Building the K-5 Chinese Readability Scale Prototype for Assessing Early Literacy

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Agenda

- Literacy challenges facing Chinese language teachers
- English language assessments/scales
- Program Team
- Building the CRS Prototype
- Accomplishments to date
Learning to read is the central achievement of early elementary schooling, and then using reading to learn...
Differences in characteristics of word comprehension impacts reading ability and comprehension.

Charles Perfetti-
Universal Theory of Reading

"These reading glasses don't work. I got a C in Reading Comprehension."
Do you recognize these students?
Reading assignments

- How much do you assign and how often?
- Can students choose their own books?
- Do you find and recommend specific books to each student?
- How do you assess reading proficiency?
  - Individually
  - Look at vocabulary
  - Comprehension
  - Ability to read with and without pinyin
  - Evidence of understanding and extrapolation
- How many of your students enjoy reading in Chinese?
The Challenge

We want our students to choose the *right level* books to reinforce and challenge their reading but

- Not enough reading materials
- Not easy to find
- Not leveled by standards
- Not easy to match with students’ developmental reading level and interests
Literacy Assessment Approaches

Scale
- An instrument with a numeric/quantitative result
- A measure of reading level
- Purpose- diagnostic, progress monitoring
- Formative or Summative

Assessment Practices
- Directly tied to instruction
- Formative or summative
- Can be qualitative or quantitative
- Individual student-level data
- Informs instructional efficacy and focus
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<th>Reading Recovery</th>
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Key Features

- A **common scale** for measuring literacy and literacy activities
- A **developmental scale** for maintaining longitudinal perspectives on growth
- Enables **targeted literacy activities** to enhance growth
- Promotes **personalized instruction**
If we know how well a student can read (performance) and the vocabulary levels of specific books/texts, we can predict how well that student will comprehend the book/text.

- **Text Measure**
  Industry standard measurement on difficulty of book

- **Reader Measure**
  Industry standard assessment on student’s reading ability
Our Strategy: A Collaborative Pioneering Effort

Development, validation and testing of a tool to determine text complexity in grades K-5

- Phase I: Develop high frequency word dictionary
  - Select children’s reading materials
  - Input text materials into digital format
  - Calculate word & character frequency
Infrastructure Stages

1. Planning

2. Development
   - Created online asynchronous Institute Orientation
   - July Institute

3. Review
The Chinese Readability Scale Team

Helen Shen  
L2 Chinese Literacy Expert

Ping Liu  
Chinese Linguist

Magaly Lavadenz  
Co-Director

Yalan King  
Co-Director

Master Practitioners

Research Assistants

Building the K-5 Chinese Readability Scale Prototype
Assessing Early Literacy
Some Criteria for Leveling Books

Length
Layout
Structure & Organization
Illustrations
Words /Characters
Graded Vocabulary List
Phrases and Sentences
Literary Features
Content and Theme
Building the K-5 Chinese Readability Scale Prototype
Assessing Early Literacy
Collaborate with Master Chinese Language Teachers

- Narrative vs. Informational
- Categories by level
  - i. Instructional
  - ii. Independent
  - iii. Frustration
- Instructional Category by grade
  - i. Alignment with Content Standards
  - ii. Reading Comprehension questions
  - iii. Vocabulary
- Building collection of material that align to levels
Development of a word frequency dictionary

- Word list based on frequency sequence
- Word list based on alphabetic order
- By grade level
- Range of 300-5000 words
At the end of the Institute, teachers will be able to:

- Understand the Lexile Reading Framework and see how it will serve as the foundation for building the K-5 CRS
- Categorize and align books by subjects aligned with CCSS and Sample subjects
- Classify books by Genre
- Develop Knowledge and Information about the processes in developing Chinese Readability
- Gauge reading materials for difficulty by using word frequency lists
- Contribute to the development of the Chinese Word Frequency Dictionary to determine Readability of Text
- Contribute to the foundational framework required to build the Chinese Readability Scale
Our Accomplishments

- Categorized and Aligned books towards the definition of corpus
- Sample books for each classification

- Created a corpus of 2.5M characters across K-5 classifications

- Determination of High Frequency “bands” for K-5 vocabulary
- Amalgamate and analyze corpus to define high frequency bands
- Conduct field-testing across the nation to validate the “levels/bands”
- Create an online High Frequency Dictionary
- Document and Summarize our processes
- Develop strategy for future phases
  - Reliability testing for HFD
“It’s called ‘reading’. It’s how people install new software into their brains”