Association for Asian Studies, 1-23.

Wheatley, J.K. (2011) *Learning Chinese: A Foundation Course in Mandarin.* Yale University Press.

Widdowson, H. (1978) *Teaching Language as Communication.* Oxford University Press.

White, S.J., Johnson, R., Liversedge, S. and Rayner, K. (2008) Eye Movements When Reading Transposed Text: The Importance of Word-Beginning Letters in Journal of Experimental Psychology Human Perception and Performance, 34,5,1261-76. 377-394.

Whitney, C. (2001) How the brain encodes the order of letters in a printed word: The SERIOL model and selective literature review in *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review,* 8, 221–243.

Whorf, B.L. (1956) Language, Thought and Reality. in Carroll, J.B., (ed.) *Selected Writings.* MIT, New York J. Wilky, London Chapinaon and Hall.

Widdowson, H.G. (1992) ELT and EL teachers: matters arising. In *ELT Journal*, 46, 4, 333- 339.

Widdowson, H.G. (1994) The ownership of English. In *TESOL Quarterly,* 28 (2), 377-388.

Widdowson, H. (2003) *Defining Issues in English Language Teaching.* Oxford University Press.

Wilkinson, J. (2020). From native speaker to intercultural speaker and beyond: intercultural (communicative) competence in foreign language education in Jackson, J. (ed.) *Routledge Handbooks* in *Applied Linguistics. The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication,* London, Routledge, 283–298.

Wolcott, H.F. (2009) *Writing up qualitative research* (3rd ed.) Thousand Oaks. CA. Sage.

Woods, P. (2006) *Successful Writing for Qualitative Researchers.* (2nd ed.) London, Routledge.

Woodraw, D. and Sham, S. (2001) Chinese Pupils and their Learning Preferences. in *Race, Ethnicity and Education.* 4:4, 377-394.

Wu, X. and Tarc, P. (2016) Translations and Paradoxes of 'Western' Pedagogy: Perspectives of English Language Teachers in a Chinese College in *L2 Journal*, 8, 4, 55-75.

Wu Zhihui. Wu Zhihui Xueshu Lunzhu (Scholarly Works of Wu Zhihui), edited by Liang Bingxuan. Shanghai, Shanghai Shudian, 1990 (reprint. of 1927).

Wu Zhihui (1933). "Fu Benhui Qing Gongbu 'Guoyin Changyong Zihui' Han" 附本會請公布《國音常用字彙》函 [Letter in Support of the Promulgation of the Glossary of Commonly Used Words]. In Guoyin Changyong Zihui 國音常用字彙 [Glossary of Characters in Common Use in the National

Pronunciation], ed. Jiaoyubu Guoyu Tongyi Choubei Weiyuanhui 教育部國語統一籌備委員會 [Committee for the Unification of the National Language of the Ministry of Education], i–x. 3rd ed. Shanghai, Shangwu Yinshuguan.

Xiao, F. (2013) Motivational Strategies in Teaching English as a Foreign Language – Applying Motivational Plan in TEFL. In *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3,18, 257-262.

Xin Qingnian (La Jeunesse), (New Youth) 1917-1918.

Xuebu Guanbao (Official Gazette of the Ministry of Education), 1906-1911.

Xu, J. (2002) Intellectual Currents behind Contemporary Chinese Nationalism in Wei, C.X. and Xiaoyuan, L. (eds.) *Exploring Nationalisms of China: Themes and Conflicts.* London. Greenwood Press, 27-39.

Xuereb, C. (2022) *Decolonising the Maltese Mind: In Search of Identity.* Midsea Books. Malta

Yasmin, H., Khalil, S., and Mazhar, R. (2020) COVID-19: stress management among students and its impact on their effective learning. In *Int. Technol. Educ. Journal.* 4, 65–74.

Yin, R.K. (2014) (5th ed.) *Case Study Research; Design and Methods.* SAGE USA.

You, X. (2014) "The Choice made from no choice": English writing instruction in a Chinese university. in *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13(2), 97-110.

Zhang, H. Song, W. Shen, S. and Huang, R. (2014) The Effects of Blog-Mediated Peer Feedback on Learners' Motivation, Collaboration, and Course Satisfaction in a Second Language Writing Course. In *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology.* 30,6, 670-685.

Zhao, Y. (2011) Review article: A tree in the wood: A review of research on L2 Chinese acquisition. In

Second Language Research 27,4, 559–572.

Zhao, J. (2011). 国际汉语教育研究的现状与拓展 (Research of international Chinese education: Its status and development). Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies, 4, 86–90.

Zhao, L.X. (2012) Interpretation of Chinese overt and null embedded arguments by English-speaking learners. In *Second Language Research,* 28,2, 169-190.

Zhao, S. and Guo, Z. (2017) *Teaching and Learning Chinese in Global Contexts: from Language Policy to Classroom Practice Applied Chinese Language Studies IX.* Sinolingua London Ltd., UK.

Zhang, Z. (1988) A discussion of communicative culture. In *Journal of Chinese Language Teachers Association*, 23, 2, 107–112.

Zhou, E. (1956) "Guowuyuan Guanyu Tuiguang Putonghua de Zhishi" 国务院关于推广 普通话的指示 (State Council Guidance on Promoting Putonghua).

Zhou, E. (1958) "Current Tasks of Reforming the Written Language." In Reform of the Chinese Written Language. Peking.

Zhou, M. (2012) Language identity as a process and second language learning. In Chan, W. M., Chin, K.N., Bhatt, S. and Walker, I. (Eds.), *Perspectives on individual characteristics and foreign language education* Boston, Mouton de Gruyter, 255–272.

Zhou, M. (2011) Globalization and language order: Teaching Chinese as a foreign language in the United States in Tsung, L. and Cruichshank, K. (eds.) *Teaching and Learning Chinese in Global Contexts: Multimodality and Literacy in the New Media Age.* Continuum. New York. 132-149.

Zhou, P. (2014) 国外起点水平语课堂教学策略初探-以布隆迪学生为例 – A study on teaching

strategies for overseas beginning Chinese class – Taking Brunundian students as an example) in 兴义民族师范学院学报 (*Journal of Xingyi Normal University for Nationalities)* 2,72-76.

Zhou, M. (2019) *Language Ideology and Order in Rising China.* Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore.

Zotzmann, K. and O'Regan, J.P. (2016) Critical discourse analysis and identity. In Preece, S. (ed.) (2016). *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Identity.* Routledge. New York. 113-127.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Field work plan

1.1 Data to be collected according to theme

1.2 Data to be collected through interviews

1.2.1 Interview questions according to theme and theoretical framework.

1.2.2 Interview questions – English version

1.2.3 Interview questions – Maltese version

1.3 Data to be collected through classroom observations

1.4 Classroom observation sheet

1.5 Fieldwork timeline plan

1.6 Timeline of the research project

Appendix 2 – participant information sheet, consent form, ethics form

Appendix 3 – Transcripts of the interviews and translations into English

Appendix 4 – quotations from the interviews according to theme

Appendix 5 – Lesson observation sheets

Appendix 6 – Data Display

Appendix 7 – Reflective journal during the fieldwork

Appendix 1 – Field work plan

1.1 Data to be collected according to theme

Themes	Literature	Theoretical implications
The existence (or lack of existence or lack of a definition) of the native speaker	Beaugrande 1998; Cook 1999; Medgyes 1992; Nayar 2002; Norton 1997; Paikeday 1985 ; Phillipson 1992; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Widdowson 1992, 1994; Paikeday (1985) *The Native Speaker is dead!*	The term 'native speaker' has no clear definition. Scholars suggest to use terms related to linguistic proficiency instead of nativeness because since it is not well defined, nativeness does not exist. Next, scholars argue that nativeness exists and it is not related to linguistic proficiency but it is a socio-cultural construct related to one's identity.
Nativeness as a socio-cultural construct that is part of one's identity	Curtis and Romney 2006; Jager 2001; Kubota and Lin 2006; Norton 2013; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011.	Identity is fluid and constructed by a number of factors; birthplace, ethnicity, race, belonging in a community… Being a native speaker of a language/s is part of a person's socio-cultural identity and not necessarily related to language proficiency.
Language and ethnicity/ birthplace	Fishman 1999; Garcia 2010; Liebold and Chen 2014; Lytra 2007; Tsung 2014; Zhou 2016, 2019.	Nativeness is not relevant to linguistic proficiency but rather to one's ethnicity and socio-cultural identity.
Nativeness and proficiency in standard Putonghua	Sun, Hu and Huang; 2007	Being a native speaker does not necessarily imply proficiency in the Standard variety of the language; a person could have varying degrees of proficiency that is not necessarily in the Standard variety.
NS/NNS teachers and cultural and linguistic proximity to students	Boyle 1997; Braine 1999; Cook 1999; Cortazzi and Jin 1996; Davies 2003; Inbar-Lourie, 1999; Rajagopalan 2004; Kramsch 1998; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002; Liang 2002; Liu 1999; Llurda 2005; Llurda and Huguet 2003; Mahboob 2004; Merino 1997; Modiano 2005; Moussu 2006; Kramsch 1993; Paikeday 1985; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Reves and Medgyes 1992; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler 1999; Seidlhofer 1999; Widdowson 1994	Medgyes (1994) discusses the "worth" of NNS teachers. They argue that NNS teachers are very worthy because they share the L1 with students and they understand what the students are going through to learn the TL. In today's world this might not be necessarily so, NNS teachers might not be proficient in the students' L1, NS teachers might be very proficient in the students' L1 and familiar with the students' cultural context.

1.2 Data to be collected through interviews

Themes	First round of interviews	Theoretical framework	Second round of interviews	Theoretical framework	Third round of interviews	Theoretical framework
Nativeness and grammaticality	Is the spoken/written production of a native speaker always necessarily grammatically correct?	Chomsky (1965) theory on the native speaker as the sole authority on their language.	Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture?	Chomsky (1965) theory on the native speaker as the ideal teacher.	Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?	Medgyes (1992, 1994) theory on the worth of the native speaker teacher.
Definition of nativeness	What is the native speaker?	Theory on the lack of a definition of what a native speaker is. (Beaugrande 1998; Cook 1999; Medgyes 1992; Nayar 2002; Norton 1997; Paikeday 1985; Phillipson 1992; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Widdowson 1992, 1994)	What are the factors that make a native speaker?	Paikeday (1985) "the native speaker is dead"; there is no clear definition of what a native speaker is. Theory on nativeness as a socio-cultural construct (Jager 2001; Paikeday 1985; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011).	Can a non-ethnically Chinese person **become** (through study/ practice speaking the language) a native speaker of Chinese?	Identity is multiple, fluid and socially constructed. (Block 2016; Blommaert 2006; De Bot 2015; Hall 1996; Kubota and Lin 2006; Norton and Toohey 2002; Norton 2016; Preece 2016)
The identity of nativeness/ non-nativeness	Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?	(Baker 2015; Block 2016; Bourdieu 1977; Cook 1999; Cummins 2000; Curtis and Romney 2006; Duff 2012; Inbar-Lourie 1999; Lave and Wenger 1991; Norton 1995; 2000; Preece 2016; Weedon 1987, 1997). Peirce (1995)	What makes a native speaker of Chinese? What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?	Norton and Toohey (2002); Zotzmann and O'Regan (2016).	Can one become a native speaker? Do non-native speakers actually want to become native speakers?	Hall (1996: 4) identity from a non-essentialist perspective; "the process of becoming rather than being"; "not 'who we are' or 'where we came from' but rather what we might become."
Nativeness and ethnicity/birthplace	Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese?	Fishman 1999; Garcia 2010; Harris 2011; Lytra 2007.	Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese?	Liebold and Chen 2014; Tsung 2014; Zhou 2016, 2019	Is a native speaker necessarily born a native speaker?	
Nativeness and Standard Putonghua	Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua? Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand	Sun, Hu and Huang 2007; Zhou 2019.	Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese? Can education/studies make a non-native speaker		Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua? Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native	

	Standard Putonghua?		like a native speaker? Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua? Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?		speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters? Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community) Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community) Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?	
Nativeness/ non-nativeness and CFL teaching and learning	Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not? Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?	Chomsky (1965), Medgyes (1994)	Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students? Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?	Medgyes (1994, 1999)	Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?	Medgyes (1994, 1999)

1.2.1 Interview questions according to theme and theoretical framework

Themes and interview questions	Theoretical framework

The identity of the native/non-native speaker as a socio-cultural construct. 1. What is the native speaker of Chinese? 2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese? 3. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why? 4. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese? 5. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language? 6. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference? 7. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?	The lack of a clear definition of what a native speaker is. (Beaugrande 1998; Cook 1999; Medgyes 1992; Nayar 2002; Norton 1997; Paikeday 1985; Phillipson 1992; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Widdowson 1992, 1994) Paikeday (1985) "the native speaker is dead"; a reaction to the lack of a clear definition of what a native speaker is. Despite the above theory, people still identify as native speakers, the term 'native speaker' is visible in foreign language education, so the native speaker exists. Theory on being a native speaker as a socio-cultural construct that is part of one's identity. (Jager 2001; Paikeday 1985; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011).
The identity of the native speaker in relation to birthplace and ethnicity. 1. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?	Ethnicity and race in the context of foreign language education. (Baker 2015; Block 2016; Bourdieu 1977; Byram 2012; Cook 1999; Cummins 2000; Curtis and Romney 2006; Duff 2012; Fang and Baker 2017; Fishman 1999; Garcia 2010; Harris 2011; Inbar-Lourie 1999; Lave and Wenger 1991;

2. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (for example in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese? 3. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese? 4. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not? 5. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese? 6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? 7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?	Liebold and Chen 2014; Lytra 2007; Norton 1995; 2000; Preece 2016; Tsung 2014; Weedon 1987, 1997; Zhou 2016, 2019).

8. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?	
The identity of the non-native speaker 1. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese? 2. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? 3. Do you want to become a native speaker of Chinese? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language? 4. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua? 5. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?	Chomsky (1965) the non-native speaker as an imperfect imitation of the native speaker.
Is there a difference between NS and NNS teachers of Chinese?	Chomsky's 1965 theory that the native speaker is the ideal model "The intuition of the native speaker, the native speaker would know if there is an error."
The native speaker and linguistic proficiency.	Chomsky's (1965) theory on the native speaker as the sole authority on the language.

1. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct? 2. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation? 3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct? 4. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker? 5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters? 6. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community) 7. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?	
The native speaker and linguistic proficiency in Standard Putonghua.	Sun, Hu and Huang 2007; Zhou 2019.

1. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua? 2. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua? 3. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua? 4. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua? 5. Are all native speakers of Chinese proficient in Standard Putonghua? 6. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?	
The exclusive use of the standard language in CFL education.	Ramsey 1987; Sun, Hu and Huang 2007; Zhou 2003.
The non-native speaker identity and proficiency in Standard Putonghua. 1. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…) 2. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example	

a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)	
Nativeness/ non-nativeness and CFL teaching and learning.	Chomsky (1965) the NS teacher as the ideal model to the students. Medgyes (1994) theory on the "worth" of the NNS teacher – the NNS teacher who can speak the students' L1 and who is familiar with the local system.
NS/NNS teachers – who is the ideal teacher? 1. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not? 2. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua? 3. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient? 4. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students? 5. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?	Chomsky (1965) Medgyes (1994)
NS/NNS teachers and cultural and linguistic proximity to students	Boyle 1997; Braine 1999; Cook 1999; Cortazzi and Jin 1996; Davies 2003; Inbar-Lourie, 1999; Rajagopalan 2004; Kramsch 1998; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002; Liang 2002;

1. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?	Liu 1999; Llurda 2005; Llurda and Huguet 2003; Mahboob 2004; Merino 1997; Modiano 2005; Moussu 2006; Kramsch 1993; Paikeday 1985; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Reves and Medgyes 1992; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler 1999; Seidlhofer 1999; Widdowson 1994
NS/NNS teachers and the students' socio-cultural and linguistic identity. 1. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?	Is the students' Maltese/European identity visible in the CFL classroom in Malta? Are the students' L1, L2 and other European FLs acknowledged in the classroom? Is the students' socio-cultural background embraced in the classroom?

1.2.2 Interview questions – English version

Interview questions – first round of interviews

1. What is a native speaker?
2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?
3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?
4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?
5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?
6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?
7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?
8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?
9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?
10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?
11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?
12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?
13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?
14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?
15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)
16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?
17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?
18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?
19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

Interview questions – second round of interviews

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?
2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?
3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?
4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?
5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?
6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?
7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?
9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?
10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?
11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?
12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?
13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

Interview questions – third round of interviews

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?
2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?
3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?
4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?
5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?
6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?
7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)
8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)
9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?
10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

1.2.3 Interview questions – Maltese version

Verżjoni Maltija tal-intervista

L-ewwel intervista

1. X'inhu kelliem nattiv?

2. Meta kelliem nattiv jitkellem, dan ikun dejjem grammatikament korrett?

3. Il-kitba tal-kelliem nattiv (karattri u grammatika) huma dejjem grammatikament korretti?

4. Inti kelliem nattiv jew kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex?

5. Jekk iva, x'jagħmlek kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

6. Jekk le, x'jagħmlek kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jekk le, x'inhi l-lingwa materna tiegħek? X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv ta' dik il-lingwa?

7. Hemm xi differenza bejn kelliem nattiv u kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

8. In-nies li twieldu ċ-Ċina huma kollha kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż? X'varjetà ta' Ċiniż? Bilfors tal-Putonghua?

9. Jista' kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż jitwieled u jitrabba f'komunità Ċiniża fil-punent? (eż. Fl-Ingilterra, fl-Amerka, fl-Awstralja...) Dawn xorta jkunu kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż?

10. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex? Għaliex le? Tista' persuna ta' etniċità Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

11. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża imma li tistudja ċ-Ċiniż fl-iskola jew fl-università qatt issir kelliem nattiv? Jew forsi ssir bħal kelliem nattiv? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

12. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li kull ma tgħid huwa grammatikament tajjeb?

13. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-karattri mikubin tagħha huma bilfors tajbin?

14. Jekk persuna tkun kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-pronunzja tat-tonalitajiet hija dejjem bilfors tajba? U l-pronunzja ta' Standard Putonghua?

15. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż li jitgħallem l-istandard Putonghua vera sewwa? (li jkun fluwenti, li jkollu grammatika tajba, pronunzja, karattri miktubin...)

16. Il-kelliema nattivi huma bilfors kelliema nattivi ta' Standard Putonghua?

17. Jista' kelliem nattiv ma jkunx jaf jitkellem/ma jifhimx Standard Putonghua?

18. L-għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi huma l-għalliema ideali? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

19. L-Għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi bilfors ikollhom aktar għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

It-tieni intervista

1. L-għalliem nattiv huwa l-għalliem ideali għax huwa twieled fil-lingwa u fil-kultura u b'hekk għandu iktar għarfien?

2. X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

3. X'jagħmel kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

4. L-etniċità u l-post tat-twelid jagħmlu persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jew l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

5. Hija l-identità soċjo-kulturali li tagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

6. Tista' persuna li mhix etnikament Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

7. Tista' persuna li hi etnikament Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

8. Jistgħu l-edukazzjoni u l-istudju jagħmlu persuna li mhix nattiva tinstema' bħal kelliem nattiv? Tistieq issir kelliem nattiv? Jew tixtieq li tibqa' kelliem nattiv tal-lingwa tiegħek?

9. Il-kelliem nattiv bilfors ikollu l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

10. Il-kelliema nattivi għandhom bżonn jistudjaw l-istandard Putonghua l-iskola jew l-università?

11. X'livell ta' għarfien jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv?

12. L-għalliema nattivi dejjem ikunu kulturalment 'l bogħod mill-istudenti tagħhom?

13. L-għalliema mhux nattivi għandhom vantaġġ għax għandhom l-istess lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

It-tielet intervista

1. L-għalliem mhux nattiv huwa l-ideal għax għandu l-istess sfond kulturali u tingwa materna bħall-istudenti?

2. Jista' xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż jistudja u **jsir** kelliem nattiv ta' Standard Putonghua?

3. Kelliema mhux nattivi taċ-Ċiniż jixtiequ li jsiru kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż/Standard Putonghua?

4. Kelliem nattiv jitwieled? Jista' wieħed isir kelliem nattiv?

5. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx fluwenti fl-istandard Putonghua?

6. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx taf tikteb il-karattri Ċiniżi?

7. Jista' kelliem nattiv 'jitlef' l-abbiltà lingwistika u ma jibqax jidentifika bħala kelliem nattiv?

(forsi jiltaq mill-komunità li titkellem iċ-Ċiniż)

8. Jista' kelliem mhux nattiv jitgħallem tant li jsir kelliem nattiv? (per eżempju persuna li tmur tgħix f'komunità fejn jitkellmu ċ-Ċiniż)

9. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li jibdel l-identità tiegħu minn kelliem nattiv għal kelliemm mhux nattiv u viċe-versa?

10. Huwa importanti għall-għalliema li jifhmu l-isfond kulturali/il-lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

1.3 Data to be collected through classroom observations.

Points to observe in the classroom	Theoretical framework
What is the cultural identity/ethnicity of the people in the classroom?	Identity is multiple, fluid and socially constructed (Block 2016; Blommaert 2006; De Bot 2015; Hall 1996; Kubota and Lin 2006; Norton and Toohey 2002; Norton 2016; Preece 2016).
How is the new identity of becoming a speaker of Mandarin Chinese as a foreign language constructed in the CFL classroom in Malta? How is the process of becoming a speaker of Mandarin as a foreign language seen in the classroom?	Learning a new foreign language is not only learning grammar structures but it also involves one's identity as the student is **becoming** a speaker of Mandarin Chinese as a foreign language.
The socio-cultural background of the students. How is the students' Maltese/European identity visible in the CFL classroom in Malta? Are the students' L1, L2 and other European FLs acknowledged in the classroom? Is the students' socio-cultural background embraced in the classroom? Are they allowed to mention their socio-cultural background? Does the teacher compare and contrast the TL language structures and culture to the students' languages and socio-cultural background? Does the teacher embrace the socio-cultural and linguistic background of the students to scaffold new knowledge in TL language and culture?	The students' socio-cultural and linguistic identity.
Ethnicity and language use – what languages are used in the classroom? To what purpose? (do students translate into their L1 or L2? Do teachers scaffold new knowledge on L1 or L2 knowledge? Is TL only used in the classroom? Why?)	Pratt (1999:2) the FL classroom as a "contact zone" as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other".
Identity – Names – do people in the CFL classroom adapt new names (thus altering their identity) in Chinese or in English? Why?	Identity is fluid and multiple – do people in the classroom adopt a new identity specifically for the purpose of the classroom?
Standard Putonghua – do all teachers/students exclusively speak Standard Putonghua in class?	The standard language in FL education (Ramsey 1987; Sun, Hu and Huang 2007; Zhou 2003).
Correction of errors; How do teachers (both NS and NNS) correct errors in tone and pronunciation? How do teachers (both NS and NNS) correct errors in characters? Do teachers correct every little error in tone and pronunciation? Do teachers accept mild errors in tone and pronunciation?	Possibly NNS teachers might be more strict, possibly NS teachers might feel that it is sufficient for a foreigner to make minor errors.
Do teachers (both NS and NNS) use the Confucian, the communicative pedagogy, a mix of both?	Pedagogy – traditional, communicative, the context approach.

The context approach – a pedagogy that is expected by students in the context (Malta)?	
Are teachers (both NS and NNS) familiar with the system at the University of Malta? (for example how exams are conducted, when and if students are expected to work on coursework, the language of instruction especially when students have questions/difficulties, class control (eg. how to gain control of the classroom when students pass comments or discuss something in the L1, or compare/contrast the TL to the L1 to better understand, or translate to the L1 to better understand the content that is being taught).	Familiarity with the system in the context of the University of Malta.

1.4 Classroom observation sheet

Classroom observation sheet **Date:**

	Observed	Additional notes
Teacher's socio-cultural identity (native/non-native)		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.		
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua		
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety		
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone		
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation		
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1		
Pedagogical purpose of L1.		
Acknowledgement of students' L1		
Use of the target language by teacher.		
Use of the target language by students.		
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction		
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.		
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review		
Teacher expects students to preview		
Revision of material covered previously		
Link to material covered previously		
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin		
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)		
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples		
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…		
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures		

1.5 Fieldwork timeline plan

Task to be done	Timeframe	Task completed on time	If something unexpected happens and task is not completed, explain why and propose an alternative date for completion.
Ethics approval by ERGO	**15.09.2020**	**Yes**	
Ethics approval by University of Malta board and approval for the data to be collected there.	**23.10.2020**	**Yes**	This took some time as I wasn't aware that I had to pay a fee, but the process went well overall.
Contact all prospective participants via email and University of Malta, Department of Oriental Studies administration.	**20.11.2020**	**Yes**	A gentle reminder was sent to prospective participants.
Prospective participants to express their interest in participating in research project via email to the researcher.	**01.12.2020**	**Yes**	
Throughout fieldwork a reflective journal needs to be kept.	**December 2020 – March 2021**	**Yes**	Reflective journal was kept well. Keeping reflective diaries was also part of my teacher training, I'm used to writing reflective diaries.
First round of interviews	**Monday 7 December – Monday 21 December 2020**	**Yes**	Interviews went well, some interviews were done online (via Zoom) and others were done in person on campus at the University of Malta. Participants chose whether they wished to meet the researcher in person on campus of the University of Malta or whether they wished to do their interview online.
Classroom observations	**Monday 7 December – Monday 21 December 2020**	**Yes**	All classroom observations up until Christmas holidays were done online. Observations went well.
Second round of interviews	**Thursday 7 January – Friday 29 January 2021**	**Yes**	
Classroom observations	**Thursday 7 January – Friday 29 January 2021**	**Yes**	This was exam period – lesson observations will continue in mid-February when the second semester starts.
Third round of interviews	**Monday 1 February – Friday 26 February 2021**	**Yes**	A lot of thick data were collected from the first 2 rounds of interviews.
Classroom observations	**Monday 1 February –**	**Yes**	Lesson observations will continue after 20 February

	Friday 26 February 2021		2021 when the new semester starts.
Another possible round of interviews/classroom observations, if needed at that point.	**Monday 1 – Thursday 18 March 2021**	**Yes**	All interviews are done. I will continue with some classroom observations.
Finish off any pending transcriptions of interviews	**1 April 2021**	**Yes**	Interviews are all transcribed and translated into English (where applicable).
	All data collected by 1 May 2021	**Yes**	
	Data analysis – after fieldwork and the collection of data – "data reduction", "data display" and "conclusion drawing and verification" (Miles and Huberman 1994:10-12).	**Yes**	
Data reduction – the selection of key points/themes. **Data display – put data in charts according to key points/ themes.**	**May 2021**	**Yes**	
Data conclusion and verification – identify and verify patterns that emerge from the data.	**July-August 2021**	**Yes**	
Draft chapters four and five.	**September 2021**	**Yes**	
Third Progression Review Report is due		**Yes**	

1.6 Timeline of the research project

2016/2017 Year 1 (Part-time)	During the first year, I read extensively on NS and NNS teachers and started the first draft of the literature review. During the first year, I also conducted the pilot study on adult students' attitudes towards NS and NNS teachers of CFL. The pilot study was presented at the 2017 International Conference of the British Chinese Language Teaching Society (BCLTS). It was published in a volume edited by Zhao and Guo (2017) entitled *Teaching and Learning Chinese in Global Contexts: from Language Policy to Classroom Practice Applied Chinese Language Studies IX.* The chapter on the pilot study is entitled *To be or not to be a Native Speaker Teacher The question is, what are adult learners' attitudes towards native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese?* (page 167).
2017/2018 Year 2 (Part-time)	During the second year, I continued reading and expanded the literature review. June 2018 – first year presentation.
2018/2019 Year 3 (Part-time)	During the third year, I prepared for the interim progression review held in June 2019. I also read extensively and prepared the portfolio for confirmation of status to take place by end of 2019.
2019/2020 Year 4 (Part-time)	Confirmation viva took place in December 2019. Following the viva, between January and July 2020 the portfolio was revised and resubmitted.
2020/2021 Year 5 (Part-time)	Following confirmation of status, application to ERGO for ethics clearance was submitted. Field work was done throughout academic year 2020/2021.
2021/2022 Year 6 (Part-time)	Third progression review. Thesis was drafted and presented for examination.
2022/2023 Year 7 (part-time)	Thesis was revised and re-submitted for examination.

Appendix 2

Participant information sheet

Consent form

Ethics form

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: The construction of the identity of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese as a foreign language.

Researcher: Christiana Gauci-Sciberras

ERGO number: 61387

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

This research project is about the construction of the identities of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese in the context of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (TCFL).

Why have I been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate in this research project because you study or teach Chinese as a foreign language at the University of Malta.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to participate in this research project, you will be interviewed by the researcher (Christiana Gauci-Sciberras) at a time and place that are convenient for you. You will receive the interview questions before the interview. The interview questions are about how you perceive native speaker identity to be constructed in the field of TCFL in Malta. No questions of a personal nature will be asked. Participation in this research project will not affect your studies/work at the University of Malta.

If you consent, the interview will be audio recorded. If you do not wish to be recorded, notes will be taken during the interview and no recording will take place.

If you decide to take part in this research project, your lessons will be observed and notes will be taken. Teaching materials used in the lesson will also be observed.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

Your participation in this research project will benefit academic study in the field of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (TCFL) especially in the Maltese context.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks.

What data will be collected?

Data on how students and teachers perceive native speaker identity will be collected. Data will be collected through interviews, lesson observation and analysis of teaching materials.

The researcher is planning to collected data during academic year 2020/2021.

Data could be collected in-person or online; according to guidelines issued by the health authorities.

All data will be collected by the researcher – Christiana Gauci-Sciberras.

No personal information will be collected.

The researcher will have access to the participants' email address if they contact her, this email address will not be used for any other reason other than this research project and will not be passed on to anyone else.

This research project will not collect any data nor store any information on participants' sexual orientation; gender identity or religious beliefs.

This research project will collect and store information on participants' race/ethnic origin because the aim of this project is to find out how nativeness is constructed in TCFL. Data, coding of the data and participants' consent forms will be stored separately and securely in order to reduce the risk of identification of any participants.

All data collected will be used for this research project and will be stored in a password protected laptop that is property of the University Of Southampton. Consent forms will be in printed format and will be stored in a locked cabinet away from data collected from interviews in order to reduce the risk of identification.

Interested prospective participants could contact the researcher via email. Email addresses of the participants will be kept in strict confidence. Participants will not be contacted except for the purpose of this research project.

Will my participation be confidential?

Your participation and the information we collect about you during the course of this research project will be kept strictly confidential.

Only the researcher, her supervisor and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

All data and consent forms will be stored separately and safely and confidentiality is ensured.

If you consent to audio recording of the interview, the recording will be destroyed after transcription of the interview.

The researcher and her supervisor will have access to data collected for this research project. There are no third parties involved.

Participants' contact details will not be used for any future studies.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

Participants could withdraw from this study at any time.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected.

If at any point you wish to withdraw, inform the researcher via email. Your work/studies at the University of Malta will not be affected in any way if you withdraw from this study.

If you decide to withdraw from this study, all your data will be destroyed.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent.

The results of this research project will be written up as part of the researcher's PhD thesis. Participants will be given the results and a copy of the thesis, if they wish.

The researcher assures that participants and their data will not be identifiable in anyway.

The data will be used for the current research project and it might be used in any future studies. If data is used in any future studies, participants will be informed before.

If, in future, any part of the research project is published, participants will be informed before.

Where can I get more information?

You could contact the researcher on C.M.Gauci-Sciberras@Soton.ac.uk

What happens if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researchers who will do their best to answer your questions.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason ('lawful basis') to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University's data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

All data will be anonymised.

Thank you for reading this information and for considering to participate in this research project.

UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

CONSENT FORM

Study title: The construction of the identity of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese as a foreign language in Malta.

Researcher name: Christiana Gauci-Sciberras

ERGO number: 61387

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (15 September 2020, version *of participant information sheet*) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time for any reason without my participation rights being affected.	

Name of participant (print name)……

Signature of participant……

Date…… ……

Name of researcher Christiana Gauci-Sciberras

Signature of researcher ……

Date……

I understand that if I withdraw from the study that it may not be possible to remove the data once my personal information is no longer linked to the data.

I understand that I will not be directly identified in any reports of the research.

I understand that taking part in this research project involves an interview (online, via telephone or in-person).

I understand that the interview will be audio recorded.

I understand that the interview will be transcribed. Follow transcription, the audio recording will be destroyed.

I agree that the interview transcription will be coded and anonymised.

I agree to take part in the interview for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet and understand that these will be recorded using audio and written notes.

I understand that my anonymity cannot be guaranteed but that any information collected by the researchers will be kept confidential and participants will be asked to keep the discussions confidential.

I understand that I must keep the discussions confidential.

I understand that my personal information collected about me such as my name or where I live will not be shared beyond the study team.

I understand that special category information (my ethnicity) will be collected about me to achieve the objectives of the study.

I understand that data might be used for future studies. If it is used in future studies, it will only be used on academic study on teaching Chinese as a foreign language and absolutely NOT for commercial use.

I understand that the interview will be audio recorded and then transcribed.

The transcription will be anonymised and coded. My race/ethnic origin will appear of the transcription; for example. Student 1 - European ethnic origin. For example Teacher 1 – Chinese ethnic origin.

I give permission for data on my race/ethnic origin that I provide to Christiana Gauci-Sciberras and the University Of Southampton as described in the participant information sheet so it can be used for future research and learning on teaching Chinese as a foreign language.

I give permission to the researcher Christiana Gauci-Sciberras and the University Of Southampton to keep my contact details (email address) to contact me for future research in the field of teaching Chinese as a foreign language.

Ethics application form for studies involving Human Participants

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

This form must be completed for any research project that involves human participants or work with human remains less than 100 years old

If your research project involves both human participants or work with human remains less than 100 years old and research involving cultural heritage that requires ethical review, you must complete both this form and the Cultural Heritage Ethics Application form. However, we will not ask you to repeat information that has already been given on another form (except your name, supervisor's name (if relevant), the title of the study and the ERGO number).

All fields marked (M*) are mandatory and must be completed. Fields marked (M**) must be completed unless you have already given these details in the Cultural Heritage Application Form or Secondary Data Analysis Application Form. Applications without mandatory fields completed are likely to be rejected by reviewers. Other fields are marked "if applicable". Help text is provided, where appropriate, in italics after each question.

1. APPLICANT DETAILS

1.1 (M*) Applicant name:	Christiana Gauci-Sciberras
1.2 Supervisor (if applicable):	Rugang Lu
1.3 Other researchers/collaborators (if applicable): *Name, address, email, telephone*	n/a

2. LIST OF CHANGES

2.1 (M) Are you resubmitting this ethics application in response to a request for revisions?** *Do not complete this section if you have already provided this information in the Ethics Application Forms for Studies Involving Cultural Heritage or Secondary Data Analysis.*
No

3. RESEARCH PROJECT DETAILS

3.1 (M*) Title of Research Project:	The construction of the identity of native and non-native speaker teachers of Chinese as a foreign language in Malta.

3.2 (M) What are the aims of this research project?** *Do not complete this section if you have already provided this information in the Ethics Application Forms for Studies Involving Cultural Heritage or Secondary Data Analysis.*
The aim of this research project is to research the construction of the identity of nativeness in the field of teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) in Malta.

3.3 (M) Background to research project** (*a **brief** rationale for conducting the research project*)**:** *Do not complete this section if you have already provided this information in the Ethics Application Forms for Studies Involving Cultural Heritage or Secondary Data Analysis.*
Much has been written on the identity of native (NS) and non-native (NNS) speaker teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and on teachers of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) but not much has been written on the construction of identity in the teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL) in the West. The main aim of this research project is to fill in that gap; to carry out research on how native and non-native identities are constructed in the CFL classroom in a western socio-cultural context.

3.4 (M) Key research question** (*Specify hypothesis if applicable*):

Do not complete this section if you have already provided this information in the Ethics Application Forms for Studies Involving Cultural Heritage or Secondary Data Analysis.

- How do students and teachers perceive NS and NNS identities to be constructed in CFL education?
- How are NS and NNS identities constructed in CFL classroom practice?
- How are NS and NNS identities manifested in teaching materials used in the CFL classroom?

3.5 (M) Study design** (*Give a **brief** outline of basic study design*)

Outline what approach is being used, why certain methods have been chosen.

Do not complete this section if you have already provided this information in the Ethics Application Forms for Studies Involving Cultural Heritage or Secondary Data Analysis.

This research project uses the case study design and the three research instruments used in the case study design; interviews, lesson observation and document analysis. It is proposed that interviews with both students and teachers are carried out to find out how they perceive the identity of nativeness is constructed in CFL teaching and learning. Data collected from interviews, will then be triangulated with data collected through lesson observation and document analysis of teaching materials.

4. PARTICIPANTS AND SETTING

4.1 (M*) How are participants to be recruited?

You must include all recruitment materials that will be seen by potential participants including the text that you plan to use for any emails, social media posts, posters etc.

All recruitment materials must include your ERGO number and the name of your project, that the project is taking place at The University of Southampton and (if relevant) the name of your degree programme.

In some cases, you may need gatekeeper approval. Gatekeepers are individuals or institutions whose permission is needed to access participants, often because they have a duty of care to participants or because you need to go on to their property to access the participants.

Gatekeeper approval needs to come from someone appropriately senior in the relevant organisation. (Headteachers not class teachers in the case of schools.)

If you have already obtained gatekeeper approval, you should upload it with your application. If not, you should upload the intended letter/ email asking for permission.

If you are asking a third party to send out emails/letters on your behalf, the text you plan to ask them to send out should also be uploaded.

Please confirm:

☑ The University of Southampton logo, version number, date, ethics number (ERGO ID for most studies) appears on every participant-facing document (including, posters, flyers, emails etc). If it is not possible to include the logo, then the name of the university is included.

Is permission from a 'gatekeeper' needed to access your participants (e.g. child accessed through a school)? Yes

If yes, please give details:

Please confirm:

☐ I have permission from_____ and I have **uploaded the letter/email of permission with my submission in ERGOII**

or:

☑ I will acquire permission from the Head of Department, Department of Oriental Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Malta and from the Data Protection Office at the University of Malta before starting the study and I have **uploaded the letter/ email that I will send asking for permission with my submission in ERGOII**

Please also confirm

☑ I have uploaded with my submission in ERGO, **the proposed text of the email/letter which I will provide to the third party to distribute my behalf to invite potential participants to take part in the research**. This email/ letter includes the ERGO number and project title, states that the project is taking part at the University of Southampton, clearly states that participation is voluntary and gives clear instructions of what to do in order to take part in the study

Social Media: No

If yes, please complete the following.

Platform (s) used:

Form of recruitment:

☐ Direct message (or equivalent)

☐ General post/ announcement (Tick all that apply)

Details:

Text that will be used in any posts/ messages: (These can also be uploaded as a separate file. If you have uploaded these as a separate file please indicate this here.)

Other relevant information:

Email: Yes

If yes, please complete the following:

How you will acquire the email addresses?

I will ask for permission from the Data Protection Office at the University of Malta and from the Head of Department of the Department of Oriental Studies, Faculty of Arts at the University of Malta to ask Faculty administration to forward my introduction letter to prospective participants.

If you are using mailing lists, please state any mailing list(s) used and then complete the declaration:

☐ I have permission from the list owner and, if using University of Southampton Mailing lists, I have permission from a senior member of the Faculty. **I have uploaded confirmation of this with my application.**

Text of any emails that will be sent: (These can also be uploaded as a separate file. If you have uploaded these as a separate file please indicate this here.)

NB The University does not support the use of 'blanket emails' for contacting potential participants within the University (i.e. fellow staff and/or students) because there is a potential to take advantage of the access to 'group emails' and the relationship with colleagues and subordinates.

Before using any University of Southampton mailing list to contact participants, you should usually

- *ensure groups of students/staff have given prior permission to be contacted in this way, or*
- *use a third party (with appropriate permissions) to pass on these requests.*

If a blanket email from a researcher to a University of Southampton mailing list is the only way to access a chosen cohort, you must

- *obtain explicit approval from the holder of the list and (if using University Mailing Lists) from a senior member of the Faculty.*

Posters: No

If yes, please complete the following:

Where will the posters be displayed?

Please confirm you have the appropriate permissions to display posters (tick one):

☐ No permission is needed to display these posters OR

☐ I have permission to display the posters from _____

Please confirm

☐ I have uploaded the poster.

In person: No

If yes, please complete the following:

Place:_____ Times_____ (If times and date will not be confirmed until ethics approval is obtained, then state maximum number of recruitment events, expected length, and approximate time of day.)

☐ Recruitment is not taking place at an open place.

☐ Recruitment is taking place at an open place, and posters/flyers will be used to warn potential participants that recruitment is taking place, including details of whom people should contact if they don't want to be approached.
These flyers have been uploaded with my ethics application.

(An open place is somewhere which can be freely accessed by either by all members of the general public or by a considerable group. Recruiting at the beginning of a class would not normally count as recruitment in an open space. Recruiting in a campus café would count as recruiting in an open space.)

Other: No

If Yes, please give details.

*Please ensure that you **include the text** of any message that you will send to participants. (This can be uploaded here or as a separate file.)*

4.2 (M*) Who are the proposed participants and where are they from (e.g. fellow students, club members)? *List inclusion/exclusion criteria if applicable.*

Students and teachers of Chinese at the University of Malta.

4.3 (M*) Describe the relationship between researcher and participants (*Describe any relationship e.g. teacher, friend, boss, clinician, etc.*)

One of the teachers who will be asked to participate is a former colleague of the researcher.

All other participants are unknown to the researcher.

4.4 (M*) Describe how you will ensure that fully informed consent is being given:

If your study has different activities or groups of participants, you may need to produce more than one version of the participant information sheet and consent form.

If your study involves research with minors then an appropriate person must provide informed consent. If you are doing research on children in schools, then parents or guardian normally need to be informed of the research and given an opportunity to decide whether their children should take part. It is good practice to get consent from parents and guardians as well as permission from the school. However, in some cases, it may be more appropriate for the Headteacher to give permission together with an opportunity for parents to 'opt-out'. If you do not intend to get active consent from parents and guardians, this must be justified.

It is also best practice to acquire 'assent' from any participants who are not able to give fully informed consent. Assent is the term for agreement to proceed from someone who is not able to give consent i.e. a child may agree to take part in a study by saying 'Yes, I would like to do it.' but because they are underage this counts as assent and not consent. Again, if assent is not going to be obtained, this requires justification.

In what format will participants be given information about the study?

Please tick those that apply.

- [x] participant information form;
- [ ] online combined participant information form and consent form
- [ ] other, please give details.

When and how will participants be given this information? Please give details.

The participant information form will be attached to the email that will invite prospective participants to participate in this research project if they wish.

How long will they have to decide whether to take part? Please give details.

One week

Please confirm

- [x] I have included all relevant participant information sheets, consent forms, and debriefing form
- [x] I have used up to date templates for all forms
- [x] The University name (and logo where possible), the version number, date, ethics number (ERGO ID for most studies) appears on every participant facing document

Is there is any reason to believe participants may not be able to give full informed consent? No

If yes, what steps do you propose to take to safeguard their interests?

n/a

Are any participants under 18? No

If yes, please complete the following:

Is the consent of participants' parents or guardians required? Yes/No

If no, please justify this and explain who will be consenting on behalf of the participants and how this consent will be acquired.

If yes, how will this be acquired?

Will you also be acquiring assent from the participants? Yes/No

If no, please justify this.

If yes, explain how.

4.5 (M*) Will you provide the findings of the study to participants? *It is good practice to give participants the opportunity to see any dissertations or publications resulting from the study, but this might not be necessary e.g. if it is a small study for an undergraduate or MA dissertation. Note: if you intend to keep participants' contact details in order to feed back findings, you must describe how this data will be managed in section 5.6.*

☐ No. Please explain why.

☑ It is stated in the participant information sheet that participants can contact me by email to ask for a copy of my dissertation or publications associated with the research project.

☐ It is stated at the end of the online questionnaire that participants can contact me by email to ask for a copy of my dissertation or publications associated with the research project.

☐ I will email results to participants. I understand that participants' email addresses count as personal data and have described in section 6 how this data will be managed.
What will be emailed to participants?

☐ Other: Please give details.

4.6 Will any of the documents that you give to participants be in a language other than English?

Public facing documents that are badly written with poor spelling and grammar can lead to complaints. University policy is that reviewers should request revisions for badly written public facing documents.

However, we will not request revisions for mistakes in English when the documents will not be given to participants in English.

No

If yes, please list any documents that will be given to participants in a language other than English. For each document say whether the English translation will also be given to any participants. Then complete the declarations below.

n/a

☐ I confirm that I have provided an accurate English translation of any non-English language documents

☐ I confirm that any documents in a language other than English have been carefully checked for grammar and spelling errors by someone fluent in the relevant language. (This may be the researcher or a third party.)

5. RESEARCH PROCEDURES, INTERVENTIONS AND MEASUREMENTS

5.1 (M*) Give a brief account of what will happen in the study as experienced by the participant

Make clear who does what, how many times and in what order. Make clear the role of all assistants and collaborators. Make clear total demands made on participants, including time and travel. You must also describe the content of your questionnaire/interview questions and EXPLICITLY state if you are using existing measures. If you are using existing measures, please provide the full academic reference as to where the measures can be found.

Please give details here.

Participants will be interviewed (interview questions are attached)

Some lessons will be observed by the researcher – participants will be observed during a few lessons.

Teaching materials will be evaluated.

Please tick all that apply.

☐ I am using a paper questionnaire and have uploaded a copy of the questionnaire in its final form, showing the University logo and project name and ERGO number.

☐ I am using an online questionnaire and have uploaded a copy of the text of the questionnaire, including the project name, ERGO number and the University name.

☑ I am using focus groups or interviews, and have uploaded a copy of the questions.

☐ I am not using questionnaires, interviews or focus groups.

6. STUDY MANAGEMENT

6.1 (M*) Detail any psychological or physical discomfort or distress and/or any other adverse effects that the participants may experience arising from the study. If there is not likely to be any discomfort, distress or adverse effects, please state: 'None.'

None.

6.2 (M*) Explain how you intend to alleviate any such discomfort, distress or adverse effects that may arise. If there is not likely to be any discomfort, distress or adverse effects, please state: 'Not applicable.'

Not applicable.

6.3 Explain how you will care for any participants in 'special groups' *(i.e. those in a dependent relationship, vulnerable or lacking in mental capacity)* **(if applicable)**

Not applicable.

6.4 Please give details of any payments or incentives being used to recruit participants (if applicable)

Not applicable.

6.5 (M*) Will there be participant anonymity and/or data anonymity and if so, how will it be maintained?

Note that unlinked anonymity can only be promised if questionnaires or other requests for information are not targeted to, or received from, individuals using their name or address or any other identifiable characteristics. For example if questionnaires are sent out with no possible identifiers when returned, or if they are picked up by respondents in a public place, then anonymity can be claimed. Research

methods using interviews cannot usually claim anonymity – unless using telephone interviews when participants dial in.

Unless there is unlinked anonymity, the information provided to participants should indicate that they could be linked to their data.

☐ Unlinked anonymity: nobody involved in the research project will be able to identify the research participants. (Please give details.)

☐ The researcher or someone else may be able to identify participants. However, the research data contain no way of identifying participants and consent forms will be kept separately. (Please give details.)

☑ The researcher or someone else may be able to identify participants. However, the research data is coded so that participants are not identifiable from the research data. Consent forms and participant codes will be kept separately.

☐ The participant can be identified in the research data, but no identifying information will be included in publication. (Please give details.)

☐ It is not possible for participants to be anonymous in this research. (Please give details.)

6.6 (M*) Will you keep research information confidential and, if so, how?

Confidentiality is defined as the non-disclosure of research information except to another authorised person. Confidential information can be shared with those who are already party to it, and may also be disclosed where the person providing the information provides explicit consent.

Research information and data will be stored in a password protected laptop property of the University Of Southampton. Data collected or any other information on participants will not be disclosed to any other participants or to anyone else. Real names of participants will not be used, data will be coded.

If participants agree to recording of interviews, recording will be stored in a password protected laptop property of the University Of Southampton. The recordings will be destroyed upon completion of transcription of the interviews.

Consent forms and participant codes will be stored separately and securely.

6.7 (M*) Please list all forms of data collected during the research. *This includes names and contact details taken to arrange participation or to feed back results from the study, consent forms and all research data. You should state the content of*

the data (e.g. what you will ask participants) and the form the data will take (e.g. audio, video, transcripts, questionnaire answers).

You must also state if you are collecting 'personal data' or 'sensitive / special category data'. In these cases additional care may be needed. The following text explains what kinds of data this applies to.

Personal data means any information relating to an identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified in particular by reference to an identifier. This could include personal data, including name, identification number, location data or online identifier. Personal data that has been pseudonymised – e.g. key-coded – can fall within the scope of the GDPR depending on how difficult it is to attribute the pseudonym to a particular individual.

Sensitive /special category personal data: data that consists of information about racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs or beliefs of a similar nature, physical or mental health or condition, sexual life, the commission/alleged commission of an offence alleged/committed by the data subject and any related court proceedings, trade union membership. It also includes genetic (i.e. inherited or acquired genetic characteristics e.g. blood type) and biometric data (e.g. fingerprints) where processed to uniquely identify an individual.

Audio recording of interviews.

Transcription of interviews.

Notes on lesson observation.

Notes on document analysis.

All data will be coded in order to reduce risk of identification.

No sensitive data will be collected.

Special category personal data: since the research project aims to research the construction of identity of nativeness in the CFL classroom in Malta, participants' race/ethnic origin is relevant. All data will be anonymised to reduce the risk of identification through the participants' race/ethnic origin.

6.8 (M*) Where will you store your data? *(Please indicate where data will be stored for all data identified in 6.7.)*

Personal data should be stored on a password protected, University of Southampton network or computer. If this is not possible, data may be on the University's Microsoft OneDrive accessed through your University email address.

Emails should be kept in a password protected University of Southampton email account and all emails should be deleted after the study is finished.

Consent forms and other hard data should be stored in lockable cabinet(s).

If you are using sensitive / special category personal data, you should be aware that this may need to be stored more securely.

If you have questions about the storage of research data please contact researchdata@soton.ac.uk

Data	**Where it will be stored.**
Emails from participants.	☑ Emails will be kept in a password protected University of Southampton email account and all emails will be deleted after the study is finished (Please tick to confirm)
Please give details. Data collected from interviews: recordings and transcriptions of interviews. All data will be stored in password protected laptop that is property of the University Of Southampton. Consent forms will be stored in a locked filing cabinet separate from the data.	☑ On University of Southampton servers, within the University network ☑ Encrypted on a university build laptop ☐ On Microsoft OneDrive accessed through your University email address ☑ In a locked filing cabinet ☐ Other –please give details
Notes on lesson observation. All data will be stored in password protected laptop that is property of the University Of Southampton.	☑ On University of Southampton servers, within the University network ☑ Encrypted on a university build laptop ☐ On Microsoft OneDrive accessed through your University email address ☐ In a locked filing cabinet ☐ Other –please give details
Notes on document analysis of teaching materials. All data will be stored in password protected laptop that is property of the University Of Southampton.	☑ On University of Southampton servers, within the University network

	☐ Encrypted on a university build laptop ☐ On Microsoft OneDrive accessed through your University email address ☐ In a locked filing cabinet ☐ Other –please give details

6.9 (M*) Please confirm

☑ I am aware of, and compliant with, the Data Protection policy of the University, the Data Protection Act and the GDPR.

☑ I understand that if I lose personal data, I must contact databreach@soton.ac.uk immediately.

6.10 (M*) Who will have access to these data and how will they be shared/ moved?

Tick the appropriate box

☐ Only I will have access to the data

☑ Only I and my supervisor will have access to the data

☐ Only the research team based at the University of Southampton will have access to the data

☐ Collaborators from [*insert external organisation*] will have access to the data. They will/ will not be given access to raw data. There *is/ is not [delete as appropriate]* a data sharing agreement under negotiation. I understand that if raw data is to be shared with collaborators, a data sharing agreement must be in place before data collection begins and that if any documents or processes are changed as a result of negotiation, I must submit an amendment to my ERGOII application and wait for approval of the amendment before beginning to collect data.
Please give details.

☐ Other. Please give details.

Tick the appropriate box

☑ No personal data will be moved or shared.

☐ When sharing or moving personal data, University of Southampton Dropoff will be used.

☐ When sharing or moving personal data, a Sharepoint site will be created for the use of the researcher and supervisor/ collaborators

☐ Other. Please give details.

Please confirm:

☑ I understand that personal data must not be sent by email

6.11 (M*) Have you taken appropriate action to minimise potential risks to researchers?

Risks to researchers

☑ If you are a student, please check to confirm you have discussed potential risks to researchers arising from the research with your supervisor.

Are there any potential risks to researchers and any other people impacted by this study as a consequence of undertaking this research that are greater than those encountered in normal day to day life that have not already been described in the application?

No

If yes, please describe these potential risks and what you will do about them. This might include, for instance, arrangements to ensure that a supervisor or co-researcher has details of your whereabouts and a means of contacting you when you conduct interviews away from your base; or ensuring that a 'chaperone' is available if necessary for one-to-one interviews.

☐ **Please check to confirm you have carried out any relevant health and safety risk assessments for your research**

6.12 Please complete if your research includes an online questionnaire. Any online questionnaire platform must be GDPR compliant. We recommend that researchers use the University's ISurvey platform (isurvey.soton.ac.uk) or Survey Monkey. If you wish to use another platform, please explain why and confirm that it is GDPR compliant.

Which platform will you be using for your survey?

Tick the appropriate box

☐ I will be using ISurvey

☐ I will be using Survey Monkey

☐ I will be using _____ because _____ Please include a link to the GDPR statement of the company here:

7. ANY OTHER DETAILS

7.1 If there is anything else that you think the reviewers should know about the study, please give details here.

Continued on next page.

8. CULTURAL HERITAGE

8. Will your study involve any of the following?

1. **Intrusive or destructive intervention in cultural heritage.**

This might include archaeological excavation, surface collection of cultural artefacts, destructive analysis of cultural artefacts or materials, or activities leading to a loss of artefact provenance information.

2. **Work with historic artefacts or materials that may be ethically or legally sensitive.**

This might include artefacts of uncertain provenance where there is the possibility that they have been illegally excavated and/or exported from their country of origin, artefacts of uncertain ownership, artefacts or materials of particular significance to indigenous people.

3. **Gathering of information leading to the commercial exploitation of cultural heritage, specifically activities that facilitate treasure hunting, pillaging or commercial salvage operations, usually with the aim of financial gain by putting artefacts from a heritage site up for sale.**

4. **Work with human remains dating from more than 100 years ago.**

☑ No

☐ Yes – and I have already provided details of relevant recognised guidelines, legislation or policy which my study will comply with and which cover all ethical concerns surrounding all work with cultural heritage involved in my study.

☐ Yes – and I have completed the Cultural Heritage Ethics Application Form.

N.B. – Before you upload this document to your ERGO submission remember to:

1. Complete ALL mandatory sections in this form

2. Complete the Cultural Heritage Ethics Application Form if relevant.

3. Upload any participant information forms, consent forms, letters of agreement to your ERGO submission. Please ensure that you are using the up to date templates, which can be found on ERGO II.

4. Upload any interview schedules and copies of questionnaires

5. Checked that the University of Southampton logo appears on all documents and the version number, date, ethics number (ERGO ID for most studies) appears on every participant facing document (including emails, posters, flyers etc)

Appendix 3 – Transcripts of the interviews and translations into English

First Interview – Student 1 – English

Interview questions – first round of interviews

1. What is a native speaker?

People who were brought up listening to this language and speaking it throughout your childhood years. A native speaker is a person who speaks the language throughout childhood.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

No. No they're not.

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

Not always. They can't memorise all the characters. I mean I say sometimes native speakers have grammatical mistakes, because even myself, I was brought up speaking English, rather than Maltese and even my English has many grammatical mistakes. It's more like Maltese English.

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

Non-native speaker (giggles haha)

Why do you feel like a non-native speaker of Chinese?

Because I wasn't brought up learning Chinese. And only I don't know how old I was, maybe I was 19/20, I was 20 when I started learning Chinese and I'm still far behind what I have to learn, I'm nowhere near native speaker.

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

n/a

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

English. **I wish it were Maltese, sometimes I struggle with Maltese and it upsets me a lot.** Because I was brought up listening to English. My parents, my family always spoke to me in English, that's why I consider myself a native speaker of English.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

Yes, I think so, yes. I believe that someone who is learning, someone who learns Chinese in the later years, a Chinese person would be able to see the difference between a native and non-native speaker.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

Erm, well it depends, there are different dialects. There's Cantonese, I mean it depends.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

Erm, I think it would depend on their family, and if they are always speaking to them in Chinese, for example I would consider them native speakers. Probably there would be a bit of a difference I guess in the language skills to someone who was born in China and who was constantly hearing Chinese spoken wherever you go.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes, if they are brought up in an environment where everyone is speaking Chinese, then yes I would definitely consider them a native speaker.

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

Definitely for sure, if a Chinese person was born in Malta they can definitely not be a native Chinese speaker. In fact I met, I met children and they say, the parents say that their Chinese is not very good.

Me: Can a person who is not Chinese become a native speaker?

Erm… It is possible, it is possible, but, but, I don't, I think there would be some differences, maybe if they've lived many years in China. I find Chinese is very, extremely difficult to reach that level, even when they are excellent, even when their Chinese is really good, still a native speaker might know more, but I think if they've spent many years in China they can sound like a native speaker but I wouldn't call them a native speaker. If, are my answers so direct?

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

No, I don't think so. I don't think so, because I think a native speaker might also use a bit of slang sometimes which might not be so grammatically correct. Or they get lazy when they speak, it could happen there, it's not always the case, yes, I think they can make many mistakes as well.

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

No, I think that the characters can very easily and very often be written wrongly, many Chinese people forget how to write so many characters, it's very common.

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

Participant: For a native speaker? In specifically Putonghua, so for people brought up speaking Putonghua? (participant asks for clarification) Erm… erm… I think, I wouldn't know exactly, but I'd say that, yes, their tones would be quite exact if they are brought up speaking Putonghua? Probably, I don't know enough, I would say I'm a bit uncertain, but I'd yes their tones, most of the time.

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

Yes, for sure, for sure they can, definitely, 100%, I'm sure they can learn very well and they can also learn how to speak **like** a native, their tones would be perfect, yes.

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

No, not necessarily no.

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

Yes, they can not know.

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

I think both of them have advantages, like for example, someone who isn't a native speaker can understand the student better and can explain things from their point of view better. And then someone who is native maybe (…) can (…) answer every single questions that they have whilst I feel like a non-native maybe cannot answer everything (stress on thing) like there are so many, and certain things that one wouldn't be able to answer, so they both have their advantages.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

Erm, but it depends if they were brought up learning Putonghua, like because there are some Chinese people who wouldn't be able to speak Putonghua. But most of the time, if, if it was someone brought up speaking Putonghua, they know how to speak it, so most of the time, yes, they would be more proficient.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

I think yes when it comes to more advanced Chinese. Like I'd say when you first start learning Chinese a non-native teacher would be better, but, as the years go on, a native teacher would be better like to learn Chinese. But I might be wrong.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

I'd say that they were born into it, their family spoke to them in Putonghua or Chinese and that, until they were, around 14 or something they have always been speaking Putonghua, and also, that they continued to be around and in contact with people that speak the language, because if they cut out completely, for like a decade, even they, their Chinese level will be, won't be as high, I feel. Maybe I'm wrong, I think I'm wrong, but I consider mostly it's people, who were, in their childhood years even a bit into their teenage years, that they were always speaking that language.

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

Non-native speaker would be someone that in their childhood they weren't brought up speaking that language. They weren't surrounded, the environment they lived in, they weren't exposed to the language in their childhood years.

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes, it does, but of course it always depends on their environment. If the people around them are speaking the language.

Me: what about proficiency, can proficiency/ studying the language make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

No

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

No it doesn't, it contributes a lot to it but in reality it doesn't. Because if I was born in China, I could still be a native speaker, if those bringing me up were speaking to me in Chinese and my friends spoke Chinese.

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever become a native speaker of Chinese?

Become? So they weren't born into it. No I don't think so, it would still be their second language even though they are very proficient in it, they wouldn't be a native speaker. **Which makes it even more incredible.**

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes, they can NOT be a native speaker of Chinese.

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

Ehe, Yes if they work very hard, they can. And if they are exposed to it they can. Then yes they can. It's a lot of hard work. (haha)

Me: Do you want to become a native speaker of Chinese?

I would love to. My dream.

Me: or do you want to be a native speaker of your language? of English?

Erm, I would love to sound like a native speaker of Chinese, I would love to work very hard and be able to speak **like** a native speaker in Chinese. That answers your question, does it?

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

No. not necessarily.

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

Participant: As in do they have to?

Me: do they need to study it?

Participant: to be proficient, I don't think they have to, they can learn and be proficient in the spoken language, they don't need to study it I think.

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

Proficiency which makes a native speaker (…) erm.. a native speaker though, it's more on the spoken language, I think, erm, that they can (…) speak freely whatever thoughts that come to their mind they can express themselves freely in their language and people can understand them. So, without thinking twice that they are native speakers. Native speaker level is the ability to speak without having to think, a native speaker speaks without the need to translate into another language. A native speaker of Chinese thinks in Chinese as they speak it. Understanding of jokes and humour also

makes a native speaker. A native speaker understands television, they understand all conversations and understands all scenarios in Chinese.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

They could be, but then again it makes the lesson more interesting if the teachers are willing to share their own culture with the students.

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

Erm, (…) in the beginning, in the first year or two they might be at an advantage, but, then again, I was brought up, as in my first year at university, for example, I had, even you I imagine had native teachers, and I had no problem with that at all. I mean at the beginning it is, at the very beginning it is a bit difficult to get used to, to get used to the rhythm to how they teach, but then, I found it very good. They can, but then again, non-native can be at an advantage as well.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

Erm (…) are they the ideal teachers, at the same time, no I don't think so, like I said in the beginning yes, it is ideal but then later on when it becomes very advanced, I think it would be better to have a **native** speaker.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

You can, I think if you work very hard I think you can become close to it. But then again I don't think you would be a native speaker.

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

Yes they would love to, but it is extremely difficult, it is a huge feat to reach, but yes they would like to become close to native, but I don't think they can become entirely native speakers, if that is even possible, they can become close to it.

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

Yes I think so, yes I think they are born into it.

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

Yes, erm yes, they'd be fluent in their own dialect.

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

Yes I think, I think I would still see them as a native speaker because they can speak the language.

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

I think the level of proficiency will be lower, they will forget many things, so, but I think, but I don't think they won't forget it to a point where they won't be native anymore. I had met, but I met a Chinese child who was living in Malta for quite a while and they were almost insecure about their Chinese because, they weren't using it for so long, but I still consider them as a native speaker.

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

Later on in life? I don't think they would fully become native speakers. I think they would be very high level, but they still wouldn't be native speakers, I feel there are so many, so much to learn in Chinese, it's such a rich language, like, there's so much to it, (giggles) even if they spend years there, everyone would be like wow, you sound **like** a native speaker, but still they are not a native speaker because they weren't brought up learning that language.

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

I don't think so. After you've been, after you've been in that environment for so many years, I'd say a good fifteen years, I don't think it would change, I mean, there could be some slight, some people that might lose their language if they stopped speaking the language completely, and stop listening to it, I guess they could change, but it's extremely unlikely I would say.

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

To learn the cultural background of the students?

Erm (…) It, it will help, yes, especially the first few months, or the first year really, they have to know some English otherwise it's extremely difficult and mostly the L1, some English or whatever language.

Interview 2 – Student 2 – Maltese – translated

Interview questions – first round of interviews

L-ewwel intervista

1. What is a native speaker?

1. X'inhu kelliem nattiv?

Xi ħadd li tgħallem il-lingwa mit-twelid. Twieled fiha l-lingwa. Jiena non-native speaker taċ-Ċiniż. Il-Malti huwa n-native language tiegħi għax jien twelidt u kbirt hawn Malta. Tgħallimt il-Malti mill-ambjent li twelidt fih.

Someone who learns the language since birth. They were born into it. Maltese is my native language because I was born and raised in Malta. I learned Maltese from the environment I was born in.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

2. Meta kelliem nattiv jitkellem, dan ikun dejjem grammatikament korrett?

Le le ma naħsibx, jekk iċ-Ċiniż, hemm ċertu djaletti li jvarjaw ħafna mill-istandard.

No, no I don't think so. There are many dialects in Chinese that vary from the Standard.

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

3. Il-kitba tal-kelliem nattiv (karattri u grammatika) huma dejjem grammatikament korretti?

Iċ-Ċiniżi jużaw l-istess karattri. Characters unify Chinese. Mandix dubju. Hemm min tgħallem is-simplified u min tgħallem it-traditional. Hemm Ċiniżi li huma illiterate.

The Chinese use the same characters. Characters unify Chinese. I have no doubt that there are people who have learned simplified and there are others who have learned the traditional characters. There are also Chinese people who are illiterate.

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

4. Inti kelliem nattiv jew kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex?

No, far from it. I haven't lived there. I haven't immersed myself in the culture.

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Jekk iva, x'jagħmlek kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Native speaker huwa persuna li għamel perjodu ta' żmien jgħix iċ-Ċina. Ma nafx eżatt kemm żmien, imma xi ħadd li għamel żmien sew jgħix iċ-Ċina. Speaking, living the life of the country.

A native speaker is someone who lived in China for a period of time. I can't define exactly how long that is, but it is someone who spent a considerable amount of time in China, living the life of the country.

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

6. Jekk le, x'jagħmlek kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jekk le, x'inhi l-lingwa materna tiegħek? X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv ta' dik il-lingwa?

Maltese – I was born and raised in Malta. English is also my native language, I lived in London for 10 years – I was immersed in the English language and culture in London.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

7. Hemm xi differenza bejn kelliem nattiv u kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Yes, non-native speakers I understand them better. Non-native speakers speak standard Putonghua. No accent, they don't speak fast, they are more careful not to make mistakes.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

8. In-nies li twieldu ċ-Ċina huma kollha kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż? X'varjetà ta' Ċiniż? Bilfors tal-Putonghua?

No, if they are raised speaking Cantonese – they are native speakers of Cantonese.

If one only speaks English at home, then they are a native speaker of English not of Chinese.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

9. Jista' kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż jitwieled u jitrabba f'komunità Ċiniża fil-punent? (eż. Fl-Ingilterra, fl-Amerka, fl-Awstralja...) Dawn xorta jkunu kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva – imma jrid inkun qatta żmien jgħix iċ-Ċina.

Yes, if they lived in China for quite some time.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

10. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex? Għaliex le? Tista' persuna ta' etniċità Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva

Yes

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

11. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża imma li tistudja ċ-Ċiniż fl-iskola jew fl-università qatt issir kelliem nattiv? Jew forsi ssir bħal kelliem nattiv? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

Jekk imur jgħix iċ-Ċina iva imma jrid ħafna żmien, It's so complicated.

Yes, if s/he has lived in China for a very long time. One needs a very long time. It's so complicated.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

12. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li kull ma tgħid huwa grammatikament tajjeb?

Le

No

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

13. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-karattri mikubin tagħha huma bilfors tajbin?

Le
No

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

14. Jekk persuna tkun kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-pronunzja tat-tonalitajiet hija dejjem bilfors tajba? U l-pronunzja ta' Standard Putonghua?

Le. Hemm teachers li kienu jitkellmu Standard Putonghua, oħrajn mhux dejjem jitkellmu Standard Putonghua.

No. There are teachers who speak Standard Putonghua, there are others who don't always speak Standard Putonghua.

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

15. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż li jitgħallem l-istandard Putonghua vera sewwa? (li jkun fluwenti, li jkollu grammatika tajba, pronunzja, karattri miktubin...)

Yes, one could have native speaker level yes, but it doesn't make him a native speaker, a native speaker is 'nativo' (in Italian) necessarily born.

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

16. Il-kelliema nattivi huma bilfors kelliema nattivi ta' Standard Putonghua?

Le
No

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

17. Jista' kelliem nattiv ma jkunx jaf jitkellem/ma jifhimx Standard Putonghua?

Yes
Iva

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

18. L-għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi huma l-għalliema ideali? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

It depends (…)if they speak Standard yes, but otherwise it becomes problematic. The standard of English is the biggest issue in CFL.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

19. L-Għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi bilfors ikollhom aktar għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

Not necessarily. I think non-native speakers will usually be more careful. Native speakers take things for granted. It is difficult for them to adapt. Not necessarily.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

It-tieni intervista

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

1. L-għalliem nattiv huwa l-għalliem ideali għax huwa twieled fil-lingwa u fil-kultura u b'hekk għandu iktar għarfien?

Le
No

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

2. X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Born in the country, immersed in culture, in the frame of mind, understand certain things that are specific to the country's collective history, for example chengyu, only people born and in the Chinese collective history and culture can understand.

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

3. X'jagħmel kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

A non-native speaker of Chinese is someone who studies and is interested in Chinese culture.

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

4. L-etniċità u l-post tat-twelid jagħmlu persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jew l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Birthplace and nurture, eg. someone who is adopted who grew up in household that speaks Chinese.

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Hija l-identità soċjo-kulturali li tagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva
Yes

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

6. Tista' persuna li mhix etnikament Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Not exactly, if they live in China for many years maybe. Native speaker level yes.

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

7. Tista' persuna li hi etnikament Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Yes

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

8. Jistgħu l-edukazzjoni u l-istudju jagħmlu persuna li mhix nattiva tinstema' bħal kelliem nattiv? Tistieq issir kelliem nattiv? Jew tixtieq li tibqa' kelliem nattiv tal-lingwa tiegħek?

Education can lead someone to the standard language, but that wouldn't make him a native speaker.

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

9. Il-kelliem nattiv bilfors ikollu l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

Le
No

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

10. Il-kelliema nattivi għandhom bżonn jistudjaw l-istandard Putonghua l-iskola jew l-università?

Yes
Iva

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

11. X'livell ta' għarfien jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv?

Native speaker level is the ability to speak without having to think, a native speaker speaks without the need to translate into another language. A native speaker of Chinese thinks in Chinese as they speak.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

12. L-għalliema nattivi dejjem ikunu kulturalment 'l bogħod mill-istudenti tagħhom?

Native speaker teachers tend to try to sell Chinese culture and everything Chinese. There is a distance. They are not open to other cultures. China conquers – sinicized

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

13. L-għalliema mhux nattivi għandhom vantaġġ għax għandhom l-istess lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

I think in certain respects a non-native teacher helps. A non-native teacher helps students to understand the mind-set of Chinese language. A non-native teacher can explain the thinking behind the hanzi, phrases, uses of words, a non-native speaker who is really very good helps a lot. A non-native teacher would be very helpful. A native speaker won't be able to explain, for example we don't know the history behind pastizzi, (a Maltese snack) a non-native speaker who studied would know.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

It-tielet intervista

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

1. L-għalliem mhux nattiv huwa l-ideal għax għandu l-istess sfond kulturali u tingwa materna bħall-istudenti?

I think a non-native speaker teacher if they are very well learned, they are an asset. But they are very hard to come by.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

2. Jista' xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż jistudja u **jsir** kelliem nattiv ta' Standard Putonghua?

I can aspire to the level but I won't become a native speaker. Maybe if I live in China for 20 years, marry a Chinese woman, raise children as Chinese, immerse myself in Chinese culture.

3.Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

3. Kelliema mhux nattivi taċ-Ċiniż jixtiequ li jsiru kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż/Standard Putonghua?

I don't think that there is a huge amount of people who want to learn Chinese. At the moment, China is not popular, it affects the number of people who study Chinese. The numbers of people who study Chinese are very low, the image of China is at times negative. Here in Malta Japanese is more popular. Japanese is positive, manga. China is negative. Communist background – very big issues, human rights. Plus language is very difficult – tones are difficult, TV they have subtitles because it is difficult even for Chinese people.

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

4. Kelliem nattiv jitwieled? Jista' wieħed isir kelliem nattiv?

Yes – natus (born). No, one cannot become.

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

5. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx fluwenti fl-istandard Putonghua?

Yes

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

6. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx taf tikteb il-karattri Ċiniżi?

Yes, there are illiterate people who are native speakers of Chinese.

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

7. Jista' kelliem nattiv 'jitlef' l-abbiltà lingwistika u ma jibqax jidentifika bħala kelliem nattiv?

(forsi jiltaq mill-komunità li titkellem iċ-Ċiniż)

It's rare but it could happen if someone leaves it behind.

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

8. Jista' kelliem mhux nattiv jitgħallem tant li jsir kelliem nattiv? (per eżempju persuna li tmur tgħix f'komunità fejn jitkellmu ċ-Ċiniż)

That would be native speaker level.

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

9. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li jibdel l-identità tiegħu minn kelliem nattiv għal kelliemm mhux nattiv u viċe-versa?

It could be possible, but very rare. If you forget words, but then once you are exposed, it comes back. It all comes back. Like Maltese people who migrate to Canada and Australia, when they come back to Malta and they hear Maltese around them they pick it up again.

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

10. Huwa importanti għall-għalliema li jifhmu l-isfond kulturali/il-lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

It makes a big difference if the teacher understands English. They need to be able to reply and explain in English, especially for beginners. Maltese is not important. Because Malta is bilingual, children study Maltese and English at the same time.

In another country, for example in Poland they should be able to speak Polish.

Maltese can help, but it is not essential. English is important – we are bilingual.

Interview 3 – Student 3 – Maltese – translated

Interview questions – first round of interviews

L-ewwel intervista

1. What is a native speaker?

1. X'inhu kelliem nattiv?

Chinese culture, kellna exercise li jgħid to fill in, inter-cultural communication – you cannot refuse going to lunch. A native speaker is someone who lived in China for many years. Native speakers, hemm ċertu kliem u expressions li tuża f'kuntest ta' kultura, there are certain things that only native speakers know.

Chinese culture, we had an exercise to fill in, inter-cultural communication – you cannot refuse going to lunch. A native speaker is someone who lived in China for many years. Native speakers, there are certain words and expressions that are used in a cultural context, there are certain things that only native speakers know.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

2. Meta kelliem nattiv jitkellem, dan ikun dejjem grammatikament korrett?

Mhux bilfors. Hemm xi tones li huma stess ma jgħiduhomx sew.

Not necessarily. There are certain tones that even they don't pronounce well.

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

3. Il-kitba tal-kelliem nattiv (karattri u grammatika) huma dejjem grammatikament korretti?

Jiena qatt ma mort iċ-Ċina, minix ċerta. Jien ma nafx biżżejjed biex niġġudika jekk native speaker hux qed jgħid sewwa jew le. Native speaker jista' jieħu żbalji. Jista' jkollhom aċċent li mhux standard.

I've never been to China, I'm not sure. I don't know enough to judge whether a native speaker is right or not. A native speaker could make grammar errors. They might have an accent that is not standard.

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

4. Inti kelliem nattiv jew kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex?

Mhux nattiv. Iċ-Ċiniż huwa r-raba lingwa tiegħi.

Non-native speaker. Chinese is my fourth language.

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Jekk iva, x'jagħmlek kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

A native speaker is a person who doesn't need to think to express themself. A NNS has to think before speaking. If one is angry, sad, tired – they speak the mother tongue.

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

6. Jekk le, x'jagħmlek kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jekk le, x'inhi l-lingwa materna tiegħek? X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv ta' dik il-lingwa?

Le m'aħna qatt ħa nitkellmu bħalhom. Aħna kif nitkellmu dejjem hemm xi ħaġa nieqsa. The accent of a non-native speaker is different. We don't have the local accent. My native language is not Chinese because I studied Chinese as an adult. Since birth, at home I always spoke Maltese.

We are never going to speak like them. When we speak something is always missing. The accent of a non-native speaker is different. We don't have the local accent. My native language is not Chinese because I studied Chinese as an adult. Since birth, at home I always spoke Maltese.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

7. Hemm xi differenza bejn kelliem nattiv u kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Id-differenza hija fl-aċċent, pronunciation. The non-native speaker could have native speaker level. There isn't necessarily a difference, a non-native speaker might have a high level of Chinese. A non-

native speaker thinks to speak, but it depends on their level, if I speak in my first or second languages it's the same for me, it all depends on one's level.

The difference is the accent, pronunciation. The non-native speaker could have native speaker level. There isn't necessarily a difference, a non-native speaker might have a high level of Chinese. A non-native speaker thinks to speak, but it depends on their level, if I speak in my first or second languages it's the same for me, it all depends on one's level.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? Necessarily Putonghua?

8. In-nies li twieldu ċ-Ċina huma kollha kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż? X'varjetà ta' Ċiniż? Bilfors tal-Putonghua?

Le, hemm ħafna djaletti.

No, there are many dialects.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

9. Jista' kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż jitwieled u jitrabba f'komunità Ċiniża fil-punent? (eż. Fl-Ingilterra, fl-Amerka, fl-Awstralja...) Dawn xorta jkunu kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż?

Le, l-aċċent ikun differenti. Ikun hemm xi ħaġa nieqsa. Jiddependi mill-exposure tal-lingwa li jkollu d-dar.

No, the accent is different. There is something missing. It depends on the exposure of the language at home.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

10. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex? Għaliex le? Tista' persuna ta' etniċità Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

If they live in China all their life, then yes. The issues is not birthplace, it's nurture. It's where one has lived for many years. Fejn kbirt – childhood is what makes a native speaker. Not birth, but where one was brought up.

If they live in China all their life, then yes. The issues is not birthplace, it's nurture. It's where one has lived for many years. Where one grew up – childhood is what makes a native speaker. Not birth, but where one was brought up.

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

11. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża imma li tistudja ċ-Ċiniż fl-iskola jew fl-università qatt issir kelliem nattiv? Jew forsi ssir bħal kelliem nattiv? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

Native speaker huwa xi ħadd li għex iċ-Ċina ħajtu kollha, hekk iva. Aħna native speakers tal-Malti (...) jekk xi ħadd jiżżewweġ lil xi ħadd Ċiniż u jmur joqgħod iċ-Ċina, dik storja oħra! Ma tistax issir native speaker, wieħed jista' jkollu l-livell ta' native speaker. Jekk aħna l-Maltin nistudjaw ħafna, xorta ma nistgħux insiru native speakers taċ-Ċiniż. Trid tgħix iċ-Ċina, trid tiżżewweġ hemm, tgħix iċ-Ċina għal

aktar minn għoxrin sena. Il-mind-set fiċ-Ċina huwa totalement differenti, wieħed irid ukoll jifhem il-kultura biex ikun native speaker. Il-kultura hija dik li tagħmel in-native speaker.

A native speaker is someone who has lived in China all their life. We are native speakers of Maltese (…) if someone gets married to someone who is China, moves to China, that's another story! Not become a native speaker, but one can acquire native speaker level. If we, Maltese study a lot, we can never become native speakers. One has to live in China, to become a native speaker one has to get married there, live there in China for over twenty years. The mind-set is totally different in China, one has to understand the culture also to be a native speaker. Culture makes a person a native speaker.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

12. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li kull ma tgħid huwa grammatikament tajjeb?

L-aċċent, il- pronunciation hija differenti fi djaletti differenti. Diffiċli tifhem l-aċċent tal-kelliem nattiv, id-djalett mhux standard. Il-kelliema nattivi mhux dejjem grammatikament korretti, mhux dejjem jitkellmu standard. Lanqas nistgħu ngħidu min hu native speaker taċ-Ċiniż.

The accents, pronunciation is different in different dialects. It is difficult to understand the accent of the native speaker, the dialects is not standard. Native speakers are not always grammatically correct, they are not always standard. We cannot really determine who the native speaker of Chinese is.

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

13. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-karattri mikubin tagħha huma bilfors tajbin?

Le

No

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

14. Jekk persuna tkun kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-pronunzja tat-tonalitajiet hija dejjem bilfors tajba? U l-pronunzja ta' Standard Putonghua?

Le, jkollhom l-aċċent.

No, they have accent.

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

15. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż li jitgħallem l-istandard Putonghua vera sewwa? (li jkun fluwenti, li jkollu grammatika tajba, pronunzja, karattri miktubin...)

Iva, imma aħna l-Ewropej ma nistgħux nilħqu l-livell tal-kelliema nattivi. Lanqas bit-Taljan, għax ukoll jindunaw li aħna Maltin.

Yes, but we Europeans cannot reach native speaker level. We cannot even reach native speaker level in Italian, they know that we are Maltese.

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

16. Il-kelliema nattivi huma bilfors kelliema nattivi ta' Standard Putonghua?

Le

No

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

17. Jista' kelliem nattiv ma jkunx jaf jitkellem/ma jifhimx Standard Putonghua?

Iva, hemm ħafna nies hekk.

Yes, there are many people like that.

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

18. L-għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi huma l-għalliema ideali? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

Le le, fil-bidu le. Fiċ-Ċina iva, l-għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi huma l-aħjar. F'Malta, fl-Ewropa, mhumiex l-ideal. Iridu jikkomunikaw bil-Malti. Fi stadju avvanzat, jiddependi fuq l-għalliem, fuq id-dedikazzjoni tiegħu, imma għalliema nattivi li huma kwalifikati huma tajbin, mela l-aħjar. Għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi għandhom żvantaġġ, il-pronunzja tal-Ingliż tagħhom mhix standard. Aħna mhux dejjem nifhmu l-Ingliż tal-għalliema li huma native speakers.

No no, in the begnning no. In China yes, native speaker teachers are the best. In Malta, Europe, they are not ideal. They need to communicate in Maltese. At an advanced stage – it depends on the teacher, on their dedication, but native speaker teachers who are qualified and good, then yes, the best. Native speaker teachers have a drawback, their English pronunciation is not standard. We might not understand the English of native speaker teachers.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

19. L-Għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi bilfors ikollhom aktar għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

Mhux bilfors. Jiddependi fuq il-persuna. Native speakers għandhom vantaġġ biex jifhmu l-kultura. Native speakers m'għandhomx vantaġġ akkademiku, għandhom vantaġġ kulturali.

Not necessarily. It depends on the person. Native speakers have an advantage to understand the culture. Native speakers don't have an academic advantage, they have a cultural advantage.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

It-tieni intervista

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

1. L-għalliem nattiv huwa l-għalliem ideali għax huwa twieled fil-lingwa u fil-kultura u b'hekk għandu iktar għarfien?

Le, mhux fil-bidu.

No, not in the beginning.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

2. X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Li jkun trabba fis-soċjetà tal-lingwa.

To be brought up in the society where the language is spoken.

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

3. X'jagħmel kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Li tgħallem il-lingwa imma qatt ma għex f'din is-soċjetà. Jekk immur f'area oħra fiċ-Ċina, jistgħu jaħsbu li jien native speaker ta' djalett ieħor.

One who has learned the language but never lived in that society. If I go to another area of China, they might think I'm a native speaker of another dialect.

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

4. L-etniċità u l-post tat-twelid jagħmlu persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jew l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Le fejn għex jagħmlu.

No, where one lived makes a native speaker.

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Hija l-identità soċjo-kulturali li tagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

L-identità mhix biss fejn twieled, imma hija wkoll fejn wieħed trabba u fejn għex. L-identità hija ffurmata u mibnija, mhux biss fejn wieħed twieled. L-identità tinbena, tikber matul il-ħajja, il-mind-set u l-kultura huma importanti wkoll.

Identity is not birth, it is where one was brought up and where they lived. Identity is formed and constructed, not just birth. Identity is constructed, it grows throughout life, the mind-set and culture are also important.

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

6. Tista' persuna li mhix etnikament Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Ma nafx. Minix ċerta.

I don't know. I'm not sure.

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

7. Tista' persuna li hi etnikament Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva

Yes

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

8. Jistgħu l-edukazzjoni u l-istudju jagħmlu persuna li mhix nattiva tinstema' bħal kelliem nattiv? Tistieq issir kelliem nattiv? Jew tixtieq li tibqa' kelliem nattiv tal-lingwa tiegħek?

Tinstema' iva, imma mhux issir. Jiena Maltija, ħadd ma jista' jħassar dan!

Sound like yes, but not become. I am Maltese, nothing can change this!

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

9. Il-kelliem nattiv bilfors ikollu l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

Mhux bilfors.

Not necessarily.

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

10. Il-kelliema nattivi għandhom bżonn jistudjaw l-istandard Putonghua l-iskola jew l-università?

Iva, għandhom bżonn jitgħallmu l-istandard. L-istandard jgħaqqadhom. L-istandard għandhom bżonnu biex jikkomunikaw.

Yes, they need to learn the standard language. It is what connects them together. The standard is necessary to be able to communicate.

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

11. X'livell ta' għarfien jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv?

(...) Native speaker jaf jitkellem, mhux bilfors jaf jikteb.

(...) Not only, native speaker can speak, not necessarily write.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

12. L-għalliema nattivi dejjem ikunu kulturalment 'l bogħod mill-istudenti tagħhom?

Iva, imma hu sabiħ li l-istudenti jitgħallmu. Iċ-Ċiniżi u l-Maltin it-tnejn iħobbu l-ikel.

Yes, but it is nice for students to learn. Chinese and Maltese both like food.

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

13. L-għalliema mhux nattivi għandhom vantaġġ għax għandhom l-istess lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

Iva, speċjalment biex jgħallmu lit-tfal. Sharing the L1 is a huge advantage to teach basics, per eżempju biex jgħallmu l-measure word.

Yes, especially for teaching children. Sharing the L1 is a huge advantage to teach basics, for example to teach the measure word.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

It-tielet intervista

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

1. L-għalliem mhux nattiv huwa l-ideal għax għandu l-istess sfond kulturali u tingwa materna bħall-istudenti?

Huwa importanti li jkollu l-istess lingwa. L-Ingliż jista' jkun ta' xkiel. L-Ingliż mhux il-lingwa tagħna. Native speaker ma jaħsibx biex jitkellem.

It is important to share the language. English could be a distraction. English is not our language. Native speaker doesn't think to speak.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

2. Jista' xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż jistudja u **jsir** kelliem nattiv ta' Standard Putonghua?

Bl-istudju biss le.

Through studying only no.

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

3. Kelliema mhux nattivi taċ-Ċiniż jixtiequ li jsiru kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż/Standard Putonghua?

Le, aħna kelliema tal-Malti. Ma rridx insir native speaker taċ-Ċiniż, jiena Maltija u Maltija rrid nibqa. If I had to identify with another language – I would identify with Arabic. L-identità tiegħi hi Maltija. Jekk tiżżewweġ u tmur toqgħod iċ-Ċina, mod ieħor.

No, we are speakers of Maltese. I don't want to become a native speaker of Chinese, I am Maltese and I want to remain Maltese. If I had to identify with another language – I would identify with Arabic. My identity is Maltese. If one gets married and moves to China, that's another thing.

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

4. Kelliem nattiv jitwieled? Jista' wieħed isir kelliem nattiv?

Iva, jitwieled. Ma jistax isir.

One is born. One cannot become.

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

5. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx fluwenti fl-istandard Putonghua?

Iva.

Yes

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

6. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx taf tikteb il-karattri Ċiniżi?

Iva, kemm f'Malta kif ukoll fiċ-Ċina hemm ħafna nies illitterati.

Yes, in both Malta and China. There are many illiterate people.

7. Can a native speaker ‘lose’ their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

7. Jista’ kelliem nattiv ‘jitlef’ l-abbiltà lingwistika u ma jibqax jidentifika bħala kelliem nattiv?

(forsi jiltaq mill-komunità li titkellem iċ-Ċiniż)

Ikunu jitkellmu l-lingwa li jkunu tgħallmu, mhux il-lingwa tal-lum. Ikollhom aċċent barrani. Huwa possibbli, mela...

They speak the language they have learned, not today’s language. They have a foreign accent. It is possible, of course...

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

8. Jista’ kelliem mhux nattiv jitgħallem tant li jsir kelliem nattiv? (per eżempju persuna li tmur tgħix f’komunità fejn jitkellmu ċ-Ċiniż)

Imma mhux isir ta (kelliem nattiv).

But not become (a native speaker).

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

9. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li jibdel l-identità tiegħu minn kelliem nattiv għal kelliemm mhux nattiv u viċe-versa?

Forsi, jekk in-nies imorru jgħixu f’pajjiż ieħor għal ħafna snin. Imma deep down ikunu native speakers ta.

Possibly, if people move to another country for many years. But deep down they are native speakers.

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

10. Huwa importanti għall-għalliema li jifhmu l-isfond kulturali/il-lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

Iva ta, huwa importanti għall-beginners u għaż-żgħażagħ. Yi dianr, ixrob naqra, eżatt bħall-Malti. L-Ingliż mhux il-lingwa tagħna. L-Ingliż huwa barrier għalina. L-Ingliż huwa L2 jew foreign language. Fl-Ingilterra, fl-Amerika, L-Ingliż huwa L1, is-sitwazzjoni hija differenti ħafna. L-Ingliż huwa barier. Hawn tfal f’Malta li ma jafux jesprimu ruħhom bil-Malti, mela m’humiex native speakers tal-Malti.

Yes, it is necessary for beginners and young learners. It is very important. Yi dianr, drink a bit, it’s exactly like in Maltese. English is not our language. English is a barrier to us. English is L2 of a foreign language. In UK, US, English is L1, so the situation is very different. English is a barrier. There are children in Malta who can’t express themselves in Maltese, so they are not native speakers of Maltese.

Interview 4 – Teacher 1 – NNS teacher – Maltese – Translated

Interview questions – first round of interviews

Me: The native and non-native teacher. You, as a teacher…

Participant: **NON-NATIVE**

1. What is a native speaker?

1. X'inhu kelliem nattiv?

Native speaker huwa xi ħadd li fil-ħajja tiegħu ta' kulljum , mal-familja tiegħu jitkellem biċ-Ċiniż. Jiġifieri jkun twieled f'familja Chinese speaking u li jitkellem biċ-Ċiniż, imrobbi f'familja jitkellem biċ-Ċiniż, u llum il-ġurnata jitkellem biċ-Ċiniż mal-familja tiegħu. Ovvjament this is a very general definition għax jaf ikollok nies li per eżempju emigraw jew marru post ieħor imbagħad bħal kull lingwa oħra, jew jista' jkun hemm nies, ovvjament mhux il-maġġoranza li jkunu bilingual, per eżempju Hong Kong jew Macau jkunu jitkellmu Mandarin u Cantonese fl-istess ħin jew Mandarin u English jew Cantonese u English imbagħad jidħol il-Mandarin ukoll. Jista' jkun varjazzjoni, imma inġenerali, native speaker huwa xi ħadd li l-ewwel lingwa tiegħu hija Chinese għax imrobbi hemm, fil-lingwa Ċiniża. Probabbilment tkun l-ewwel lingwa li jkun tkellem ukoll minn meta jkun żgħir.

A native speaker is someone who in their daily life, speaks Chinese with their family. This means that one was born in a Chinese speaking family who speaks Chinese and who was brought up in a family that speaks Chinese and who, today, speaks Chinese with their family. Obviously, this is a very general definition because there might be people who, for example, have emigrated or who moved to another place and then, like any other language, there might be people, not the majority, who are bilingual, for example in Hong Kong or in Macau who speak both Mandarin and Cantonese or Mandarin and English or Cantonese and English and then later Mandarin. It might be a variety, but generally, a native speaker is someone whose first language is Chinese because they were brought up there, in the Chinese language. Probably it would be the first language that they spoke when they were young.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

2. Meta kelliem nattiv jitkellem, dan ikun dejjem grammatikament korrett?

Le le mhux dejjem, mhux dejjem. Ġieli jieħdu ħafna żbalji, bħal ma nieħdu aħna, jiena native speaker tal-Malti per eżempju, ok, so, meta nitkellem ħafna drabi nieħu żbalji, biss biss ħafna drabi naqilbu għall-Ingliż, ġieli nikkonjugaw affarijiet bl-Ingliż mal-Malti, jiġifieri mhux dejjem huwa grammatically correct.

No, no, this is not always the case. At times native speakers make many mistakes, like we make mistakes. I am a native speaker of Maltese, for example, ok, so, when I speak I make mistakes at times, very often I switch to English, sometimes I conjugate things in both English and Maltese, so a native speaker is not always necessarily grammatically correct.

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

3. Il-kitba tal-kelliem nattiv (karattri u grammatika) huma dejjem grammatikament korretti?

Iva ħafna ħafna ħafna ħafna jagħmlu żbalji. Ovvjament trid tara daqsxejn il-persuna x'livell ta' edukazzjoni għandha, jiġifieri għandek various levels imma xi ftit jew wisq kulħadd jieħu żbalji hux. Xi ħadd li jgħallem l-università jew li għamel tertiary education l-ewwel nett ħa jkun kiteb iżjed allura forsi għandu inqas ċans li jieħu żbalji tal-kitba fil-characters, hemm nies b'livell inqas ta' edukazzjoni ovvjament ha jieħdu iktar żbalji, mhux għax huma inqas intelligenti imma għax ma jkollhomx dik l-exposure, ma jipprattikawx daqshekk il-kitba.

Yes, they make many many many many mistakes. Obviously one has to consider the level of education of the person, meaning that there are various levels but more or less, everyone makes mistakes. A person who teaches at university or who has achieved a high level of education, would have written so much in life, so the chances of making errors in their writing are much less, there are people who did not go through higher education, so probably they would make more errors in writing, it's not because they are less intelligent, it's because they wouldn't have had much exposure to writing, they wouldn't have practiced writing so much.

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

4. Inti kelliem nattiv jew kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex?

Le le non-native. Jiena minix native speaker taċ-Chinese għax meta twilidt jien u meta bdejt nitkellem l-ewwel lingwa li tkellimt u li kellmuni ma kinitx iċ-Ċiniż, il-Malti jiġifieri, native speaker tal-Malti, lanqas jiena native speaker tal-Ingliż per eżempju, għax jien fil-familja tiegħi ma kinux ikellmuni bl-Ingliż, English came later, hawn, ġie wara jiġifieri, l-iskola eżatt, ma kinitx l-ewwel lingwa li tkellimt l-ewwel jien. Lanqas l-ewwel kliem li għedt jien kienu bil-Malti, il-ġenituri kellmuni bil-Malti.

No no non-native. I'm not a native speaker of Chinese because when I was born, and when I started to speak the first language that I spoke and that I was spoken to was not Chinese, Maltese, I am a native speaker of Maltese, I'm not a native speaker of English, for example, because in my family they never spoke to me in English, English came later, at school, that's it, it wasn't the first language that I spoke. The first words that I uttered were in Maltese, my parents spoke to me in Maltese.

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Jekk iva, x'jagħmlek kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

6. Jekk le, x'jagħmlek kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jekk le, x'inhi l-lingwa materna tiegħek? X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv ta' dik il-lingwa?

Kif qed ngħid, aħna meta tkellimt jien, l-ewwel kliem li għedt jien kienu bil-lingwa Maltija u l-ġenituri tiegħi, il-guardians tiegħi, in-nies li kelli exposure għalihom fl-ewwel snin ta' ħajti kienu kellmuni bil-Malti. U jiena ovvjament tgħallimt il-Malti, l-ewwel lingwa li tgħallimt il-Malti u llum il-ġurnata għadni nitkellem ma' tal-familja u day to day life tiegħi bil-Malti.

As I was saying, when I first spoke, the first words that I said were in Maltese and my parents, my guardians, the people I was exposed to in the first few years of my life used to speak to me in Maltese. Obviously, I learned Maltese, the first language that I learned was Maltese and today I still speak with my family and in my day to day life in Maltese.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

7. Hemm xi differenza bejn kelliem nattiv u kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Ovvjament hemm range. Għandek min hu native speaker u għandek min hu non-native speaker, hemm min hu non-native speaker li għandu fluency jew pronounciation li hi daqs ta' native speaker jew kważi daqs ta' native speaker. Imbagħad għandek non-native speakers li mhumiex daqshekk fluent, jew li jieħdu ħafna aktar żbalji min-native speaker jew li l-pronouncation tagħhom mhix tajba. Jiġifieri hemm range, ma tistax qisu taqta' linja eżatt. Inġenerali ovvjament in-native speakers ħa jkollhom fluency ħa jkollhom pronounciation ħa jkollhom grammar li huwa aħjar min-non-native speaker għax ovvjament, kienu exposed għal ħafna ħafna iżjed żmien għal-lingwa milli xi ħadd li huwa non-native. Per eżempju jekk jiena bdejt nitgħallmu ta' 30 sena, meta kelli 30 u meta kelli 20 ċ-Chinese, jiena diġa għandi 20 jew 30 years neqsin ta' exposure minn dik il-lingwa minn xi ħadd li twieled f'ambjent Ċiniż li minn mindu twieled, mill-ewwel ġie exposed, meta ħaduh id-dar mill-isptar, anke l-isptar stess diġa qed jisma' ċ-Ċiniż, ovvjament mhux qed jirrispondi imma diġa qed jigi exposed, qed tifhem, so.

There is obviously a range. There are native speakers and there are non-native speakers, there are non-native speakers who has fluency and pronunciation like native speakers or near native speakers. Then there are non-native speakers who are not that fluent, or who make more mistakes than native speakers or whose pronunciation is not good. This means that there is a range, one cannot draw an exact line. In general, obviously native speakers have fluency, they have pronunciation, they have grammar that is much better than that of a non-native speaker because, obviously, they were exposed for much much longer to the language from someone who is a non-native speaker. For example, if I started studying Chinese when I was 30 years old, when I was 30 or 20, I already have lost 20 or 30 years of exposure to the language than someone who was born in a Chinese environment and exposed to Chinese since birth, when they took him home from hospital, even in hospital they were already listening to Chinese, obviously they are not responding but they are already being exposed, are you understanding, so.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

8. In-nies li twieldu ċ-Ċina huma kollha kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż? X'varjetà ta' Ċiniż? Bilfors tal-Putonghua?

Hawnhekk tidhol x'qed nifhmu bil-kelma Chinese – il-kelma Chinese language għandek ħafna varieties of Chinese u imbagħad għandek lingwi oħrajn li m'humiex related maċ-Chinese jew li huma lingwi in their own right, qed tifhem. Inti semmejt l-istandard Putonghua, native speakers ta' Standard Putonghua, mhux kulhadd huwa native speaker ta' Standard Putonghua, għandek nies li jitkellmu per eżempju Mandarin imma m'huwiex standard Putonghua lanqas. Per eżempju nies li joqgħodu Beijing għandhom il-Beijinghua. Beijinghua u Standard Putonghua m'humiex l-istess. Standard Putonghua hija xi ħaġa pjuttost uffiċjali. Daqsxejn artifiċjali fir-realtà. Issa Beijing jitkellmu Beijinghua li hija related ma' Putonghua, imma hija djalett tal-belt. Beijinghua hija aktar xi ħaġa ħajja, Putonghua hija xi ħaġa utilitarja, iktar xi ħaġa Standard li tintuża fil-media, taf kif, bħala xi ħaġa Standard all over the country. There are many varieties and many languages. Standard Putonghua, mhux kulhadd hu native speaker ta' Standard Putonghua.

Here one needs to consider what is meant by the word Chinese – the word Chinese language; there are many varieties of Chinese and then there are other languages that are not related to Chinese or that are languages in their own right, can you understand. You have mentioned Standard Putonghua,

native speakers of Standard Putonghua, not everyone is a native speaker of Standard Putonghua, there are people who speak for example Mandarin that is not Standard Putonghua. For example, people who live in Beijing have Beijinghua. Beijinghua and Standard Putonghua are not the same. Standard Putonghua is something rather official. Quite artificial in fact. In Beijing they speak Beijinghua that is related to Putonghua, but that is a city dialect. Beijinghua is something that is more alive, Putonghua is something utilitarian, something Standard that is used in the media, you know, as something Standard all over the country. There are many varieties and many languages. Standard Putonghua, not everyone is a native speaker of Standard Putonghua.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

9. Jista' kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż jitwieled u jitrabba f'komunità Ċiniża fil-punent? (eż. Fl-Ingilterra, fl-Amerka, fl-Awstralja...) Dawn xorta jkunu kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż?

Le, inti għandek xi ħadd li twieled per eżempju Beijing, sewwa, trid tara dan meta kien Beijing jekk kienx diġà qed jitkellem biċ-Ċiniż, jekk hu jitkellem biċ-Ċiniż, dak huwa native speaker taċ-Ċiniż. Issa jekk hu mar l-Amerika u l-Amerika mar għand familja jew il-familja f'daqqa waħda iddeċidew li jibdew jitkellmu bl-Ingliż, ma naħsibx jiena, nagħmlu mod dan sab ruħu f'ambjent, exchange jew ġie addottat, f'dak il-każ, trid tara daqsxejn jekk hu kienx diġà jaf iċ-Ċiniż, speċi jiddependi mill-età tiegħu, għax jekk kien adopted ta' sena jew ta' sentejn meta l-language skills huma quite limited, ma nafx eżatt it-timeframe tal-etajiet kif inhu, imma, tifel ta' sentejn u tliet snin diġà għandu ċertu language skills, ħafna minn li għandu xi ħadd ta' 6 months jew ta' 1 year, naħseb bejn 2 to 3 years hemm jump kbira. Jiddependi naħseb jiena fejn kien hemm it-transfer, speċi ta' minn pajjiż għall-ieħor. Jekk it-transfer kien kmieni ħafna, kien wara 6 months, wara sena, hemm, ovvjament jista' jkun li jsir native speaker tal-Ingliż imbagħad ukoll, there's enough time. Fir-realtá naħseb anke aktar tard ukoll, anke jekk ġie per eżempju ta' erba' snin, naħseb ikollu żmien biex jippikkja l-Ingliż tajjeb u sakemm jilħaq is-6-7 years ikun, I'm sure li hawn ħafna nies hekk għax it-tfal għandhom din il-kapaċità enormi, kbira ħafna li jippikkjaw language li aħna l-kbar m'għandniex, it-tfal ta' 5 jew 6 snin diġà jkun jaf most of the grammar li aħna ndumu xhur u snin biex nitgħallmu fil-klassi u practice u exercises u tifel mingħajr ma jkun għadu lanqas biss, ikun għadu mar skola ikun diġà jkun jaf jikkonjuga, mhux qed ngħid għaċ-Chinese, qed ngħid għal-lingwi l-oħrajn, diġà jaf fejn ipoġġi s-subject, diġà jaf fejn ipoġġi l-verb, b'hekk ikun diġà jafhom.

No, if there is someone, for example, who was born in Beijing, right, one has to consider whether when that person was in Beijing, whether they used to speak in Chinese, if they spoke in Chinese, that is a native speaker of Chinese. Now, if they went to America and in America they went to a family, or their family decided to start speaking in English, I don't think so, let's say they found themselves in an environment, in an exchange or else they were adopted, in that case one has to see whether they had already known Chinese, it kind of depends on their age, if they were adopted at age one or two when language skills are quite limited, I don't know the exact timeframe, the ages, but a two or three year old child already has certain language skills, more than someone who is 6 months or 1 year old, I think that between 2 to 3 years there is a great jump. I think it depends on when the transfer took place, from one country to the other. If the transfer was very early, after 6 months, after a year, obviously there they could become a native speaker of English, there's enough time. In fact, I think that even at a later stage, even if they came at for example, at the age of four, I think they would have the time to practice English well and by the time they reach 6-7 years they would be, I'm sure there are many people like this, because children have this great ability, a great ability to pick a language that we adults don't have, children at age 5 or 6 already would have most of the grammar that takes us adults months or years to learn in class and we practice and do exercises while a child without even having

ever attended school, would have already know how to conjugate, I'm not speaking for Chinese, I'm speaking about other languages, they would already know where to put the subject, the verb, they would already know.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

10. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex? Għaliex le? Tista' persuna ta' etniċità Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Naħseb jekk ovvjament, in theory jekk ġej minn familja Ċiniża jista' jkun. Ikun hemm każijiet, naħseb hemm każijiet fiċ-China ta' familji Ċiniżi li jaddottaw per eżempju tfal mill-Cambodia jew li jaddottaw tfal mill-Vietnam, li saru Ċiniżi u dawk ikunu native speakers. Any human being can become a native speaker of any language jekk huwa mrobbi f'dik iċ-ċirkustanza.

I think that obviously, in theory, if one comes from a Chinese family, it could be possible. There are cases, I think there are cases in China of Chinese families who adopt children for example from Cambodia or who adopt children from Vietnam, and these children have become Chinese and they are native speakers. Any human being can become a native speaker of any language if they are brought up in that circumstance.

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

11. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża imma li tistudja ċ-Ċiniż fl-iskola jew fl-università qatt issir kelliem nattiv? Jew forsi ssir bħal kelliem nattiv? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

No, speċjalment jekk studja biss. No. Jekk jgħix, jekk jgħix għal żmien twil fil-pajjiż, jew inkella jkun f'ambjent li hu Ċiniż ħafna tipo jekk għandu l-mara li hija Ċiniża, jew jekk f'daqqa waħda jibda jgħix f'familja Ċiniża, anke jekk jgħix ġo l-Amerika, hemmhekk jista' japprowċja native speaker, they could approach native speaker level, però they wouldn't really be a native speaker. Fis-sens għax ma jkunx trabba, I mean ma jkunx twieled u trabba, l-ewwel lingwa tiegħu ma tkunx iċ-Chinese. Naħseb they would approach something approximating native speaker. Speċjalment jekk jgħaddi ħafna żmien jgħix f'pajjiz ieħor jew inkella jkun f'familja jew ikun f'relazzjoni ma' xi ħadd li hu Ċiniż. Ifisser li letteralment il-ħin kollu jrid jitkellem biċ-Ċiniż jew li huwa exposed għaċ-Ċiniż.

No, especially if they have only studied. No. If they lived in the country for a long time, or else if they are in a very Chinese environment, for example if their spouse is Chinese, or if suddenly they start living in a Chinese family, even if it is in America, there they could approach native speaker, they could approach native speaker level, but they wouldn't really be a native speaker. In the sense that they wouldn't have been brought up, I mean, they wouldn't be born and brought up, their first language wouldn't be Chinese. I think that they would approach something approximating native speaker. This is especially if they live in another country for a long time or in a family or they would be in a relationship with someone who is Chinese, meaning that literally, they have to speak Chinese and are exposed to Chinese all the time.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

12. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li kull ma tgħid huwa grammatikament tajjeb?

Le le le mhux dejjem huwa tajjeb. Ħadd ma jitkellem perfect grammar kemm jekk huwa native speaker u anke jekk huwa non-native speaker.

No no no. It's not always good. No one speaks perfect grammar native speaker and even non-native speaker.

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

13. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-karattri mikubin tagħha huma bilfors tajbin?

Le le, jieħdu ħafna żbalji wkoll.

No no, they make a lot of mistakes also.

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

14. Jekk persuna tkun kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-pronunzja tat-tonalitajiet hija dejjem bilfors tajba? U l-pronunzja ta' Standard Putonghua?

Le, le mhux dejjem, mhux dejjem. L-ewwel ħaġa għandek varjazzjonijiet reġjonali, jiġifieri jien naf, kif jgħidu l-first u s-second tone Beijing mhux l-istess kif jgħidu l-first u s-second tone Chongqing jew kif jgħiduhom in-naħa t'isfel taċ-Ċina u anke fl-aktar areas li jitkellmu Standard jew similar to standard Mandarin ukoll isiru żbalji tat-tones. Imma ovvjament compared ma' xi ħadd li huwa non-native speaker naħseb li jkunu aktar preċiżi huma (native Chinese speakers).

No, no, not always. First and foremost there are regional variations, meaning, for instance, how they say the first and the second tone in Beijing is not the same as how they say the first and the second tone in Chongqing or how they say them in the south of China and even in areas where they speak more Standard or similar to Standard Mandarin there are mistakes in tones. But obviously, compared to someone who is a non-native speaker I think that they are more precise (native Chinese speakers).

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

15. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż li jitgħallem l-istandard Putonghua vera sewwa? (li jkun fluwenti, li jkollu grammatika tajba, pronunzja, karattri miktubin...)

Yes, yes, mela. Għandek numru ta' sitwazzjonijiet. Tfal li jiġu adopted u li mhux ethnically Chinese u li dawn jekk jitrabbew fl-istess ċirkustanzi bħat-tfal Ċiniżi ħa jitgħallmuhom perfectly well daqshom, tones u l-affarijiet kollha. U ghandek nies li jistudjaw iċ-Ċiniż jew li jmorru jgħixu ċ-Ċina jew li jiġu exposed u jitgħallmuh ukoll.

Yes, yes, of course. There are a number of situations. Children who are adopted and who are not ethnically Chinese and who are brought up in the same circumstances as Chinese children, they will learn them perfectly well like them, tones and everything else. There are also people who studied Chinese or who lived in China or who were exposed and who have learned it as well.

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

16. Il-kelliema nattivi huma bilfors kelliema nattivi ta' Standard Putonghua?

Le le le le. Iċ-Ċina hemm ħafna djaletti, ħafna varjazzjonijiet, ħafna lingwi differenti. Hemm mijiet ta' lingwi differenti, speċjalment fl-areas tas-south.

No no no no. In China there are many dialects, many varieties, many different languages. There are hundreds of different languages, especially in the south.

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

17. Jista' kelliem nattiv ma jkunx jaf jitkellem/ma jifhimx Standard Putonghua?

In most cases le ta, illum il-ġurnata prattikament kollha jkunu marru skola, u fl-iskola se jiġu exposed għal Standard Putonghua. Jista' jkun f'xi rħula remoti tat-Tibet jew ta' Xinjiang jew ta' xi Yunnan province, qed nimmaġina f'xi muntanji, jista' jkun hemm xi nies, probabbilment anzjani li jbatu fil-Putonghua. Probabbilment ikunu jafu xi ftit Ċiniż, anke jekk il-first language tagħhom hija Tibetan, imma xi ftit jew wisq l-istandard kulħadd jifhmu fiċ-Ċina. Forsi ma jifhmuhx 100%, imma xi ftit jew wisq jifhmuh.

In most cases no, in today's world practically everyone attends school, at school they are exposed to Standard Putonghua. It could be the case that in some remote villages in Tibet or in Xinjiang or in Yunnan province, I imagine in the mountains, there might be people, most probably old people who find Putonghua hard. Probably they would know some Chinese, even if their first language is Tibetan, but more or less everyone understands the standard in China. Maybe they don't understand it 100%, but they understand it more or less.

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

18. L-għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi huma l-għalliema ideali? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

Skont għal xiex, mhux dejjem. Ara naħseb għal xi ħadd li huwa beginner, an absolute beginner, maybe not, maybe not. Later on, I think iktar ma titla 'l fuq aktar aħjar li jkollok native speaker, però, jista jkun hemm exceptions jew ċertu ċirkustanzi li huwa tajjeb li jkollok lil xi ħadd li mhux native speaker. Per eżempju hawnhekk jidħlu affarijiet kulturali mbagħad. Per eżempju meta għandek education system, per eżempju Malta li l-education system ta' Malta hi differenti minn taċ-Ċina, xi ħadd li huwa native speaker taċ-Ċiniż li ġej minn education system differenti, qed jgħallem pedagoġija, ċertu cultural values ġo pajjiż ieħor dik sometimes, dik tista' toħloq challenges, ħalli ma ngħidulhomx problemi, għall-istudent u kemm għat-teacher. Minħabba l-cultural difference jista' jkun hemm sitwazzjonijiet fejn anke higher up, jista' jkun li xi ħadd li mhux native speaker, ovvjament ikollu high level of Chinese, imma mhux native speaker taċ-Chinese tista' tkun idea tajba wkoll li jgħallem iċ-Ċiniż. Mhux neċessarjament min hu native speaker hu aħjar. Generally yes, imma not always. This is my opinion of course. Din mill-esperjenza li għandi jien. Per eżempju jien, meta bdejt nitgħallem jien, l-ewwel teacher tiegħi kienet native speaker of Chinese, u kien hemm ċertu affarijiet li mnalla kienet native speaker taċ-Chinese, però mbagħad kien hemm affarijiet li minħabba fihom, dak iż-żmien, ħassejtni li kont inbati, qed tifhem, per eżempju kienet tgħallem il-pronounciation kienet pjuttost diffiċli għalija, forsi kieku xi ħadd li ma kienx native speaker taċ-Chinese, for me it would have been easier. Anke l-characters, l-approach kif tgħallem il-characters, kellha ċertu approach li kien daqsxejn challenging, qed tifhem.

It depends on what, not always. I think that for a beginner, an absolute beginner, maybe not, maybe not. Later on, I think later on, the more one advances, it's better to have a native speaker, but there might be exceptions or certain circumstances where it would be good to have someone who is not a native speaker. For instance, here cultural issues come into play. For example, when there is an education system, for example, Malta, the education system of Malta is different from that in China, someone who is a native speaker of Chinese who comes from a different education system, who is teaching in a pedagogy, certain cultural values in another country, that sometimes, that might cause challenges, let's not call them problems, both for the student and for the teacher. Because of the cultural difference there might be situations where even higher up, it could be someone who is not a native speaker, obviously they would have a high level of Chinese, but who is not a native speaker of

Chinese, it might also be a good idea that they teach Chinese. Native speakers are not necessarily better. Generally yes, but not always. This is my opinion of course. This is from my experience. For example, when I first started studying Chinese, my first teacher was a native speaker of Chinese, there were certain things where it's better that they were a native speaker of Chinese, but there were other things that because of them, back then, I used to feel that it was difficult, can you see, for example, how they used to teach pronunciation was quite difficult for me, maybe someone who wasn't a native speaker of Chinese, for me it would have been easier. Even the characters, the approach how they used to teach characters, they had an approach that was quite challenging, you understand.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

19. L-Għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi bilfors ikollhom aktar għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

Jiddependi min huma, għax native speaker teachers jista' jkollok ħafna tipi differenti, per eżempju, jiddependi x'native speakers huma. Per eżempju dawk li jiġu Malta tal-Confucius Institute, dawk l'm sure li jkunu għamlu eżamijiet ta' Standard Putonghua. I suppose they would have good proficiency level. Ma nafx, I don't want to pass judgement, ma nafx, my impression is li dawk li jiġu tal-cultural centre forsi wħud minnhom forsi ma kinux eżattament għal teaching. Per eżempju jien l-ewwel teacher li kelli tal-Cultural Centre they hadn't come to Malta propjament biex tgħallem, infatti kienet taħdem fil-library u kienet taħdem fl-administration tagħhom, tal-Cultural Centre, imbagħad tawha l-klassijiet. Ma nafx kemm kellha Standard Putonghua to be honest, kienet minn Chongqing, kultant ċertu sounds kienet tgħidilna għax aħna fir-reġjun tagħna ngħidulhom b'dan il-mod, insejt jekk hux l-'nn' kienet, l-'nn' u l-'rr' kien hemm xi sounds li kienu daqsxejn ambigwi, kienet tgħidilna li huwa tar-reġjun tagħhom ma jgħiduhx dak is-sound. Naħseb li inġenerali iva jkollhom, imma mhux kollha, għax native speakers taċ-Ċiniż jista' jkollok ħafna gruppi u kategoriji.

It depends on who they are, because there are different types of native speaker teachers, for example, it depends on what type of native speakers they are. For example those who come to Malta through the Confucius Institute, I'm sure they do exams of Standard Putonghua. I suppose they would have good proficiency level. I don't know, I don't want to pass judgement, I don't know, my impression is that those who come through the Cultural Centre maybe some of them do not come specifically for teaching. For instance, the first teacher I had at the Cultural Centre they hadn't come to Malta specifically to teach, in fact they used to work at the library and they used to work in their administration, at the Cultural Centre, then they gave them classes. I'm not sure whether they had Standard Putonghua to be honest, they were from Chongqing, sometimes they used to tell us that certain sounds, they used to say that in their region we say them in this way, I forgot whether it was the 'nn' sound, the 'nn' sound and the 'rr' sound, there were a few sounds that were a bit ambiguous, they used to say that in their region they don't pronounce that particular sound. In general I think that yes, they would have, but not all, because native speakers of Chinese could mean many groups and categories.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

It-tieni intervista

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

1. L-għalliem nattiv huwa l-għalliem ideali għax huwa twieled fil-lingwa u fil-kultura u b'hekk għandu iktar għarfien?

Ideali eħe, għax ikun hemm ċertu fine points li huma jkunu jafuhom iktar minn min m'għandux native speaking. Però, naħseb jiena meta titwieled ġo native language, titwieled ġo sistema, a whole set of values, anke ġo ċertu politika, ġo certu soċjetà u dawn ikunu linked ħafna ma' teaching u man-knowledge tal-language. Anke l-mod kif tapprowċja (approach) lill-istudenti, it-tip ta' exercises li tagħti lill-istudenti, anke kif tistaqsi l-questions, what you expect from students, jista' jkun li jvarjaw minn pajjiż għal ieħor, qed tifhem, jiġifieri diffiċli tagħti answer li huwa exhaustive, taf kif. It's not a black and white situation. Naħseb inġenerali iva, imma jista' jkun hemm exceptions għaliha wkoll. Per eżempju kif jgħallmu l-characters, ħafna drabi, mill-esperjenza tiegħi, native speakers taċ-Chinese, jużaw is-sistema li jużaw ħafna drabi ċ-China, repetition, repetition, repetition, practice, practice, drilling, drilling, drilling, which, fis-sistema tagħna aħna bħala practice, għandna practice għax ovvjament jitgħallmu, it-tfal jitgħallmu kif jiktbu l-alfabett, imma mhux tal-livelli kif jagħmluh iċ-Ċiniżi, min mhux native speaker jipprova juża sistemi oħrajn kif jgħallem il-characters. In general yes. They would know certain fine points. They are born in a system, a set of values, society, linked to teaching and knowledge of the language, asking questions, what you expect from students, ivjarjaw minn pajjiż għal ieħor. It's not black and white. In ġeneral iva. Kif jgħallmu l-characters jużaw sistema li jużaw iċ-China repetition.

Ideal yes, because there are certain fine points that they would know more than someone who doesn't have native speaking. But I think that when one is born in a native language, one is born in a system, a whole set of values, even in certain politics, in a certain society and such things are very much linked to teaching and to knowledge of the language. Even they way how to approach students, the type of exercises one gives to students, even how to ask questions, what you expect from students, things might vary from one country to another, you know, it's difficult to give an exhaustive answer, you know. It's not a black and white situation. I think that in general, yes, but there might be exceptions to it. For exmple how they teach characters, from my experience, many times native speakers of Chinese, use the system that is mostly used in China, repetition, repetition, repetition, practice, practice, drilling, drilling, drilling, which, in our system, we do have practice, we practice because children learn, children learn how to write the alphabet, but not at the same levels that the Chinese teach, those who are not native speakers try to use other systems to teach characters. In general yes. They would know certain fine points. They are born in a system, a set of values, society, linked to teaching and knowledge of the language, asking questions, what you expect from students, things vary from one country to another. It's not black and white. In general yes. They teach characters in the system used in China, repetition.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

2. X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

3. X'jagħmel kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

4. L-etniċità u l-post tat-twelid jagħmlu persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jew l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Naħseb iżjed fejn twilidt u l-ethnicity li jagħmluk native speaker. Jien dik hi t-teorija tiegħi, ma nafx, if it's correct or not. Però min ikun exposed għal ħafna Ċiniż, u għex u vvjaġġa u studja u espona ruħu għal ħafna, I think they can approach native speaking, u forsi anke tilħqu native speaking, imma naħseb li mhux facli u it's not the rule, hija l-exception iktar milli r-regola. Ethnicity and birth make a native speaker. Min ikun exposed I think they can approach native speaker level but this is the exception.

I think that birthplace and ethnicity make a native speaker. That is my theory, I don't know if it's correct or not. But those who are exposed to a lot of Chinese, those who have lived and travelled and studied and exposed themselves to a lot, I think they can approach native speaking, and maybe even reach native speaking, but I don't think it's easy and it's not the rule, it's the exception rather than the rule. Ethnicity and birth make a native speaker. Those who are exposed I think they can approach native speaker level but this is the exception.

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Hija l-identità soċjo-kulturali li tagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva, naħseb li iva. Is-soċjetà li twilidt fiha, il-kultura li twilidt fiha wkoll. Jien naħseb kollha jaffettwaw dawk ukoll.

Yes, I think so. The society one is born in also. I think they all play a role.

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

6. Tista' persuna li mhix etnikament Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva, iva, jista' jista'. Jiġi adopted, kif qed ngħidu u xorta jitkellem Chinese minn meta jkun żgħir.

Yes, yes, one can become. If one is adopted, as we are saying, if one speaks Chinese since childhood.

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

7. Tista' persuna li hi etnikament Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva, mhux hekk, jekk għandek baby Ċiniż li jiġi adopted minn American family per eżempju, mhux se jkun native speaker taċ-Chinese. Jew inkella xi ħadd li baqa' mal-familja tiegħu, imma l-familja tiegħu marru l-America u bdew ikellmuh bl-Ingliż, mela dan beda' jitkellem native speaking tal-Ingliż, imbagħad marru lura ċ-China per eżempju. Jiena l-iskola kelli student li twieled Malta ġo familja Ċiniża, jitkellem ftit Ċiniż, imma mhux propja native speaker taċ-Ċiniż għax lilu dejjem kellmuh bl-Ingliż peress li kien hawn dejjem kellmuh bl-Ingliż, issa mbagħad kellu jmur lura ċ-Ċina, ma nafx x'ġara jiġifieri, imma ma kellux il-livell taċ-Chinese. L-ewwel lingwa tiegħu spiċċat l-Ingliż.

Yes, of course, in the case of a Chinese baby who is adopted in an American family, for example, they woudn't be a native speaker of Chinese. Or else someone who has stayed with their family, but the family moved to America and started to speak to them in English, so they started to speak English as a native speaker, then they returned to China for example. At school i had a student who was born in a Chinese family in Malta, they can speak some Chinese, but they are not exactly a native speaker of Chinese because they have always spoken to them in English since they were always here (in Malta), then they had to return back to China, I don't really know what happened, but they didn't have the level of Chinese. Their first language ended up to be English.

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

8. Jistgħu l-edukazzjoni u l-istudju jagħmlu persuna li mhix nattiva tinstema' bħal kelliem nattiv? Tistieq issir kelliem nattiv? Jew tixtieq li tibqa' kelliem nattiv tal-lingwa tiegħek?

Naħseb simili eħe, iva, imma li tiġi kompletament naħseb li diffiċli ħafna jew impossibbli. Minix ċert jekk hux diffiċli jew impossibli, imma it's not easy for sure. Dawn l-affarijiet m'humiex affarijiet ta' absolutes, jiġifieri naħseb li hemm range ukoll, jiġifieri, what is a native speaker, what is a non-native speaker mhux qisu għandek line, jista' jkun li tkun somewhere in between ukoll, qed tifhem. Aħna nħarsu lejn il-poles, (the extremes) per eżempju z-zijiet tiegħi li marru l-Awstralja fin-1970s marru l-Awstralja, illum il-ġurnata jitkellmu perfect, kważi perfect Australian English, forsi m'humiex native speakers ta' Australian English, imma kważi huma native speakers ta' Australian English. Native speaker tal-Malti ma rridx nitlifha żgur, għax jiena Malti. U naħseb li diffiċli ħafna li nitlifha at this point għax jiena għandi aktar minn 40 sena, jiġifieri biex ninsa l-Malti diffiċli ħafna, jiġifieri anke jekk nagħmel għaxar snin iċ-Ċina xorta ħa nkun għamilt aktar minn 40 years, imma nixtieq li nkun native speaker taċ-Ċiniż ukoll, nixtieq inkun, eħe. I think it will be very difficult, very very difficult.

Yes, similar, yes, but I think that to become completely a native speaker I think that it is very difficult or impossible. I'm not sure if it's difficult or impossible, but it's not easy for sure. These are not things of absolutes, meaning that there is also a range, what is a native speaker, what is a non-native speaker it's not a straight line, one might also be somewhere in between, you know. We look at the poles, (the extremes) for example my aunts went to Australia in the 1970s, today they speak perfect, nearly perfect Australian English, maybe they are not native speakers of Australian English, but they are nearly native speakers of Australian English. Native speaker of Maltese, I definitely don't want t olose that because I am Maltese. I think it is very difficult for me to lose that at this point because I am over 40 years old, so, it would be very difficult for me to forget Maltese, even if I spend ten years in China, I would still have spoken Maltese for over 40 years, but I wish to be a native speaker of Chinese also, I wish to be, yes. I think it will be very difficult, very very difficult.

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

9. Il-kelliem nattiv bilfors ikollu l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

Le le le mhux bil-fors.

No no no not necessarily.

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

10. Il-kelliema nattivi għandhom bżonn jistudjaw l-istandard Putonghua l-iskola jew l-università?

Iva, għax inti meta tgħid tistudja ċ-Ċiniż, language hija xi ħaġa li għandek ħafna aspects tagħha, jiġifieri, apparti li għandek il-grammar, language mhux just titgħallem il-grammar u titgħallem il-vocabulary, għandek l-expressions, il-proverbji, il-literature, il-history tal-lingwa, għandek ħafna aspetti differenti taċ-Chinese u ovvjament min hu native speaker taċ-Ċiniż mhux neċessarjament li jafhom dawn. Jiena bħala native speaker tal-Malti, għalkemm kelli edukazzjoni primarja (...) imma xorta jiena nista' nkompli nistudja l-Malti, jiena nista' nistudja l-letteratura Maltija, jew expressions ġodda li daħlu fil-Malti fl-aħħar għaxar snin, jew expressions antiki tal-Malti li huma parti mill-Maltese language, dan japplika għaċ-Chinese.

Yes, because when one studies Chinese, there are many aspects to language, apart from grammar, language isn't just learning the grammar and learning the vocabulary, there are expressions, proverbs,

literature, history of the language, there are many aspects of Chinese and obviously, native speakers of Chinese do not necessarily know all this. As a native speaker of Maltese, even though I had primary and secondary education in Maltese, (…) I can still continue studying Maltese, I can study literature, or new expressions or else old expressions that are part of Maltese language, this also applies to Chinese.

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

11. X'livell ta' għarfien jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv?

Hawn żewġ affarijiet li trid tqis hawnhekk. Le ma naħsibx li dak biss. Naħseb il-fatt li tkun twildt u trabbejt ġo ambjent ta' familja Ċiniża, dik li tagħmel native speaker. Naħseb li hemm aspett kulturali wkoll, plus li jekk tkun native speaker taċ-Chinese ma jfissirx li neċessarjament tkun taf tiktbu sew iċ-Chinese. Writing a literature, that will have to come at a later stage, mill-edukazzjoni li tiġi mbagħad, mhux just mill-familja tiegħek. Għalhekk għedtlek li hemm żewġ aspetti tagħha. Learning a language, whether you are a native speaker or not, learning a language is a process, għandek proċess, jista' jkun li l-proċess ma jkollokx għażla fih, għax twilidt f'dak l-ambjent, bħala tifel jew tifla tassimila l-lingwa u minħabba li għandek bżonnha biex tikkomunika, biex tiekol, għax għandek bżonn l-għajnuna, allura titgħallem il-lingwa, u għandek nies li għal raġuni jew oħra li batuhom l-iskola jew għax huma interessati fil-lingwa li ħa jitgħallmu l-lingwa wkoll. It's a process.

There are two things to consider here. I don't think that that's all. I think the fact that one was born and brought up in a Chinese family; that makes a native speaker. I think that there are cultural aspects also, plus if one is a native speaker of Chinese that doesn't mean that one is able to write Chinese well. Writing a literature, that will have to come at a later stage, that comes from education, not just from one's family. That's why I said that there are two aspects to it. Learning a language, whether you are a native speaker or not, learning a language is a process, there is a process, it could be that one has no choice in this process. Because one has been born in such an environment, as a child one needs to assimilate the language because it is necessary to communicate, to eat, if one needs help, so one learns the language, and there are people who, for one reason or another, they were sent to school or they were interested in the lanuage and they also earn the language. It's a process.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

12. L-għalliema nattivi dejjem ikunu kulturalment 'l bogħod mill-istudenti tagħhom?

Naħseb hemm areas fejn ikunu distanti u hemm areas fejn ma jkunux daqskemm distanti. Peró naħseb li lanqas hu fear li min naħa tiegħi qisu nagħmel ruling għal kulhadd, naħseb li hemm varjazzjoni, naħseb li jiddependi fuq it-teacher, għax, jista' jkun teacher, native speaker taċ-Ċina li għandha esperjenza tgħallem fl-Ewropa jew studjat kif jitgħallmu fl-Ewropa, u li ovvjament mhux se tkun daqshekk distanti daqs kemm xi ħadd li per eżempju jkun għadu kif wasal miċ-Ċina, u li ma studjax fuq l-Ewropa, kif jgħallmu fl-Ewropa, jiġifieri naħseb li għandek range ukoll. Iva hemm areas fejn ikunu a bit distant in general. Mill-esperjenza tiegħi kien hemm affarijiet fejn ħassejt li m'aħniex on the same frequency, peró on the other hand ukoll, aħna kollha bnedmin jiġifieri, no matter what the situation is in China, culturally, politically, socially, whatever u no matter what is the situation here in Malta, culturally, politically, socially whatever, xorta l-issues prinċipali huma l-istess, fis-sens, bħala bnedmin aħna, jien naf, jekk tmur tixtri f'ħanut, jew you greet someone, ċertu affarijiet huma l-istess, mhux kollox e jiġifieri, imma hemm affarijiet li huma komuni, xorta tista' ssib common ground. It depends on the teacher, a teacher might be familiar with Europe and pedagogy in Europe. Iva hemm areas fejn ikunu distant. We are all humans, situation in China and here our issues are the same, we are humans.

I think that there are areas where they are distant and there are areas where they are not so distant. But I think that it's not fear if from my end, I make a ruling for everybody, I think there is a variation, I

think that it depends on the teacher, because a teacher, a native speaker from China, who has experience teaching in Europe or who has studied how teaching is done in Europe, obviously, they wouldn't be so distant as much as someone who has just arrived from China and who has never studied on Europe, how teaching is done in Europe, so I think that there is a range also. Yes, there are areas where they are a bit distant in general. From my experience, there were things that I felt that we weren't on the same frequency, but on the other hand, we are all human, no matter what the situation is in China, culturally, politically, socially, whatever and no matter what is the situation here in Malta, culturally, politically, socially whatever, the principal issues are the same, as humans, when we go to a shop, or when you greet someone, certain things are the same, not everything, but there things that are common, there is common ground. It depends on the teacher, a teacher might be familiar with Europe and pedagogy in Europe. Yes there are areas where they are distant. We are all humans, situation in China and here our issues are the same, we are humans.

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

13. L-għalliema mhux nattivi għandhom vantaġġ għax għandhom l-istess lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

Iva, speċjalment jekk huma beginners. Jekk huma absolute beginners, ovvjament huma se jħossuhom iktar komdi li għandhom lil xi ħadd li jistgħu anke jistaqsuh bil-lingwa tagħhom. Malta għandna problema addizzjonali għax għandek il-problema li jekk għandek lil xi ħadd Chinese, native speaker u għandek lil xi ħadd Malti li jrid jistaqsi lil xi ħadd Chinese, I mean, irid jistaqsi bl-Ingliż ukoll, mhux se jistaqsi biċ-Ċiniż għax għadu ma jafx Ċiniż, and they had to resort to a third language jerġa.

Yes, especially for beginners. If they are absolute beginners, obviously they feel more confident that they know that they have someone they could ask in their own language. In Malta we have an additional problem, because in the case of a Chinese native speaker and someone who is Maltese who needs to ask something to someone who is Chinese, I mean, they would need to ask in English, they cannot ask in Chinese because they don't know enough Chinese and they have to resort to a third language.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

It-tielet intervista

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

1. L-għalliem mhux nattiv huwa l-ideal għax għandu l-istess sfond kulturali u tingwa materna bħall-istudenti?

Naħseb li f'ċertu sitwazzjonijiet iva, f'ċertu sitwazzjonijiet le. Per eżempju, later on, at a higher level, naħseb li xi ħadd li huwa native speaker taċ-Chinese huwa aħjar għax għandek, proverbju, expression, idjoma, probabbilment xi ħadd li huwa native speaker jaf jużaha u jaf l-oriġini tagħha. Jaf il-context fejn għandha tintuża ħafna aħjar minn xi ħadd li mhux native speaker.

I believe that in certain situations, yes, in other situations, no. For example, later on, at a higher level, I think that someone who is a native speaker of Chinese is better because if there is a saying, an expression, an idiom, probably someone who is a native speaker knows how to use it and knows its origin. They know the context where it should be used much better than someone who is not a native speaker.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

2. Jista' xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż jistudja u **jsir** kelliem nattiv ta' Standard Putonghua?

Billi jistudja biss naħseb li le. Iktar naħseb hemm ċans li jsir native speaker jekk jgħix iċ-Ċina jew jekk ikun f'relazzjoni ma' xi ħadd Ċiniż. Jista' jibqa fl-istess pajjiż imma jgħix ma' xi ħadd Ċiniz, u hu jrid ikollu ċertu livell ta' Ċiniż diġa. Naf Maltin li miżżewġin Ċiniżi u llum jitkellmu biċ-Ċiniż mhux ħażin u li fil-bidu ma kinux jafu Ċiniż u biż-żmien għallmuhom u jitgħallmu ħafna. Ma nafx hux native speaking jew le, imma minħabba l-familja tagħhom, ir-relazzjoni hija xi ħaġa li tippuxxjjak ħafna għal-lingwa, il-fatt li tgħix fl-istess household ma' xi ħadd li huwa close tiegħek li qed jitkellem lingwa oħra, ħa tkun exposed u se jkollok ċans li tapprowċja native speaking, ma nafx jekk issirx native speaker, imma se tkun aħjar minn xi ħadd li studja l-universitá per eżempju. L-universitá għandek il-lecture time, siegħa, sagħtejn kollox, tagħmel l-exercises, imma it's not something li hija alive. Il-lingwa hija xi ħaġa li hija aktar ħajja, meta tħaddimha f'kuntest ħaj, naħseb hemm tista' ssir jew tapprowċja native speaking, jew li ssir tajjeb fil-lingwa. Il-lingwa mhux xi ħaġa li qiegħda hemm biex titgħallimha u tagħmel stop. A language is a tool. Xi ħaġa li tipprattika, l-aktar li titgħallem kif tużaha meta tużaha f'xi ħaġa reali.

By studying only, I don't think so. I think there is more chance of becoming a native speaker if one moves to China or if one is in a relationship with someone who is Chinese. One could stay in the same country but who lives with someone who is Chinese, and who has a certain level of Chinese already. I know Maltese people who are married to someone who is Chinese and today they speak Chinese quite well, at the beginning they didn't know any Chinese but by time they learned a lot. I don't know whether that is native speaking or not, it's because of their family, a relationship is something that pushes someone a lot to a language, the fact that one lives in the same household with someone close who speaks another language, one will be very exposed and one has a better chance of approaching native speaking, I don't know if one actually becomes a native speaker, but one will be better than someone who has studied at university, for example. At university one has lecture time, one, two hours, one does the exercises, but it's not something that is alive. A language is something that is alive, when one uses it in a living context, I think there one could approach native speaking, or becoming good at the language. A language is not there to be learned and then one stops. A language is a tool. Something that is practiced, that one learns when one uses it in real life.

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

3. Kelliema mhux nattivi taċ-Ċiniż jixtiequ li jsiru kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż/Standard Putonghua?

Naħseb li eħe, naħseb li iva, kulħadd naħseb li hekk. Jekk ġenwinament iħobbu l-lingwa u jridu jitgħallmuha, mhux nies li huma sfurzati, li l-iskola ġegħluhom jagħmlu ċ-Ċiniż jew whatever language.

Yes, I think so. I think that everyone is like this. If they really like the language and they want to learn it, not people who are forced to learn it, if they forced them to study Chinese or whatever language at school.

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

4. Kelliem nattiv jitwieled? Jista' wieħed isir kelliem nattiv?

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

5. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx fluwenti fl-istandard Putonghua?

Naħseb li huwa possibbli, imma xi Putonghua jkunu jafu eh jiġifieri. Kważi kulħadd, min jgħix fiċ-Ċina llum il-ġurnata jkunu jafu xi ħaġa Standard Putonghua. Forsi mhux jkunx perfett fih, jew meta jitkellem tisma' d-djalett, jew aċċent qawwi, imma jkun jaf il-Putonghua. Iċ-Ċiniżi jgħidulek li dan xi ħadd li ġej minn Sichuan province jew xi ħadd li ġej minn Dongbei, il-varjeta, għax anke, nies li jitkellmu Djalett tal-post, meta jitkellmu Putonghua imbagħad jitkellmu b'ċert mod, in-nies li jitkellmu vera standard Putonghua aktar huma nies f'kuntest uffiċjali, fuq it-televixin, jew ħbieb bejniethom l-universita, pero l-ħbieb dawn jistgħu ikunu ġejjin minn postijiet differenti fiċ-Ċina, u jekk tismagħhom jitkellmu d-dar u tismagħhom jitkellmu l-università ha tismagħhom jitkellmu two different forms of Chinese.

I think it is possible, but they would know some Putonghua. Nearly everyone, who lives in China today knows Standard Putonghua. They might not be perfect at it, or they might speak with a dialect, or an accent, but they would know Putonghua. The Chinese would say, this person comes from Sichuan province or from Dongbei, the variety, because even the people who speak the local dialect, when they speak in Putonghua they also speak in a certain way, the people who speak the real Standard Putonghua are those in official contexts, on television, or friends at university, friends who come from different parts of China, ut if you listen to them at home and you listen to them at university they would be speaking two different forms of Chinese.

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

6. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx taf tikteb il-karattri Ċiniżi?

Iva, imma mhux fiċ-China. Jekk fiċ-Ċina probabbilment xi characters se jkun jaf għax l-iskola jitgħallem xi characters. Jista' jkun hemm sitwazzjoni fejn hemm familja Ċiniża li marru l-America li kellhom baby hemmhekk, dan bdew ikellmuh biċ-Ċiniż, però ma jgħallmuhx, jew ftit li xejn jgħallmuh characters. Malta naf biha din, naf tifel li twieled ġo familja Ċiniża (...), huwa native speaker taċ-Chinese, dan jiġi l-Cultural Centre u dan jaf perfettament jitkellem Chinese għax jaf jitkellem mat-teachers, jidher li hu native speaker, pero, jiġi l-Cultural Centre biex jitgħallem il-characters għax ma jafx jikteb. Ma kellux ċans li jitgħallem il-characters. Knowing the language does not necessarily mean that you are literate.

Yes, but not in China. In China they would probably know some characters because at school they would learn some characters. It might be the case of a Chinese family who moves to America and who has a baby there, they speak to the baby in Chinese but they don' teach the baby how to write characters. In Malta I know a case like this, a child born in a Chinese family, (...), they are a native speaker of Chinese, they come to China Cultural Centre, they can speak Chinese perfectly because they speak to the teachers, they look like a native speaker, but they come to China Cultural Centre to learn characters because they cannot write. They didn't have the chance to learn any characters. Knowing the language does not necessarily mean that you are literate.

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

7. Jista' kelliem nattiv 'jitlef' l-abbiltà lingwistika u ma jibqax jidentifika bħala kelliem nattiv?

(forsi jiltaq mill-komunità li titkellem iċ-Ċiniż)

Kompletament le. Però li tinbidel il-linguistic ability fin-native language, iva, jidħol ċertu aċċent tas-second language, jew ċertu vokabularju jinsewh. Ma jibqax jiġi daqshekk quick. Jinsew kelma partikolari because they resort to the word in the second language li huma exposed għaliha. Li jitilfuh kompletament naħseb li hi diffiċli sakemm ma jkunx per eżempju, qed nimmaġina, ma nafx ta, trid tagħmel riċerka fuqha din, tifel li kien laħaq tgħallem ftit Ċiniż sa ma kellu 4 snin, imbagħad jiġi adopted

l-Amerka jew Malta u jibdew ikellmuh bil-Malti jew bl-Ingliż, jista' jkun li hemm jintilef l-ewwel lingwa, meta tkun early on, I'm not sure, biex ikolli risposta jrid ikolli lil xi ħadd li għamel studju. This is my opinion, my impression. Imma trid tara r-riċerka.

Not completely. But one's linguistic ability in the native language might change, yes, there would be a certain accent of the second language, or they might forget certain vocabulary. They wouldn't be so quick any longer. They would forget particular words because they resort to the word in the second language that they are exposed to. I think that it's very difficult to lost it completely, as long as it's not, for example, the case of, I don't know, this should be researched, a child who had learned some Chinese until age 4, then they are adopted in America or in Malta and they start to speak to them in Maltese or in English, it could be that they would have lost their first language, when early on, I'm not sure, to answer this we need a study. This is my opinion, my impression. But one has to look at the research.

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

8. Jista' kelliem mhux nattiv jitgħallem tant li jsir kelliem nattiv? (per eżempju persuna li tmur tgħix f'komunità fejn jitkellmu ċ-Ċiniż)

Li jsir kompletment naħseb diffiċli, imma li kważi jsir, jew japprowċja iva, tista'. Iktar ma ddum hemmhekk, iktar ma tesponi ruħek, iktar ma jkollok ineteractions man-nies, iva, iktar issir. Ovvjament xi ħadd li għamel ħmistax-il sena jgħix Beijing, u mhux qiegħed f'bubble ta' foreigners, għax naf nies li kienu Beijing imma ma jafu xejn Chinese, għax ovvjament dejjem kienu fl-area ma' barranin oħra, jitkellmu bl-Ingliż bejniethom, dawn kienu hemm imma xorta ma tgħallmux, imma min mar joqgħod hemm għax iżżewweġ jew li jitkellem maċ-Ċiniżi (...)

It is difficult to become a complete native speaker, but maybe to become a near native, or to approach native level, yes, it's possible. The longer one stays there, the more one exposes themselves, the more interactions one has with people, yes, one would become more. Obviously, someone who lived in Beijing for fifteen years and who is not in a bubble of foreigners, I know people who were in Beijing but they don't know any Chinese because they were always with other foreigners, they only speak English between themselves, these people still did not learn, but those who moved there because of marriage or who speaks with the Chinese (…)

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

9. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li jibdel l-identità tiegħu minn kelliem nattiv għal kelliemm mhux nattiv u viċe-versa?

Native għal non-native diffiċli ħafna. Forsi jista jkun at a very early age. Jekk xi ħadd minħabba ċirkustanzi ma jibqax exposed għal dik il-lingwa. Il-line fejn qiegħed ma nafx, jekk hux at one year, two years, three years, I don't know that, imma ma naħsibx, le.

Native to non-native, that is very difficult. Maybe possible at a very early age. If someone is no longer exposed to the language because of certain circumstances. I don't know where to draw the line, maybe the line could be drawn at one year, two years, three years, I don't know that, but I don't think so.

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

10. Huwa importanti għall-għalliema li jifhmu l-isfond kulturali/il-lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

Iva, iva importanti ħafna naħseb jiena. Ovvjament xi ħadd Ċiniż li ġej Malta idealment ikun jaf daqsxejn fuq il-kultura tagħna u dwar anke l-education system, it-teaching strategies, il-pedagogy li nużaw hawnhekk, mhux għax tagħna aħjar jew taċ-Ċina aħjar minn ta' Malta, imma l-istudenti li se jsib hawn se jkunu ggerjati għal ċerta sistema, it-teacher, ovvjament, aħjar ikun jaf dwarha, ħalli taddatta jew tuża combination jew tintroduċi s-sistema ġdida tagħha, imma they have to be aware li Malta s-sistema tagħna, speċjalment fl-aħħar snin kienet li we move away milli nitgħallmu l-affarijiet bl-amment. Fl-antik konna ħafna hekk, nitgħallmu bl-amment, Iċ-Ċina l-pedagogy tagħhom għad hemm ħafna li jitgħallmu bl-amment. Mhux kollox, u ovvjament anke ċ-Ċina hemm changes, iċ-Ċina huwa pajjiż fejn hemm ħafna teknoloġija moderna, in ġenerali li tkun familjari ma' ċertu sistema tgħin. Xi ħadd li ġie minn barra jgħallem hawn fl-iskejjel tagħna, irid ikun aware li għandna s-sistema tal-O levels u l-A levels, primary, secondary u choice of subjects u x'lingwi jitgħallmu, tipo li aħna bilingual, ċertu tfal jitkellmu bl-Ingliż, naħseb li tgħin dik.

Yes, yes, I think it's very important. Obviously, someone who is Chinese coming to Malta ideally needs to know a bit about our culture and even on our education system, our teaching strategies, the pedagogy we use over here, it's not because ours is better than that in China or because that in China is better than that in Malta, but they need to know that the students over here will be used to a certain system, the teacher, it would be better if they would know about it, so that they adapt themselves or uses a combination or introduces their own new system, but they have to be aware that in Malta, our system, especially lately, we have moved away from learning things by heart. In the past we were like that, we used to learn by heart, in China their pedagogy still teaches a lot by heart. Not everything, and even in China there are changes, in China there is a lot of modern technology, it would be very helpful to be familiar with the system. Someone who comes from abroad to teach on our schools over here, they have to be aware of our system of O and A levels, primary, secondary, choice of subjects and what languages we teach, that we are bilingual, certain children speak in English, I think that would help.

Interview 5 – Student 4 – English

Interview questions – first round of interviews

1. What is a native speaker?

A person who always speaks the language at home, since childhood.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

No

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

No

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

No

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

No

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

My native language is not Chinese because I studied Chinese as an adult. Since birth, at home I always spoke Maltese.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

The non-native speaker could have native speaker level. There isn't necessarily a difference, a non-native speaker might have a high level of Chinese. A non-native speaker thinks to speak, but it depends on their level, if I speak in my first or second languages it's the same for me, it all depends on one's level.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

No – there are many dialects.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

Yes, yes.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

It depends on the language spoken at home, the language since childhood. I'm a non-native speaker but I have native speaker level in Spanish. A native speaker is born into that language.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

No.

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

No.

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

No, people speak their dialect.

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

Yes, it's possible.

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

No, not necessarily, for example there are people who live in the country side who might not be fluent in Putonghua.

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

Yes

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

No, because native speakers know something but don't necessarily know why something is like that. When a person studies the language as a non-native speaker, they would know why things are as they are and would know how to explain it. A native speaker does not necessarily know why things are as they are or how to explain things as their acquisition is natural, born into it.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

No.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

No, the native speaker is not necessarily more proficient in Chinese. Culture could affect proficiency, it is difficult for a non-native speaker to acquire to culture of the language, a native speaker is someone who was born into the culture of the language.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

A native speaker could be born wherever, but a native speaker is a person who speaks Chinese at home since birth and throughout childhood, it's the first language one speaks is their native language. A person says 'mum' and 'dad' in their native language.

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

When a person **STUDIES** Chinese as a foreign language in a classroom. This is studying, not the first language one speaks after birth.

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

Ethnicity and birthplace do not make a native speaker, the language spoken at home since birth and during childhood makes a person a native speaker.

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

No

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

One can study to acquire native speaker level, but culture is still missing, so one is not a native speaker. A native speaker is someone whose mother tongue is Chinese, Chinese is the first language one speaks. If a baby is not ethnically Chinese, for example a baby is adopted by a Chinese family and they speak Chinese at home, then yes, the baby is a native speaker of Chinese A native speaker is one who was spoken to in Chinese and who spoke Chinese at home since birth and during childhood.

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

It depends on the language spoken to them at home as a child.

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

Yes, sound like a native speaker, maybe, but still I can never become a native speaker of Chinese. I can gain the level or proficiency of a native speaker. No, I don't want to become a native speaker of Chinese, anyways, I cannot become a native speaker of Chinese because I am a native speaker of Maltese! I started studying Chinese in adulthood, at university. My identity is Maltese, but I wish to gain native speaker level in Chinese, like I have native speaker level in Spanish.

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

No

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

Yes, definitely, to learn how to read and write.

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

Native speaker level is the ability to speak without having to think, a native speaker speaks without the need to translate into another language. A native speaker of Chinese thinks in Chinese as they speak it. Understanding of jokes and humour also makes a native speaker. A native speaker understands television, they understand all conversations and understands all scenarios in Chinese.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

If a native speaker teacher has lived in Malta for many years, that's one thing, but if a teacher has just landed from China that's another thing. If a teacher has just come from China, then yes, s/he might be distant as s/he doesn't know the culture here in Malta.

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

Yes, in a way. Mentally and culturally, non-native speaker teachers of Chinese here in Malta are at an advantage as they understand the student better.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

Yes, it is an advantage but it doesn't make you the ideal teacher, because what is ideal? Sharing the native language with students helps a lot.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

You cannot become a native speaker, a native speaker is born, a non-native speaker can study and acquire native speaker level.

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

I want to have native speaker level in Chinese, linguistically, but culturally I can never become a native speaker of Chinese because my native language is Maltese.

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

Yes, I was born a native speaker of Maltese.

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

Yes, if they speak dialect. Not all Chinese people speak Standard Putonghua, the Standard is studied.

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

Yes, to learn how to write one must study at school.

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

Yes, if they don't speak the language for a long time. But you cannot really forget your native language, unless you leave the country at a very young age.

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

Not become a native speaker, but one can acquire native speaker level.

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

No, a native speaker cannot become a non-native speaker. A non-native speaker can study and learn and acquire native speaker level.

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

Yes, it is very important to understand students in order to teach effectively.

Interview 6 – Student 6 – English

Interview questions – first round of interviews

1. What is a native speaker?

Practically, for me a native speaker is person who has learned and spoken a particular language since childhood. Normally this is the language of the place where the person was born and raised. For me this is a native speaker.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

No I don't think so, because I think there is a difference between the sort of grammar that maybe taught in school and the grammar of actual native speakers in formal settings. Also I think it is good to consider that the first language is learned from parents who are not always accurate in their pronunciation, grammar and everything, so I think that the capability to spell certain words, write and pronounce depends mostly on the foundation which is usually from the parents or carers by whom they were raised.

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

I think yes, it's the same. Yes, even in Pinyin they make errors. I have experience in that at the moment! So!

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

Obviously I am a non-native speaker. First of all, I'm not fluent in the language, I wasn't born there and I wasn't raised there, so I'm not a native speaker (laughs) I can never be, the maximum maybe I can be a **near** native speaker, unless I get immersed in the community, the Chinese community, go and live in China. (laughs)

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

We're not born and raised in China, we're not with the Chinese, ok, at the moment I'm working with the Chinese, so, it's like having first-hand experience with them, however, no I'm not. Maltese. I'm a native speaker of Maltese. We are born and raised in Malta, what really makes a native speaker is the fact that one can detect sarcasm, even certain meanings of words that go beyond the dictionary definitions, humour, rhythm of the language, the accent, filler words, cultural context is very important and is what defines a native speaker.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

Yes, obviously there is. A native speaker has a bonus, a kind of power that can spot even the smallest details of the language. I think that a Chinese native speaker knows which accent usually corresponds to which city and social class, even the education level of the others, so, therefore they are generally better equipped to recognise this information.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

Not necessarily, because it depends on by whom they are raised, and also the community, there are many dialects in China so it is not necessarily Putonghua, spoken Chinese is divided into 5 main dialect groups. It depends, it depends from which place, practically those who come from Beijing are the ideal ones to teach Putonghua, obviously because it's their dialect, Mandarin.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

Born in America but within a Chinese community, yes I do think so, if the parents/carers are Chinese, probably then they would be bilingual.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

No unless they are being raised in China, maybe adopted by Chinese parents or within an environment where Chinese is the main language, it's the first language spoken.

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

I think that there's a huge gap between learning Chinese in a school and living within a Chinese environment. So it's like, I think there's a difference between being fluent and proficient, because university or the institution teaches a student proficiency, which is the ability to comprehend and speak, practice by writing and reading, so I think one wouldn't be fluent in the dialect, but can still be a skilful speaker. I think that fluency is impossible to attain without engaging in dialogue, to become a fluent speaker of the language.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

No because it depends on their level of education and also surroundings. This also applies to the next two questions I think.

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

Same

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

Same

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

It is possible, fluency is combined with proficiency because that is, if one is living in China, preferably in Beijing and communicates with locals while learning the language in school and university, yes I think that would be the best way. Learning at university and obviously living with locals.

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

No no obviously not, because it depends on from which province they are coming, if they are from Beijing, yes, probably yes. If they can speak and understand.

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

Yes yes, If they are not from Beijing, they are is from villages, remote areas, I don't think that they understand Standard Putonghua if they didn't go to school, had a basic education.

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

Not necessarily because being a native speaker still it does not ensure that one understands one's own language as a teacher or linguist would. So the rules of a language are absorbed by a native speaker when they are children, so it's internalised, so they are not aware, or really conscious of what they had internalised without proper training.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

No unless they are from Beijing and have been well trained in teaching Putonghua.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

No because a native speaker, they are not enough to be the ideal teacher, ok because maybe they can help with conversation in Chinese, I think that their understanding of grammar can sometimes be way below the standards required to be the ideal teacher.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

For me, being born and raised in China, that's what makes a native speaker.

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

Someone who speaks Chinese, or maybe we try to (laughs), as a second language.

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

No, no, it depends on where they are born and raised. At the end of the day, that's what counts, where you are raised.

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes I think so, yes.

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

He can, if they live in China, especially from childhood, yes they can.

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes it is possible, if they are adopted, there are babies who are adopted.

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

Well, I don't think that education or studies are sufficient to become a native speaker. I think that living with the locals is important in order to be, maybe, a **near** native speaker. I wish to become a native speaker of Chinese, but, in my dreams! (laughs)

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

No no no (laughs)

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

Yes I think so, it is very important since it has been set as a standard language by the government so that people from different provinces would be able to communicate better. Yes it is essential.

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

The highest level – obviously the tones, they are important, also I think that being able to understand and use colloquialisms, idioms, slang language, even understand puns, I think that's the most… as long as the acquisition starts very early, you know, the earlier the better.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

Sometimes yes, I think there is a cultural barrier yes, and it can be felt and also limits the ability of the students to grasp and comprehend what the teacher is really saying or trying to explain, yes, yes. I'm speaking from experience.

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

Yes, of course, especially when students are at the beginner or the elementary level, yes. To be honest I think that it is important that at that level the teacher is the same language, the same nationality as the students. Yes, I think it is very important.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

Yes, I think it is ideal, because at some point the non-native speaker teacher had to learn the language, and also went through everything the students are going through. This makes them better equipped to also anticipate problems and are able to foresee what students may encounter because of the cultural difference, so there is also the cultural adaptation.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

No, however a proficient speaker will have a higher chance of being better than a native speaker actually.

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

I think that for me, proficiency is important, I don't think that one can ever become native speaker, but, near native speaker maybe, yes.

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

I think so. If raised in that country since childhood, yes.

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

Yes, there are people from different provinces, Shanghai and Fujian have their own dialect. I don't think they are fluent in Standard Putonghua.

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

Yes, I think so, it could be. Especially those who live in villages and haven't had an education, I think they only rely on speaking.

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

Well, I think still it depends, and this is called language attrition, if I'm not mistaken, usually it happens to children who move abroad and have no contact with the community, and they no longer speak the language in question. However I don't really think it happens in adults.

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

A near native speaker maybe (laughs).

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

I don't think so.

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

Yes, because it will definitely help the student to identify the way, the best method of learning the language. I think that the non-native speaker's knowledge of their native language would be beneficial in drawing parallels also between both languages, a deeper and more correct understanding of the language. At beginning, elementary level it is very important to have a non-native speaker teacher, because you can relate with her/him.

Interview 7 – Student 5 – Maltese – Translated

Interview questions – first round of interviews

L-ewwel intervista

1. What is a native speaker?

1. X'inhu kelliem nattiv?

Native speaker huwa dik il-persuna li tgħallmet il-lingwa fil-post fejn din il-lingwa tiġi użata u tkun tgħallmitha qabel ma bdiet tistudja formalment l-iskola, jiġifieri anke qabel ma titwieled hi mdawra fil-kuntenst ta' fejn il-lingwa hi użata naturalment jiġifieri mhix ikkunsidrata f'dak il-post bħala lingwa barranija jew mgħallmha l-iskola biss. Mela native speaker huwa bniedem li hu mkabbar f'dik il-lingwa, u allura kapaċi jifhem u juża l-lingwa bl-aktar mod naturali. Hemm ħafna x'nistgħu ngħidu dwar native speaker, pero' bażikament, dak, dak.

A native speaker is a person who acquired the language in the country where the language is mostly spoken. The person would also have learned the language before they start to study it formally at school, this means that even before birth, the person would be immersed in the context where the language is spoken and used naturally and not only taught in school. So a native speaker is a person who has grown up in the language, so they could understand and use the language in the most natural way. There's a lot to say on the native speaker, but that is it basically.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

2. Meta kelliem nattiv jitkellem, dan ikun dejjem grammatikament korrett?

Jien naħseb l-irwol prinċipali ta' kelliem hu li jwassal messaġġ. (…) per eżempju jiena native speaker tal-Malti, jiena nirrealizza (…) fejn nieħu żball, għalkemm dan l-iżball ma jwassalx għal nuqqas ta' komunikazzjoni, jiġifieri l-proċess wassal il-messaġġ. (…) ħadd m'għandu grammatika perfetta, kemm il-kelliema nattivi u kemm dawk li m'humiex nattivi. (…) il-grammatika mhux dejjem fil-moħħ tal-kelliem nattiv, jiġifieri ma ngħidx li n-native speaker dejjem għandu, mhux dejjem għandu l-grammatika dejjem soda f'idejh.

I think that the main aim of a speaker is to get the message through. (…)For example, I am a native speaker of Maltese, I realise (…) where I make mistakes, even though the mistake does not hinder communication, meaning that the process has delivered the message. (…) No one has perfect grammar, both native and non-native speakers (…) Native speakers do not necessarily always have grammar on their minds, native speakers do not always have very strong grammar.

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

3. Il-kitba tal-kelliem nattiv (karattri u grammatika) huma dejjem grammatikament korretti?

Ifhimni, jekk, li kieku nikkunsidraw lill-kelliem nattiv Malti, lanqas nibdew għax il-Maltin ma tantx jafu jiktbu l-lingwa tagħhom. Issa fil-każ taċ-Ċiniżi, spiss jiġri mill-istudji fejn l-iżbaji li jieħdu spiss jinvolvu, taf int il-karattri għandhom element fonetiku li juri l-ħoss tal-karattru, jiġifieri żewġ karattri li

għandhom l-istess ħoss u xi kultant anke l-istess tone, spiss ikollhom l-istess element fonetiku, jiġri li spiss jiktbu l-komponent fonetiku tajjeb imma mbagħad ir-radical, din tiġri ħafna, (...) fiċ-Ċiniż, ħafna żbalji tipiċi li jiehdu n-native speakers, imma biex nurik li anke fil-kitba jieħdu ħafna żbalji.

If we consider native speakers of Maltese, then there would be a problem because the Maltese are not that good at writing their language. In the case of the Chinese, studies show that most of the mistakes they make involve characters, you know, characters have a phonetic elelment that indicate the sound of the character, so two characters have the same sound and sometimes even the same tone, very often they have the same phonetic element, very often they write the phonetic element well but then make mistakes in the radical, this happens very often, many typical mistakes that native speakers make are in writing.

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

4. Inti kelliem nattiv jew kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex?

Jiena ma nħossnix native speaker taċ-Ċiniż, ħa nibdew minn hemmhekk. Li tkun native speaker li tilħaq dak il-livell fejn mhux propju titkellem lingwa imma propju li tħossha, fejn inti tħoss li hemm xi ħaġa ħażina kultant u ma nafx kif tgħidha, kultant meta tkun kapaċi, kif tispjega xi ħaġa li hi żbaljata, din ma turix li inti native speaker, li inti tkun kapaċi tispjega kultant ċertu sentiment fil-lingwa turi, turi li mintix native speaker, għalhekk jien qatt ma ħa nkun native speaker għax nistudjaha wisq fil-fond mentri n-native speaker huwa xi ħadd li m'għandux għalfejn jistudja biex jifhem.

I don't feel that I am a native speaker of Chinese, let's start from there. A native speaker would have a certain level where they not only speaks the language, but also feels it, a native speaker would feel if there is an error even if they cannot explain what it is. Sometimes when one is able to explain why something is wrong, that shows that one is not a native speaker. I can never be a native speaker of Chinese because I study Chinese in too much depth, a native speaker doesn't need to study their language in depth to be able to understand it. A native speaker doesn't need to study their language in depth to be able to understand it.

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Jekk iva, x'jagħmlek kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

6. Jekk le, x'jagħmlek kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jekk le, x'inhi l-lingwa materna tiegħek? X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv ta' dik il-lingwa?

Appuntu l-fatt li wieħed irid propju jistudja fil-fond il-lingwa, m'hemx l-element fis-subkonxju, li kbirt f'dak il-kuntest, jiena ma kbirtx fil-kuntest Ċiniż, jiġifieri ċertu affarijiet tlifthom għax ta' tifel ma' kellix il-perspettiva ta' tifel, ma kellix xhieda ta' interazzjoni meta kont tifel, u bejni ta' tifel ma' tfal oħra, kull ma jista' jkolli huwa parti biss minn dik l-esperjenza li tkun Ċiniż, li tkun native, jiġifieri, jiena ninteraġixxi ta' adult ma' adulti u ninteraġixxi ma' tfal ta' adult, jiġifieri differenti kompletament, m'għamiltx iċ-ċirku kollu, dejjem bħala adult fiċ-Ċiniż.

It's the fact that one needs to study the language in depth, there is no element in the subconscious, that one grew up in that conext, I didn't grow up in the Chinese context, so I have lost certain things because as a child, I didn't have the perspective of a child, I didn't interact as a child, between myself and other children, what I could have is part of the experience of being Chinese, meaning being a

native Chinese, meaning that I interact as an adult with adults and I interact with children as an adult, meaning, I didn't experience the whole circle, my experience in Chinese was always as an adult.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

7. Hemm xi differenza bejn kelliem nattiv u kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Jiddependi mill-esperjenza, hux hekk, jekk wieħed studja biżżejjed iċ-Ċiniż u b'mod kif suppost, jiġifieri jaf il-livelli kollha ta' formalita', għandu vokabularju vast fil-moħħ, għandu esperjenza ta' użu kemm fit-taħdit u anke fil-kitba jien naħseb li m'hemx differenza, apparti forsi qisu fl-intuitiveness, kif f'sekonda tħoss li hemm xi ħaġa ħażina, ok, ovvjament kultant din il-ħaġa ma tagħmilx differenza għax inti trid tikkomunika, ma tridx tħoss x'inhu għaddej, imma, imma jekk hemm xi differenza qiegħda hemmhekk bejniethom. Li tkun Ċiniż hija propju kwistjoni ta' razza, jiġifieri fis-sens, jien naħseb li native speaker jew persuna barranija kull m'għandha tagħmel hija li tħares lejn mera biex tkun taf jekk tistax tikkunsidra ruħha bħala membru tas-soċjeta Ċiniża ħa ngħidu hekk, għax kultant mhux biżżejjed tkun taf il-lingwa, trid anke tidher dik il-lingwa wkoll. Tista' tilħaq ċertu livell kemm trid fil-lingwa, imma jekk m'intix Ċiniż qatt m'int se tkun, u se juruk li mhux jaċċettawk bħala membru.

It depends on one's experience, if one studied Chinese well enough, as it should be, meaning they would know all levels of formality, if one has a vast vocabulary in their mind, if one has experience of using spoken as well as written Chinese, I don't think there is any difference, apart from maybe a kind of intuition, how in a second one feels if something is wrong, ok, obviously, at times this doesn't make any difference because one needs to communicate, there is no need to feel what's going on, but if there is any difference, that is here it lays. Being Chinese is a question of race, meaning that, a native speaker and a foreigner all they need to do is look in the mirror to see whether they will be accepted as a member of Chinese society, because sometimes it's not enough to know the language, the language needs to show as well. One could reach a certain linguistic level, but if one is not Chinese, they will never become, and they will show you that you are not accepted as a member.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

8. In-nies li twieldu ċ-Ċina huma kollha kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż? X'varjetà ta' Ċiniż? Bilfors tal-Putonghua?

Ifhimni jekk wieħed jitwieled u jikber hemm, iva huwa native speaker, issa 'l quddiem nibdew nitkellmu dwar nies ta' oriġini barranija li twieldu ċ-Ċina u li kibru ċ-Ċina, sew, dawn huma native speakers taċ-Ċiniż jew le? Ir-risposta hija iva, native speakers taċ-Ċiniż. Jiġifieri jekk inti kbirt u tgħallimt bħala l-ewwel lingwa l-lingwa tal-post, u l-post huwa ċ-Ċina, inti native speaker taċ-Ċiniż.

Normalment, hux hekk, il-Putonghua qisu l-lingwa tal-media, però n-native speaker normalment ma jitkellimx dak it-tip ta' Ċinż, jitkellem bid-djalett tiegħu propju, jiġifieri sakemm ma twelidx Beijing jiġifieri, u lanqas Beijing ma jitkellmu l-Putonghua għax jitkellmu propju l-R hua, jitfgħu dik l-/r/ fl-aħħar, iħobbuha ħafna, jiġifieri, ma ngħidx li dawk li jitkellmu ċ-Ċiniż bħala native speaker se jitkellmu l-Putonghua, jafuh, imma mhux propja l-lingwa li jafu, huma jafu d-djalett tagħhom, tones u xi espressjonijiet u anke grammatika differenti, però huwa varjetà ta' Ċiniż li ma nistgħux insejjħulu Putonghua. Putonghua hija xi ħaġa li tintuża fil-media biex tgħaqqad iċ-Ċina, propju għaliex hemm differenzi lingwistiċi kbar ħafna bejn djalett u ieħor kultant fiċ-Ċina.

If one was born and brought up there, yes, they are a native speaker, later on we will talk about people of foreign origin who were born and brought up in China, right, are they or are they not native speakers of Chinese? The answer is yes, native speakers of Chinese. This means that if one was brought up and learned as their first language the language of the country, and the country is China, then one is a native speaker of Chinese.

Putonghua is the language used in the media, native speakers don't normally speak that sort of Chinese, native speakers tend to speak in their dialect, so as long as one wasn't born in Beijing, and not even in Beijing, they don't speak Putonghua, they speak /r/ hua, they like to pronounce that /r/ at the end, they like the /r/ sound, not all native speakers of Chinese speak Putonghua, they know it, but they know their dialect more, tones and some expressions and grammar are different, it's a variety that cannot be called Putonghua. Native speakers speak in Putonghua but it might not be their dialect. Putonghua is used in the media to unite China, Putonghua is used to unite China linguistically as there is so much linguistic diversity in China.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

9. Jista' kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż jitwieled u jitrabba f'komunità Ċiniża fil-punent? (eż. Fl-Ingilterra, fl-Amerka, fl-Awstralja...) Dawn xorta jkunu kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva dawn l-affarijiet jiġru spiss, f'Melbourne jew f'San Francisco, fic-Chinatowns, Londra naħseb hemm iċ-Chinatown ukoll, anke Malta hawn Ċiniżi li jitkellmu kemm Ċiniż u anke Malti, jiġifieri jista' jkollhom problemi biex jaqrawh għax biex taqra ċ-Ċiniż propju għandek bżonn edukazzjoni għalih ta' numru ta' snin l-iskola, pero' n-native speaker m'għandux bil-fors ikun kapaċi jiktibha l-lingwa, għandu bżonn ikun jaf jitkellem, jitħadded biha, u jekk jaf jagħmel dan, u normalment il-barranin li għandhom missierhom u ommhom Ċiniżi, il-ġenituri Ċiniżi f'pajjiż li mhux iċ-Ċina, ma jkunux qed jitkellmu l-Putonghua, ikunu qed jitkellmu l-varjeta' ta' Ċiniż li jitkellmu d-dar, u spiss dan huwa d-djalett pero iva huma native speakers ta' lingwa Ċiniża li forsi ma teżistix iċ-Ċina, għax issa hemm taħlit ta' Ingliż u Ċiniż pero' huma native speakers ta' lingwa li mhux la Ingliż u forsi xi kultant mhix Ċiniż ukoll.

Yes, such things happen often in Melbourne or in San Francisco, in Chinatowns, I think there is a Chinatown in London also, even in Malta there are Chinese people who speak Chinese and even speak Maltese, they might have issues to read, because to be able to read Chinese one needs an education for a number of years at school, but the native speaker does not necessarily know how to write the language, they need to know how to speak it, to converse, and if they can do that, normally, foreigners who have Chinese parents, Chinese parents who are not in China might not be speaking Putonghua, they speak a variety of Chinese that they speak at home, very often this is a dialect, but they are still native speakers of a Chinese language that might not exist in China, because now there is also a mixture of English and Chinese, but they are native speakers of a language that is not English and sometimes that is not even Chinese also.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

10. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Għaliex? Għaliex le? Tista' persuna ta' etniċità Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva mela jista', iva, issa kif jiġi ikkunsidrat fis-soċjeta' dik hija problema oħra, però huwa lingwistikament native speaker, jeżistu anke tfal Maltin li twieldu ċ-Ċina u jitkellmu ċ-Ċiniż propju nattivament, kien hemm wieħed fil-gazzetti xi ħames snin ilu, per eżempju, iva dak huwa native

speaker. Probabbilment mhux native speaker tal-Malti f'dak il-każ, imma taċ-Ċiniż huwa. Imma le, jiddependi, għax jista jkun li t-tifel anke studja l-Malti d-dar, u dak jiġi anke native speaker tal-Malti jiġifieri.

Yes, it could be, how society will consider this person is another issue, but linguistically, they are native speakers, there are even Maltese children, born in China and who speak Chinese natively, there was one in the newspapers around five years ago, for example, that is a native speaker. Probably they are not a native speaker of Maltese in that case, but they are of Chinese. But no, it depends, it could also be that the child studied Maltese at home, and that would be a native speaker of Maltese.

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

11. Tista' persuna li mhix ta' etniċità Ċiniża imma li tistudja ċ-Ċiniż fl-iskola jew fl-università qatt issir kelliem nattiv? Jew forsi ssir bħal kelliem nattiv? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

Jien naħseb anke meta xi ħadd jaf lingwa b'mod wisq perfett, kultant tagħti x'tifhem li dak mhux native speaker, jiġifieri li tkun native speaker huwa li anke tkun kapaċi b'mod naturali li tagħmel l-iżbalji li jagħmlu n-native speakers ukoll, jiġifieri, jien naħseb huwa possibbli imma huwa diffiċli ħafna. Wieħed jista' jilħaq livell avvanzat, jista' jistudja ħafna, imma kif iħabbat is-subgħa ta' siequ mas-sieq tal-mejda mhux se jitkellem ħażin biċ-Ċiniż, taħrablu xi kelma bl-Ingliż jew bil-Malti! Jiġifieri meta tkun propju fil-qalbha tal-persuna u tolqotha fil-laħam il-ħaj, jiġifieri propju fl-istint tal-persuna toħroġ ir-reazzjoni naturali tkun biċ-Ċiniż, min jaf, forsi propju għandek native speaker hemm.

I think that when a person know the language in such a perfect way, sometimes they show that they are not native speakers, being a native speaker is even being able to, in a very natural way, to even make the mistakes that native speakers make, so, I think that it is possible but it is very difficult. One could reach a very advanced level, if they study a lot, but once they hit their toe with the table, they will not swear in Chinese, they will utter something in English or in Maltese! So when one really hits home, in one's natural instinct, if one's natural instinct reaction is in Chinese, maybe there you have a native speaker.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

12. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li kull ma tgħid huwa grammatikament tajjeb?

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

13. Jekk persuna hija kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-karattri mikubin tagħha huma bilfors tajbin?

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

14. Jekk persuna tkun kelliem nattiv, dak ifisser li l-pronunzja tat-tonalitajiet hija dejjem bilfors tajba? U l-pronunzja ta' Standard Putonghua?

Jien naħseb li meta wieħed jitkellem id-djalett tiegħu jew qed jitkellem Putonghua biex jiftiehem ma' ħaddieħor, jien naħseb li dejjem qed juża forma ta' tone li hija ta' qbil ma' dak li qed jistennew li jaf ħaddieħor, normalment it-tones mhix kwistjoni li toħloq problema fiċ-Ċiniż. Jeżistu varjanti, forsi jkun hemm xi problemi hemmhekk, l-istess kelma bl-istess karattri jaf ikollha tones differenti bejn varjetà u oħra, imma ma nafx ngħidlek, fis-sens, jien naħseb li d-differenzi joħorġu anke minn affarijiet oħra prinċipali, imma fil-varjetajiet taċ-Ċiniż hemm uħud li għandhom ħafna tones u tones li ma jeżistux

f'ħafna postijiet fiċ-Ċina, jiġifieri, in-native speaker għandu qabda sew fit-tones imma, u tista' tikkawża problemi bejn native speakers u oħrajn, però, hemm, bħala għerf tal-varjetà tiegħu ma naħsibx li għandu ħafna difetti, sakemm, per eżempju m'aħniex nitkellmu fuq kliem li mhux komuni, għax imbagħad forsi hemmhekk jista' jkun li hemm propju nuqqas ta' għarfien.

I think that when one speaks their dialect or Putonghua in order to be understood by someone else, I think that they would be using a tone that is in agreement with what the other is expecting and what the other knows, normally tones do not cause any issues in Chinese. There are variations, there might be issues there, the same word with the same character might have a different tone between one variety and another, but I can't tell, in the sense that there are other things that are points of difference, but in the varieties of Chinese there are some that have many tones and tones that don't exist in many parts of China, so the native speaker has a good command of tones, but there might be issues between native speakers and others, but knowledge in one's variety, I don't think that it has many shortcomings, as long as, for example, we're not considering words that are not so common, there might be a lack of knowledge.

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

15. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż li jitgħallem l-istandard Putonghua vera sewwa? (li jkun fluwenti, li jkollu grammatika tajba, pronunzja, karattri miktubin...)

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

16. Il-kelliema nattivi huma bilfors kelliema nattivi ta' Standard Putonghua?

Jien naħseb li anke l-istandard iridu f'ċertu mod ukoll jistudjawh. Naħseb li hija xi ħaġa li jistudjaw l-iskola. Jien naħseb li l-istandard qisu kif aħna nafu l-Ingliż, spiss nitkellmuh id-dar imma lanqas varjetà ta' Ingliż pur, huwa varjeta ta' Ingliż-Malti u huwa xi ħaġa li anke nistudjawha l-iskola normalment, jiġifieri, aħna native speakers tal-Ingliż? Jekk tista' tgħid iva għall-Matin, tista' tgħid iva għall-Putonghua fiċ-Ċina, ħlief li tant hemm wisq affarijiet simili bejn il-Putonghua u d-djalett, fis-sens ta' pronunzja u grammatika, fil-biċċa l-kbira tal-każijiet li ma tistax tqabbilha mad-differenzi li hemm bejn il-Malti u l-Ingliż, jiġifieri hemm inqas affarijiet simili bejniethom, jiġifieri anke jekk forsi mhix lingwa nattiva għalihom, ok, għalkemm jien ngħid li prattikament iva, hija lingwa nattiva għalihom, xorta hija xi ħaġa aktar viċina milli l-Ingliż għall-Malti.

I think that in a way they have to study the standard. I think that it's something that they study at school. I think that the standard is like how we know English, we often speak it at home but it's not a pure variety of English, it is a variety of Maltese-English that is normally studied at school, so, are we native speakers of English? If you can say yes for the Maltese, then you can also say yes for Putonghua in China, but there are many similar things between Putonghua and the dialects, in pronunciation and grammar, in most cases I don't think it could be compared to the differences between Maltese and English, meaning that there is much less similar between them, so even if it's not their native language, ok, even though practically it is, it is a native language for them, it is still closer than English and Maltese.

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

17. Jista' kelliem nattiv ma jkunx jaf jitkellem/ma jifhimx Standard Putonghua?

Iva, iva, din hija l-biċċa l-kbira tal-każijiet nistgħu ngħidu, għalkemm forsi llum il-ġurnata naqset din il-ħaġa, hemm nies illiterati fil-Putonghua, jeżistu nies li jaħdmu fir-raba, fl-industrija, jew propju nies li

m'għandhomx bżonn jikkomunikaw ma' oħrajn b'din il-forma, jew ma jarawx televixin, jew ma studjawx l-iskola jew dawn l-affarijiet kollha, li jitkellmu d-djalett tagħhom, il-varjetà tagħhom imma ma jafux jesprimu ruħhom b'mod li huwa Putonghua.

Yes, yes this is what most of the cases are, but today there is less of this situation, there are illiterate people in Putonghua, there are people who work the fields, who work in industry, or people who don't need to communicate with others in this form, or who don't watch television, or who haven't studied at school, or all these things, who speak their own dialect, their variety and who cannot express themselves in Putonghua.

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

18. L-għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi huma l-għalliema ideali? Għaliex? Għaliex le?

Jiena naħseb speċjalment fil-bidu tajjeb li jkun hemm, barrani (xi ħadd li mhux Ċiniż, Ewropew) li studja l-lingwa sew, l-istudenti li għadhom jibdew iċ-Ċiniż bħala lingwa barranija tajjeb li jkun hemm teacher barrani, jiġifieri non-native speaker bħala teacher, jiġifieri xi ħadd bħalna, per eżempju, għax propju jifhem il-problemi li jiltaqa' magħhom l-istudent u probabbilment ikun kapaċi jagħti eżempji li jispjegaw aħjar id-differenzi, mentri meta wieħed huwa native speaker forsi huwa limitat li jispejega l-affarijiet kif jafhom hu mingħajr forsi ħafna għarfien ta' lingwi oħrajn ma xiex jista' jqabbilha, per eżempju. Iktar ma jaf lingwi l-għalliem dejjem aħjar, il-konoxxenza tal-Malti u tal-Ingliż meta wieħed qed jgħallem iċ-Ċiniż, tkun ideali għall-kuntest Malti. Huwa xogħol l-għalliem li jkun kapaċi joħloq eżempji u jispjega b'mod li jifhem u jfiehem il-lingwa Ċiniża biex ikun jista' jispejgaha lill-barranin bi kwalunkwe lingwa li jitkellmu nattivament, jiġifieri, però mhix xi ħaġa impossibli għal għalliem li huwa native. Però hemm iżjed immedjatezza meta barrani li qed jgħallem iċ-Ċiniż, hemm inqas x'tipprepara, hemm inqas studju xi jsir u hemm iżjed naturalezza.

I think that especially at the beginning, it is very good to have a foreigner (someone who is not Chinese, someone who is European) who has studied the language well, for the students who have just started studying Chinese as a foreign language, it's good to have a foreign teacher, meaning, a non-native speaker teacher, someone like us, for example, because they could understand the issues that the student encounters and probably they would be able to give examples that better explain the differences, but when one is a native speaker, they might be limited in a way that they would explain things as they know them, maybe without any knowledge of their languages with what they could compare, for example. The more languages the teacher knows, the better it is. Knowledge of Maltese and English when one is teaching Chinese is ideal for the Maltese context. It is the teacher's job to be able to create examples and to explain the Chinese language in a way that foreigners could understand in any language that they speak natively, but it's not impossible for a native teacher. There is more immediacy when a foreigner teaches Chinese, there is less to prepare, there is less studying to be done and it's more natural.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

19. L-Għalliema li huma kelliema nattivi bilfors ikollhom aktar għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

Domanda tajba, jien naħseb, ma naħsibx, jien naħseb li forsi għandhom inqas kunflitti bejn id-djalett u l-Putonghua. Jista' jkun li kelliem nattiv jgħid ara din nafha, ġieli smajtha qabel, jiġifieri probabbilment hija tajba, imma jista' jkun li semagħha fil-varjeta' tiegħu u ma teżistix fil-Putonghua mentri dan il-proċess ma jseħħx spiss mal-foreign teacher, jiġifieri peress li hu normalment jaf biss il-Putonghua. Jekk xi ħaġa semagħha jew ma semagħhiex, dik tkun propju r-risposta għalih, ma jkollux

dan il-kunflitt bejn din teżisti fid-djalett tiegħi jew teżisti fil-Putonghua. Jew din tingħad hekk fid-djalett tiegħi jew din tingħad hekk fil-Putonghua, jiġifieri xi kultant inqas ma taf, iktar taf aħjar.

Good question, I think, I don't think so, I think they have less conflict between dialects and Putonghua. A native speaker might say that they know something, I've heard this before, so most probably it's correct, but they could have heard it in their own variety and it might not exist in Putonghua, this process does not exist with the foreign teacher, meaning they would only know Putonghua. If they have or they haven't heard something, that would be the answer, they wouldn't have the conflict between their dialect and Putonghua. Is this said like this in my dialect or in Putonghua, meaning that at times, the less one knows, the better.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

It-tieni intervista

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

1. L-għalliem nattiv huwa l-għalliem ideali għax huwa twieled fil-lingwa u fil-kultura u b'hekk għandu iktar għarfien?

Jiena naħseb li native teacher isir ideali maż-żmien. Iżjed ma wieħed javvanza fl-istudju taċ-Ċiniż, iżjed isir ideali, imma ma nafx jekk jeżitix teacher ideali, però għalliem li forsi huwa bilingual, li jaf iċ-Ċiniż u li jaf anke l-lingwa tal-istudenti tiegħu, dak forsi huwa ideali, imma bażikament għalija native speaker li jitkellem Ċiniż biss, prattikament, u għalliem barrani li studja Ċiniż ħafna, m'humiex eżattament l-istess imma hemm, għandhom differenzi li jagħmluhom tajbin għal-livelli differenti. Iktar ma tkun fil-bidu tal-istudju iktar naħseb tajjeb li jkollok għalliem li mhux native, imbagħad iktar ma tavvanza iktar aħjar li jkollok wieħed native, imma jiddependi hux, jiddependi mil-livell tal-għalliem għax native speaker mhux bil-fors ikollu l-livell ta' għarfien tal-lingwa li tissodisfa l-bżonnijiet tal-istudent, u jista' jkun li non-native teacher ikollu dan l-għarfien. Il-persuna, min jgħallmek jrid ikollu esperjeza ta' taħdit ma' ħafna persuni biex wieħed jitgħallem lingwa, ma tiddependix mill-għalliem biss, tiddependi mill-esperjenza tal-istudent u kif jużaha, l-għalliem hu biss gwida, hux hekk, ma jistax jeħel dejjem l-għalliem jekk l-istudent ma jitgħallimx, huwa dmir l-istudent li anke jiltaqa' u juża l-lingwa u hemmhekk għandu esperjenza ta' kuntest nattiv kemm irid u tarrikkixxi (to enrich) biss tista' l-ħaġa, però n-native teacher huwa ideali skont il-livell, ngħid jiena.

I think that the native teacher becomes ideal by time. The more one advances in their studies of Chinese, the more one becomes ideal, I don't know if an ideal teacher actually exists, but a bilingual teacher, one who knows Chinese and who also knows the students' language, maybe that is ideal, but basically, for me, a native speaker who only speaks Chinese, practically, and a foreign teacher who has studied a lot of Chinese, they are not exactly the same but there are many differences that make them good for different levels. At the beginner's stage I think it's better to have a non-native teacher, but as one advances in their study, it's better to have a native, but it depends, it depends on the level of the teacher because a native speaker does not necessarily have knowledge of the language that satisfies the needs of the students and it could be that a non-native teacher has such knowledge. The person, the person who teaches has to have experience in speaking with many people so that one learns the language, it doesn't depend on the teacher only, it depends on the student's experience and how they use their experience, the teacher is only a guide, right, it's not always the teacher's fault if the student doesn't learn, it's the student's duty to meet and to use the language, there they would gain the experience in a native context that enriches, but the native teacher is ideal depending on their level, that's what I think.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

2. X'jagħmel kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Kif semmejna l-ewwel hemm qisu intuition tal-lingwa, iżjed milli għarfien, jiġifieri minn ħaġa żgħira wieħed jista' jifhem fejn persuna oħra mhix native speaker, jiġifieri native speaker **ma jisibx komunikazzjoni biss bil-lingwa, imma jsib identita',** jiġifieri mill-mod kif jissarraf il-kliem, kif jiġi pronunzjat, u anke użat u rranġat u anke kultant minn kaos wieħed jinduna jekk **jidentifikax bħala nattiv bħalu jew le,** OK. Jekk persuna hija kapaċi tinduna b'dawn l-affarijiet, li tinduna meta wieħed huwa nattiv jew le, jiena naħseb li laħqet dak il-livell, jiġifieri, OK, laħqet dak il-livell li tista' tikkunsidraha bħala native speaker.

As we have already discussed, there is a kind of intuition for the language, more than knowledge, meaning that from any minor thing one is able to understand if another person is a native speaker or not, meaning that the native speaker **doesn't only use the language to communicate, but also finds their identity,** from the way meaning is made from words, how words are pronounced, how words are used and arranged, and even from chaos one would know if another person **identifies as a native speaker like him or not, OK.** If a person is able to sense these things, to sense if one is native or not, I think they would have reached that level, meaning, OK, they have reached the level that they could be considered to be a native speaker.

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

3. X'jagħmel kelliem mhux nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Domanda tajba għax kultant, per eżempju, hawn min jgħidlek mill-aċċent, li m'għandikx aċċent ta' native mintix native. Jiena ma nafx kemm naqbel fuq dan imma. Jien naħseb li dak li jagħmlek mhux native huwa li ma tkunx tifhem iċ-ċajt, ma tistax tifhem iċ-ċajt li qed jgħidu, jew is-sarkażmu, jew tifhem il-messaġġ ta' poeżija per eżempju, qed tifhem, jien ma jimpurtanix ħafna mill-aċċent, it-tone importanti, imma l-aċċent xi ħaġa oħra, l-iżbalji li jgħidu ċ-Ċiniżi nattivi ma nħossx li wieħed għandu jirrepetihom, imma hemm affarijiet ta' native speakers, jien naħseb li dak li ma jagħmlikx native huwa propju din il-kapaċità li tifhem l-umoriżmu, is-sarkażmu, il-poeżija, OK, u propju dawn l-affarijiet idjomatiċi li hemm propju background kulturali warajh biex tifhmu, in-native speaker għandu DEJJEM dawn l-affarijiet, OK DEJJEM fil-kuntest normali.

Good question, some say that it's the accent, that one doesn't have the accent of a native speaker. I don't know whether I agree with this or not. What makes a person a non-native speaker is that one doesn't understand jokes, sarcasm, humour, poetry for example, I don't care much about accent, the tone is important, but the accent is something else, the mistakes that the native Chinese make, I don't think they should be repeated, but there are things that native speakers do, I think that what makes a person a non-native speaker, I think that what the ability to understand humour, sarcasm, poetry, OK, and these idiomatic concepts that have a cultural background in order to be understood, a native-speaker always has this knowledge, Ok, ALWAYS in a normal context.

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

4. L-etniċità u l-post tat-twelid jagħmlu persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż? Jew l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Bejn wieħed li twieled iċ-Ċina u r-razza hemm ftit differenza, hux hekk, għax wieħed jista' jkun twieled iċ-Ċina u ma jkunx ta' razza Ċiniża. Jista' jkun twieled xi mkien ieħor u huwa ta' razza Ċiniża. Spiss

persuna ta' razza Ċiniża hija kburija u marbuta sew mal-lingwa Ċiniża, jiġifieri, spiss hemm relazzjoni bejn il-fatt li wieħed jaf iċ-Ċiniż għax huwa ta' razza Ċiniża, imma dan mhux dejjem il-każ. Jien ma naħsibx li hemm konnessjoni b'saħħitha bejn razza u l-lingwa Ċiniża, però r-razza kultant hija, qisha valur żejjed għal min jitkellem biċ-Ċiniż, jiġifieri jekk inti barrani u ma studjajtx iċ-Ċiniż imma għandek id-dehra ta' razza Ċiniża, għandek il-fattizzi ta' persuna Ċiniża jiġifieri, din forsi se tgħin il-kredibiltà tiegħek, jiġifieri l-fatt li għandek dehra Asjatika tkun ta' valur żejjed għalik bħala non-native speaker, OK, imma li jkollok il-fattizzi Ċiniżi ma jfissirx li inti native speaker. Dik hija biss koinċidenza, orrajt.

There is some difference between someone who was born in China and someone's race, right, a person could have been born in China but is not of a Chinese race. A person could have been born somewhere else and is of a Chinese race. Often a person of a Chinese race is proud and well connected with the Chinese language, so, very often there is a connection between the fact that one knows Chinese because they are of a Chinese race, but this is not always the case. I don't think that there is a very strong connection between race and the Chinese language, but race sometimes is an added value for someone who speaks Chinese, so if one is a foreigner and didn't study Chinese but has the appearance of a Chinese person, this might contribute to one's credibility, thus, the fact that one has an Asian look is added value to the non-native speaker, OK, but having Chinese features doesn't mean that one is a native speaker. This is just a coincidence.

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Hija l-identità soċjo-kulturali li tagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva, għar-raġunijiet li semmejna l-ewwel, biex wieħed jifhem l-umoriżmu, sarkażmu, dawn l-affarijiet, dak irid jikber propju fil-kuntest soċjo-kulturali, hux hekk, allura iva importanti.

Yes, for the reasons that we mentioned earlier, to be able to understand humour, sarcasm, these things, one has to be brought up in the socio-cultural context, yes, so it's important.

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

6. Tista' persuna li mhix etnikament Ċiniża qatt tkun kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva

Yes

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

7. Tista' persuna li hi etnikament Ċiniża ma tkunx kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż?

Iva

Yes

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

8. Jistgħu l-edukazzjoni u l-istudju jagħmlu persuna li mhix nattiva tinstema' bħal kelliem nattiv? Tistieq issir kelliem nattiv? Jew tixtieq li tibqa' kelliem nattiv tal-lingwa tiegħek?

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

9. Il-kelliem nattiv bilfors ikollu l-għarfien ta' Standard Putonghua?

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

10. Il-kelliema nattivi għandhom bżonn jistudjaw l-istandard Putonghua l-iskola jew l-università?

Biex ikun jista' jiġi kunsidrat litterat, irid jistudjaha biex ikun jista' jaqra, għax iċ-Ċiniż għandu kitba kumplessa ħafna, ma tistax titgħallimha d-dar xi ħaġa hekk. Però jrid jistudja wkoll jekk irid jgħallimha, biex tgħallem iċ-Ċiniż mhux xi ħaġa li tista' tagħmel mingħajr studju, jiġifieri speċjalment meta tkun native speaker, trid tkun taf kif taħdem il-lingwa Ċiniża, li hija kumplessa ħafna, lingwa li iktar ma jgħaddi żmien iktar tiskopri kemm hi kumplessa, tibda' b'lingwa li hija sempliċi imma imbagħad iktar ma jgħaddi ż-żmien iktar tinduna li hija kumplessa u profonda, wieħed irid ikollu ħjiel ta' dan kollu, u dan bl-istudju biss hux.

In order to be considered literate, one needs to study to be able to read because Chinese has a very complex writing system, it's not something that one could learn at home. To teach Chinese one has to study, it's not something that could be done without studying, especially for native speakers, one needs to know how the Chinese language works, it's very complex, it's a language that the more one knows, the more one realises how complex it is, one starts with some simple language but as time goes by, the more realises how complex and profound it is, one needs to understand all this, this only comes with studying.

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

11. X'livell ta' għarfien jagħmel persuna kelliem nattiv?

Jien naħseb li jrid ikollu għarfien propju tal-ewwel nett tal-karattri Ċiniżi, jiġifieri jrid ikollu, jiġifieri dan irid jistudja l-karattri, kif jinqraw u xi jfissru, irid ikollu idea ta' kollukazzjoni jiġifieri fejn jaqbel l-aħjar li tpoġġi kelma u liema kliem tajjeb li tuża' ma' kelma, irid ikollu konoxxenza tal-istrutturi, u jqabbel strutturi (sentence agreement), strutturi per eżempju bħal, taf inti, 'ru guo', if, u hemm ħafna strutturi li qishom għandhom l-istess tifsira, bejn 'he' li tfisser 'and', hux hekk, imbagħad hemm ħafna strutturi li huma simili, u l-għalliem irid ikun jaf iqabbilhom, imma dawn huma affarijiet li jridu jsiru anke li kieku mhux native teacher. Imma għal non-native speaker dawn huma affarijiet li bil-fors irid jgħaddi minnhom, imma mentri native speaker iħossu li diġà jaf il-lingwa mentri ma jafhiex biex jgħallimha, jiġifieri hija perspettiva differenti, kull barrani (non-Chinese) jrid jgħaddi mill-proċess ta' tagħlim, imma native speaker irid jgħaddi minn proċess ta' re-tagħlim, jiġifieri, jrid jerġa' jitgħallem.

I think that one needs knowledge of Chinese characters, they need to study the characters, how they are read and their meaning, one needs to know collocation, meaning where to put words and which words are appropriate with which words, one needs to be familiar with structures and how to match structures (sentence agreement), structures like, you know, 'ru guo', if, and there are many structures that look the same, between 'he' that means 'and', right, there are many structures that are similar, the teacher must know how to match them, but such things need to be done even in the case of a non-native teacher. But for a non-native speaker, these are things that they need to go through, but a native speaker would feel that they already know the language but if fact, they don't know it to teach it, it's a different perspective, every foreigner (non-Chinese) needs to go through a learning process, but a native speaker needs to go through a process of re-learning, meaning they need to learn again.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

12. L-għalliema nattivi dejjem ikunu kulturalment 'l bogħod mill-istudenti tagħhom?

Iva hemm ċerta affarijiet li ma jkunx jista' jispjega sew, għax propju m'għadux f'dak il-kuntest, jiġifieri fejn forsi, fiċ-Ċina jkun jista' jipponta subajh u juri xi ħaġa, sempliċiment hekk, jew jisma' jew jiltaqa' ma' xi ħaġa li jista' jispjegaha lill-istudenti f'sekonda, dawn ma jistax jagħmilhom meta jkun f'pajjiż

barrani, orrajt, jiġifieri huwa totalment maqtuh, għandek biss persuna li qiegħda f'ambjent barrani għaliha jew għalih, jiġifieri.

Yes there are certain things that they cannot explain well, because they are no longer in that context, in China they can point to something to show it, it's quite simple, they hear or encounter something that they could explain to students in a second, they can't do this in a foreign country because they are totally cut off, it's just a person in a foreign environment.

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

13. L-għalliema mhux nattivi għandhom vantaġġ għax għandhom l-istess lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

Iva, huwa ta' vantaġġ kbir, hux hekk, għax inti tista' tispjega u toħloq eżempji biex tqabbel, ħafna ħafna aħjar speċjalment fil-bidu ta' kors, u anke tagħti propju sens ta' kuraġġ, fejn anke barrani bħalek li għandu l-istess background prattikament, li dejjem jista' jilħaq dak il-livell, jiġifieri hemm ħafna fatturi pożittivi ta' għalliem Malti li qed jgħallem iċ-Ċiniż lill-Maltin u anke, anke forsi bħala materjal, bħala noti, jista' joħloq affarijiet appropjati, ok, jista' jsib espressjonijiet li huma simili jew li huma differenti, jista' forsi wkoll isib mod kif iqassar l-affarijiet li għandhom jiġu mgħallmin, jiġifieri jorganizza aħjar, bħala barrani (non-Chinese) l-affarijiet li huma simili, per eżempju, b'mod li mhix possibli mill-perspettiva ta' native teacher.

Yes, it's a great advantage because one could explain u create examples to compare much better, it's much much better especially at the beginning of the course, even to encourage students, where even a foreigner like the student could reach that level, there are many positive factors to having a Maltese teacher who teaches Chinese to other Maltese people, even to create materials, notes, they could create more appropriate materials, one could find expressions that are similar or different, they might find ways how to summarise material that need to be taught, they could organise better as a foreigner (non-Chinese) thing that are similar, for example, in a way that is not possible from the perspective of a native teacher.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

It-tielet intervista

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

1. L-għalliem mhux nattiv huwa l-ideal għax għandu l-istess sfond kulturali u tingwa materna bħall-istudenti?

Speċjaljment fil-bidu, fl-ewwel sena, sentejn ta' studju, jiġifieri, tajjeb li jkollok non-native speaker bħala għalliem, però idealment tajjeb li wieħed ikollu taħlita wkoll tat-tnejn. Imma fil-bidu, jekk m'għandekx għażla, jew m'għandekx il-possibilità li jkollok it-taħlita, inħoss jiena n-non-native speaker huwa tajjeb bħala għalliem.

Especially at the beginning, in the first year or two, it's good to have a non-native speaker teacher, but ideally one would have a mix between the two. But at the beginning, if there is no choice, if there isn't the possibility to have a mix, I feel that the non-native teacher is good as a teacher.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

2. Jista' xi ħadd li mhux etnikament Ċiniż jistudja u **jsir** kelliem nattiv ta' Standard Putonghua?

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

3. Kelliema mhux nattivi taċ-Ċiniż jixtiequ li jsiru kelliema nattivi taċ-Ċiniż/Standard Putonghua?

Wieħed dejjem se jibqa' native speaker tal-lingwa tiegħu, la darba qed jużaha, m'hemx problemi hemmhekk jew biża', jien naħseb li min jixtieq jistudja l-lingwa ġeneralment, jixtieq, li kieku jkollu għażla, **jixtieq li jkun jafha fil-livell ta' native speaker.** Spiss imma n-nies ħa jakkommodaw ruħhom għall-bżonnijiet li għandhom tal-lingwa, jiġifieri jista' jkun li fil-bidu jixtiequ dak il-livell, imma mbagħad maż-żmien jiskopru li m'għandhomx propju dak il-bżonn li jkollhom livell ta' native speaker, kull ma jkollhom bżonn huwa livell propju ta' komunikazzjoni bażika jew ta' ċertu tip, orrajt, ta' ċertu qasam, hi biżżejjed għalihom hekk.

One will always remain a native speaker of their own language, once they use that language, there are no issues in that case, I think that whoever wishes to study the language, generally they would wish to have the choice, **they would wish to learn the language to native speaker level,** but very often people adapt to their needs, at the beginning they would wish to achieve that level, but then by time they realise that they don't really need the level of a native speaker, all they would need is a level of basic communication or a certain kind of communication, in a certain sector, and that would be enough for them.

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

4. Kelliem nattiv jitwieled? Jista' wieħed isir kelliem nattiv?

Jeżistu nies li twieldu f'post imma li ma jitgħallmux il-lingwa nattiva tal-post. Jiġifieri għandek anke sitwazzjonijiet hekk, imma inti jekk trid tkun native speaker, trid mhux biss titwieled fil-post, imma anke tikber u tuża dik il-lingwa, jiġifieri r-razza u l-post tat-twelid mhumiex biżżejjed, irid ikun hemm xi ħaġa ta' kulljum, jiġifieri proċess li jgħaddi mit-twelid, kultant anke minn qabel it-twelid, sa propju l-pubertà per eżempju li inti kont f'dak il-kuntest.

There are people who were born in a country but who don't learn the native language of that country. There are such situations, but if one wishes to be a native speaker, one needs to not only be born in the particular country, but to even be brought up using that language, meaning that race and birthplace are not enough, there has to be something related to daily life, a process starting from birth, even before birth until puberty, of living in that context.

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

5. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx fluwenti fl-istandard Putonghua?

Jekk għandek native speaker li ma jafx jitkellem Putonghua u jrid jgħallem, hemmhekk hemm, jaf ikun hemm problema, għax inti jew ħa tgħallem Mandarin standard jew ħa tgħallem djalett, jista' jkun li għalliem li jaf il-varjetà jew id-djalett tiegħu biss ikun qed jgħallem studenti li se jkunu kapaċi biss jikkomunikaw f'dak ir-reġjun taċ-Ċina u ħa jkollhom problemi, jista' jkun li anke diskriminazzjoni jekk imorru f'post ieħor, jiġifieri, mhux bil-fors diskriminazzjoni negattiva imma anke umoristika, jiġifieri jgħidu dan minn fejn inqala?! Fejn kiber dan?! Fejn studja dan?! Jiġifieri ħa jkun hemm differenza li ħa tidher, f'dak is-sens diskriminazzjoni jiġifieri.

In the case of a native speaker who can't speak Putonghua and they wish to teach, there might be a problem there because one is either going to teach Mandarin or one is going to teach a dialect. A

teacher who only knows their variety or dialect would be teaching students to only be able to communicate in a particular region in China and this will cause problems, it might even cause discrimination if they go somewhere else, this might not necessarily be negative discrimination, it might be funny, people will say where did this person come from?! Where did they grow up?! Where did they study?! There will be a marked difference, discrimination in that sense.

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

6. Huwa possibbli li persuna tgħid li hi kelliem nattiv taċ-Ċiniż imma ma tkunx taf tikteb il-karattri Ċiniżi?

Native speaker li ma jafx jikteb dik tkellimna dwarha għax jeżistu nies li m'humiex letterati, ftit, imma jeżistu, imma ma jistax ikun għalliem jekk ma jafx jikteb biċ-Ċiniż, ikun qed jiffoka fuq aspett wieħed biss li huwa t-taħdit. Iċ-Ċiniż juri l-aqwa tiegħu fil-kitba wkoll, jiġifieri.

A native speaker who cannot write, we've already spoken about this, there are people who are not literate, very few, but there are, but such a person cannot be a teacher because if they cannot write in Chinese, they would only be focusing on one aspect that is spoken. In Chinese writing is very important.

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

7. Jista' kelliem nattiv 'jitlef' l-abbiltà lingwistika u ma jibqax jidentifika bħala kelliem nattiv?

(forsi jiltaq mill-komunità li titkellem iċ-Ċiniż)

Iva, dawn affarijiet li jiġru spiss, normalment iridu jgħaddu tal-anqas xi ħmistax, għoxrin sena fejn inti m'għandek l-ebda kuntatt mal-lingwa iżjed. Jista' jkunu anke li jekk qed taqra biss il-lingwa, u ma tużahiex biex titkellem tista' titlifha iva, din ġrat, imma mhix xi ħaġa li hi impossibli li terġa' takkwistaha.

Yes, such things happen often, normally around fifteen or twenty years have to pass where one has no contact with the language. One could only be reading the language, but not speak it, one could lose a language, this has happened, but it's not impossible to pick it up again.

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

8. Jista' kelliem mhux nattiv jitgħallem tant li jsir kelliem nattiv? (per eżempju persuna li tmur tgħix f'komunità fejn jitkellmu ċ-Ċiniż)

Spiss dawn li jitilfu l-lingwa nattiva tagħhom, spiss jakkwista waħda ġdida, jiġifieri, jekk wieħed mhux biss qiegħed iċ-Ċina imma qed jistudja u jużaha attivament, iva jien naħseb li hu possibbli ħafna, jridu jgħaddu ftit tas-snin, imma possibbli hux hekk.

Often they lose their native language, often they acquire a new language, so if a person is not only in China but is also studying the language and using it actively, I think it is very possible, a few years would need to go by, but it is possible.

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

9. Huwa possibbli għal xi ħadd li jibdel l-identità tiegħu minn kelliem nattiv għal kelliemm mhux nattiv u viċe-versa?

Normalment huwa iktar faċli direzzjoni waħda mill-oħra, normalment wieħed jista' jidher non-native meta jkun native milli viċe-versa, OK, smajtni?

Normally it is easier in one direction, normally one appears to be non-native when they are in fact native rather than vice-versa, OK, did you hear me?

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

10. Huwa importanti għall-għalliema li jifhmu l-isfond kulturali/il-lingwa materna tal-istudenti tagħhom?

Iva, tkun utli ħafna. Spiss ħa jkollok klassi ta' taħlita ta' studenti, u hemmhekk propju huwa xogħol l-għalliem li jkun kapaċi, jifhem ftit, mhux bil-fors kollox, dak li qed jgħaddi minnu l-istudent hu u qed jitgħallem. Jiġifieri jekk għandek studenti Taljani, Franċiżi, Serbjani, jien naf, tajjeb li wieħed ikun kapaċi jispjega għaliex iċ-Ċinżi jaħsbuha hekk u kif għandhom jifhmuha huma, ok, billi ttihom eżempji inti, jekk per eżempju teżisi kelma, orrajt, u hija magħmulha minn karattri li qishom ma tantx jaqblu mat-tifsira finali tal-kelma, trid per eżempju tispjega l-kelma karattru b'karattru jew issib eżempju fil-lingwa tagħhom jew issib xi storja li teżisti fil-proża tagħhom, jew hekk, jiġifieri, imma normalment fil-kuntest Ewropew, spiss in-nies tal-Ewropa jaqsmu storja jiġifieri, għandhom passat simili ħafna, jew passat li jgħaqqadhom, kollox huwa ta' vantaġġ jiġifieri, imma jiddependi dejjem mill-għalliem li jsib l-affarijiet li jaqsmu bejniethom.

Yes, it's very useful. Often in class there is a mixture of students and it's the teacher's job to be able to understand, not necessarily to understand everything, what the student is going through in the process of learning. So, if one has Italian, French, Serb students, it's good that one is able to explain why the Chinese think as they do, ok, by giving examples, for example, if there is another word, ok, that is made of characters that do not really reflect the final meaning of the word, one has to explain the word character by character or one has to find examples in their language or find a story in their literature, but normally in the European context very often European people share their history, so they have a similar past, or a past that unites them, everything is of an advantage, but it is up to the teacher to find things that they share.

Interview 8 – Student 7 – English

Interview questions – first round of interviews

1. What is a native speaker?

A NS is someone who was either born or raised in a country that speaks it, not necessarily as their first language but speaks it to degree that they can express themselves, naturally in that language.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

No absolutely not. (laughs)

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

I haven't seen many examples of Chinese characters written by native speakers so I couldn't comment. I've only seen my teachers and I'm sure they…

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

Non-native

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

I don't speak Chinese fluently, I didn't grow up speaking Chinese, it's something I acquired it later in life. Even if I've learned it, let's say, since I was eight, nine or ten years old, I still wouldn't call myself a native speaker. English – I learned it in my family setting, I've spoken it with my friends, English is the language I have grown up speaking, I have spoken English throughout all my life, it's the language that I can express myself in best.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

Yes, native speakers, like I can in my language, can express themselves efficiently, effectively, to say exactly what they need to say whereas non-native speakers may try to translate rather than use their knowledge of the language itself to express themselves.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

No because some Chinese people grow up in other communities, they have different indigenous languages, there are so many different native languages.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

Yes, if they have Chinese parents, or even if they have one Chinese parent, if they grow up speaking Chinese at home or within their family, they can be considered as native speakers.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

If they grow up in China, or maybe they go to a Chinese private school and they speak it with their friends, yes, if they speak it. It depends on how much connection they have with the language.

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

No, I would say no.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

My knowledge of Chinese isn't good enough to say if something is grammatically correct or not, but I guess no they don't. They don't always say grammatically correct, the same as we don't always in English.

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

No, probably not, there's room for error. I know even Chinese people have to study the characters a lot.

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

There's room for some error – more or less yeah. They have to be pretty accurate.

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

Yes

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

No

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

Yes

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

Yeah I would say so.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

Not necessarily. All my teachers are Chinese natives but I can only relate it back to English and foreign language teachers in general they don't necessarily need to be native because if a non-native speaker who has studied it in some depth could have more knowledge and actually better knowledge than the average native speaker.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

Yes, but for me it's a cultural thing, so it's more about the intricacies of the language and learning about why they say this where they come from and it's a personal preference because it helps me to learn about things come from, the origins.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

Someone who has grown up learning it, they speak it at home, with friends, at school, at a young age. It's part of their daily life, they speak it regularly.

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

A non-native speaker is someone who has learned, second hand, after their first language, maybe they learned it late at school, or maybe in their adult years and it's not learned in a natural way.

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

No, not necessarily, there are plenty of people who are ethnically Chinese living in different countries that don't necessarily speak Chinese.

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

No

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

Yes, with a lot of studying, sound like. I don't think I can be a native speaker of Chinese, I'm a native speaker of English, **I can be a very proficient non-native speaker of Chinese one day. (laughs)**

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

No, I don't think so, not necessarily.

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

Yes

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

I think there's a standard of what you have to learn basically to hold a conversation, to be able to express yourself, maybe not grammatically correct, but you can use the words that you need to express yourself, and importantly you can understand what other people say, even if they're not grammatically correct you can still understand what they say, whereas maybe a non-native speaker they would get confused about what was being said.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

I think they can understand it but I think they don't have the connection with it. I don't think that they can adhere to it so much. Maybe something that is too strange for them.

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

It can be, it depends on what age, but also there's some benefits with speaking the language that you are teaching with your students, I think.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

No I don't think so. A native or a non-native speaker teacher, the cultural background isn't as important as their teaching experience and knowledge of the language.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

No I don't think so.

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

No I don't think so.

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

No, no, you can grow up learning the language to be a native speaker.

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

Yes

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

Yes

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

No, their vocabulary could decrease, if they speak it with people regularly then they won't lose it, maybe their dialect, their accent could change, but no I don't think that you can forget your native language.

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

No

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

No

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

Yes, I think it is important for them to understand their students. Yes, because they have to have some understanding of social norms, how to respect their students, I would expect the same if I were to go to China to teach English, I should have some idea of what would be respectful, I need to understand Chinese social norms, what is respectful, what is not.

Interview 9 NS teacher – English

Interview questions – first round of interviews

1. What is a native speaker?

Native speaker, actually, you know, actually in different places, actually we talk a lot of dialects, so not everybody is speaking the Standard Mandarin. Even they are speaking Mandarin, some they don't really as the Standard requires, but we can understand, that's OK, it's not, it's not, how to say, it's not very serious erm, it's not very serious requirement for them to speak as Standard as possible, so just they can express the meaning and we can understand, that's enough, and also the dialect, the Mandarin, northern part of China and southern part of China the way they pronounce some syllables, we say 'Pinyin', we say 'Pinyin', so they speak different ways, for some people, because the regional, maybe speaking habits, they don't get used to say some, say some pronunciation like 'zhe', 'zhi', 'shi', some of them they only say 'ze', 'zi', 'se', like 'zhe ge ren' they say 'ze ge zen', and the ren they don't say 'ren' they say 'zen', the pronunciation, the initial they say 'zen' they say 'zz' 'zen', 'ze ge zen', sometimes not only say 'ze ge zen' but also they say 'ze ge len', 'ze ge len' especially the Fujian Province, some part of Fujian Province they speak 'ze ge len', so for foreigners the Standard Mandarin like us because if you want to become a Chinese teacher for foreigner students you need a lot of qualifications, so like us, at least the Mandarin qualification you should get A, 2A, A2 I think, let me check and I will tell you. I think it's 2A, so we have our, our level, translated into English, but at least it's caller 'er jia', for international Chinese teacher they should have 'er jia', as the required qualification, so they can speak as good, like us, so when the foreigners they learn the Standard Mandarin, maybe they went to some places like Wenzhou, like Fujian, they may not understand the local people in some situation because they speak in another way, like in my place, in our place we are Southwest of China, Yunnan Province we don't speak Mandarin, we speak Chinese, but it's not Mandarin, so, our dialect is very different from Mandarin, the grammar, most of the grammar, I say, but we have our local grammar, but, words are there, but we add some other words, maybe our words is a bit different from the ones in the Mandarin, and also in Chinese, in different cities, one certain thing, one same thing has, is the base, because China is big, we have different culture and we have, in ancient times sometimes we had different languages, we can say we had different languages and now everybody speaking, everybody can understand the Mandarin, but not everybody can speak it well, like my grandmother, grandfather, they don't speak Mandarin, they speak the dialect, but it's Chinese, words are same but the grammar, the order of the words, and the pronunciation is a bit different. My mum and my dad they don't speak Mandarin very well, it's not Standard, when you listen it, you will feel it strange but you can understand. You know, from my grandfather's, that generation, they are still writing the un-simplified characters, so even though some of them they don't speak Mandarin, but we always use Chinese characters, especially some ethnic minority groups, they have their own language, some of the minorities they have written languages and speaking, but some of them only have speaking language for their own language, so it's totally different from Mandarin, it's totally different from Han Yu. Why we call Han Yu is because Han people is the majority of the Chinese population, so Han people's language we call it Han Yu.

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

(participant covered questions 2 and 3 in their first answer, so the questions were not asked)

Especially for the young peoples, we cannot say 100%, but actually it's 90 something percent, 99% they study, they are learning Mandarin.

Yes, yes, all schools they are teaching in Mandarin, maybe some very remote places they also have both languages, like local dialect and Mandarin or maybe their own minority's language, but at least for the young generation they can understand Mandarin. That's why we have Mandarin, no matter the student go to which part in China, everybody can understand them and they can communicate with the local people.

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

(Question 4 wasn't asked – I felt embarrassed to ask question 4 because from the participant's ethnicity and race it was very obvious that they are native speakers of Chinese)

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

I know, it's like nature, when you are born everybody is speaking Chinese, everybody is speaking native Han language, Han language, if not Mandarin, Mandarin means the Common Standard Speaking of Chinese Language, but our local, our dialect is also Han Yu, we can use the same characters, the same grammars, only a bit different, we can say, we cannot say they are all the same, but actually they are, we can understand, they are same origin, almost the same, just a bit different, they shift a bit, the same nature, so when we are born we speak dialect, dialect is a kind of Han Yu, the pronunciation different and maybe we have some local words for describing something, but the grammars most of them are like Mandarin.

6. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

It depends on the environment, if the family everyday they speak Chinese, or everyday they speak both languages, English and Chinese in this environment the student growing up they can speak both, and the grammar of Chinese is good and the grammar of English is good, that is very, very good for language, if they learn from very little, from childhood, and now I'm teaching for Chinese language school in Malta which was in Santa Lucija, that 'jingyuan' these are the children of Chinese origin, their Chinese is as good as me, so their speaking is as good as me, they cannot speak very, very, like long dialogue, but when they speak to me they understand everything, they understand the meaning, because they growing in this environment, but in both languages, English good, Chinese good, and Maltese a bit. But I have some students they live in Maltese family so they don't speak in Chinese often, only the mum speaks a bit with, when they make a call to China with the relatives they speak Chinese, if the environment is like this, the child may not speak as fluent as a Chinese native speaker. They can understand some, but they cannot express very well, so.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

(the participant covered answers for questions 7, 8 and 9 throughout the interview)

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

We should consider two kinds; one is if they study in China, I said the environment is very important, if they study in Chinese school and from primary they speak in Chinese, of course they can be a native speaker, they are very good in Chinese, maybe they are better than the local people, but, if they study abroad it depends, if they start from maybe kindergarten and everyday they have enough hours to practice, I think they can be very, the ability of speaking Chinese will be very close to native speaker, but I cannot say they are as a native speaker, but if they start only from primary of maybe from secondary school actually it's a bit late, and also it depends on how much time they spend on studying this language and, you know, if they study but after class they don't use and they don't have this environment to speak with others, it's very difficult for them to become a native speaker, like I taught for, I have been to three countries teaching and also when I was in China I also taught the students from different countries, I think it's very difficult for them to speak Chinese as a native speaker, they can be very close if they spend enough time and have the environment, but for some certain words, they will use it not so properly because Chinese language includes the culture and for example, the person, the position who is higher than you, we talk the same words, we talk the same meaning, you need this word, but for another person who is the age as you, or who has the same position as you, you use another word, and for children, for kid, we use another word, same meaning, when we express meaning for different people we use different words, and also for older people we use respectful words, and for people like friends, we use the words which is showing more closer relation, so this is culture in the language, if they are not living with us in this culture they may not understand, they might choose a wrong word to express, these kinds of expressions may cause misunderstanding and maybe cause, sometimes they cause like a conflict, older people will say: Why you use this word on me? You don't respect me! because words include culture. And what is very difficult for foreign students is that they use English or they use their own language to learn Chinese, they directly translate to Chinese, one word in English can have many translations in Chinese, we may see the dictionary, you may not know, oh so many, which one I should choose? If there is no native speaker Chinese teacher to tell you how to use it, you probably use it wrongly. Also more difficulty is that one Chinese word may have different meanings, one word, the same character, but one character has many meanings.

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

How to say this, in English they only translate Chinese, so for us we use different words to describe Chinese, now we are using the context, this one we call Han Yu, so minority's language we call it 'Shao Xu Ming Zu Yu Yan', and if you emphasize the language of China we say Zhong Wen, the people of other countries they only say Chinese, but actually, why is it called Han Yu and Zhong Wen? Han Yu to emphasize the Han People's language, they also have other minority ethnic groups, and Zhong Wen they are talking about language of China, they only emphasize on Han People's language, but actually Zhong Wen has a lot of languages, this is a word that I cannot look for.

Right now I think, let's not talk about the old generations, the young generations, if they are born in China now, I don't say 100%, as before I said, I don't say 100%, but, majority, majority, majority of them learn, are speaking Chinese language like, they are speaking Han Yu, maybe they are not the Mandarin, but they are speaking Han Yu, you know Mandarin, which you are learning now, Han Yu means we are using it, the characters, the pronunciations, but only our pronunciation a bit different. We are speaking same language, but different pronunciation, like different pronunciation a bit, so, if you are, if you travel in China you will hear a lot of dialects, they are speaking, not Mandarin, but they are speaking Chinese language, it's a different dialect, but only some words the pronunciation is different, but the characters are same. For example if I say, if I say 'wan shang' this is Mandarin, 'wan

shang' and in my dialect it is 'we shen', 'we shen', so maybe in other people's dialect it is 'wa san', 'wa san', when you hear you know it is very similar, because we are using the same characters, only our local dialect is different, a bit, why we have this difference is because from ancient time when they spread like the official documents to different places at that time we don't have recordings, we use our only way to mark the pronunciation, and you know, different people read the marks in different ways, without recording we just pronounce it similar to the letter, that mark is ok, so it's like you spread a document and you say this character should be read as 'shi' and it goes to that place and they read it 'si', these documents express to the north, they read as 'SI', these documents spread to the south maybe they read as 'she', 'shi, si, SI, she', we don't have recordings, we only use the mark and not everybody understands the mark very well, not everybody read this mark very good, because in ancient time, you know, like the newspaper (laughs) it's like a newspaper, to be spread to all the country, and to different places they use the local way to read the mark, we don't have recordings so we read differently, it' like the English word people here read this but maybe in another place they read it another way, but it's the same thing.

Because my English is very limited (laughs) … I just use what I know to express.

I think the culture is not a very, how do I say, not very big part for influencing somebody to become a native speaker because it is like, in some other countries they are living in, they are the Chinese descendants, they are not living in this culture like Chinese people's culture, they only live in American people's culture, they can speak like native because maybe the family member they are speaking Chinese language, maybe they accept the culture of other country but at same time they are speaking Chinese language at home, so for this kind, the kids can become a native speaker, and also, you know, because we have like a promotion of Mandarin, that's why the young people when they are born they know, even though they live in different part of China, maybe the culture is a bit different, but they can speak Chinese well as everybody is native, culture is a big aspect to influence to become a native speaker.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

(participant answered questions 12-17 throughout the interview)

I can explain by two ways; for explaining the grammar, for explaining the range of using words, you know, in Chinese a word has its range for using, you can only use it for this range, you don't use for other things, by this way, a native Chinese teacher of course has an advantage because they know this culture and they know this range better than foreign teachers, local teachers, so for the culture, the native teacher has an advantage, but you know, for a bilateral understanding I think the local teacher has advantage, especially like in Malta they have their own language, maybe to explain, if Maltese has

some similarities with Chinese, you can explain very well, but for us, we may not know, so I think the Chinese localisation, for the local Chinese teachers to teach Chinese will be a tendency in the future, not always the Chinese teacher who comes from other countries, because a long time ago not so many people learning Chinese, so the Chinese teachers are teaching, but now, we have a lot of Chinese language students, they have graduated, they like teaching, also they have their own advantages.

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

I think they know the students' personality and they know the local, how to say, the local habits, the local ways for organizing the class better, better than the native speaker teacher, and, for some cultural differences, I think they have a more sensitive feeling with it so they can plan better than the native Chinese teacher. Of course, so it depends on this local language is every, all the place speaking this local language or just a part of them speaking this local language for daily communicating, so, I went to some countries, they also say (speak) their own language, because our teaching language is English, but they also speak their own languages, so if the local teachers they are teaching and they know this local language it's good, especially for primary schools it's an advantage because some primary school students they don't speak in English, so if we go to this kind of class, maybe we cannot, we explain well in English but students don't understand, because their English also not good, like this, the teacher also can help them, they can also help the teacher themselves with some gestures, local people have the advantage, they just say something and the primary school students just understand and they can follow the teacher and for us, we only speak English, maybe, probably, so we have to use a lot of body gestures to call them come, to call them to do this, do that, we try to explain by our body language.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

Before I have said something like the way they explain something like, the usage of words, for understanding the grammar, the usage of words, the range of using words, and some culture maybe the foreign local teacher they may not understand very, as well as the native speaker teacher does, the cultural aspect that the native speaker teacher will be, will have more advantages.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

I think so (laughs) … because they grow in the culture, they grow in this environment (laughs) they will be more influenced, for some deeper language knowledge the native speaker will be more professional on it.

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

Of course, they should. For a teacher to help you practice speaking, even though they didn't go to university it's ok, but if they really want to do the Chinese language teacher for foreigners, they need to learn a lot, our local people, not the person who can speak Mandarin good can teach this language good, and you know, teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages doesn't have a long history, it's just at the beginning, and you know, Mandarin we didn't learn it for many many years, it just started from 1960s, so, and also they know, sorry, they know **how** this sentence should be spoken, but they don't know **why** it is spoken like that, and they don't know, they speak, they use this word properly in daily but they don't know **why** they should use this word not another one, and they don't know what's the difference, they don't know why the foreign students who learn Chinese have some problems like the, because they never had such kind of problems when they are communicating daily with the local people, with native speaker people, but when they explain to the foreign student they don't know why they cannot explain well, because they don't, they don't learn these major like us, Chinese, actually by now, I can say if you want to learn it very very well it is really very difficult, only learn the daily expressions, two, three years if you pay enough time on it is ok, but if you want to do research, one word in English, it can have 20 sayings(meanings) (laughs), so the native speaker some of them they don't know how to explain to the foreigners, why a word has 20 sayings.

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

Interview questions – third round of interviews

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

Yes of course. So, the local teachers they have their own advantages, of course. They know their own culture very well, and they know that this culture is very different from China's culture, they can explain better, and they also, like before I said, the students will, they can explain some language points, maybe the difference between Chinese language and English language better, and also the local teacher, they know the regulations of a school and how they plan a course for students, they know the ways better than us, they have advantages, so, we think if the native speaker teacher and the local teacher they can co-operate well, that would be ideal!

I think to know the culture is the most important, and to try to understand the students is also very important, so these two aspects are the most important, so the local language, if the teacher can understand, that's good, if not we can use other ways to explain in the class, just like I now said for the language, to show the students some videos, like cartoon, by the action of the cartoon they also understand sound, even though they don't understand Chinese language but they can learn, they can know what they are doing, so when they are hearing, listening some words they may know what they, what the cartoon is saying, so, you know, because the native speaker Chinese teacher may not always teaching in a country, sometimes maybe they just live in this country, like us, maybe two years and most maybe four years, maybe if they like to stay here, they have a plan to stay here, yes, they learn

that language, for some teachers, they stay in that country for a short time so mainly they learn, their language is English, also you know, a Chinese teacher they may be teaching students from different countries, they cannot speak all the languages well, so, if they have long plan for teaching students from that country, it's better they learn that language, so we have some common, we go to Thailand, Thailand is closer to China, in the future they can go Thailand as a tourist they are learning that language and in that environment they learn it very well, and this also become the communication way between teachers and students, you get closer to the students, ah you teach me Thailand, Thai language and I teach you Chinese language, and the student will say, ah, I'm the teacher for my teacher, so they would be happy and this is a way to make the teacher and the student have a closer relationship, I mean the student-teacher relation, so they will have a better, closer feeling.

The purpose and the strategy is the answer to this question, it depends on the purpose and the strategy and also the interest, so if they want to use this language to make a living, to have a career on this kind of, on this asset, so they want to become a native speaker, they want to understand our culture, they want to co-operate with us better, but if they are just for interest, they just want to learn a part, just they can express daily words, that's ok, if they want to travel to China they may not want to be so good with it, they can just buy, they can speak Chinese for daily use, that's enough, so it depends on the strategy, the interest and the purpose.

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

No, I don't think so, because if you have learned this language it's by nature, after ten years, you speak it again you will get very familiar with it, you just need to do it, like swimming, like driving, once you get it, after many years you go to swim again, you go to drive again, you still going to do it, maybe at the beginning, but you get used to it again, but after several days you can do it very well. You cannot forget your native language.

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

Of course, of course, the local teacher will be more closer because the local teacher knows the students better than the native speaker teachers, for this, the native speaker teachers also have another advantage maybe, because some local students are very eager to see the foreign language teachers, they may not afraid of foreign, native speaker teachers, they will make fun with you, maybe the local teachers they think ah next day I will see them again, I will see them again, maybe

they will be very strict to me, but the foreign, like us, like us, our native language teacher they think we can learn some interesting things from her and tomorrow maybe our class is just like, not a main course, just to foster the interest, so maybe they don't have exam, because they are foreign teachers we can play with her (laughs) … so it depends on the students how do they like.

Interview 10 NNS teacher – English

Interview questions – first round of interviews

1. What is a native speaker?

A native speaker is one who is born into that society or culture, into that language environment essentially. But I do think that people can get to native level. Like my friend in Taiwan, they only hire native English teachers, with the pandemic it was difficult because they couldn't bring people in from the UK or Canada who are, you know "so called" native speakers of English, so they had to hire domestically, which is not something they've ever thought about doing before, in fact they would actively avoid doing that, because they didn't want the array of foreigners who can speak English but maybe not at that native level, because they are very particular about this thing. So on the job application or description they very specifically wanted us to write native level of English. Native level – they were looking at the accent, the terms and phrases that they could use, pronunciation ticks, I mean Maltese people generally are bilingual but it would be difficult for them to be hired because of the /th/ issue, they would latch on to that. A person who was born in Singapore for example, grows up in a Hokkien speaking family, I mean that is native Chinese, it's not Mandarin, so for them they would have to go to school and probably learn English and probably Mandarin, so is it native level? Often times Singaporeans don't get to so called native level, could they pass an HSK test, I don't know, but they communicate, **so I don't know, native level at is what you're born into.**

2. Is the spoken production of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

Definitely not. I make mistakes, in my native language, I hear my family make mistakes, I hear Chinese people make mistakes. I thinks it's one of the given idiosyncrasies, native speakers, the grammar has been ingrained, they don't have to think about it, so it can come out, and often it will come out idiosyncratically, but it can still be understood because of other aspects.

3. Is the written production (characters and grammar) of a native speaker always grammatically correct?

No definitely not, I've seen Chinese people writing characters incorrectly.

4. Are you a native or a non-native speaker of Chinese? Why?

Definitely non-native. I wouldn't even say that I'm native level. There are different degrees of fluency, I concluded this a long time ago, I'm fluent in some degree, in some aspects, but I'm definitely not native level, but I'm probably as close as I can get if I put some really focused time and attention to it.

5. If yes, what makes you a native speaker of Chinese?

6. If not, what makes you a non-native speaker of Chinese? if not, what is your native language? What makes you a native speaker of that language?

Culturally, on a more semantic, on a more technical level, there are times when I'm thinking in English and translating into Chinese, so I get the grammar wrong or I don't say it in a way native speakers would generally automatically say, sometimes I really think about it. There are ways of phrasing things that I wouldn't, I don't automatically access, I either train myself in doing it that way, or I didn't, but I get it wrong still.

7. Is there a difference between a native and a non-native speaker of Chinese? if so, what is the difference?

There's definitely a difference on the surface of course. There doesn't have to be a difference. My friend is extremely excellent. I would consider them as close to native level as there is, they wouldn't consider themselves as that, but they really are, but they switches their accent, they used to live in Beijing, they lived in Beijing for ages and ages, and of course they developed the Beijing /r/, Beijinghua, but when they moved to Taiwan they discovered that people would treat them differently, they would get on the phone for example, call somebody in an office, just to ask a question, and they would hear the Beijing accent and they would think it's some mainlander calling and they would be a little bit tears with him. And so they would be, why are they treating me like this? And when they put on the Taipei accent and they would get a completely different response. They'd be sweet and lovely to him. But they are at such a level that they could do that. There are a lot of people who can't. There are students who study for 3 or 4 years, they speak with a flow, but there's a quality in their voice, and if you tell them your second tone is not quite right, they find it hard to change that, there is a lack of flexibility. There is a difference but there doesn't have to be a difference.

8. Are all people born in China native speakers of Chinese? What variety of Chinese? necessarily Putonghua?

No, politically, culturally no. There are 56 minorities, a lot of them are born in language environments where Chinese is the second language, they learn it when they go to school, they are born into a totally different language environment but culturally they're Chinese.

9. Can a native speaker of Chinese be born and raised within a Chinese community in the West? (eg. in the UK, US, Australia…) Would they still be native speakers of Chinese?

Yes, but that it also depends on family. A lot of people, second generation people, they often classify themselves as non-native speakers. So, I would say it depends on their parents and how much they really used the language at home, and how much they used it growing up, but, many people say they used it on me but I didn't use it back, so I'm not a native speaker.

10. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese? why? Why not? Can an ethnically Chinese person not be a native speaker of Chinese?

Yes, I've seen it. I think it's about being flexible and adopt that intonation, not the tone, being able to sound, mimic, and then of course grammar comes into it.

11. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese but who studies Chinese at school/university ever become a native speaker? Or maybe become like a native speaker? Why? Why not?

I don't think you need to be born into it. I don't think that can be the only way. If you go to China in an immersive environment, you still won't get very far if you went to Chinese classes and learned and then outside never used it, it has to be immersive, it has to be a total experience. You have to forget who you are originally, in my opinion and my experience.

12. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that all their utterances are grammatically correct?

No

13. If a person is a native speaker, does that mean that their written characters are always necessarily correct?

Even scholars forget how to write a character.

14. If a person is a native speaker, that that mean that their pronunciation of tones is always necessarily correct? And in Standard Putonghua pronunciation?

Definitely not, there are so many accents all across China, you can say dialects, but they are languages. Fu Jian Hua is Chinese but it is not Putonghua, it is a totally different way of speaking Chinese, or for example Taiwanese, you know it's a different language, it's still Chinese, but it has its own tones.

15. Is it possible for a non-ethnically Chinese person to learn Standard Putonghua very well? (to be fluent, to have good command of grammar, pronunciation, written characters…)

Yes, yes definitely.

16. Are native speakers of Chinese necessarily native speakers of Standard Putonghua?

Yes

17. Could a native speaker not be able to speak/understand Standard Putonghua?

Yes, if your native language is Taiwanese or if it's Hokkien or Hakka, you can probably pick up a lot, or Guandonghua, even if they don't understand everything in Putonghua, they can understand a lot. Written of course, it's not even a problem. It doesn't really work the other way round, Putonghua speakers, they can understand some things, but they find it harder to understand, I mean that's my impression.

18. Are native speaker teachers the ideal teachers? Why? Why not?

I wouldn't say ideal, because native teachers have a lot going through them as well. As long as they are good teachers, that's the most important thing; are you a good teacher? Do you engage your students? Do you plan your lessons? Are you responsible for what you say? Those types of things are first and foremost. Teaching skills are first and foremost, there is a place for both. There is a place for both. It also depends on where you are in the world. In China they train teachers, they have programmes for Chinese as a Foreign Language and it's for teachers to learn and they go to different schools and universities throughout China and international students come to China and those are the people who teach them. So in that environment, you don't want any other than a native speaker. I can't image myself or any of my class mates from back then, I can't imagine them getting a job in a place like that and it's because they are not native speakers. The whole point of them studying that is to back to their home countries and be able to teach. Maybe in 20 years we'll see a different phenomenon there, but at the same time there's something that makes sense about it. A lot has to do with pedagogy, but at the end of the day, if you're in your native country or if you're in a country where everybody speaks the same native language as your native language, you can be an example and you also provide that link culturally. Things that native speakers can't explain, or they explain but it still doesn't quite work. There's a lot of grammatical things that I find hard to explain, but when I do, I'm using my own experience to explain, my students, when they're getting it from the native speaker teacher, they understand in a technical way but they don't see how it works in real life. When I explain

and make an equivalent, or I make a comparison with English, when I provide a context where I've used it, then it becomes clearer to them. The quintessential problem is the 了 le. 了 is a hard thing for students to grasp. It's super super difficult. I can often be unsure of it as well. When you are fluent, is when you're not thinking about the 了 anymore. When you're no longer thinking did I use it right or did I not use it right. It comes out in some sentences and you know that that is when it's supposed to come out and it doesn't come out in other sentences. Another common one is Ba – it's colloquial.

19. Are native speaker teachers necessarily more proficient in Standard Putonghua?

They're supposed to be. It's not always the case. It depends on who they are and how they got hired. In the US and NZ women, generally they're women, who actually studied English as their degree, but because they're Chinese native speakers they get hired to teach Chinese. But one who is sent from the CI to teach Chinese, they vet their people with the CI, linguistically, they need to hear that you have really good Putonghua before they send you out there, and good English for that matter. It's a different vetting system, so it depends. One of my teachers as an undergrad, they were from Taiwan, they had studied English, they got hired because they are a Chinese native speaker, but their pronunciation was all Taiwanese, that's not Putonghua really.

Interview questions – second round of interviews

1. Is the NS the ideal teacher because they were born into the target language and its culture and are thus more proficient?

There's a place for both. I don't think there is an ideal at all. I think ideally you would have access to both. That would be really nice. I didn't have access to someone like me in my language learning.

2. What makes a native speaker of Chinese?

3. What makes a non-native speaker of Chinese?

4. Do ethnicity and birthplace make a native speaker of Chinese? or does proficiency of Standard Putonghua make a person a native speaker of Chinese?

5. Does a person's socio-cultural identity make them a native speaker of Chinese?

6. Can a person who is not ethnically Chinese ever be a native speaker of Chinese?

7. Can a person who is ethnically Chinese not be a native speaker of Chinese?

8. Can education/studies make a non-native speaker sound like a native speaker? Do you want to become a native speaker? Or do you want to be a native speaker of your language?

It depends on the work you put into it, it depends on what you study and how you study, if you just read to yourself and you're not hearing yourself you probably don't know how you sound, it's a very good way to keep up with everything, our textbooks have these pattern drills, I love them because probably that's the most effective way, to drill the sound of a phrase and the rhythm of a phrase.

9. Is a native speaker necessarily proficient in Standard Putonghua?

10. Do native speakers need to study Standard Putonghua at school/university?

If they want to go to university they do. If they want a good job they do.

11. What is the linguistic proficiency that makes a person a native speaker?

There are tests that test that. You can go beyond HSK 6, that's what standardised tests are for, to see if someone is really good at their language.

12. Are native speaker teachers necessarily culturally distant from their students?

It depends on what the students are. It depends on the environment, on personalities. If we're talking about the Maltese context, I also don't know enough about it, and I haven't observed any of the native teachers classes, it can happen that way, it can be the case, especially when you're not in China. Outside of China it's a different story, it depends a little bit on age also.

13. Are non-native speaker teachers at an advantage because they share their native language with their students?

We code-switch, but I try very hard to keep them in Chinese for 60% of the time. I don't want to switch to English for every little thing. My goal is to keep them in the language. I want to build their confidence, especially when it comes to speaking. I only use English for when it is necessary, when it is right. Funny things happen in English. Humour comes out in English.

Interview questions – third round of interviews

1. Is the NNS teacher the ideal teacher because they share the cultural background and L1 with students?

2. Can a non-ethnically Chinese person study and **become** a native speaker of Standard Putonghua?

3. Do non-ethnically Chinese speakers of Chinese actually want to become native speakers of Chinese/Standard Putonghua?

4. Is a native speaker born a native speaker? Can one become a native speaker?

5. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be fluent in Standard Putonghua?

6. Is it possible for a person who claims to be a native speaker of Chinese not be able to write in Chinese characters?

7. Can a native speaker 'lose' their linguistic ability and not identify as a native speaker any longer? (maybe they move out of Chinese speaking community)

In some ways … unlikely to forget English because I think in English all the time.

8. Can a non-native speaker learn so much to become a native speaker? (for example a person who moves into the Chinese speaking community)

9. Is it possible for a person to change their identity from native to non-native or vice versa?

10. Is it important for teachers to understand the cultural background/ L1 of their students?

Yes, yes. There are places where it isn't the priority. It can't hurt. It depends, if you're an international student in China, Japan or Korea you are a foreigner. Here it's different. My students are Maltese – I want to know about their background.

Appendix 4 – quotations from the interviews according to theme

Family background and early childhood

People who were brought up listening to this language and speaking it throughout their childhood years. A native speaker is a person who speaks the language throughout childhood. (S1)

A person who always speaks the language at home, since childhood. (S5)

Practically, for me a native speaker is person who has learned and spoken a particular language since childhood. Normally this is the language of the place where the person was born and raised. For me this is a native speaker. (S6)

A native speaker is someone who was either born or raised in a country that speaks it, not necessarily as their first language but speaks it to degree that they can express themselves, naturally in that language. (S7)

A native speaker is someone who was born in China, who was always spoken to in Chinese, who has heard spoken Chinese since birth and throughout childhood. (S7)

A native speaker is a person who acquired the language in the country where the language is mostly spoken. The person would also have learned the language before they start to study it formally at school, this means that even before birth, the person would be immersed in the context where the language is spoken and used naturally and not only taught at school. So, a native speaker is a person who has grown up in the language, so they could understand and use the language in the most natural way. There's a lot to say on the native speaker, but that is it basically. (S5, Translation)

A native speaker is a person who speaks in Chinese in their daily life with their family. Meaning that this person was born in a Chinese speaking family and that they speak in Chinese, who was born and raised speaking Chinese and who now speaks in Chinese with their family. (…) There might be different situations, but generally, a native speaker is someone whose first language is Chinese because they were brought up in China, in the Chinese language. (T1 NNS, Translation)

A native speaker is one who is born into that society or culture, into that language environment essentially. A person who was born in Singapore for example, grows up in a Hokkien speaking family, I mean that is native Chinese, it's not Mandarin, so for them they would have to go to school and probably learn English and probably Mandarin. (T3 NNS)

I know, it's like nature, when one is born everybody is speaking Chinese, everybody is speaking native Han language, […] (T2 NS)

Birthplace and place of residence during early childhood

Erm, I think it would depend on their family, and if they are always speaking to them in Chinese, for example I would consider them native speakers. Probably there would be a bit of a difference I guess in the language skills to someone who was born in China and who was constantly hearing Chinese spoken wherever they go. (S1)

Yes, if they lived in China for quite some time. (S2, Translation)

No, the accent is different. There is something missing. It depends on the exposure of the language at home. (S3, Translation)

Yes, such things happen often in Melbourne or in San Francisco, in Chinatowns, I think there is a Chinatown in London also, even in Malta there are Chinese people who speak Chinese and even speak Maltese, they might have issues to read, because to be able to read Chinese one needs an education for a number of years at school, but the native speaker does not necessarily know how to write the language, they need to know how to speak it, to converse, and if they can do that, normally, foreigners who have Chinese parents, Chinese parents who are not in China might not be speaking Putonghua, they speak a variety of Chinese that they speak at home, very often this is a dialect, but they are still native speakers of a Chinese language that might not exist in China, because now there is also a mixture of English and Chinese, but they are native speakers of a language that is not English and sometimes that is not even Chinese also. (S5, Translation)

Yes, if they have Chinese parents, or even if they have one Chinese parent, if they grow up speaking Chinese at home or within their family, they can be considered as native speakers. (S7)

The following are quotations on birthplace from interviews with teachers:

No, if there is someone, for example, who was born in Beijing, right, one has to consider whether when that person was in Beijing, whether they used to speak in Chinese, if they spoke in Chinese, that is a native speaker of Chinese. Now, if they went to America and in America they went to a family, or their family decided to start speaking in English, I don't think so, let's say they found themselves in an environment, in an exchange or else they were adopted, in that case one has to see whether they had already known Chinese, it kind of depends on their age, if they were adopted at age one or two when language skills are quite limited, I don't know the exact timeframe, the ages, but a two or three year old child already has certain language skills, more than someone who is 6 months or 1 year old, I think that between 2 to 3 years there is a great jump. I think it depends on when the transfer took place, from one country to the other. If the transfer was very early, after 6 months, after a year, obviously

there they could become a native speaker of English, there's enough time. In fact, I think that even at a later stage, even if they came at for example, at the age of four, I think they would have the time to practice English well and by the time they reach 6-7 years they would be, I'm sure there are many people like this, because children have this great ability, a great ability to pick a language that we adults don't have, children at age 5 or 6 already would have most of the grammar that takes us adults months or years to learn in class and we practice and do exercises while a child without even having ever attended school, would have already know how to conjugate, I'm not speaking for Chinese, I'm speaking about other languages, they would already know where to put the subject, the verb, they would already know. (T1 NNS, Translation)

Yes, but that it also depends on family. A lot of people, second generation people, they often classify themselves as non-native speakers. So, I would say it depends on their parents and how much they really used the language at home, and how much they used it growing up, but, many people say they used it on me but I didn't use it back, so I'm not a native speaker. (T3 NNS)

Native speakers and ethnicity

[...] if a Chinese person was born in Malta they can definitely not be a native Chinese speaker. In fact I met, I met children and they say, the parents say that their Chinese is not very good. (S1)

Yes, if they lived in China for a very long time. One needs a very long time. It's so complicated. (S2 Translation)

If one lives in China all their life, then yes. The issues is not birthplace, it's nurture. It's where one has lived for many years. Where one grew up – childhood is what makes a native speaker. Not birth, but where one was brought up. (S3 Translation)

No unless they are being raised in China, maybe adopted by Chinese parents or within an environment where Chinese is the main language, it's the first language spoken. (S6)

Yes, it could be, how society will consider this person is another issue, but linguistically, they are native speakers, there are even Maltese children, born in China and who speak Chinese natively, there was one in the newspapers around five years ago, for example, that is a native speaker [of Chinese]. Probably they are not a native speaker of Maltese in that case, but they are of Chinese. But no, it depends, it could also be that the child studied Maltese at home, and that would be a native speaker of Maltese. (S5, Translated)

If they grow up in China, or maybe they go to a Chinese private school and they speak it with their friends, yes, if they speak it. It depends on how much connection they have with the language. (S7)

I think that obviously, in theory, if one comes from a Chinese family, it could be possible. There are cases, I think there are cases in China of Chinese families who adopt children for example from Cambodia or who adopt children from Vietnam, and these children have become Chinese, and they are native speakers of Chinese. Any human being can become a native speaker of any language if they are brought up in that circumstance. (T1 NNS, Translation)

We should consider two kinds; one is if they study in China, I said the environment is very important, if they study in Chinese school and from primary they speak in Chinese, of course they can be a native speaker, they are very good in Chinese, maybe they are better than the local people, but, if they study abroad it depends, if they start from maybe kindergarten and every day they have enough hours to practice, I think they can be very, the ability of speaking Chinese will be very close to native speaker, but I cannot say they are as a native speaker, but if they start only from primary of maybe from secondary school actually it's a bit late, and also it depends on how much time they spend on studying this language and, you know, if they study but after class they don't use and they don't have this environment to speak with others, it's very difficult for them to become a native speaker, like I taught for, I have been to three countries teaching and also when I was in China I also taught the students from different countries, I think it's very difficult for them to speak Chinese as a native speaker, they can be very close if they spend enough time and have the environment, but for some certain words, they will use it not so properly because Chinese language includes the culture. (T2 NS)

Native speakers and formal education

Erm… It is possible, it is possible, but, but, I don't, I think there would be some differences, maybe if they've lived many years in China. I find Chinese is very, extremely difficult to reach that level, even when they are excellent, even when their Chinese is really good, still a native speaker might know more, but I think if they've spent many years in China they can sound like a native speaker but I wouldn't call them a native speaker. (S1)

I think that there's a huge gap between learning Chinese in a school and living within a Chinese environment. So it's like, I think there's a difference between being fluent and proficient, because university or the institution teaches a student proficiency, which is the ability to comprehend and speak, practice by writing and reading, so I think one wouldn't be fluent in the dialect, but can still be a skilful speaker. I think that fluency is impossible to attain without engaging in dialogue, to become a fluent speaker of the language. (S6)

No, especially if they have only studied formally. No. If they lived in the country for a long time, or else if they are in a very Chinese environment, for example if their spouse is Chinese, or if suddenly they

start living in a Chinese family, even if it is in America, there they could approach native speaker level, one could approach native speaker level, but one wouldn't really be a native speaker. In the sense that they wouldn't have been brought up, I mean, they wouldn't be born and brought up, their first language wouldn't be Chinese. I think that they would approach something approximating native speaker. This is especially if they live in another country for a long time or in a family or they would be in a relationship with someone who is Chinese, meaning that literally, they have to speak Chinese and are exposed to Chinese all the time. . (T1 NNS, Translation)

If one goes to China in an immersive environment, one still won't get very far if they went to Chinese classes and learned and then never used it outside of the classroom, it has to be immersive, it has to be a total experience. One has to forget who they are originally, in my opinion and my experience. (T3 NNS)

Native speakers of other languages

My native language is English. I wish it were Maltese, sometimes I struggle with Maltese and it upsets me a lot. Because I was brought up listening to English. My parents, my family always spoke to me in English, that's why I consider myself a native speaker of English. (S1)

Someone who learns the language since birth. They were born into it. Maltese is my native language because I was born and raised in Malta. I learned Maltese from the environment I was born in. (S2, Translation)

I'm Maltese. I've lived in Malta all my life. The fact that we were raised speaking Maltese, we have spoken Maltese since birth, even our hand gestures are typically Maltese. Even our English is Maltese-English. (S7)

No, no, I'm a non-native speaker. I'm not a native speaker of Chinese because the first language that I spoke was Maltese and my parents have always spoken to me in Maltese, so I'm a native speaker of Maltese, I'm not even a native speaker of English for example, because my family did not speak to me in English, English came later, English was introduced to me at school, English wasn't my first language. The first words I said were in Maltese, my parents used to speak to me in Maltese. (T1 NNS, Translation)

Immersion in a language in adulthood can make a near-native speaker

A native speaker is someone who lived in China for a period of time in childhood. I can't define exactly how long that is, but it is someone who spent a considerable amount of time in China, living the life of the country, preferably in childhood. (S2, Translation)

I can aspire to the level but I won't become a native speaker. Maybe if I live in China for 20 years, marry a Chinese person, raise children as Chinese, immerse myself in Chinese culture. (S2, Participant answered the question in English)

A native speaker is someone who lived in China for many years. We are native speakers of Maltese. (…) If one marries a Chinese person and moves to China, that's another story, still, not-native (S3, Translation)

Later on in life? I don't think they would fully become native speakers. I think they would be very high level, but they still wouldn't be native speakers, I feel there are so many, so much to learn in Chinese, it's such a rich language, like, there's so much to it, (giggles) even if they spend years there, everyone would be like wow, you sound like a native speaker, but still they are not a native speaker because they weren't brought up speaking that language. (S1)

Maltese – I was born and raised in Malta. English is also my language, I lived in London for ten years – I was immersed in the English language and culture in London for a long time. (S2, participant answered this question in English)

Native speakers' naturally acquired linguistic and cultural knowledge

Native speakers' fluency and proficiency

The level of Chinese makes a native speaker, native speakers have a high level of Chinese, even the fact that I'm not ethnically Chinese, a native speaker of Chinese is from China or has Chinese relatives. I'm Maltese. I've lived in Malta all my life. The fact that we were raised speaking Maltese, we have spoken Maltese since birth, even our hand gestures are typically Maltese. Even our English is Maltese-English. (S7)

I don't feel that I am a native speaker of Chinese, let's start from there. A native speaker would have a certain level where they not only speak the language, but also feel it, a native speaker would feel if there is an error even if they cannot explain what it is. Sometimes when one is able to explain why something is wrong, that shows that one is not a native speaker. I can never be a native speaker of Chinese because I study Chinese in too much depth, a native speaker doesn't need to study their language in depth to be able to understand it. A native speaker doesn't need to study their language at all to be able to understand it. (S5, Translation)

First of all, I'm not fluent in the language, I wasn't born there and I wasn't raised there, so I'm not a native speaker (laughs) I can never be, the maximum maybe I can be a **near** native speaker, unless I get immersed in the community, the Chinese community, go and live in China. (Laughs) (S4)

I'm a non-native speaker of Chinese, the fact that we weren't born in China, we don't have Chinese influence on our culture, my level of Mandarin is not native speaker, and I'm still learning the grammar, characters… (S6)

Culturally, on a more semantic, on a more technical level, there are times when I'm thinking in English and translating into Chinese, so I get the grammar wrong or I don't say it in a way native speakers would generally automatically say, sometimes I really think about it. There are ways of phrasing things that I wouldn't, I don't automatically access, I either train myself in doing it that way, or I didn't, but I get it wrong still. (T3 NNS)

"The level" of proficiency of native speakers

Proficiency which makes a native speaker (…) erm.. a native speaker though, it's more on the spoken language, I think, erm, that they can (…) speak freely whatever thoughts that come to their mind they can express themselves freely in their language and people can understand them. So, without thinking twice that they are native speakers. Native speaker level is the ability to speak without having to think, a native speaker speaks without the need to translate into another language. A native speaker of Chinese thinks in Chinese as they speak it. Understanding of jokes and humour also makes a native speaker. A native speaker understands television, they understand all conversations and understand all scenarios in Chinese. (S1)

The highest level – obviously the tones, they are important, also I think that being able to understand and use colloquialisms, idioms, slang language, even understand puns, I think that's the most… as long as the acquisition starts very early, you know, the earlier the better. (S4)

Definitely one needs to be able to read and write Chinese characters, one needs to know collocation, meaning, where a word should be placed one needs to know structures and syntax, they have awareness of the structures. (S5, Translation)

I think there's a standard of what one has to learn to basically hold a conversation, to be able to express oneself, maybe not grammatically correct, but one could use the words that they need to express themselves, and importantly one could understand what other people say, even if they're not grammatically correct one can still understand what they say, whereas maybe a non-native speaker would get confused about what was being said. (S6)

A very high level of the language, a native speaker is very confident when they speak their native language. They don't need to think to speak. (S7)

Native speakers' spontaneity

A native speaker is a person who doesn't need to think to express themselves. A non-native speaker has to think before they speak. If a person is angry, sad, tired – they speak the mother tongue. (S3 – the participant uttered this in English)

Native speaker level is the ability to speak without having to think, a native speaker speaks without the need to translate into another language. A native speaker of Chinese thinks in Chinese as they speak it. (S2, participant answered this question in English)

A native speaker is a person who doesn't need to think to express themselves. A non-native speaker has to think before speaking. If one is angry, sad, tired – they speak the mother tongue. (S3 participant answered this question in English)

Yes, native speakers, like I can in my language, can express themselves efficiently, effectively, to say exactly what they need to say whereas non-native speakers may try to translate rather than use their knowledge of the language itself to express themselves. (S6)

Yes, native speakers speak more fluently, they are more confident, I take time to speak Chinese, I think, a native speaker does not need to think while speaking, I think, I am conscious of tones, grammar... (S7)

Culturally, on a more semantic, on a more technical level, there are times when I'm thinking in English and translating into Chinese, so I get the grammar wrong or I don't say it in a way native speakers would generally automatically say, sometimes I really think about it. There are ways of phrasing things that I wouldn't, I don't automatically access, I either train myself in doing it that way, or I didn't, but I get it wrong still.

(T3, NNS teacher)

Native Speakers' understanding of humour

Understanding of jokes and humour also makes a native speaker. A native speaker understands television, they understand all conversations and understand all scenarios in Chinese. (S1)

Native speakers – there are certain words and expressions that are used in the Chinese cultural context, there are certain things that only native speakers know. (S3, Translation)

What really makes a native speaker is the fact that one can detect sarcasm, even certain meanings of words that go beyond the dictionary definitions, humour, rhythm of the language, the accent, filler words, cultural context is very important and is what defines a native speaker. (S4)

I think that being able to understand and use colloquialisms, idioms, slang language, even understand puns, I think that's the most… as long as the acquisition starts very early, you know, the earlier the better. (S4)

Good question, some say that it's the accent, that one doesn't have the accent of a native speaker. I don't know whether I agree with this or not. What makes a person a non-native speaker is that one doesn't understand jokes, sarcasm, humour, poetry (…) the ability to understand humour, sarcasm, poetry, OK, and these idiomatic concepts that have a cultural background in order to be understood, a native-speaker always has this knowledge, ok, always in a normal context. (S5, Translation)

We code-switch, but I try very hard to keep them in Chinese for 60% of the time. I don't want to switch to English for every little thing. My goal is to keep them in the language. I want to build their confidence, especially when it comes to speaking. I only use English for when it is necessary, when it is right. Funny things happen in English. Humour comes out in English. (T3 NNS)

Native speakers' errors

Spoken production errors

I think a native speaker might also use a bit of slang sometimes which might not be so grammatically correct. Or they get lazy when they speak, it could happen there, it's not always the case, yes, I think they can make many mistakes as well. (S1)

The main aim of a speaker is to get a message across. For example I am a native speaker of Maltese, but as a linguist I often realise that sometimes I make errors, but these errors do not cause any lack of communication, meaning that despite the errors, I still get the message across. (S4)

I think that the main aim of a speaker is to get the message across. (…)For example, I am a native speaker of Maltese, I realise (…) where I make mistakes, even though the mistake does not hinder communication, meaning that the process has delivered the message. (…) No one has perfect

grammar, both native and non-native speakers (…) Native speakers do not necessarily always have grammar on their minds, native speakers do not always have very strong grammar. (S5, Translation)

No absolutely not. (laughs) (S6)

No, I don't think so. I am Maltese, I'm a native speaker of Maltese, my grammar when I speak is not always correct, it depends on one's level of education. (S7)

Yes, non-native speakers I understand them better. Non-native speakers speak standard Putonghua. No accent, they don't speak fast, they are more careful not to make mistakes. (S2, Participant answered in English)

The accents, pronunciation is different in different dialects. It is difficult to understand the accent of the native speaker, the dialects is not standard. Native speakers are not always grammatically correct, they are not always standard. We cannot really determine who the native speaker of Chinese is. (S3, Participant answered in English)

No, no, this is not always the case. At times native speakers make many mistakes, like we make mistakes. I am a native speaker of Maltese, for example, ok, so, when I speak, I make mistakes at times, very often I switch to English, sometimes I conjugate things in both English and Maltese, so a native speaker is not always necessarily grammatically correct. (T1 NNS, Translation)

I make mistakes, in my native language, I hear my family make mistakes, I hear Chinese people make mistakes. I think it's one of the given idiosyncrasies, native speakers, the grammar has been ingrained, they don't have to think about it, so it can come out, and often it will come out idiosyncratically, but it can still be understood because of other aspects. (T3 NNS)

Written production errors

I think that the characters can very easily and very often be written wrongly, many Chinese people forget how to write so many characters, it's very common. (S1)

I have no doubt that there are people who have learned simplified and there are others who have learned the traditional characters. There are also Chinese people who are illiterate. (S2, Translation)

No, they make many, many errors, even Chinese people make mistakes in characters, our teacher told us. (S6)

I think it's the same for both native and non-native speakers. Yes, even in Pinyin they make errors. I have experience in that at the moment! So! Even scholars forget how to write a character at times! (S4)

If we consider native speakers of Maltese, then there would be a problem because the Maltese (people) are not that good at writing their language! In the case of the Chinese, (…) many typical mistakes that native speakers make are in writing. (S5, Translation)

I haven't seen many examples of Chinese characters written by native speakers so I couldn't comment. I've only seen my teachers' characters and I'm sure they can all write well. (S6)

No, not all native speakers can write all the characters correctly. I watched videos on YouTube where they ask native speakers of Chinese to write some characters and not all native speakers were able to write the characters. (S7)

Yes, they make many, many, many, many, mistakes. Obviously, one has to consider the level of education of the person, meaning that there are various levels but more or less, everyone makes mistakes. A person who teaches at university or who has achieved a high level of education, would have written so much in their life, so the chances of making errors in their writing are much less, there are people who did not go through higher education, so probably they would make more errors in writing, it's not because they are less intelligent, it's because they wouldn't have had much exposure to writing, they wouldn't have written so much.

(T1 NNS, Translation)

No definitely not, I've seen Chinese people writing characters incorrectly. (T3 NNS)

Native speakers and literacy

Yes, I think, I think I would still see them as a native speaker because they can speak the language. (S1)

Yes, there are illiterate people who are native speakers of Chinese.

(S2, participant answered this question in English)

There are also Chinese people who are illiterate. (S2 translation)

Yes – in both Malta and China. There are many illiterate people.

(S3, participant answered this question in English)

Yes, I think so, it could be. Especially those who live in villages and haven't had an education, I think they only rely on speaking. There could be native speakers who are illiterate, but there are very few. (S4)

Yes, yes this is what most of the cases are, but today there is less of this situation, there are illiterate people in Putonghua, there are people who work in the fields, who work in industry, or people who

don't need to communicate with others in this form, or who don't watch television, or who haven't studied at school, (…) who speak their own dialect, their variety and who cannot express themselves in Putonghua. (S5 Translation)

If we consider native speakers of Maltese, then there would be a problem because the Maltese are not that good at writing their language. (S5 Translation)

I think it's possible, yes. Even here in Malta there are many native speakers of Maltese who cannot write in Maltese. It's normal. I learned to write in Maltese at school. (S6)

Yes, but highly unlikely in China as people learn how to write characters at school. There might be a situation where a Chinese family moves to America (for example) and they had a baby there, they start talking to the baby in Chinese but they don't teach them how to write in characters. I am aware of such a situation here in Malta. I know a Chinese child here in Malta, they have a restaurant here in Malta, the child is a native speaker of Chinese, they come to China Cultural Centre, they can speak Chinese perfectly because they speak to the teachers, they speak like a native speaker, but they don't know how to write characters so they come to China Cultural Centre to learn how to write characters because they cannot write Chinese. They didn't have the opportunity to learn how to write Chinese characters. Knowing the language does not necessarily mean that one is literate. (T1 NNS, Translation)

Native speakers and Standard Putonghua

Putonghua is the language used in the media, native speakers don't normally speak that sort of Chinese, native speakers tend to speak in their dialect, so as long as one wasn't born in Beijing, and not even in Beijing, they don't speak Putonghua, they speak /r/ hua, they like to pronounce that /r/ at the end, they like the /r/ sound, not all native speakers of Chinese speak Putonghua, they know it, but they know their dialect more, tones and some expressions and grammar are different, it's a variety that cannot be called Putonghua. Native speakers speak in Putonghua but it might not be their dialect. Putonghua is used in the media to unite China, Putonghua is used to unite China linguistically as there is so much linguistic diversity in China. (S5, Translation)

Parents might not necessarily speak to them in standard Mandarin, so they would not be native speakers of the standard, Chinese is a group of languages, there are many dialects, one might be a native speaker of a dialect or of another language. (S7)

Native speaker, actually, you know, actually in different places, actually we talk a lot of dialects, so not everybody is speaking the standard Mandarin. There are many dialects in Chinese that vary from the standard Putonghua. (T2 NS)

Chinese – the term Chinese language includes many varieties of Chinese and there are other languages in China also. Not everyone is a native speaker of Standard Putonghua, there are people who speak Mandarin but who don't speak standard Putonghua either. Many people in Beijing speak Beijinghua. Beijinghua and standard Putonghua are not the same thing. Standard Putonghua is rather official. It's actually a bit artificial. In Beijing they speak Beijinghua, this is related to Putonghua, but it is a city dialect. Beijinghua is very much alive, Putonghua is very standard, used in the media, something standard all over the country. There are many varieties and many languages in China. Standard Putonghua – not everyone is a native speaker of standard Putonghua. (T2 NS)

There are 56 minorities in China, a lot of them are born in language environments where Chinese is the second language, they learn it when they go to school, they are born into a totally different language environment but culturally they're Chinese. (T2 NS)

Education can lead someone to the standard language, but that wouldn't make them a native speaker.

(T3 NNS)

Non-native speakers speak standard Putonghua. No accent, they don't speak fast, they are more careful not to make mistakes. I think non-native speakers will usually be more careful. Native speakers take things for granted. (S2, participant answered this question in English)

Appendix 5 – Lesson observation sheets

Lesson observation sheet 1

Date: 26 February 2021

NS Teacher

	Observed	Additional notes
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Lesson is mostly in Standard Putonghua. Teacher mostly speaks Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	Yes	Teacher switches to non-standard accent at times.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher does not correct tone all the time. Teacher only corrects tone when communication does not take place.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	No	Teacher only corrects pronunciation and tone when communication does not take place.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	Students have different native languages. Maltese is the most common students' L1. Students speak in Maltese/Italian among themselves, the students' L1 is not used by the teacher.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	No	The students' L1 is not used to teach the target language.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes/No	The students' L1 is not used in the lesson. English as a lingua franca is used. Teacher tries to mention Malta, they make an effort to get culturally closer to students.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin for most of the time.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only use target language when explicitly asked by the teacher. When they are not asked by the teacher to specifically read or to answer in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	Mandarin is the main language of instruction. If students do not understand something, then English is used as it is a lingua franca between the teacher and all students.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	No	The teacher does not include non-native speakers; the teacher utters phrases such as "in China **we** have", "for us **we** say"… non-native speakers are excluded.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher expects students to review on their own and does not review in class.
Teacher expects students to preview	Yes	Students are expected to preview before class.
Revision of material covered previously	No	The teacher utters "we covered this a long time ago" – there is no room for revision in class.

Link to material covered previously	No	There is no link to material covered previously.
Localisation	No	Teacher is not aware of local norms.
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is used a way through which to memorise new vocabulary.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	Yes	New characters are taught and they are not linked to other characters learned previously. Teacher reads the vocabulary list from the textbook. Teacher has a PPT with pictures to explain the meaning of certain characters.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	Yes	Teacher encourages students to repeat and memorise examples of sentences with grammar structures. “Read these sentences for a while, try to memorise, ok.” Then students are given 2 minutes to memorise the sentences. After the 2 minutes are over, the teacher quizzes students.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as ‘subject’, ‘verb’, ‘object’…	No	Teacher does not explain grammar structures directly. Teacher gives examples and encourages students to memorise the model sentences. This will enable students to learn the grammar structure.
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	Yes	Teacher gives many model sentences, examples from the textbook and expects students to ‘absorb’ grammar structure through the examples.

Lesson observation sheet 2

Date: 1 March 2021

NS Teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Lesson is mostly in Standard Putonghua. Teacher mostly speaks Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	Yes	Teacher switches to non-standard accent at times.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher does not correct tone all the time. Teacher only corrects tone when communication does not take place.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	No	Teacher only corrects pronunciation and tone when communication does not take place. A student's utterance had errors in tone and grammar. The teacher says "you express again" encouraging the student to correct their errors.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	Students have different native languages. Maltese is the most common students' L1. Students speak in Maltese/Italian among themselves, the students' L1 is not used by the teacher.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	No	The students' L1 is not used to teach the target language.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes/No	The students' L1 is not used in the lesson. English as a lingua franca is used. Teacher tries to mention Malta, they make an effort to get culturally closer to students.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin for most of the time.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only use target language when explicitly asked by the teacher. When they are not asked by the teacher to specifically read or to answer in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English. One of the students uses the target language phrase 我有一个问题 (I have a question) but apart from this phrase, the student always addresses the teacher in English. This is a kind of stock phrase.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	Mandarin is the main language of instruction. If students do not understand something, then English is used as it is a lingua franca between the teacher and all students. The teacher's English is limited at times; at times they cannot express themselves.

Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	No	The teacher does not include non-native speakers; the teacher utters phrases such as “in China **we** say”… non-native speakers are excluded.
Teacher’s expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher expects students to review on their own and does not review in class.
Teacher expects students to preview	Yes	Students are expected to preview before class.
Revision of material covered previously	No	The teacher utters “we covered this a long time ago” – there is no room for revision in class.
Link to material covered previously	No	There is no link to material covered previously.
Localisation	No	Teacher is not aware of local cultural norms.
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is used a way through which to memorise new vocabulary. Teacher types characters on PPT; there is no mention of radicals or stroke order. Teacher does not check how students write characters. Teacher does not compare/contrast to other characters learned previously.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	New characters are taught and they are not linked to other characters learned previously. The aim is to learn words and to practice, understanding is not given importance, practice that leads to memorization is given a lot of importance. Understanding is not giving importance either, it’s as if words are in a vacuum. “writing characters is a general problem … gradually it gets better.”
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	Yes	Teacher encourages students to repeat and memorise examples of sentences with grammar structures. The teacher nominates a particular student to say a sentence with a particular grammar structure to practice the grammar structure they are learning during the lesson.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as ‘subject’, ‘verb’, ‘object’…	No	Teacher does not explain grammar structures directly.
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	Yes	Teacher gives many model sentences, examples from the textbook and expects students to ‘absorb’ grammar structure through the examples.

Lesson observation sheet 3

Date: 4 March 2021

NNS Teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Teacher only speaks Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	No	
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher corrects students' tone all the time.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	Yes	The teacher corrected student's tone and said that the student's utterance was non-standard.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	Yes	Students have different native languages. Maltese is the most common students' L1. Students speak in Maltese/Italian among themselves. The teacher mostly uses Mandarin as a language of instruction, but uses Maltese and English as well.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	Yes	The students' L1 is used to explain certain concepts in the target language.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes	The students' L1 is used in the lesson. English as a lingua franca is mostly used as not all students could speak/understand Maltese.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin for most of the time.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only use target language when explicitly asked by the teacher. When they are not asked by the teacher to specifically read or to answer in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English or in Maltese.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	Mandarin is the main language of instruction. English is used as a lingua franca between the teacher and all students.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	Yes	The teacher includes themselves and the students as legitimate speakers of Mandarin as a Foreign Language. The teacher presents a multilingual identity.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher does a lot of revision in class but also expects students to revise on their own.
Teacher expects students to preview	No	This is an alien concept in Malta.
Revision of material covered previously	Yes	The teacher continuously revises things in class.
Link to material covered previously	Yes	Revision is constant.

Localisation	Yes	Teacher is aware of local cultural norms. Teacher is also aware of the students' course of studies and where they could further their studies in Chinese.
Teacher's familiarity with local norms	Yes	
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is rarely used. teacher writes characters and expects students to write characters. The textbook has Pinyin.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	Yes	Teacher is teaching some new vocabulary. The teacher reads the words one by one and asks students to repeat so they practice the tones. The teacher writes characters, elicits radicals, links to characters with the same radical, compares/contrasts to other characters and explains stroke order. The teacher checks students' characters.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	No	Teacher elicits creative sentences from students.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	Yes	Teacher explains grammar structures clearly and using technical terminology.
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	Yes	Teacher gives many model sentences, examples from the textbook and expects students to come up with their own sentences.

Lesson observation sheet 4

Date: 04 March 2021

NS Teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Lesson is mostly in Standard Putonghua. Teacher mostly speaks Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	Yes	Teacher switches to non-standard accent at times.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher does not correct tone all the time. Teacher only corrects tone when communication does not take place.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	No	Teacher only corrects pronunciation and tone when communication does not take place. A student's utterance had errors in tone and grammar. The teacher says "you express again" encouraging the student to correct their errors.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	Students have different native languages. Maltese is the most common students' L1. Students speak in Maltese/Italian among themselves, the students' L1 is not used by the teacher.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	No	The students' L1 is not used to teach the target language.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes/No	The students' L1 is not used in the lesson. English as a lingua franca is used. Teacher tries to mention Malta, they make an effort to get culturally closer to students.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin for most of the time.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only use target language when explicitly asked by the teacher. When they are not asked by the teacher to specifically read or to answer in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English. One of the students uses the target language phrase 我有一个问题 (I have a question) but apart from this phrase, the student always addresses the teacher in English. This is a kind of stock phrase.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	Mandarin is the main language of instruction. If students do not understand something, then English is used as it is a lingua franca between the teacher and all students.

		The teacher's English is limited at times; at times they cannot express themselves.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	No	The teacher does not include non-native speakers; the teacher utters phrases such as "in China **we** say"… non-native speakers are excluded.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher expects students to review on their own and does not review in class.
Teacher expects students to preview	Yes	Students are expected to preview before class.
Revision of material covered previously	No	The teacher utters "we covered this a long time ago" – there is no room for revision in class.
Link to material covered previously	No	There is no link to material covered previously.
Localisation	No	Teacher is not aware of local cultural norms.
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is used a way through which to memorise new vocabulary. Teacher types characters on PPT; there is no mention of radicals or stroke order. Teacher does not check how students write characters. Teacher does not compare/contrast to other characters learned previously.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	New characters are taught and they are not linked to other characters learned previously. The aim is to learn words and to practice, understanding is not given importance, practice that leads to memorization is given a lot of importance. Understanding is not giving importance either, it's as if words are in a vacuum. "writing characters is a general problem … gradually it gets better."
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	Yes	Teacher encourages students to repeat and memorise examples of sentences with grammar structures. The teacher nominates a particular student to say a sentence with a particular grammar structure to practice the grammar structure they are learning during the lesson.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	No	Teacher does not explain grammar structures directly.
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	Yes	Teacher gives many model sentences, examples from the textbook and expects students to 'absorb' grammar structure through the examples.

Lesson observation sheet 5

Date: 5 March 2021

NS Teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is quite proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Lesson is mostly in Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	Yes	Teacher switches to non-standard accent at times.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher does not correct tone all the time. Teacher only corrects tone when communication does not take place.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	No	Teacher only corrects pronunciation and tone when communication does not take place. Teacher does not correct students if their utterance is non-standard.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	Students have different native languages. Maltese is the most common students' L1. Students speak in Maltese/Italian among themselves, the students' L1 is not used by the teacher.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	No	The students' L1 is not used to teach the target language.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes/No	The students' L1 is not used in the lesson. English as a lingua franca is used. Teacher tries to mention Malta, they make an effort to get culturally closer to students.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin most of the time.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only use target language when explicitly asked by the teacher. When they are not asked by the teacher to specifically read or to answer in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English. One of the students uses the target language phrase 我有一个问题 (I have a question) but apart from this phrase, the student always addresses the teacher in English. This is a kind of stock phrase.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	Mandarin is the main language of instruction. If students do not understand something, then English is used as it is a lingua franca between the teacher and all students. The teacher's English is limited at times; at times they cannot express themselves.

Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	No	The teacher does not include non-native speakers; the teacher utters phrases such as "in China **we** say"… non-native speakers are excluded.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	"after the class review, try to memorise them." "practice after class."
Teacher expects students to preview	Yes	Students are expected to preview before class.
Revision of material covered previously	No	The teacher utters "we have already covered this." – there is no room for revision in class.
Link to material covered previously	No	There is no link to material covered previously.
Localisation	No	Conclusion of the lesson – teacher is not aware that usually at the end of the lesson local teachers are expected to recap what has been covered during that particular lesson. The conclusion is simply "that's all for today".
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is used a way through which to memorise new vocabulary. Teacher types characters on PPT; there is no mention of radicals or stroke order. Teacher does not check how students write characters. Teacher does not compare/contrast to other characters learned previously.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	New characters are taught and they are not linked to other characters learned previously. The aim is to learn words and to practice, understanding is not given importance, practice that leads to memorization is given a lot of importance. Understanding is not giving importance either, it's as if words are in a vacuum. "try to memorise."
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	Yes	Teacher encourages students to repeat and memorise examples of sentences with grammar structures. The teacher nominates a particular student to say a sentence with a particular grammar structure to practice the grammar structure they are learning during the lesson.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	No	Teacher does not explain grammar structures explicitly.
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	Yes	Teacher gives many model sentences, examples from the textbook and expects students to 'absorb' grammar structure through the examples.

Lesson observation sheet 6

Date: 8 March 2021

NS Teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Lesson is mostly in Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	Yes	Teacher switches to non-standard accent at times.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher does not correct tone all the time. Teacher only corrects tone when communication does not take place.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	No	Teacher only corrects pronunciation and tone when communication does not take place. Teacher does not always correct non-standard pronunciation.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	Students have different native languages. Maltese is the most common students' L1. Students speak in Maltese/Italian among themselves, the students' L1 is not used by the teacher.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	No	The students' L1 is not used to teach the target language.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes/No	The students' L1 is not used in the lesson. English as a lingua franca is used when students do not understand the teacher's utterances in Mandarin. Teacher tries to acknowledge Malta and its customs, but the students' L1 is not used during lessons. It's as if the students' L1 does not exist.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin most of the time during lessons.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only use target language when explicitly asked by the teacher. When they are not asked by the teacher to specifically read or to answer in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	Mandarin is the main language of instruction. If students do not understand something, then English is used as it is a lingua franca between the teacher and all students.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	No	The teacher does not include non-native speakers; the teacher utters phrases such as "in China **we** say"… non-native speakers are excluded.

Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher expects students to review on their own and does not review in class. "After class review at least 1 word 3 times." "I need you to do this, I will check next time, memorise the words."
Teacher expects students to preview	Yes	Students are expected to preview before class.
Revision of material covered previously	No	There is no link to material covered previously. "we learned this a long time ago." Lesson only presents new material, there is no link to material covered previously.
Link to material covered previously	No	There is no link to material covered previously. Teacher introduces new material every lesson.
Localisation	Yes	The teacher tries to mention Malta during the lesson, for example at a point the teacher says, the flowers are blooming in Malta now, but still, they are not very familiar with the local customs.
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is used as a way through which to memorise new vocabulary.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	Teacher presents new vocabulary. "ok, try to memorise this character." "after class you need to memorise characters more." "study more, study harder." "Today I notice that you forget a lot of what we have learned." Memorisation is given a lot of importance.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	Yes	Teacher encourages students to repeat and memorise examples of sentences with grammar structures. "after class you need to practice more."
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	No	Teacher does not explain grammar structures directly.
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	Yes	Teacher gives many model sentences, examples from the textbook and expects students to 'absorb' grammar structure through the examples.

Lesson observation sheet 7

Date: 11 March 2021

NS Teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is proficient and fluent overall. At times, teacher's English is limited.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Lesson is mostly in Standard Putonghua. Teacher mostly speaks Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	Yes	Teacher switches to non-standard accent at times.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher only corrects tone when communication does not take place.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	No	Teacher only corrects pronunciation and tone when communication does not take place.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	Students have different native languages. Maltese is the most common students' L1. Students speak in Maltese/Italian among themselves, the students' L1 is not used by the teacher.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	No	The students' L1 is not used to teach the target language.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes/No	The students' L1 is not used in the lesson. English as a lingua franca is used. Teacher tries to mention Malta, they make an effort to get culturally closer to students.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin for most of the time.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only use target language when explicitly asked by the teacher. When they are not asked by the teacher to specifically read or to answer in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	Mandarin is the main language of instruction. If students do not understand something, then English is used as it is a lingua franca between the teacher and all students.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	No	The teacher does not include non-native speakers; the teacher utters phrases such as "for us **we** say"… non-native speakers are excluded.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher expects students to review on their own and does not review in class.
Teacher expects students to preview	Yes	Students are expected to preview before class. "preview what we will learn and look up words you don't know in the dictionary."

		Students giggle when teacher tells them to preview; preview is so unfamiliar to them.
Revision of material covered previously	No	The teacher utters “we have already covered this.”
Link to material covered previously	No	There is no link to material covered previously.
Localisation	No	Teacher is not aware of local norms.
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is used to teach a few difficult characters. (characters with many strokes have Pinyin next to them in the PPT.)
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	Teacher reads the vocabulary list from the textbook. Teacher has a PPT with pictures to explain the meaning of certain characters.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	Yes	Teacher encourages students to repeat and memorise examples of sentences with grammar structures. “Read these sentences for a while, try to memorise, ok.” Then students are given 2 minutes to memorise the sentences. After the 2 minutes are over, the teacher quizzes students.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as ‘subject’, ‘verb’, ‘object’…	No	Teacher does not explain grammar structures directly. Teacher gives examples and encourages students to memorise the model sentences. This will enable students to learn the grammar structure.
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	Yes	Teacher gives many model sentences, examples from the textbook and expects students to ‘absorb’ grammar structure through the examples.

Lesson observation sheet 8

Date: 12 March 2021

NNS Teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent in Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is proficient and fluent in English. (English is the official language of instruction at the University of Malta).
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Lesson is in Standard Putonghua. Teacher only speaks Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	No	Teacher only knows Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher repeats in the correct tone after students who make errors in intonation and tone.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	No	Students' utterances are in Standard.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	Students have different native languages. Maltese is the most common students' L1. Students speak in Maltese/Italian among themselves at times, the students' L1 is not used by the teacher. The teacher mostly speaks in Mandarin or in English.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	No	The students' L1 is not used to teach the target language.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes	The teacher acknowledges the students' native languages.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin most of the time.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes	Students only use target language when explicitly asked by the teacher. When they are not asked by the teacher to specifically read or to answer in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	Mandarin is the main language of instruction. If students do not understand something in Mandarin, the teacher switches to English.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	Yes	The teacher speaks about their experience in speaking/translating Chinese.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher expects students to revise on their own after the lesson.
Teacher expects students to preview	No	
Revision of material covered previously	Yes	The teacher refers to material covered previously.
Link to material covered previously	Yes	There is a link to material covered previously.
Localisation	Yes	Teacher is not aware of local norms. For example, the teacher is knows about the students' programme of studies.

Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is used to teach new vocabulary. Pinyin is in the textbook.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	Yes	The teacher refers to radicals and stroke order. The teacher writes the new vocabulary on the board and explains stroke order.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	No	Teacher elicits new sentences from students.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	Yes	Teacher explains grammar structures using words such as 'subject', 'verb' and 'object'.
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	Yes	Teacher gives examples, model sentences and elicits sentences from students.

Lesson observation sheet 9

Date: 14 April 2021

NNS teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Teacher speaks Standard Putonghua (they don't know any other dialect of Chinese)
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	No	Teacher does not know any other non-standard variety of Chinese.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher always corrects errors in pronunciation and tone. If students mispronounce something, the teacher repeats the utterance in Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	Yes	If students pronounce a word that is not in Standard Putonghua, the teacher says that such an utterance is non-standard.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	English as a lingua franca is used.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	Yes	At times, the teacher uses other foreign languages to explain something, for instance, the teacher and students compare a sound in Mandarin to a sound in French. Other common foreign languages are used for pedagogical purposes.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes	Teacher acknowledges students' L1. The teacher refers to Maltese at times, but English is used as a common lingua franca.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin most of the time. They only switch to English when students cannot understand instructions in Mandarin.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only speak Mandarin when asked by the teacher.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	English is the common lingua franca in the classroom.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	Yes	The teacher shows students a video of a person from the West who lives in Beijing and who speaks Mandarin very well.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher encourages students to revise after class.
Teacher expects students to preview	No	Preview is not expected in Maltese culture.
Revision of material covered previously	Yes	Teacher refers to material covered previously especially if asked by students.
Link to material covered previously	Yes	

Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is in the textbook.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	Teacher writes characters on a board, teacher elicits radicals and explains stroke order. Teacher also checks students' written characters.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	No	Teacher elicits sentences with the particular grammar structure. Students come up with some funny sentences and they all laugh but teacher accepts their sentences. The teacher says as long as the grammar structure and tones are right, then it is fine. The main aim is to get students to come up with their own sentences; creative language use to ensure understanding.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	Yes	Teacher explains grammar structures very clearly using technical terminology (subject, verb, object)
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	No	Practice and eliciting new sentences from students. Teacher reads model sentences from the textbook. Then they ask students to repeat drills, this is to practice pronunciation. Teacher encourages students by saying "last time you did very well." The teacher also justifies why this exercise is important; the NNS teacher also justifies why a certain exercise is important.

During the lesson, the NNS teacher speaks about their experience as a student. The teacher speaks about when they were a student and how they used to study Chinese.

Lesson observation sheet 10

Date: 21 April 2021

NNS teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Teacher speaks Standard Putonghua (they don't know any other dialect of Chinese)
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	No	Teacher does not know any other non-standard variety of Chinese.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher always corrects errors in pronunciation and tone. If students mispronounce something, the teacher repeats the utterance in Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	Yes	If students pronounce a word that is not in Standard Putonghua, the teacher says that such an utterance is non-standard and repeats the word in Standard. At a point a student pronounced 'ren' as 'zhen'
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	English as a lingua franca is used.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	Yes	The teacher compares and contrasts structures to English and to other foreign languages.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes	Teacher acknowledges students' L1. The teacher refers to Maltese at times, but English is used as a common lingua franca. The teacher appreciates and embraces the students' culture, they compare and contrast Chinese and Maltese culture.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin most of the time. The teacher only switches to English when students explain something to the teacher that is not really relevant. The teacher explains something related to Chinese culture in English.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only speak Mandarin when asked by the teacher. When not asked by the teacher to say something in Mandarin, students address the teacher in English.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	English is the common lingua franca in the classroom.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	Yes	The teacher speaks about their experiences as a student in China.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		

Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher encourages students to revise after class.
Teacher expects students to preview	No	Preview is not expected in Maltese culture.
Revision of material covered previously	Yes	Teacher refers to material covered previously especially if asked by students.
Link to material covered previously	Yes	NNS teacher speaks about their experience as a student. The teacher speaks about when they were a student and how they used to study Chinese.
Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is in the textbook.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	Teacher writes characters on a board, teacher elicits radicals and explains stroke order. Teacher also checks students' written characters.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	No	Teacher elicits sentences with the particular grammar structure. Teacher asks students to "come up with your own sentences" in a particular grammar structure. The aim is to get students to come up with their own sentences. The main aim is to get students to come up with their own sentences; creative language use to ensure understanding.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	Yes	Teacher explains grammar structures very clearly using technical terminology (subject, verb, object)
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	No	Practice and eliciting new sentences from students. Teacher reads model sentences from the textbook. Then they ask students to repeat drills, this is to practice tone and rhythm.

Lesson observation sheet 11

Date: 28 April 2021

NNS teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Teacher speaks Standard Putonghua (they don't know any other dialect of Chinese)
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	No	Teacher does not know any other non-standard variety of Chinese.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher always corrects errors in pronunciation and tone. If students mispronounce something, the teacher repeats the utterance in Standard Putonghua. Teacher is very strict on the accurate pronunciation of tones.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	n/a	Students' utterances were all in Standard Putonghua.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	English as a lingua franca is used.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	Yes	The teacher compares and contrasts structures to English and to other foreign languages.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes	The teacher refers to Maltese at times, but English is used as a common lingua franca.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin most of the time. They only switch to English to clarify and to ensure that students understand instructions.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only speak Mandarin when asked by the teacher. Students address the teacher in English and speak among themselves in Maltese.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	English is the common lingua franca in the classroom.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	Yes	Teacher includes both themselves and the students in the Chinese speaking community. They even speak about Chinese spoken in Chinatowns around the world.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher encourages students to revise after class.
Teacher expects students to preview	No	Preview is not expected in Maltese culture.
Revision of material covered previously	Yes	Teacher refers to material covered previously and even asks students "do you remember when we spoke about the structure…"
Link to material covered previously	Yes	Continuously

Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is in the textbook.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	Teacher writes characters on a board, links new words with other words that have the same radical. Teacher explains stroke order and emphasises the importance of stroke order.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	No	Teacher elicits sentences with the particular grammar structure. Students have to think of their own sentences.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	Yes	Teacher explains grammar structures very clearly using technical terminology (subject, verb, object)
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	No	Practice and eliciting new sentences from students. Teacher reads model sentences from the textbook. Then they ask students to repeat drills, this is to practice tone and rhythm.

Lesson observation sheet 12

Date: 5 May 2021

NNS teacher

	Observed	**Additional notes**
Teacher's socio-cultural identity		
Speaking		
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in the target language	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's fluency and proficiency in English.	Yes	Teacher is very proficient and fluent.
Teacher's use of Standard Putonghua	Yes	Teacher speaks Standard Putonghua (they don't know any other dialect of Chinese)
Teacher's switches to non-standard variety	No	Teacher does not know any other non-standard variety of Chinese.
Teacher's correction of pronunciation and tone	Yes	Teacher always corrects errors in pronunciation and tone. If students mispronounce something, the teacher repeats the utterance in Standard Putonghua.
Teacher's correction of non-standard pronunciation	n/a	Students' utterances were all in Standard Putonghua.
Language of instruction		
Use of students' L1	No	English as a lingua franca is used.
Pedagogical purpose of L1.	Yes	The teacher compares and contrasts structures to English and to other foreign languages.
Acknowledgement of students' L1	Yes	The teacher compares a structure to Maltese, but English is used as a common lingua franca.
Use of the target language by teacher.	Yes	Teacher speaks Mandarin most of the time. The teacher repeats instructions in English if students do not understand the instructions in Mandarin.
Use of the target language by students.	Yes/No	Students only speak Mandarin when asked by the teacher. Students chat with each other in Maltese or Italian.
Use of English as a lingua franca/ language of instruction	Yes	English is the common lingua franca in the classroom.
Inclusion of non-native speakers in the Chinese speaking community.	Yes	The teacher speaks in the plural – one of their examples is we can speak Chinese. The teacher includes themselves and the students in the Chinese speaking community.
Teacher's expectations – cultural differences		
Teacher expects students to review	Yes	Teacher encourages students to revise after class.
Teacher expects students to preview	No	Preview is not expected in Maltese culture.
Revision of material covered previously	Yes	Teacher refers to material covered previously especially if asked by students. Teacher revises and links to material covered previously.
Link to material covered previously	Yes	Teacher refers to material covered previously. They even say when such material was covered.

Teaching characters and new vocabulary		
Use of pinyin	Yes	Pinyin is in the textbook.
Teaching characters (stroke order, radicals)	No	Teacher writes characters on a board and asks students if they can think of other characters with the same radical.
Teaching of grammar		
Memorisation of examples	No	Teacher elicits sentences with the particular grammar structure. Students need to come up with their own sentences; creative language use to ensure understanding.
Explaining grammar structures explicitly and clearly using technical terms such as 'subject', 'verb', 'object'…	Yes	Teacher explains grammar structures very clearly using technical terminology (subject, verb, object)
Giving examples and expect students to naturally absorb grammar structures	No	Practice and eliciting new sentences from students. Teacher reads model sentences from the textbook. Then they ask students to repeat drills, this is to practice tone and rhythm.

Appendix 6 – Data Display

Theme	Theoretical framework	Data collected from interviews	Data collected from lesson observations
The construction of identity of the native speaker.	The lack of a clear definition of what a native speaker is. (Beaugrande 1998; Cook 1999; Medgyes 1992; Nayar 2002; Norton 1997; Paikeday 1985; Phillipson 1992; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Widdowson 1992, 1994) Paikeday (1985) "the native speaker is dead"; a reaction to the lack of a clear definition of what a native speaker is. Despite the above theory, people still identify as native speakers, the term 'native speaker' is visible in foreign language education, so the native speaker exists. Theory on being a native speaker as a socio-cultural construct that is part of one's identity. (Jager 2001; Paikeday 1985; Rampton 1990; Saniei 2011).	A native speaker is a person who was born in China and who spent their childhood in China. A native speaker was born and raised in China with a family who speak Chinese. A native speaker is a person who spoke Chinese since birth and throughout childhood and Chinese was the first language that they spoke and were spoken to. A native speaker of Chinese acquired Chinese since birth from the family and society. The native speaker acquires the language naturally, non-native speakers study or learn the language later in life, not since birth. A person who lives in China for many years and possibly gets married there or works there; such a person might approximate native speaker level, but not become a native speaker because they were not exposed to Chinese since birth. **"Native level is what you're born into."** "A native speaker is a person who doesn't need to think to express themselves. A non-native speaker has to think before speaking. If one is	The NS is ethnically Chinese and was born and brought up in China. NS teachers came to Malta from China in adulthood. Chinese is their native language. Most are bilingual – Chinese and English. NNS teachers are Maltese/European, born in Malta or in other European countries and their native language is not Chinese. All NNS teachers learned Chinese formally in a classroom context. They all identify as non-native speakers of Chinese and as native speakers of other languages. They are all multilingual. All students are non-native speakers of Chinese. Most students are Maltese, others are all European.

		angry, sad, tired – they speak the mother tongue."	
The identity of the native speaker in relation to birthplace and ethnicity.	Ethnicity and race in the context of foreign language education. (Baker 2015; Block 2016; Bourdieu 1977; Byram 2012; Cook 1999; Cummins 2000; Curtis and Romney 2006; Duff 2012; Fang and Baker 2017; Fishman 1999; Garcia 2010; Harris 2011; Inbar-Lourie 1999; Lave and Wenger 1991; Liebold and Chen 2014; Lytra 2007; Norton 1995; 2000; Preece 2016; Tsung 2014; Weedon 1987, 1997; Zhou 2016, 2019).	"A native speaker is **born** in China. We are born and raised in Malta, what really makes a native speaker is the fact that one can detect sarcasm, even certain meanings of words that go beyond the dictionary definitions, humour, rhythm of the language, the accent, filler words, cultural context is very important and is what defines a native speaker." All participants agree that a native speaker is born and raised in China.	
Since all participants agree that a native speaker is born and raised in China, then, are all the people born in China native speakers of Chinese?		"No, there are many dialects in China." "Not everyone is a native speaker of Standard Putonghua." "There are Chinese people who learn Putonghua when they go to school, they are born into a totally different language environment but culturally they're Chinese." – so being a native speaker of Chinese is more relevant to race, ethnicity, birthplace and cultural background.	
The identity of the non-native speaker – do non-native speakers actually want to become native speakers of Chinese? Is the non-native speaker an	Chomsky (1965) the non-native speaker as an imperfect imitation of the native speaker.	A NNS wasn't born in China. A NNS wasn't brought up speaking Chinese since birth and early childhood. A NNS learns Chinese in a classroom context at a later stage in life. A NNS of Chinese is a NS of another language –	During lesson observations, all NNS teachers spoke about how they learned Chinese, strategies they used to study Chinese. (For example, a teacher suggested that students group characters in lists according to radicals, they say stories to remember characters…) such strategies show that NNS teachers studied Chinese later in life in a classroom context and not acquired Chinese naturally since birth.

imperfect imitation of the native speaker?		"Maltese is my native language". NNS have the identity of another language and culture. "I'm a non-native speaker. Chinese is my 4th language." "I haven't lived there. I haven't immersed myself in the culture." "The first language that I spoke was Maltese. They did not speak to me in Chinese as soon as I was born, I am a native speaker of Maltese. I'm not even a native speaker of English, because in my family, at home we don't speak in English, English came later, English was introduced to me in primary school. English wasn't my first language. English wasn't the first language that I spoke. My parents have always spoken to me in Maltese, the first language that I spoke is Maltese." NNS teachers and students agreed that they would love to have native speaker fluency and proficiency. Some said that to have native speaker proficiency involves a lot of work and studying, but they aspire to "approximate", to be "like" native speakers or to have "native speaker level". They all agree that it is impossible to actually become native speakers, they believe that it is possible to achieve "native-like" proficiency by studying hard and by practicing Chinese. NNS teachers and students all agreed that	

		they "love" Chinese language and culture, but most of them also said that they cannot become native speakers of Chinese because they are native speakers of another language. They said that they cannot lose their native language and their identity because they were born in Malta/Europe. They all agreed that they "love" Chinese but it seems like it is not their language, they want to study to be "like" native speakers, to be proficient.	
Is there a difference between NS and NNS teachers of Chinese?	Chomsky's 1965 theory that the native speaker is the ideal model "The intuition of the native speaker, the native speaker would know if there is an error."	Yes, there is a difference. "a Chinese person would be able to see the difference between a native and non-native speaker." "Non-native speakers speak standard Putonghua. No accent, they don't speak fast, they are more careful not to make mistakes." "There isn't necessarily a difference, a non-native speaker might have a high level of Chinese. A non-native speaker thinks to speak, but it depends on their level." (Paikeday – the native speaker is dead! It doesn't make a difference if one is a native speaker or a non-native speaker.) "There are non-native speakers who are fluent and whose pronunciation is as good as that of a native speaker or nearly the as good as that of a native speaker. There are also non-native speakers who are not that fluent, or who make many errors, or whose pronunciation is	All teachers were very fluent, the NNS teachers all spoke very Standard Mandarin, possibly the NNS teachers sound too Standard! The NS teacher is closer to speech in real life. The difference is in the teachers' ethnicity and pedagogy (to a certain extent).

		not good. So, there is a range, there is no clear cut line. Generally, native speakers tend to be more fluent, they tend to have pronunciation and grammar that is better than that of non-native speakers."	
The native speaker and linguistic proficiency.	Chomsky (1965) theory on the native speaker as the sole authority on the language.	Fluency is another factor that constructs the native speaker. All participants speak about "the level" of native speakers. Literacy – native speakers do not necessarily know how to read and write. Native speakers need to study their native language formally at school to be literate. Intuition – the native speaker does not need to think to speak their native language – it comes naturally to him. Emotions – one expresses emotions best in their native language. Native speakers have a local Chinese accent which non-native speakers do not have. The native speaker understands sarcasm, humour, culture… There are errors that NS typically make, these NS errors contribute to the construction of identity of the NS. NS make errors in writing characters, in grammar and pronunciation.	All teachers are very fluent and proficient. Possibly, if one doesn't see the teachers' ethnicity through their face, they sound very similar. One NS teacher has an accent/dialect. The NNS teachers sound too standard. (possibly, future research on NS/NNS pronunciation could be done, maybe an experiment on whether students realise who is a NS or a NNS) The main difference between NS and NNS teachers is how they correct students' errors in pronunciation. NS teachers do not always correct the students' incorrect tones. NNS teachers emphasize the importance of tones and repeat after students and encourage them to repeat after them. NNS teachers do a lot of drills to ensure students pronounce tones well. NNS teachers expect students to sound like them.
The native speaker and linguistic proficiency in	Sun, Hu and Huang 2007; Zhou 2019.	Standard Putonghua – non-native speakers speak Standard Putonghua only,	All teachers are very fluent and proficient, at times NS teacher speaks fast, another NS teacher has an accent/dialect. NNS teachers only

Standard Putonghua.		native speakers tend to speak dialect. "I think non-native speakers will usually be more careful. Native speakers take things for granted."	know the standard. NNS teachers are not as fluent as NS teachers. NNS teachers speak slower – it might be easier for students to follow. NNS teachers might not be as fluent, they need to think while they speak in Chinese, NS teachers speak more naturally.
The exclusive use of the standard language in CFL education.	Ramsey 1987; Sun, Hu and Huang 2007; Zhou 2003.		NNS teachers only used Standard Putonghua as that is all they know. They do not know any other variety. NNS teachers tend to speak the TL to expose students to the TL. NS tend to speak in English to get closer to the students. NNS teacher switches to English when necessary, when students cannot understand what they are saying. A particular NS teacher speaks Standard Putonghua in class all the time, pronunciation is very clear. Another particular NS teacher speaks a mix of standard and dialect and students wonder which pronunciation is correct.
The non-native speaker and proficiency in Standard Putonghua.		"Non-native speakers speak standard Putonghua. No accent, they don't speak fast, they are more careful not to make mistakes." "The non-native speaker could have native speaker level… non-native speaker might have a high level of Chinese." A non-native speaker thinks to speak, but it depends on their level, if I speak in my first or second languages it's the same for me, it all depends on one's level. "If the NNS has studied well and has a vast vocabulary and could speak and read/write, I don't think there is any	NNS teachers are very proficient, they speak slowly and clearly and correct students' pronunciation of tone all the time. NS teachers speak mostly Standard, but a particular teacher had an accent/dialect. Another spoke quite fast at times. All teachers are very fluent and proficient.

		difference apart from the intuition of the native speaker, the native speaker would know if there is an error." It is possible for a native speaker to not be fluent in Standard Putonghua. They would be fluent in a dialect. This situation might be rare in today's world.	
Nativeness/ non-nativeness and CFL teaching and learning.	Chomsky (1965) the NS teacher as the ideal model to the students. Medgyes (1994) theory on the "worth" of the NNS teacher – the NNS teacher who can speak the students' L1 and who is familiar with the local system.	"No, not in the beginning, no. In China yes, native speaker teachers are the best. In Malta/ Europe, they are not ideal. They need to communicate in Maltese. At an advanced stage – it depends on the teacher, on their dedication. But native speaker teachers who are qualified and good, then yes, the best. Native speaker teachers have a drawback – their English pronunciation is not standard. We might not understand the English of native speaker teachers."	Teaching of new vocabulary – NS teacher – teacher gives examples of the new word in use, teacher gives examples of sentences where the new word is used. The emphasis is on practice of a structure. NS teacher – "I think we need more practice." NS teacher – "writing characters is a general problem…. Gradually it gets better." But NS teacher does not explain radicals or stroke order, possibly there is no emphasis on characters not to dishearten the students. NNS teacher gives tips on how to learn and remember characters, "this is how I learned… making lists, copying…" NNS teacher – explains radicals, stroke order, elicits other characters with the same radical, compares and contrasts with other words. NNS teacher compares to L1 and L2 and scaffolds more on existing knowledge. The emphasis is on understanding. NNS teacher ensures that students understand. After ensuring that students have understood, NNS teacher elicits sentences from students. NNS teacher puts an emphasis on linking new knowledge with previous knowledge. Scaffolding. The NS teacher is more focused, if the aim is to teach new words, then only that is done in class, eg. if a student says a sentence with the new word that they have learned, the NS teacher only corrects the point that is being taught

			in that lesson. NNS teacher repeats and links to previous knowledge a lot. The conclusion is very different – NS teacher "that's it for today". NNS teacher summarises what the lesson was about and briefly says what the plan is for next lesson. NS teacher – the Introduction – there is no consolidation or mention of material covered previously, just dive into new material. NS teacher – "we learned this a long time ago", there is no room for revision in class, revision is to be done at home. NNS teacher – always start with revision. NS teachers expect memorization, NNS teachers explain why characters are written the way they are, radicals, stroke order…
NS/NNS teachers – who is the ideal teacher?	Chomsky (1965) Medgyes (1994)	"I think both of them have advantages, a NNS can understand the student better and can explain things from their point of view better." "if they speak Standard yes, but otherwise it becomes problematic. The standard of English is the biggest issue in CFL." "A native speaker does not necessarily know why things are as they are or how to explain things as their acquisition is natural, born into it." "No, not in the beginning, no. In China yes, native speaker teachers are the best. In Malta, they are not ideal. They need to communicate in Maltese. At an advanced stage – it depends on the teacher, on their dedication. But	NS and NNS teachers teach differently. It is a good idea for students to be exposed to both.

		native speaker teachers who are qualified and good, then yes, they are the best." "I think that for an absolute beginner, maybe not. Later on, I think as the student learns then yes, it would be better to have a native speaker teacher." "There's a place for both. I don't think there is an ideal at all. I think ideally you would have access to both. That would be really nice. I didn't have access to someone like me in my language learning."	
NS/NNS teachers and cultural and linguistic proximity to students	Boyle 1997; Braine 1999; Cook 1999; Cortazzi and Jin 1996; Davies 2003; Inbar-Lourie, 1999; Rajagopalan 2004; Kramsch 1998; Lasagabaster and Sierra 2002; Liang 2002; Liu 1999; Llurda 2005; Llurda and Huguet 2003; Mahboob 2004; Merino 1997; Modiano 2005; Moussu 2006; Kramsch 1993; Paikeday 1985; Rajagopalan 2004; Rampton 1990; Reves and Medgyes 1992; Samimy and Brutt-Griffler 1999; Seidlhofer 1999; Widdowson 1994	"If a native speaker teacher has lived in Malta for many years, that's one thing, but if a teacher has just landed from China that's another thing. If a teacher has just come from China, then yes, s/he might be distant as s/he doesn't know the culture here in Malta, but it's also good for students to learn."	NS teacher is not aware that in the Mediterranean culture of Malta it is ok for students to be 5 minutes late. Actually lectures officially start 5 minutes past the hour at the University of Malta. NS teacher was not aware that this is actually normal in this context. NS teacher was not aware that students have lectures in Academic English and that they will eventually have to write a dissertation. NNS teacher was more aware of the cultural context and knew more about the course of studies students are enrolled in. NS teacher – the time is an issue, 10 minutes into the lesson, even though some students still did not manage to log on, NS teacher just explained the new vocabulary. This is very strange in the cultural context of Malta. NNS teachers tend to first break the ice, then revise briefly what was done in the previous lesson and scaffold new knowledge on what was done in the previous lesson. NS teacher just starts the new material right away. This is not something many students in Malta are used to.

			NS teacher does not give the normal 10 minute break between lessons, NS teacher also continues the lesson beyond the time-tabled time, a number of students have to go to another lecture, NS teacher just continues the lesson. This is not usually done. NS teacher also expects students to "preview" material – this idea is totally alien in Malta. Students have never heard of this concept! This tends to create conflict in class as students are not aware of what the NS teacher means by "preview". NS teacher is not aware of education culture in Malta, they are very aware of activities that China Cultural Centre are organising and promotes them.
NS/NNS teachers and language use in the classroom. The use of the L1/L2 in the CFL classroom.	Pratt (1991:2) the FL classroom as a "contact zone" as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other". Braine (1999), Medgyes (1994), Llurda (2005) knowledge in the L1 to scaffold new knowledge in the TL.	The L1 is useful in the classroom especially for beginners. "If students are absolute beginners, they will obviously feel more comfortable to ask questions in their own language. In Malta there is an additional problem because if a student has a problem or a question, if the teacher is a native speaker of Chinese, I mean the student needs to ask in English, the student might not be able to ask in Chinese because they are still beginners, so they have to resort to a third language, English is a barrier."	NS teacher speaks in Mandarin but students always address the NS teacher in English. Students speak in Maltese or in Italian among themselves. NNS teacher speaks mostly in Mandarin "to expose the students to the TL as much as possible". NNS teacher encourages students to speak in the TL, students are not afraid, they try. Students are encouraged and not intimidated. NNS teacher is a role model to the students. The NNS teacher speaks about their travels in China, their studies, how they have learned Mandarin… Utterances of hedges, filler words, both NS and NNS teachers use a mix of English/Maltese and Mandarin to ask "do you understand?"
NS/NNS teachers and the students' Socio-cultural and linguistic identity.	Is the students' Maltese/European identity visible in the CFL classroom in Malta? Are the students' L1, L2 and other European FLs acknowledged in the classroom? Is the	The students' languages and background is part of what they are, multilingual NNS students learn differently from NS mono/bilinguals.	Cultural proximity – NS teacher "in lantern festival **we** eat…" the NNS students are not part of the **we. "in China we say…" "in China we have…"** Students are excluded from the Chinese native speaking community. On the other hand, NNS teacher – 我们会说汉语。- very inclusive.

	students' socio-cultural background embraced in the classroom?		NS teacher – "for Maltese people China is too far." On the other hand, NNS teachers speak about their visits to China. NS teacher – the TL is the main focus, the L1 of the students is not acknowledged. NNS teacher – the L1 is a tool. NS teacher – "study more, study harder." NNS teacher – "when I was a student I used to write lists of words…" NNS teacher explains how to study Chinese. NS teacher teaches them a strategy – "If you can't remember the word write the Pinyin so next time you remember it." The NS emphasis on memory rather than understanding. NNS teacher – in addition to the TL, the teacher and students interact in English, Maltese and even Italian at times. The background of the students and the NNS teacher is used in the lesson, eg, at a point the NNS teacher explains how some students mispronounced the word /qu/ 去 The NNS teacher explained how this is similar to a sound in French. The background languages of students are used.
NS/NNS teachers and scaffolding on students' previous linguistic knowledge.			NS teacher – teaching vocabulary but not teaching radicals and not comparing/contrasting to other characters. During a particular lesson, NS teacher explains radicals and mentions other characters with the same radical. NNS teacher – comparing/contrasting to other characters and explains radicals to help students understand. Not only memorize, but also understand. "This character, try to memorize it." But no explanation on the radical or how to learn characters. NNS teachers

			explains how they used to study in the past. NS teacher – "1 minute to prepare, use this structure at least 10 times. Try to memorize what you said." NNS teacher explains the grammar structure. Then the teacher asks students to come up with sentences with that particular structure to practice. Some sentences are funny, but it's ok, as long as the grammar structure is used well. NNS teacher encourages creative usage of grammar and language use. The emphasis of the NNS teacher is on practice and on understanding, not on memorizing. NNS teacher explains a grammar structure and gives examples. Then the teacher elicits sentences from students, the sentences have to be original and creative – "you come up with your own sentences." Students are independent and creative and communicative language us being encouraged in the classroom. This is the communicative approach. Students' language production is creative. NNS teacher explains why they are going to do drills in class. The NNS teacher involves the students and explains why drills are important. Students are given responsibility into what is done during the lesson, the NNS teacher involves students in making the decision whether they need more drills. NNS teacher praises students – "last time you did very well", "you have learned so much since we started the course…"
NS/NNS teachers and correction of errors.			NS teacher – "memorize it so I don't need to explain it again." NS – teaching new vocabulary – NS teacher reads the vocabulary list on the book. "2 minutes, try to memorize

			the characters, meaning and pronunciation." NS teacher gives them two minutes to memorize, NNS teacher does not give them time to memorize/study during the lesson. NS teacher – "we need to practice reading after class and preview before class." NS teacher – "practice is important, try to memorize." NNS teacher – lesson always starts with revision. NNS teacher says that the plan was to start a new lesson today, but students had questions and instead of starting the new lesson NNS teacher revises. The NNS teacher is very flexible, doesn't stick to the plan. NS teacher sticks to the plan. NNS teacher – first the teacher reads the text and the students Listen. Then the NNS teacher encourages the students to read and to practice. After students read and practice, the NNS teacher reads the text again so that students understand what their errors in tone were. NS teacher tends to stick to material on the book. NNS teacher does not always stick to the material on the book, constant revision and scaffolding on knowledge covered previously. NS teacher – Try to memorize what we learned." – but NS teacher does not explain how to study Chinese, just lots of repetition and learning by heart. This is very teacher centred. In Malta we are very student centred and teachers are encouraged to explain multiple times. NS teacher does not always correct the students' incorrect tones. NS teacher corrects the tone when the teacher cannot understand what the student is saying. NNS teachers emphasize the importance of tones and repeats after

			students and encourages them to repeat after them. NNS teachers do a lot of drills to ensure students pronounce tones well. NNS teacher corrects tone and intonation all the time.

Appendix 7 – Reflective journal during the fieldwork

1 December 2020

Following approval from the University of Malta to carry out fieldwork there, last week I sent an email to University of Malta administration to forward it to prospective participants.

Up to today, a total of 9 participants have contacted me and expressed their interest in taking part in the research project.

I have scheduled a first interview with all 9 participants. All 9 interviews will be held during this week and next week. 8 interviews will be held online (due to Covid-19 situation) and 2 interviews will be done in person (it is possible to do in-person interviews because in Malta there is partial lock-down). Participants chose whether to do the interview online or in-person.

2 December 2020

Another two participants have expressed their interest in being part of this research project.

The first interview will be done online this afternoon. The interview went very well, the participant was very happy to participate in the research project. Before the interview the participant asked me how I was and said that they are very happy to meet me. After the interview, the participant said that they were very interested in my research and asked me about how my PhD studies are going and also asked me about my job.

4 December 2020

So far, all prospective participants who have expressed their interest in being part of this research project are all Maltese nationals and non-native speakers of Chinese.

In the evening I had the second interview. The interview started a bit late due to technical difficulties. This was not a problem at all as in Malta, things tend to start a bit later than planned, so it is ok. Once the participant and I were connected, the interview went very well.

5 December 2020

Today I had 2 interviews.

The first interview was with a student and it was held at University of Malta campus. The participant decided that the interview will be done in person. The in-person interview was possible because Malta is not under lockdown and all necessary legal health and safety requirements were observed. Facemasks are mandatory in all public places in Malta, including the University campus, and so, facemasks were worn at all times. Social distancing regulations were also adhered to. The participant (student) was very interested in my research, and they asked me if I was previously an undergraduate student of Chinese at University of Malta in the past. When I said that I was an undergraduate student

of Chinese at University of Malta, the participant asked me for some study tips on learning Chinese and also for some help with some translation from Mandarin into Maltese. I helped the student with the translation after the interview.

I had a second interview in the afternoon. This interview was held online. The participant decided that the interview is held online due to Covid situation. This interview was with a NNS teacher who was also my classmate around 10 years ago. The interview went very well. The interview was held mainly in Maltese, but at times the participant switched to English. (Code-switching between Maltese and English is very normal in Malta, even at university). The participant just asked me how I've been lately and what my PhD research project is about, but nothing personal was discussed. The interview went very well.

7 December 2020

Today I had 2 interviews.

The first interview was held in-person. The participant decided to meet in person. The participant switched between Maltese and English a number of times during the interview. The interview went very well. Throughout the interview, the participant wanted to read the questions themselves, and of course I let them look at the questions. The interview went well. After the interview, the participant asked me on how my PhD studies are going and asked me what a PhD involves.

The second interview was held online. The participant decided to meet online due to Covid. At the beginning of the interview, the participant asked me whether they should answer in Maltese or in English, I said any language is fine by me, but the participant answered most of the questions in English. (possibly because they know that my thesis eventually has to be in English or because the language of instruction at the University of Malta is English).

The interview went very well, the participant asked me about my PhD studies and on my job, the participant was very interested in my research and job. The interview went well.

8 December 2020

Today I had 2 interviews. Both participants decided to do the interview online due to Covid situation.

The first interview was done in Maltese – the participant asked which language shall we use during the interview, I said any language would be ok, the participant said that they are more confident expressing themselves in Maltese, I said any language is fine by me, so the participant decided that the interview will be done in Maltese. The interview was done in Maltese, it was later transcribed and translated into English. The interview went very well.

The first interview was done in English – the participant spoke to me in English and so I spoke in English also. The interview went very well.

Today is a public holiday so I'm free from teaching duties so I am planning to transcribe interviews that haven't been transcribed yet. I did 8 interviews so far with a mix of students and teachers of CFL at the University of Malta and fieldwork is going well overall.

In the meantime, in addition to interviews I'm also doing lesson observations and collection of teaching materials for document analysis later on. Currently, I'm observing 2 NNS teachers, all their lessons are currently online due to Covid situation.

11 December 2020

Interviews – Up until today, I did a total of 8 interviews. Some interviews were done online, others were done in person – participants decided whether they wanted to meet me in person or online. For me – I said anyway is fine by me because I am not considered to be vulnerable. Some interviews were done in English, others in Maltese – participants chose the language as they wished. I said that Maltese or English – any language is fine by me. Interviews done in Maltese will be translated – I have experience in translation from English into Maltese and I'm confident in translating between the two languages. Up to now, all participants are Maltese/European nationals and all claimed to be non-native speakers of Chinese. Most of the participants are native speakers of Maltese, others claimed to be native speakers of English.

Lesson observations – up to now I observed 6 lessons of two different non-native speaker teachers. One teacher teaches Mandarin Chinese language to beginner students. The other teacher teaches a Chinese history course to a mix of elementary and intermediate students.

So far, all participants in this study have all claimed to be non-native speakers of Chinese. I hope to have positive responses from native speaker teachers to participate in the research project.

Currently, I am transcribing and translating interviews. After I complete all transcriptions and translations of interviews, I am planning to type all the notes from lesson observation. During lesson observations, I wrote notes on what I observed on paper – I still need to type the notes neatly.

Today is my eleventh day of fieldwork – I feel that fieldwork is going well. I am actually enjoying the fieldwork and I feel that participants are also happy to participate in this research project. The only concern I have is that lesson observation is being done online, because due to Covid, many lessons at the University of Malta are being done online. Despite this, I feel that observing a lesson online might also have advantages, students do not feel like there is an intruder in their classroom that might make them anxious. Despite this, similar to in-person lessons, the teacher might still feel anxious that they are being observed. All the lessons observed in this research project are live, so there is interaction between the teacher and students. I feel that it is important to observe live lessons, because during live lessons there is interaction between the teacher and students. There is an additional dimension to online lessons – the chat. The chat, along with the blackboard facility are also being observed.

21 December 2020

Today I did two interviews, so by now I did a total of ten interviews. (In ERGO application, I wrote that the research project will involve 10 participants). The first interview was with a student who is currently in the second year and reading for a Bachelor's degree in Chinese Studies at the University of Malta. The participant chose to do the interview in person, so the interview was held on campus at the University of Malta. The Participant was very happy to participate in the research project and the interview went very well. The interview started in English, but the participant code-switched to Maltese at times. At first the participant spoke in English as they know that I will eventually write my thesis in English, at times the participant switched to Maltese as is normal in bilingual settings. I transcribed and translated the interview.

In the afternoon, I had an online interview with a native speaker teacher who works at the Confucius Institute at the University of Malta. This participant does not really know me, they have only seen me in a couple of online meetings between the Confucius Institute and the Ministry for Education and Employment (Malta). The interview went well, at times the participant said that the internet connection wasn't very good or that their English wasn't very good, but overall the interview went

very well. At times the interview went a bit out of point and deviated from the original questions, but anyways, I listened to the participant and later transcribed all their utterances. Following the interview, the participant send me photos of their qualifications in Mandarin issued by Han Ban to show that all Confucius Institute teachers are qualified in Standard Mandarin. I thanked the participant, but I was worried that my questions on nativeness and the Standard language might have upset the participant, and so they wanted to really show the evidence (the certificate) that Confucius Institute teachers are trained and proficient in Standard Mandarin. I thanked the participant for the interview and also for sending me photos of their certificates. I feel that the interview went well and by sending me photos of their certificates the participant only meant to show me that Confucius Institute teachers are really proficient and trained in Standard Mandarin. Despite the deviations at times, the interview went well.

22 December 2020

The participants

I have interviewed a total of ten participants; 7 students and 3 teachers.

5 students are native speakers of Maltese, 2 students are native speakers of English. 1 of them is British and the other is Maltese.

3 teachers: 2 teachers are non-native speakers of Chinese. They are multilingual – they speak Maltese, English and other European languages.

1 teacher interviewed is a Native Chinese teacher. They have experience in teaching Chinese in Europe.

26 December 2020

I am currently transcribing and translating interviews.

I will continue lesson observation in January 2021 after the Christmas holidays.

31 December 2020

All interviews have been transcribed and translated.

23 January 2021

So far I have observed lessons of non-native speaker teachers. I will observe lessons of native speaker teachers through February – March 2021.

9 February 2021

I did not do any lesson observations during the last week of January and through to the first few weeks of February. This is because lessons at the University of Malta started late in October2020 (usually lectures start of the beginning of October) due to Covid situation. At the end of January and the beginning of February University of Malta had exam period – so there weren't lessons to overserve.

I am planning to continue lesson observation after 20 February when the new semester starts.

20 February 2021

The second semester stars on Monday 22 February at the University of Malta.

I will continue lesson observation next week. So far, I have done 10 interviews and I have observed lessons of a NNS teacher. As from next week, I will start observations of lessons of NS teacher.

March – April 2021

Throughout March and April 2021 I observed a number of lessons of both NS and NNS teachers.

Lesson observations were all done online as most lectures at the University of Malta were done online throughout academic year 2020/2021 due to Covid situation. Lesson observations went well, I joined the lessons online and the students did not acknowledge my presence at all. One of the teachers did not acknowledge my presence also. The other teacher briefly said "we have a visitor to our class" on the first day that I joined the lectures. I did not personally know the teachers whose lessons I observed before interviewing them. I met the two teachers whose lessons I observed when I interviewed them and then during lesson observations.

I previously knew two of the students who I interviewed. These two particular students were also present in the lessons that I observed. These two particular students used to attend the elementary course I teach at the Ministry of Education and Employment (Malta) a few years before they enrolled in the degree programme in Chinese at the University of Malta.

At this point at the end of April 2021 I feel that I have collected a lot of data and that I should now start typing out and reducing the data to prepare it for analysis.