

ZSUZSANNA KARSAI

(Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)

**The Target Language Civilisation Subject
at the Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and
Secondary School
– A Case Study in the Light of the Local Curriculum
and Teaching Practice**

Abstract

The Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School is the only educational institution in Central and Eastern Europe where education is carried out in Chinese and the language of the host country—in this case, Hungarian—across twelve grade levels. Among the subjects that can be taught in the target language at bilingual schools in Hungary is the Target Language Civilisation course, which aims to provide students with knowledge about the target country and its culture in the target language. The purpose of this case study is first to review the local curriculum of the Chinese Target Language Civilisation subject at the school, then to reflect on the teaching practices through the lens of the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) educational approach, based on Coyle’s (1999) 4C’s model, and finally to propose recommendations for the revision of the local curriculum.

Keywords: Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School, Chinese language teaching, Target Language Civilisation subject

如意

目标语言文明课程在中匈双语学校的实施 ——基于课程计划与教学实践的案例研究

摘要

中匈双语学校是中东欧唯一一所从一年级到十二年级都以中文和所在国语言——在本例中为匈牙利语——进行教学的教育机构。匈牙利的双语学校中，有一门可以用目标语言（即中文）教授的课程叫做目标语言文明课，其目的是让学生用目标语言学习目标国及其文化。本案例研究的目的，首先是梳理该校中文目标语言文明课的课程大纲，其次是基于教学经验，并借助 Coyle (1999) 提出的 CLIL（内容与语言整合学习）4C 模型对教学经验进行反思，最后提出对课程大纲的调整建议。

关键词： 匈中双语学校；汉语教学；目标语文明课程

Introduction: Literature Review and Methodology

In Hungary, the subject called Target Language Civilisation is taught in bilingual primary and secondary schools, where students learn about the target language's country and its culture in the target language itself. The Hungarian-Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School was the first in the country to introduce this subject in Chinese in 2013, at the upper grades of primary school (Grades 5–8). Although the Target Language Civilisation subject also contributes to the development of students' language skills, it is not a traditional language lesson. Beyond language learning, the focus is placed more on acquiring subject-specific content and developing intercultural competences. For students, the emphasis is therefore not primarily on grammatical accuracy, but rather on communicative language use and understanding of content. Because of these characteristics, the subject is closely associated with the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) educational approach.

In Coyle's (1999) 4C's model, the four pillars of the CLIL educational approach are intertwined: subject Content (e.g. Chinese festivals, the geography of China, etc.), Communication in the foreign language (i.e. language learning for real purposes), the Cognition, the development of thinking processes (referring to higher-order thinking skills such as comparison, evaluation, etc.), and Culture (meaning the development of an intercultural perspective). The CLIL

approach can, in practice, be regarded as the implementation of Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence, which consists of five main components: attitudes, knowledge, skills of discovery and interaction, skills of interpreting and relating, and critical cultural awareness.¹ In Hungary, bilingual education celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2017. The first CLIL program was launched in a secondary school in 1987, followed by the introduction of the first primary school CLIL programs in 1989.² In this regard, Kovács (2018), in her book *"School, Language, Success"*, provides a comprehensive insight into bilingual education in Hungary and the history of Hungarian CLIL, as well as into the collected experiences and achievements. She concludes that the CLIL approach represents a more modern perspective, one that is closer to the requirements of the 21st century, since "knowledge that can be applied"³ is considered more important than the acquisition of descriptive grammar with as few errors as possible.⁴ With regard to language learners, a distinction is made between the "effective" and the "successful" language learner,⁵ which in Kovács's (2018) definition serves to differentiate between the language proficiency of students taught through traditional language instruction and those taught using the CLIL approach.⁶ According to Illik (2018), CLIL combines the transmission of information with the development of competences, strengthening learners' linguistic and knowledge-based competences. He considers the CLIL approach so useful that he even sees its application as beneficial in a history class taught in Hungarian, since a significant portion of historical terminology is of non-Hungarian origin. In their study, Hu, Mohd Said and Hashim (2023) provide an overview of numerous CLIL studies conducted in China, most of which were carried out in higher education with English as the medium of instruction. They conclude that CLIL is a highly promising educational approach; however, related research needs to be expanded into new areas (e.g. teaching materials, assessment, the role of the mother tongue, etc.). With regard to the teaching of Chinese culture in English, Huang (2023) highlights three key aspects: the strategic planning of content and language integration, the alignment of learners' language proficiency with their cognitive abilities, and the adoption of a research-based, exploratory teaching/learning approach that can balance content and language requirements. Poveda-García-Noblejas and Antropova (2024) present a systematic review of CLIL-related research and found that most studies focus on communication and

¹ Bajzát 2014: 409.

² Kovács J. 2013: 146.

³ Kovács J. 2018: 30.

⁴ Kovács I. 2018: 70–71.

⁵ Kovács J. 2018: 34–35.

⁶ Kovács I. 2018: 71.

motivation, while the least explored area is cognitive skills (e.g. creative and critical thinking).

The present study is a qualitative case study that reviews the local school curriculum and syllabi of the Chinese Target Language Civilisation subject, with a focus on the cultural content they incorporate, and then, based on the framework curriculum recommendations and teaching experience, identifies possible shortcomings. Following the presentation of the cultural content, the author of this study—also the teacher of the subject—provides reflections, summarizing teaching experiences by grade level. The analysis explores how Coyle's (1999) 4C's model, associated with the CLIL approach, is manifested, namely content, communication in the foreign language, the development of cognitive processes, and cultural elements. Finally, in light of these teaching experiences, recommendations are made for further revision and development of the local curriculum.

A Brief Introduction of the Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School

The Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School was founded in Budapest in 2004 and now has a history of twenty years. The initial aim of establishing the institution was to provide children of the Chinese community living in Hungary with an educational environment that would support their integration into Hungarian society, offer them high-quality education, and at the same time help them preserve their Chinese identity—giving them the opportunity to learn the Chinese language and writing system, and to maintain their mother tongue and cultural heritage. Parallel to China's economic rise, particularly after the Beijing Olympics, the school became increasingly popular among Hungarian parents and students, with a growing number of native Hungarian speakers enrolling. Today, approximately three-quarters of the students are Hungarian native speakers. At present, the institution is the only state-maintained full-time day school in Hungary and the wider Central and Eastern European region where Chinese language education is provided across twelve grade levels in two languages—Chinese and the language of the host country, in this case Hungarian. In 2016, the school was expanded with a secondary school division; however, the bilingual education concept applies only to the primary level (Grades 1–8), while at the secondary level students receive advanced Chinese language instruction. Chinese language education at the school has been continuously developing, as demonstrated by the fact that graduating students regularly achieve excellent results in the Chinese secondary school leaving

examination. The school's future development is also signaled by the establishment of a Confucius Institute on its premises in 2024.⁷ All this also means that the focus of the present study, the Target Language Civilisation subject, is itself undergoing continuous transformation and development.

At the school, students begin learning Chinese from the first grade as their first foreign language, with five lessons per week in split groups. Hungarian students attend Chinese as a Foreign Language class, while Chinese students take Chinese Language and Literature lessons similar to those taught in China. In addition, as a bilingual educational institution, the school also provides subject-based classes taught in Chinese at the primary level, including Music, Digital Culture, Visual Culture, and the Target Language Civilisation subject.⁸

Target Language Civilisation Subject

The Target Language Civilisation subject deals with the cultures of the target language countries, interpreting the term “culture” in a broader sense. Its topics therefore include knowledge related to the geography, economy, history, literature, and arts of the target language countries, as well as the everyday life, living conditions, customs, festivals, and value systems of different social strata and groups within the target language society.⁹ The subject may form part of the target language curriculum framework, but it can also appear as an independent subject in the timetable. Since it is taught in the target language, a prerequisite is that students reach a certain level of proficiency in the target language before beginning the Target Language Civilisation course.¹⁰ This required level means that by the end of Grade 4 students must have attained A1 proficiency in Chinese, which also implies that this is the expected language level for Hungarian students upon entering Grade 5.

Guidelines for teaching the Target Language Civilisation subject were already introduced in the Decree 26/1997 (VII.10.) of the Ministry of Culture and Education on the issuance of the Directive for Bilingual School Education, at that time with reference to bilingual secondary education. This decree includes the framework curriculum for teaching the subject in grammar schools and regulates that it may be taught in the last two years of secondary education—namely in Grades 11 and 12 of four- and six-year grammar schools and four-year vocational secondary schools, as well as in Grades 12 and 13

⁷ Karsai 2024: 96–98.

⁸ Karsai 2024: 101–102

⁹ <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/1997-26-20-67> (last accessed: 02.02.2025)

¹⁰ Takács 2016: 71.

of five-year (i.e. preparatory year) grammar schools and vocational secondary schools—either independently with two lessons per week or integrated into the number of target language classes.¹¹ The Government Decree 100/1997 (VI.13.) on the issuance of the regulations of the school-leaving examination includes the examination regulations and requirements pertaining to the Target Language Civilisation subject.¹²

The Decree 4/2013 (I.11.) of the Ministry of Human Resources on the issuance of the Directive for Bilingual School Education also addresses the teaching of the Target Language Civilisation subject in primary schools. While the decree does not make the teaching of the subject compulsory in bilingual primary schools, it regulates the range of subjects that may be taught in the target language within the local curricula of the schools. According to this regulation, in Grades 5–6 the subjects that may be taught in the target language are Music, Visual Culture, Physical Education, Natural Science, Target Language Civilisation, Informatics, and History, while in Grades 7–8 they are Biology, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Target Language Civilisation, Mathematics, Informatics, and History. For primary education, the decree specifies that the Target Language Civilisation subject should be taught over a period of four years, in Grades 5–8, with 36 lessons per year. It also stipulates that the Target Language Civilisation subject may be taught by a teacher who holds a teaching degree and qualification in the target language, or in teaching history in the target language, or who is a native speaker of the target language with a relevant teaching degree and qualification¹³—for example, a teaching diploma in Chinese Language and Culture.

Framework Curriculum for the Target Language Civilisation Subject

In connection with the 2012 National Core Curriculum (NAT), the framework curricula for the various subjects were published in 2013, including the framework curriculum for the Target Language Civilisation subject. In 2020, the NAT was renewed, and new framework curricula aligned with it were also published, which are available on the website of the Educational Authority. With regard to the recommended thematic units included in the framework curriculum of the Target Language Civilisation subject, no substantial changes have been made. In the earlier framework curriculum, in the table listing the recommended

¹¹ <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/1997-26-20-67> (last accessed: 02.02.2025)

¹² <https://njt.hu/jogszabaly/1997-100-20-22> (last accessed: 02.02.2025)

¹³ <https://magyarokzlonny.hu/dokumentumok/5bed5e837a55ce0ca0c8eeb6c0655ff4257b0cbe/megtekintes> (last accessed: 02.02.2025)

thematic units and developmental objectives, an additional row also displayed the links to other subjects, whereas this row is missing from the later version. Similarly, in the earlier document titled Framework Curriculum for Bilingual Primary School Target Language Education, aligned with the 2012 NAT, the recommended connections for Target Language Civilisation lessons were also indicated under the topics of target language education, but these are absent from the later framework curriculum.

The framework curriculum aligned with the new NAT also specifies in detail the recommended thematic units, developmental goals and requirements, knowledge areas, and key concepts of the Target Language Civilisation subject for different grade levels. For Grades 5–6, the following thematic units are included: the physical geography and economy of the target language countries; the history and social relations of the target language countries; everyday life, traditions, customs, and festivals in the target language countries; leisure and sports in the target language countries; the literature and arts of the target language countries; and presenting Hungary to foreigners. For Grades 7–8, essentially the same thematic units appear, with minor additions: the physical geography of the target language countries; the economy of the target language countries; the history, politics, and social relations of the target language countries; everyday life, traditions, customs, and festivals in the target language countries; leisure and sports in the target language countries; the literature, arts, and scientific life of the target language countries; and presenting Hungary to people living in other countries.¹⁴

Learning Goals and Future Perspectives of the Chinese Target Language Civilisation Subject

According to Decree 20/2012 (VIII.31.) of the Ministry of Human Resources, in bilingual primary schools at least two subjects must be taught in the target language in Grades 1–2, and from Grade 3 onwards at least three subjects must be taught in the target language, or alternatively, the combined number of lessons in the target language and in subjects taught in the target language must reach at least thirty percent of the students' total weekly lesson hours. At the lower grades of the Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School, in addition to five weekly target language lessons (4+1 extracurricular class), Music and Visual Culture are taught in Chinese. At the upper grades, in addition to five weekly target language lessons (4+1 extracurricular class),

¹⁴ <https://magyarkozlony.hu/dokumentumok/5bed5e837a55ce0ca0c8eeb6c0655ff4257b0cbe/megtekintes> (last accessed: 02.02.2025)

Visual Culture, Digital Culture, and the Target Language Civilisation subject are taught in Chinese.

The Decree 4/2013 (I.11.) of the Ministry of Human Resources entered into force on 1 September 2013, and its provisions had to be implemented in practice for the first time in the 2013/2014 academic year. Accordingly, the then—and current—head of the Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School, Zsuzsanna Erdélyi, deemed it appropriate to introduce the teaching of the Chinese Target Language Civilisation subject at the upper grades of primary school. This decision was made after considering the list of subjects that could be taught in the target language and the qualifications and professional expertise of the teachers available at the institution. Thus, the 2013/2014 academic year was the first in which the Target Language Civilisation subject was introduced as a separate subject in the timetable, starting from Grade 5 and subsequently expanding to higher grades year by year.

Before the beginning of the school year, the head of the institution entrusted Wang Yue, a native Chinese teacher at the school, with the task of developing the local curriculum for the subject. The preparation of the syllabi and concrete teaching materials in line with the local curriculum, as well as the teaching of the subject in Grades 5–8, was informally assigned to the author of this article, who has been responsible for teaching the subject up to the present day, with the exception of a brief interruption due to a study trip abroad (academic year 2014/2015 and the second semester of 2015/2016). During this period, the Target Language Civilisation classes were covered through substitute teaching.

The teaching of the subject now has a history of more than ten years, providing sufficient experience for the writing of this article. With the introduction of the renewed National Core Curriculum (NAT) in 2020, the revision of the local curriculum raised the question of whether certain modifications should be made to the Target Language Civilisation curriculum in light of teaching experience. The changes introduced into the local curriculum represent a significant development in the history of the subject, covering an entire thematic unit; at the same time, over the years, a number of adjustments have also been made to the syllabi and concrete teaching materials of other thematic units. Such modifications during the academic year were necessary, on the one hand, because the development of the subject has been shaped by practical teaching experience, and on the other hand, because learning the subject presupposes a certain level of prior language competence, which may vary from cohort to cohort. As a result, both the teaching materials and the manner and depth in which topics are addressed in class have been subject to continuous change, adapting to the learners' abilities. It is worth noting, for example, that in the years following the introduction of remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chinese

language skills of students entering Grade 5 were, according to the teacher's personal experience and observation, noticeably weaker compared to those of students entering Grade 5 before the pandemic. This difference in language competence resulted in variations in the depth of content delivery, the linguistic formulation of the materials, and the amount of time allocated to certain topics in lessons. In the future, the organization of the subject will also need to continue to take into account the diversity of learners' skills.

The Target Language Civilisation subject may also serve as a school-leaving examination subject in bilingual secondary schools. At present, the bilingual program of the Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School is offered only at the primary level, while at the secondary level students study Chinese as a foreign language with an increased number of lessons, in which they may also take the school-leaving examination. A possible future direction of development is that the secondary level of the school could also be expanded with a bilingual educational program, which would make it possible for the Target Language Civilisation subject to appear both in secondary education and as a school-leaving examination subject. However, for this to be realized, the local curriculum, syllabi, and concrete teaching materials of the Target Language Civilisation subject at the primary level must first be finalized in such a way that they can provide a solid foundation for the future teaching of the subject at the secondary level.

The Local Curriculum of the Chinese Target Language Civilisation Subject and the 4C's Model

The following presents the first version of the local curriculum of the Target Language Civilisation subject, broken down by grade level. In addition to the thematic units, the syllabus is also indicated. In the table, the thematic units affected by the modifications made in the 2020 local curriculum are highlighted in grey.

As part of the case study, based on teaching experience, the table of the local curriculum has been supplemented to indicate which element of Coyle's (1999) 4C's model (Content, Communication, Cognition, Culture) received primary emphasis in the teaching of a given subject content. The appearance of the other elements, as well as the extent of their implementation, is discussed in the reflection section.

Thematic Units of Chinese Civilisation class (Grade 5)	Syllabus	The main focus of the 4C's model
The history of the Chinese language	The origin of Chinese characters, Classical Chinese, Modern Chinese	Content
	The types and characteristics of different dialects	Content
	The relationship between simplified and traditional Chinese characters	Cognition
	The relationship between Mandarin Chinese and the dialects	Cognition
Chinese names	Common Chinese surnames	Content
	The naming customs of the Chinese people	Culture
	An introduction to common Chinese male and female given names	Culture
Invitation and hospitality in China	The characteristics of Chinese hospitality	Culture
	Chinese hospitality	Culture
	The question of payment when inviting	Culture
	Etiquette considerations for the host and the guests	Communication
The large family of the Chinese people	The concept of family in China	Content
	Respect for the elderly in China	Culture
	The effects of the Chinese family structure	Cognition

Thematic Units of Chinese Civilisation class (Grade 6)	Syllabus	The main focus of the 4C's model
A geographical overview of China	China's territory	Content
	The population of China	Content
	China's seas, rivers, mountains, lakes, forests, etc.	Content
The meaning of the dragon	The origin of the dragon	Content
	The appearance of the dragon	Communication
	The meaning of the dragon symbol	Culture
	Festivals, legends, customs, etc. related to the dragon	Culture
Spring Festival, Lantern Festival	The origin of the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival	Content
	The traditional ways of celebrating the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival	Communication
	The traditional foods of the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival	Culture
	The status of the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival	Content
Mid-Autumn Festival	The origin of the Mid-Autumn Festival	Content
	The traditional ways of celebrating the Mid-Autumn Festival	Communication
	The traditional foods of the Mid-Autumn Festival	Culture
	The status of the Mid-Autumn Festival	Content
Dragon Boat Festival	The origin of the Dragon Boat Festival	Content
	The traditional ways of celebrating the Dragon Boat Festival	Communication
	The traditional foods of the Dragon Boat Festival	Culture
	The status of the Dragon Boat Festival	Content

Thematic Units of Chinese Civilisation class (Grade 7)	Syllabus	The main focus of the 4C's model
The economy of China	The economic development of Ancient China	Content
	The economic development of Modern China	Content
	China's foreign trade	Content
	China's economic position in the world	Content
Animal idioms and proverbs	The origin and meaning of animal idioms and proverbs	Communication
The 12 Chinese zodiac signs	The 12 zodiac signs and the animals	Culture
	The 12 zodiac signs and agriculture	Culture
	The 12 zodiac signs and their meanings	Culture
The climate of China	The climate of China on the mainland	Content
	The climate of China at sea	Content
	Climate zones in China	Content
Chinese proverbs and idioms: chengyu	Chengyu and language learning	Communication
	Chengyu and historical references	Content
Thematic Units of Chinese Civilisation class (Grade 8)	Syllabus	The main focus of the 4C's model
Chinese cities	The proportion and population of Chinese cities	Communication
	The economy of Chinese cities	Communication
	An introduction to famous Chinese cities	Communication
Rural areas in China	The proportion and population of rural areas in China	Content
	The economy of rural areas in China	Content

The policy of reform and opening up in China	The history, beginning, and background of the reform and opening-up policy	Content
	The results of the reform and opening-up policy	Content
	The current situation of the reform and opening-up policy	Content
Traditional Chinese drama	The history, development, and current form of traditional Chinese drama	Content
	Beijing Opera	Culture
	Local Chinese operas	Culture

Table 1: The First Version of the Local Curriculum of the Target Language Civilisation Subject

With the introduction of the 2020 National Core Curriculum (NAT), modifications were also made to the local curriculum, and based on teaching experience it became timely to introduce some necessary adjustments to the Target Language Civilisation subject. These modifications primarily affected the thematic units of Grades 7 and 8.

In Grade 7, “The economy of China” and “The climate of China” are no longer listed as separate thematic units; instead, they have been integrated into the topics “A geographical overview of China” (Grade 6) and “Chinese Cities” and “Rural Areas in China” (Grade 8). After the modifications, the following thematic units are taught in Grade 7: “Life in China”, “Animal idioms and proverbs”, “The 12 Chinese zodiac signs”, and “Chinese proverbs and idioms: chengyu”. The most significant change, therefore, occurred in the first thematic unit.

New Thematic Units in Grade 7	Syllabus	The main focus of the 4C's model
Life in China	The currency of China	Communication
	Payment methods in China	Communication
	Prices in China: comparison with Hungary	Communication
	Means of transportation and their use in China	Communication
	Public transportation and bike-sharing system in China	Communication
	Popular social media platforms in China	Communication
	Leisure activities	Communication

Table 2: New Thematic Unit in Grade 7 of the Target Language Civilisation Local Curriculum

In Grade 8, the thematic unit “The policy of reform and opening up in China” contains vocabulary that far exceeds the Chinese language proficiency level of students at this stage, making the topic very difficult to cover and more suitable for secondary school students. Instead, following the unit on “Traditional Chinese Drama”, a new thematic unit focusing on the arts was introduced, which is much more accessible at the students’ language level. As a final addition, the following thematic unit was included in the Grade 8 local curriculum:

New Thematic Units in Grade 8	Syllabus	The main focus of the 4C's model
Chinese art	Chinese literature	Culture
	Chinese film art	Culture
	Chinese music	Culture
	Chinese fine arts	Culture

Table 3: New Thematic Unit in Grade 8 of the Target Language Civilisation Local Curriculum

The syllabus of the Target Language Civilisation subject was compiled on the basis of this revised local curriculum. The local curriculum also specifies the approximate number of lessons to be allocated for the classroom instruction of each topic.

In Grade 5, each unit is allocated approximately 9 lessons. In Grade 6, a geographical overview of China is planned for 12 lessons, while the other units are allotted 6 lessons each. In Grade 7, the thematic unit “Life in China” is covered in 12 lessons, and the remaining units in 8 lessons each. In Grade 8, the unit “Chinese Cities” is taught in 12 lessons, while the other units are allocated 8 lessons each.

Grade-by-Grade Reflections

This section provides a more detailed overview of the specific content covered in the Target Language Civilisation classes for each grade level, based on the current local curriculum. It is important to note that students’ Chinese language proficiency ranges from A1 level to near-native level, since classes are taught to the entire cohort together, including both Hungarian native students learning Chinese as a foreign language and native Chinese students. Consequently, when determining the taught content, factors such as classroom language use, the difficulty of the topics, the vocabulary required for processing the topics, the methods of topic delivery, as well as the task types and their level of difficulty must all be taken into account simultaneously.

After the presentation of the content taught in each grade, a reflection follows, summarizing the experiences gained during the teaching of that grade, as well as examining whether and how the four components of the CLIL 4C’s model are realized: subject content, communication in the foreign language, the development of cognitive processes, and cultural elements.

1. Grade 5: Syllabus Content

In Grade 5, the first thematic unit is “The history of the Chinese language”. The topics include the origin of Chinese characters, Classical Chinese, Modern Chinese, the relationship between Mandarin Chinese and dialects, the relationship between simplified and traditional characters, and the types and characteristics of various dialects. Within this, the curriculum covers the development of Chinese characters (oracle bone inscriptions, bronze inscriptions, seal script, clerical script, regular script, cursive script, and semi-cursive script) and four

of the six traditional types of characters (“pictographs,” “indicatives,” “compound ideographs,” and “phono-semantic characters”). It also introduces the Four Treasures of the Study, provides examples of simplified and traditional characters, explains the concept of the official Chinese language (putonghua), and presents some dialect examples. The second thematic unit is “Chinese names”. The content includes the most common Chinese family names from the “Hundred Family Names” classic, the order of family and given names (which corresponds to the Hungarian order), Chinese naming traditions, and several characters frequently appearing in male and female given names. The next thematic unit is “Invitation and Hospitality in China”, which covers: the characteristics of Chinese hospitality, Chinese generosity, the issue of payment when hosting, and the responsibilities of hosts and guests. This unit also introduces some well-known Chinese dishes, Chinese tea and tea-drinking/serving customs, chopsticks, rules of table etiquette, phrases used when inviting someone, different payment methods, as well as considerations regarding gift-giving. The final thematic unit in Grade 5 is “The large family of the Chinese people”. The content includes the concept of family in China, respect for the elderly, and the effects of family structure. This unit also reviews vocabulary related to family members and the value of respecting elders. Due to linguistic limitations, only a very brief discussion is possible on the former one-child policy, changes in the permitted number of children, and their impact on demographic trends and population size.

2. Grade 5: Reflection

Based on teaching experience, Grade 5 begins with subject matter that is particularly difficult. The content on the Chinese language—its origins, development, and types—remains challenging for students at A1 level, even after both content and linguistic simplification. For Hungarian students, this requires learning additional vocabulary that is less relevant to everyday life (whereas for Chinese students, naturally, this poses no difficulty). Entering the upper grades of primary school already brings many new challenges, subjects, and changes compared to the lower grades; therefore, beginning the year with a completely new subject in Chinese and one that is demanding in terms of content as well placed a considerable burden on the learners. Due to the complexity of the topic and the students’ lack of prior knowledge, instruction was carried out mainly through teacher-fronted methods. Teacher–student communication in the foreign language often focused on checking how well students could follow and understand the teacher’s explanations, which were supported with images and

videos. Verifying students' understanding of unfamiliar vocabulary encountered during the lessons was time-consuming but necessary. This unit is strong in subject content, focusing primarily on content delivery. The culture component of the 4C's model is also present; however, while the unit does contribute to students' language development, it does not primarily foster their foreign-language communicative skills. For students less motivated to learn Chinese, this topic proved extremely challenging. At the same time, attentive students improved in their ability to sustain attention during subject lessons taught in a language somewhat above their proficiency level. The units on names and on hospitality and dining customs provided a sense of relief for students. These topics enabled two-way communication in the foreign language, such as making comparisons between Hungarian and Chinese customs. Thus, all four elements of the 4C's model were realized, and the integration of subject content and language was much stronger. Because of the difficulty of the first unit, there were several delays in following the syllabus, which meant that the final unit, "The large family of the Chinese people", was only covered briefly. In summary, the first unit in Grade 5 occupies too prominent a place in the curriculum; despite earlier simplifications, it requires further linguistic and content simplification, and its placement in the local curriculum should definitely be reconsidered. Overall, within the yearly material, the 4C's model is dominated by content and culture. This is largely due to the language proficiency of Hungarian students, whose oral skills are limited to answering simple questions, making them less suitable for group work. In contrast, Chinese students frequently engaged in communication in Chinese during lessons, also with the aim of encouraging Hungarian students to get used to using Chinese with their Chinese classmates.

3. Grade 6: Syllabus Content

In Grade 6, the first thematic unit is "A geographical overview of China". The content includes China's territory, geographical location, capital city, population, administrative divisions, several major cities well known in the West and popular from a tourism perspective, China's seas, major rivers, famous mountains, largest and most renowned lakes, as well as some native animals and plants found in China. The next thematic unit is about the Chinese Dragon. Here, the content covers the origin of the dragon, its simplified and traditional characters, the names of the body parts of different animals that form the dragon's shape, the symbolic meanings of the dragon, its representations and abilities, some simpler chengyu idioms, as well as festivals and customs associated with the dragon—primarily the dragon dance performed during festive occasions and the

Dragon Boat Festival. For the remainder of the school year, Chinese festivals are studied, including the Spring Festival (Chinese New Year), the Lantern Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival, and the Mid-Autumn Festival. For each festival, the content includes its date according to the lunar calendar, the names and a brief introduction of traditional festive foods, customary ways of celebration, the items and decorations used, the greetings associated with the occasion, and the origins of the festival. Students also become acquainted with a few legendary stories related to these festivals.

4. Grade 6: Reflection

Based on teaching experience, the Grade 6 curriculum is more balanced both in terms of subject content and language difficulty, making it easier for students to cope with. The topics of China's geography, the Chinese Dragon, and Chinese Festivals sparked greater student interest, which in turn increased their motivation to learn. Nevertheless, within the geography unit there were sections that proved more difficult to master. This topic is also strong in subject content according to the 4C's model, with information transfer as the dominant feature. At the same time, each topic provides opportunities for communication in Chinese at the students' language level and for making comparisons (e.g. between the populations of Hungary and China, the Chinese and Western dragons, or Hungarian and Chinese festive traditions). In Grade 6, comparison was likewise the most frequently used tool for developing cognitive skills. Hungarian students also had a sufficient basic vocabulary for this purpose (e.g. expressing numbers, describing the dragon's appearance), which supported the development of oral communication skills. Owing to the nature of the topics and the language proficiency of Hungarian students, Grade 6 lessons also emphasized subject content within the 4C's model, while the focus on festivals gave particular importance to the development of intercultural awareness.

5. Grade 7: Syllabus Content

In Grade 7, the first thematic unit is "Life in China". Within this unit, students learn about China's currency (the renminbi), including the name of the Chinese currency and its subdivisions, the colloquial names of various denominations, the current exchange rate, and different types of currency that appeared throughout history, such as cowry shells, knife-shaped coins, round coins with square holes, yuanbao and its depictions linked to various festivals, as well as the first

paper money. Students also learn about different payment methods used in China, particularly the use of mobile applications such as WeChat and Zhifubao (Alipay), as well as facial recognition payments. Prices in China are discussed, and comparisons are made with the prices of certain products in Hungary. The content further includes means of transportation and their use, how to purchase tickets, and comparisons with transportation practices in Hungary. This is followed by a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of public transport, as well as the use and popularity of public bike-sharing systems. Students are also introduced to which social media platforms popular in Hungary are available (or not available) in China, and which platforms are widely used by Chinese people. Among these, WeChat, TikTok, and Xiaohongshu are presented in detail, along with some practical applications such as Taobao and Meituan. As part of this unit, students also learn about popular leisure activities in China, such as various traditional games (Chinese chess, mahjong) and public square dancing, especially enjoyed by elderly people. The second thematic unit in Grade 7 focuses on idioms and proverbs related to animals, which are taught through riddles and games. Students learn about their origins, meanings, and possible Hungarian equivalents. This is followed by a review of the 12 Chinese zodiac signs, along with the story of their origin. The lunar calendar and the connection between the zodiac signs and agriculture are also discussed. The final content area in Grade 7 introduces several chengyu stories. Students become familiar with selected Chinese idioms, their meanings, and whether Hungarian equivalents exist, as well as with how chengyu are used. Some of the idioms studied have historical backgrounds, which are also addressed in class discussions.

6. Grade 7: Reflection

Roughly speaking, Grade 7 is the stage at which it becomes clear which students are able to keep up with the pace of five weekly Chinese lessons in addition to the increasing demands of new subjects such as geography and chemistry. Students' interests also begin to take shape, as in Grade 8 they are required to sit the national entrance examination, which determines the type of secondary school they will attend. By Grade 7, it is already becoming apparent who wishes to continue learning Chinese, and it is usually at this stage that a clear divergence emerges in students' Chinese proficiency. Motivated students prepare for the HSK Chinese proficiency exam, with some already successfully passing the HSK4 level in Grade 7, while others gradually lose interest in learning the language. With the increasing proportion of students reaching higher levels of proficiency, more communicative activities can be introduced. As the variation in

students' language levels grows, group work also becomes easier to implement. The previous local curriculum shows that topics such as economy and climate were strong in terms of subject content but, taught as separate units, they did not attract students' interest as effectively as the content of "Life in China". Because Chinese students can draw on their own experiences related to these topics, the "Life in China" unit can also be explored through project-based work, making it an opportunity to bring Hungarian and Chinese students closer together. Within this unit, the emphasis of the 4C's model is clearly on developing oral communication skills in Chinese. The same applies to the study of idioms, proverbs, and chengyu, which are well suited for enhancing oral communication skills through their meanings or underlying stories, and which can also be compared with Hungarian equivalents. The unit on the twelve zodiac signs, in turn, primarily highlights the cultural component of the 4C's model. Overall, the Grade 7 curriculum focuses primarily on the development of communicative skills.

7. Grade 8: Syllabus Content

Grade 8 marks the final year of studying the Target Language Civilisation subject. In this year, the first thematic unit focuses on Chinese cities. Students become acquainted with major Chinese cities, their locations, populations, economies, climates, famous historical sites and landmarks, the dialects spoken there, renowned universities, local culinary specialties, as well as notable figures and historical personalities associated with these cities. Following this, and by way of comparison with the cities, students study the characteristics of rural life in China, including its development and economy, primarily through reading texts. The third thematic unit introduces students to the features of traditional Chinese drama, with a focus on Beijing Opera, including its facial makeup, the symbolic meanings of its colors, its traditional musical instruments and props, and the symbolic nature of the performances. Beyond Beijing Opera, students also learn about face-changing in Sichuan Opera and locate the regions associated with the development of the five main types of Chinese opera (jingju, yuju, yueju, huangmeixi, and pingju). At the end of Grade 8—bearing in mind that many students continue their secondary education at different schools and may not necessarily pursue further Chinese studies—the final thematic unit takes a lighter approach by offering insights into Chinese arts. Within Chinese literature, students are introduced to the poems of famous poets along with their Hungarian translations, as well as to several well-known classical Chinese novels. In film and music, students are exposed to currently popular works, while in the visual arts they learn about the distinctive features of Chinese painting and architectural solutions found in some famous landmarks.

8. Grade 8: Reflection

In Grade 8, the development of communicative skills continues. The first thematic unit, the introduction of Chinese cities, is also well suited to project-based work. Although relatively time-consuming in group work, it fits well with students' language level. Moreover, it is not overly demanding and can be managed alongside preparation for the national entrance examination, even though by this stage clear differences are visible in students' Chinese proficiency and in their motivation to study Chinese language and culture. In this grade, the dominant elements of the 4C's model are the development of communicative skills and cultural content.

Recommendations for the Further Development of the Local Curriculum and Teaching Content

Although the above list of teaching materials contains diverse cultural knowledge, it is far from complete. Both the sequence of topics and the range of subjects covered should be reconsidered, and adjustments should be introduced in light of teaching experience. All four elements of the CLIL 4C's model are implemented at each grade level, but in varying proportions. In Grades 5–6, due to the students' level of Chinese proficiency, subject content and cultural elements dominate, while in Grades 7–8 the focus shifts to the development of communicative skills alongside cultural content. Although language learning is inherently linked to cognitive development, lesson organization has so far paid the least attention to fostering cognitive skills. While in several thematic units students make comparisons, the development of analytical skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving would require a higher level of language proficiency than the students currently possess.

With regard to the local curriculum, the proposed modifications are presented according to the following criteria: 1. which of the currently taught contents should be removed or revised, and for what reasons; 2. which additional contents should be introduced and at which grade level; 3. how the sequence of topics should be modified to create a new proposal for the local curriculum of the Target Language Civilisation subject; 4. paying more conscious attention to ensuring that the four elements of the 4C's model are more evenly balanced in the processing of the topics within the local curriculum.

1. Recommended Deletions/Revisions from the Existing Content

The three topics previously listed separately—“The Economy of China”, “The Climate of China”, and “The Policy of Reform and Opening up in China”—are indeed essential elements of knowledge about China, but as stand-alone thematic units they did not fit well into the structure of the local curriculum. The topic of climate was therefore integrated into the unit dealing with the geographical overview of China. The Policy of Reform and Opening represents both a historical and economic theme. However, history and economy are areas that contain many abstract expressions, and any level of engagement with these topics requires learning a significant amount of additional vocabulary. Given the great length of Chinese history and the complexity of its economy, these themes cannot realistically be addressed within the time frame of the Target Language Civilisation subject (36 lessons per school year) at A1–A2 Chinese proficiency levels. The publication *“The Framework of Reference for Chinese Culture and Society in International Chinese Language Education”* also recommends history and economy as topics primarily for the secondary school age group. As a compromise, since the classes include a varying number of native Chinese-speaking students, the solution has been to integrate selected aspects of China’s economy (e.g. rice cultivation, animal husbandry, industrial production, textile industry, electronics industry) into the thematic units on Chinese cities and rural areas, while also introducing famous personalities or historical figures associated with those cities. This change is already reflected in the current form of teaching. One further modification is advisable. In Grade 5, the topic of the Chinese family and family structure can be introduced, focusing primarily on learning and practicing the names of different family members within the family tree, since the terminology for relatives in Chinese is significantly more complex than in Hungarian. In addition, it is important to address respect for the elderly. However, the broader issue of family structure is a complex topic, which may include traditional and modern family models, their impact on individuals, or, for example, changes in the permitted number of children, which in turn involves wider social transformations. Family cohesion, the importance of children’s education, and multi-generational cohabitation are all important issues concerning the Chinese family. Nevertheless, because these are relatively abstract topics and would require learners to understand the description of processes in Chinese, they are linguistically difficult to handle at this age and proficiency level. Therefore, it is necessary to consider which of these elements, and in what form, can be integrated into the curriculum. The content manageable at the A1–A2 level should remain. Thus, rather than being removed altogether, this topic should be revised under the title Characteristics of the Chinese Family.

Within this framework, students can learn the names of relatives using the family tree, discuss respect for the elderly and the importance of children's education, and, through simple language, compare the advantages and disadvantages of nuclear families, extended families, and multi-generational households.

2. Introduction of Additional Content

Considering the framework curriculum available online as well as interdisciplinary connections,¹⁵ the introduction of the following additional topics may be advisable. Below is a list of the recommended topics for each grade level together with the suggested number of lessons.

Recommended Additional Topics for Grade 5: 1) In this year, students encounter the Target Language Civilisation class for the first time, so it is advisable not to begin immediately with the complex topic of the history of the Chinese language, but rather to start with an introductory unit that presents China in general (location, population, official language, capital city, etc.), along with the national symbols (anthem, flag, coat of arms); 2) The presentation of China's native animals and plants can be easily processed with simple language use, richly illustrated with pictures, and is a rewarding topic for A1-level students that can spark their interest. For this reason, it would be advisable to include this at this grade level (giant panda, red panda, snow leopard, golden snub-nosed monkey, Manchurian crane, Tibetan antelope, silkworm, bamboo, ginkgo, mandarin, orange); 3) As part of a literary unit, poems, nursery rhymes, tongue twisters, or even a story such as *Mulan* (which most students are already familiar with by Grade 5) could be incorporated; 4) Within the topic of Chinese food, Chinese cabbage and Chinese chives may be mentioned (e.g., as popular ingredients in dumpling fillings), which students may also encounter in other subjects (science, technology).

Recommended Additional Topics for Grade 6: 1) As an economic extension of the geography unit, the locations of certain mineral resources (oil, coal, iron ore, etc.) could be presented on a map. In addition, instead of waiting until

¹⁵ The review of interdisciplinary connections was supported by the online textbook catalogue ([https://www.tankonyvkatalogus.hu/tankonyvek?schooltype\[0\]=2193&nat=2](https://www.tankonyvkatalogus.hu/tankonyvek?schooltype[0]=2193&nat=2), last accessed: 31 January 2025). In the full online versions of the textbooks used at the school and available on this platform, the interdisciplinary connections were mapped by searching for the entries "China" (Kína) and "Chinese" (kinai). It is important to note that the recommended topics listed in this section do not include every single occurrence of the keywords "China" or "Chinese." In some cases, for example in mathematics textbooks, these terms appear only as part of word problems, where the reference to Chinese culture does not constitute actual learning content beyond solving the exercise.

Grade 8, it would be worthwhile to introduce the most famous historical landmarks already in this grade (the Great Wall of China, the Terracotta Army), which should include a discussion of Qin Shi Huangdi, and which students will already have encountered in history lessons by Grade 5; 2) When learning about the Chinese dragon, it would be useful to mention the paper kite, which is also called a “dragon” in Hungarian and is itself a Chinese invention; 3) Between the unit on the Chinese dragon and traditional Chinese festivals, students are usually introduced to the twelve zodiac signs, though only in passing. It would be advisable to supplement this with a few details about the lunar calendar, which would also help students to better remember the dates of traditional Chinese festivals.

Recommended Additional Topics for Grade 7: 1) Students can also learn in Chinese about the Four Great Inventions of ancient China, which they have already studied in history lessons in previous years (the compass, gunpowder, printing, and papermaking). In connection with papermaking, the arts of Chinese paper folding and paper cutting, as well as the invention of the first umbrellas, can also be mentioned. Due to the vocabulary load, this topic is suitable for Grade 7; 2) As a complement to the inventions, it is important to introduce the Chinese abacus (suanpan), especially since from the 2025/2026 school year onwards this tool will play a significant role in the school’s mathematics teaching; 3) The “Life in China” unit includes leisure time. Within this, the games section can be expanded with the tangram and dominoes—both of which are of Chinese origin and mentioned in the mathematics textbook. In addition to Chinese martial arts (wushu, taiji), popular sports (badminton, table tennis, basketball) and famous athletes can also be introduced; 4) The “Life in China” unit also includes popular social media platforms in China. Given the increasing prevalence of artificial intelligence programs today, it would be worthwhile to mention some AI programs used in China (DeepSeek, Doubao, Kimi, Qwen, etc.).

The final year of teaching the subject is Grade 8. In this year, students take part in the national entrance examination, and the majority of them continue their studies at other educational institutions. Since this is their last school year in the program, and many of them decide to discontinue learning Chinese, the Grade 8 curriculum becomes progressively lighter toward the end of the year. This means that the school year begins with more demanding topics and moves on to lighter ones as it progresses. The year starts with the topics of Chinese cities and the Chinese rural areas, for which a thorough review of the previously learned Geography of China material is essential. During this review, further supplements can be made in terms of economy and industry. In addition, one more recommended topic could usefully be integrated into the Grade 8 curriculum: 1) With the help of a map, it would be worthwhile to introduce some of the 56 nationalities living in China, and to become familiar with their traditional clothing, customs, and practices.

3. Suggested Reordering of the Thematic Units

From Grade 5, the supplementary topics (China's national symbols, China's national treasures, Chinese text reading with nursery rhymes and tongue twisters) remain, but one change has been made in sequence: "Invitation and hospitality in China" has been moved to Grade 7, placed after the "Life in Contemporary China" unit, since both topics relate to everyday life in China and are therefore thematically connected. In Grade 6, a unit on the Chinese lunar calendar has been introduced before the traditional festivals, as some general information about the lunar calendar is necessary to understand the timing of the festivals. In Grade 7, the unit on Chinese inventions has been placed at the beginning of the school year. Even more importantly, the topic of the twelve zodiac signs now precedes the unit on animal-related proverbs, as this closely resembles the unit on chengyu idioms, and it is therefore more logical to study these two topics consecutively. In Grade 8, the units on Chinese cities and rural areas include a review of previously studied geographical material, followed by the introduction of the topic of ethnic minorities. In addition, based on the framework curriculum, a literary text-reading component has also been incorporated into this stage of study, placed between the units on traditional Chinese drama and Chinese art forms.

Below is the revised local curriculum based on the recommendations, with the rows shaded in gray indicating newly introduced topics as well as topics that appear in a new position within the sequence of thematic units.

Thematic Units of Chinese Civilisation class (Grade 5)	Syllabus
Introduction to Target Language Civilization: The National Symbols of China	General information about China The national anthem of China The flag of China The national emblem of China
Chinese national treasures	Native animals in China Native plants in China
The history of the Chinese language	The origin of Chinese characters, Classical Chinese, Modern Chinese The relationship between Mandarin Chinese and the dialects The relationship between simplified and traditional Chinese characters The types and characteristics of different dialects
Chinese names	Common Chinese surnames The naming customs of the Chinese people An introduction to common Chinese male and female given names
The large family of the Chinese people	The concept of family in China Respect for the elderly in China The effects of the Chinese family structure
Chinese text reading	Chinese nursery rhymes Chinese tongue twisters

Thematic Units of Chinese Civilisation class (Grade 6)	Syllabus
A geographical overview of China	China’s territory The population of China China’s seas, rivers, mountains, lakes, forests, famous sights, etc. The climate of China Mineral resources in China
The meaning of the dragon	The origin of the dragon The appearance of the dragon The meaning of the dragon symbol Festivals, legends, customs, etc. related to the dragon The Chinese paper kite
The Chinese lunar calendar	The Chinese lunar calendar
Spring Festival, Lantern Festival	The origin of the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival The traditional ways of celebrating the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival The traditional foods of the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival The significance of the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival
Mid-Autumn Festival	The origin of the Mid-Autumn Festival The traditional ways of celebrating the Mid-Autumn Festival The traditional foods of the Mid-Autumn Festival The significance of the Mid-Autumn Festival
Dragon Boat Festival	The origin of the Dragon Boat Festival The traditional ways of celebrating the Dragon Boat Festival The traditional foods of the Dragon Boat Festival The significance of the Dragon Boat Festival

Thematic Units of Chinese Civilisation class (Grade 7)	Syllabus
Chinese inventions	Paper-making, printing, gunpowder, and the compass The Chinese abacus
Life in modern China	The currency of China Payment methods in China Prices in China: comparison with Hungary Means of transportation and their use in China Public transportation and bike-sharing system in China Popular social media platforms in China Chinese artificial intelligence applications Popular leisure activities and sports
Invitation and hospitality in China	The characteristics of Chinese hospitality Chinese hospitality The question of payment when inviting Etiquette considerations for the host and the guests
The 12 Chinese zodiac signs	The 12 zodiac signs and the animals The 12 zodiac signs and agriculture The 12 zodiac signs and their meanings
Animal idioms and proverbs	The origin and meaning of animal idioms and proverbs
Chinese proverbs and idioms: chengyu	Chengyu and language learning Chengyu and historical references

Thematic Units of Chinese Civilisation class (Grade 8)	Syllabus
Chinese cities	The proportion and population of Chinese cities The economy of Chinese cities An introduction to famous Chinese cities
Rural areas in China	The proportion and population of rural areas in China The economy of rural areas in China
Ethnic groups in China	The 56 ethnic groups The traditional costumes of some ethnic groups The traditions and customs of some ethnic groups

Traditional Chinese drama	The history, development, and current form of traditional Chinese drama Beijing Opera Local Chinese operas Chinese musical instruments
Reading Chinese literary texts	Chinese poems Chinese stories and fables

Table 4: Local Curriculum with the Suggested Modifications¹⁶

The above-mentioned topics and their sequence need to be tested empirically in practice to determine how their teaching can be introduced and implemented at the respective grade levels. Further refinement of the topics and their order could also be supported by reviewing the local curricula and syllabi of Target Language Civilisation classes taught in other bilingual primary schools in different foreign languages (e.g. English, German). At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that these curricula are primarily connected to European cultures; therefore, the topics cannot be borrowed wholesale from them, nor can the content elements of the Chinese Target Language Civilisation class be shaped entirely on their basis. In addition, for other languages (e.g. English, German), textbooks and workbooks for teaching Target Language Civilisation are already available on the Hungarian market. Since these publications are not specific to Chinese culture, they may provide some guidance in fine-tuning the content of the Chinese Target Language Civilisation class, but no direct parallel can be drawn with any of them. This is particularly the case because, in other European languages, Target Language Civilisation classes often cover multiple cultures of target language countries—for example, in English classes, the United Kingdom and the United States are treated separately, sometimes linked to different textbooks or workbooks at different grade levels. By contrast, in the case of Chinese, the school’s Target Language Civilisation class addresses culture specifically in the context of the People’s Republic of China. Thus, while the content presented in this article could in the future be complemented by the above perspective, such a review falls beyond the scope of the present study.

¹⁶ Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School: 2020.

4. Recommendations for Balancing the Elements of the 4C's Model

In Grades 5–6, among the elements of the 4C's model, subject content and cultural aspects dominate excessively. With the proposed changes, topics could be introduced into the local curriculum that are more suitable for integrating oral communication skill-building activities in line with the Chinese language proficiency of Hungarian students. Examples include, in Grade 5: general knowledge about China (e.g. “What do you know?” quiz), China's national symbols (discussion of the Chinese flag and emblem), China's national treasures (presentation and description of native animals, such as the giant panda), as well as the teaching of Chinese nursery rhymes and tongue twisters. In Grades 7–8, alongside subject content and culture, the development of communication skills has already been given a more prominent role. Nevertheless, the newly proposed topics create further opportunities for strengthening the communicative component: in Grade 7, the topic of invitations, hospitality, and dining customs in China is well suited to introducing additional communicative exercises (writing dialogues, accepting or refusing invitations, arranging meetings, discussing differences in dining and payment customs, etc.), which also bring greater emphasis to elements of speech and behavioral culture and can be implemented at the students' current level of Chinese proficiency. The topics of Grade 8 can also be further enriched with communicative activities: reading Chinese poems, stories, and fables and summarizing their content provides longer oral skill-development tasks, ensuring continuous opportunities for communication practice for Grade 8 students throughout the second semester.

Summary

In Hungarian public education, the Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School occupies a unique position, as it is the only institution that guarantees the teaching of Chinese from the first grade through all 12 grade levels, with bilingual education provided in the primary school section. Consequently, within the field of Chinese language teaching in Hungary, the subject of Chinese Target Language Civilisation was first introduced at this school. Although the teaching of the subject has now a history of more than ten years, this period has brought significant changes both in the history of the school and in the quality of Chinese language education. Amidst these changes, it is from time to time worthwhile to review and, where necessary, carry out certain modifications in the local curriculum, the taught content, and the requirements of the Chinese Target Language Civilisation subject, in light of teaching experiences and the overall development of Chinese language instruction.

This study has summarized the sections of Hungarian regulations relevant to the Target Language Civilisation subject, reviewed the local curriculum of the Hungarian–Chinese Bilingual Primary and Secondary School, and, on the basis of the four-year teaching syllabi, presented in detail the current thematic units and topics of the compulsory material. The study proposed adjustments to the sequence of topics in the local curriculum so that the transitions between units may become smoother and the contents studied in succession may be more closely connected to each other. Although the existing material already conveys a broad range of knowledge, Chinese culture is extremely rich and multifaceted. Therefore, with regard to the local curriculum, the syllabus, and the taught content, the study has also proposed supplementary cultural topics that could expand the palette of themes covered in lessons—topics that would also be suitable for introduction considering the students’ age-specific characteristics and language proficiency. Based on teaching experience, the study further evaluated which elements of the CLIL 4C’s model are most dominant during the teaching of particular subject content, and formulated recommendations for balancing the four components—namely subject content, communication in the foreign language, the development of cognitive processes, and cultural elements.

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