

# The University of Saint Louis' Foreign Language Program: Introspections and Realizations

Asia Pacific Journal of  
Multidisciplinary Research

Vol. 4 No.3, 82 - 92

August 2016

P-ISSN 2350-7756

E-ISSN 2350-8442

www.apjmr.com

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*Date Received: April 6, 2016; Date Revised: June 16, 2016*

**Abstract** - *This study was meant to present an evaluation of the delivery of the University of Saint Louis' Foreign Language Program-Mandarin Chinese. Using descriptive research design, coupled with focus group discussion with the students in total enumeration, data along the different aspects of the teaching and learning of Mandarin Chinese, was ascertained using a developed and validated questionnaire. The student-respondents have evaluated the following areas: 1.Objectives of the Lesson/Course 2) Lesson Strategies 3) Lesson Assessments 4) Student Engagement 5) Learning Resources and Environment 5) Classroom Management 6) Outcomes. Moreover, the grades of the students along two major assessments-oral and written were also looked into to validate the perceptions of students along outcomes. In addition, a structured interview with the teachers was also conducted to provide further information.*

*Looking within, data gathered and analyzed reveals that the University's Foreign Language Program with the offering of Mandarin Chinese is generally very satisfactory along all areas evaluated. The oral and written examination results as reflected in the grades of the students show that the students have gained adequate skills in both oral and written Mandarin Chinese, although among all areas, it's the written Mandarin that got the lowest mean rating among all items under "outcomes".*

*From the foregoing, realizations have been made that while the evaluation is generally very satisfactory using the scale, there is a need for the University to look into specific items under the major areas by way of designing intervention programs to further improve the delivery of the current foreign language program to its students. Moreover, an in-depth study of the same can be expanded to other classes delivered by Filipino professors.*

**Keywords:** *Foreign Language Program, Mandarin Chinese, Evaluation of Language teaching and learning, Outcomes in Language teaching and Learning*

## INTRODUCTION

In 2012-2013, University of Saint Louis of Tuguegarao (USL) after thorough evaluation of its curricula in all program offerings has embarked on a multi-sectoral review of all its programs. Following its framework for Curriculum Planning and Development, it gathered the different sectors which include industry, alumni, employers, government agencies, students, faculty members, program chairs and administrators.

After month long reviews, USL decided to put together the revised curricula which were made effective S.Y. 2013-2014. The new curricula were then forwarded to the Philippine Commission on

Higher Education (CHED) for Contents Notation as required by existing higher education law.

One such reflection of the new curricula was the inclusion of Foreign Language Program (FLP) for all of USL's offerings brought about by the developments in education: ASEAN 2015 Integration, CHED's Educational Reform and Globalization of Education. As USL became aggressive in her pursuit to a global reach, it started partnering with other universities in Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Indonesia and China. It will explore also opportunities in Thailand, Korea and Taiwan. In the area of faculty exchange, USL was able to send a good number of

faculties with partner universities for the enhancement of learning of its students and was also able to host a good number of visiting professors from those mentioned university partners.

The University's Foreign Languages in the past included, Nippongo, French, and Mandarin Chinese. Like any other endeavors in the University, evaluation was always necessary to ensure that the program is at its best and that actions must be undertaken to address weaknesses if any.

The choice of Mandarin Chinese was because of China's growing economy that extends beyond borders based on environmental scanning. Moreover, USL has two partner Chinese universities which are willing to assist in the delivery of the Foreign Language Program. In addition, Thompson [1] states that Mandarin is the most widely spoken of all Chinese dialects spoken as a first language in a vast area of northern and southwestern mainland China. There is also a huge diaspora of Mandarin speakers in Brunei, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, United Kingdom, USA, and Viet Nam. With close to 850 million speakers, Mandarin Chinese is by far the world's largest language. And with the economy that is growing fast, the choice of Mandarin remained a big consideration for USL.

The University's FLP consists of different aspects of pedagogy like the objectives of the course and the lessons, the teaching strategies, assessments, student engagement, learning resources and environment, classroom management and outcomes. These aspects of the FLP are thought to be the prime factors in ensuring its effective and efficient implementation. It is with firm hope that taking a look at how these areas are implemented will provide insights on how else the university will be able to deliver future FLP's in a manner consistent with the University's core values of excellence.

USL's experience of the teaching of Mandarin Chinese the first time, with a partner school from China proved to have been a good start with a number of points for improvement. In the end, the school decided to explore other professors, this time with another partner school also from China. From that year USL first offered Mandarin, it has been five years since it employed a visiting professor with a compressed Mandarin Chinese Program. The USL Foreign Language Program is a 3-unit course

equivalent to 54-hour regular load in a 5-month program. With the coming of a visiting professor, the program was compressed in 10 days at first and eventually after periodic evaluation; the need to have it in a month was piloted.

The different program offerings in the university are theorized to be basically requiring specific needs in terms of FLP, and so is gender. The need to know whether males and females have different views about the university's FLP was likewise included.

While, the University is contended with how the FLP was administered over the last five years, the need to fully evaluate the program is felt, thus this study.

#### **STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES**

This study sought to find out how well the Foreign Language Program of the University is administered. The research questions that were investigated are as follows:

1. What is the profile of the respondents along:
  - 1.1 program
  - 1.2 gender ?
2. How do the respondents rate the following components of the school's FLP:
  - 1.1 Objectives of the Lesson/Course
  - 1.2 Lesson Strategies
  - 1.3 Lesson Assessments/Evaluation
  - 1.4 Student Engagement
  - 1.5 Learning Resources and Environment
  - 1.6 Classroom Management
  - 3.7 Outcomes?
3. Is there a significant difference in the ratings of the respondents over the components of the Foreign Language Program when grouped according to their profile variables?
4. What steps have to be undertaken with the findings from the students and teachers' views on the components of the FLP?

#### **METHODS**

##### **Research Design**

The study utilized the Descriptive Research Design to elicit students' perception of the different areas of the USL Foreign Language Program. To further validate the students' perceptions along the areas that were evaluated, a focus group discussion was conducted. The teacher and facilitator's views

were likewise elicited in a structured interview also along the areas surveyed.

**Table 1. Distribution of respondents per Program(n=189)**

Program	F	%
Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering	49	25.93
Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering	21	11.11
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science	42	22.22
Bachelor of Arts in Legal Management	34	17.99
Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Tourism Management	43	22.75
	189	100

All students enrolled from the School of Education, Arts and Sciences, School of Hospitality and Vocational Education and School of Engineering, Architecture and Interior Design in the Foreign Language Program consisting of 189 took part in this study.

The table above shows the number of respondents based on the program that they are currently enrolled in. It can be noted that two groups come from the Engineering Programs represented by Electrical and Civil Engineering, two groups from the Liberal Arts, represented by Political Science and Legal management and the lone group-Hospitality. Of the total of 189 respondents, 106 are females and 83 are males.

**Data Collection**

The participants of the study were totally enumerated and the study was conducted after the implementation of the Foreign Language Program. Secondary data, like grades of students were also gathered. A focus group discussion was also conducted among the students to further elicit clarifications on the written responses. Moreover, the FLP Facilitators were also interviewed along the components of the program to corroborate findings derived from the students.

**Instrument**

The study made use of a questionnaire which was developed by the author and validated with some Education Experts in the field. The questionnaire, as the main instrument to gather the primary data consisted of items along the following areas: 1.Objectives of the Foreign Language Program in general and the specific objectives of the Course 2)

Lesson Strategies 3) Lesson Assessments 4) Student Engagement 5) Learning Resources and Environment 5) Classroom Management 6) Outcomes.

**Data Analysis**

In the conduct of the study, the five-point likert scale was used to measure the evaluation of the respondents of the different components of the FLP: 5-Outstanding 4-Very Satisfactory 3-Satisfactory 2-Good 1-Fair. After the rating has been made, the interpretation and analysis of the figures were made using the following:

Mean Score	-	Equivalent
4.50 – 5.00	-	Outstanding
3.50 – 4.49	-	Very Satisfactory
2.50 – 3.49	-	Satisfactory
1.50 – 2.49	-	Good
1.00 – 1.49	-	Fair

For the in depth analysis of the variables, descriptive statistics were utilized. To further compare the differences in the mean ratings of the different areas of the FLP with the profile variables of the respondents, the t-test were used.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Objectives of the Foreign Language Program and Specific Course Objectives of the Mandarin Chinese Class**

It can be gleaned in Table 2, that the objectives for which the FLP have been realized. With an overall mean of 4.24, study reveals that the university’s Objectives of its Foreign Language Program satisfied the intention of the institution in making it part of the curriculum.

**Table 2. Evaluation of the Objectives of the FLP**

Items	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. Clarity of the Lesson Objectives on a day-today basis	4.31	Very Satisfactory
2. Variety of lesson objectives	4.30	Very Satisfactory
3. Clarity of the Course Objectives/Subject in general	4.28	Very Satisfactory
4. Alignment of the objectives to industry and foreign employment opportunities	4.08	Very Satisfactory
<b>Over-all Mean</b>	<b>4.24</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

Prior to the general implementation of the FLP, the School of Engineering, Architecture and Fine Arts, the School of Business Administration and Accountancy and the School of Hospitality and Vocational Education have already made a Foreign Language integral to their curricula. But in a succeeding review, by the University's Academic Council, the need to make Foreign Language a must in all program offerings was aimed. This was also in the light of the on-going move for ASEAN Integration at that time. To date, as revealed in this study, the FLP has met the objectives of the institution and the intention of the course at the classroom level. Specifically, these objectives as set run parallel to what industry requires both locally and globally.

Corollary to this, Table 3 reveals that the specific objectives of the FLP, with Mandarin Chinese as a choice, were realized with an over-all mean of 4.28 or very satisfactory.

**Table 3. Evaluation of the Specific Objectives of the FLP-Mandarin Chinese**

Items	Mean	Descriptive Value
a. Recognize and articulate the basic communication styles, practice and word order used in the Chinese language and show their relevance to their lives and profession	4.18	Very Satisfactory
b. Enunciate correctly and interact effectively the commonly used Chinese particles, greetings, counting numbers and expressions	4.32	Very Satisfactory
c. Distinguish the differences and similarities between Chinese and Filipino culture especially on respective professions and other related fields that require Human relations.	4.29	Very Satisfactory
d. Show respect on the Cultural influences and differences between Chinese and Filipino way of life.	4.31	Very Satisfactory
e. Conduct a culminating program to show appreciation of the Chinese culture.	4.32	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

Dean et. Al.[2]citing Jere Brophy on Motivating Students to Learn, states that "the key to making your students' learning experiences worthwhile is to focus your planning on major instructional goals, phrased in terms of desired student outcomes—the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and dispositions that you want to develop in your students. Goals, not content coverage or learning processes, provide the rationale for curriculum and instruction." This reinforces the need for every class to have a clear and concise goals or objectives that are in every teacher's expected role of making simple, measurable, attainable, results-focused/realistic and time-bound objectives.

From the FLP facilitators' point of view, setting the goals before the course started, and making clear the objectives before every lesson, point to why the class went on smoothly and culminated with the attainment of the goals and objectives of the program.

### Learning Strategies

According to the National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages (NADSFL) [3] (1999), in a document developed in collaboration with and based on work done by the Montgomery County Maryland Public Schools, it has identified certain characteristics of effective foreign language instruction. One of which is that the teacher sets high expectations for all students, designs assessment, and organizes instruction to engage and motivate all learners. The different strategies employed by the FLP facilitator determine the success of students' learning. Table 4 shows an over-all mean rating of 4.38 which denotes that the strategies employed by the teacher were effective in delivering the expected outcomes in the course. Classroom observations made and as confirmed in the focused group discussion showed evidence of students' interests in the course. Strategies used were varied, appropriate to the lesson and course objectives and allowed rapport between the teacher and the learners.

Hismanoglu,[4] in its article Language Learning Strategies in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching states that: It is a fact that each learner within the same classroom may have different learning styles and varied awareness of the use of strategies. The teacher cannot attribute importance to only one group and support the analytical approach or only give input by using the auditory mode. The language teacher should, therefore, provide a wide range of learning strategies in order to meet the needs

and expectations of his students possessing different learning styles, motivations, strategy preferences. These thought confirms the findings of this study that the strategies employed by the FLP facilitator as was revealed in the mean scores for all items under evaluation that success in foreign language teaching requires skillful use of varied strategies.

Moreover, Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA)[5], of the University of Minnesota along Curriculum and Instruction in Language states two important principles such as 1) Teachers design activities that allow learners to practice single modalities (listening, speaking, reading, writing) as well as linked modalities (e.g., listening and speaking, reading and writing) and 2) Teachers should incorporate both achievement-oriented tasks (i.e., those reflecting a specific skill component) and proficiency-oriented (i.e., Communicative) tasks into the classroom. These actions of teachers based on the preceding principles by CARLA are suggestive of the roles teachers play to ensure good language proficiency.

Additionally, Chamot and Kupper[6] in their study state that foreign language instructors taught students how to apply learning strategies. Classroom applications discussed in the paper include guidelines for developing students' metacognition and motivation through the identification and discussion of their existing language learning strategies, and techniques for modeling and practicing additional strategies that can help students become more effective and independent language learners.

Furthermore, Thomson [7] in her paper "Language Teaching Strategies and Techniques Used to Support Students Learning in a Language other than Their Mother Tongue" found out that effective teachers are those who: are able to use language in various ways and those who are able to utilize teaching strategies and techniques, such as but not limited to vocabulary checks, eliciting, modeling of target language, think aloud and a lot more.

Interview with the FLP facilitators showed that they also employed various teaching strategies that include drills, simulations and technology enhanced discussion using powerpoint presentations, video clips, music and interactive teaching techniques. In that, strategies were not the focus but the content that was delivered well with the use of these varied strategies.

**Table 4. Evaluation of the Strategies being Employed in the Delivery of the FLP**

Items	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. Strategies are appropriate to the lesson objectives	4.32	Very Satisfactory
2. Strategies are appropriate to the course objectives	4.24	Very Satisfactory
3. The Class Time is well spent	4.56	Very Satisfactory
4. Adequacy of content	4.40	Very Satisfactory
5. Strategies are varied	4.30	Very Satisfactory
6. Evidence of teacher-student interaction	4.48	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.38</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

### Learning Assessments/Evaluations

Jay McTighe and Ken O'Connor [8] in their paper Seven Practices for Effective Learning express that Classroom assessment and grading practices have the potential not only to measure and report learning but also to promote it. In addition, they likewise say that: Students are more likely to put forth the required effort when there is 1) Task clarity—when they clearly understand the learning goal and know how teachers will evaluate their learning, 2) Relevance—when they think the learning goals and assessments are meaningful and worth learning and 3) Potential for success—when they believe they can successfully learn and meet the evaluative expectations. These meant that students who are made aware of what they need to learn and how these learning will be measured will likely succeed. In summary, task clarity, relevance and potential for success were evident in the university's FLP as confirmed with the students in the focus group discussion.

The NASDFL[9] likewise found out that one of the characteristics of effective language instruction is on the type of assessments. It said, that: Assessments are ongoing. Students are assessed formally and informally on how well they are able to meet the objectives of the lesson. Continuous self-assessments for students and teachers are encouraged. These finding goes tangent with the result of this study that show very satisfactory rating along the assessments employed by the FLP Instructor as can be gleaned from Table 5. The over-all mean of 4.33 summarizes this claim.

**Table 5. Evaluation of the Different Assessments Employed in the FLP**

Items	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. Variety of assessments used in the class	4.34	Very Satisfactory
2. Effectiveness of Oral Examination	4.30	Very Satisfactory
3. Effectiveness of Written Examinations	4.35	Very Satisfactory
4. Assessments contribution to student learning	4.32	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.33</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

According to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) [10] on characteristics of an effective foreign language program states on evaluation: Processes for evaluating both student achievement and program success are in use. Evaluation processes are appropriate to the goals, objectives and teaching strategies of elementary foreign language programs, as well as to the developmental level of children.

### Student Engagement

The Glossary for Education Reform (GER) [11], (2016) explains student engagement as one referring to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education. Table 6 indicates especially item 1 with a mean of 4.51 or outstanding, that students have been actively participating. In the same table, it is noted that over-all, a mean of 4.38 or very satisfactory shows that students have been engaged during the course. This satisfies the GER which states that generally speaking, the concept of “student engagement” is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired, and that learning tends to suffer when students are bored, dispassionate, disaffected, or otherwise “disengaged.”

The students confirmed that they were very interested to enter the class and followed religiously all the lessons being presented to them. They also employed other means like looking into the internet to be able to get to know lessons in advance.

**Table 6. Evaluation of the Students' Engagement in the FLP**

Items	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. Participation of students	4.51	Outstanding
2. Sustenance of students' attention to teaching and learning	4.35	Very Satisfactory
3. Students mastery of lessons	4.12	Very Satisfactory
4. Clarification of students queries	4.36	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.33</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

As Selengkapnya [12] puts it, motivation, environment and attitudes toward errors are very influential factors in using strategies of language learning.

It was confirmed from the FLP facilitators, that attendance of students was good, in that, all of them were present in most cases during the meeting. Absences noted if there were, were made when it was necessary for students to leave because of a more pressing personal or academic concern. Such a picture shows interest of students, which is an innate motivation to take active role in the class. It should be noted that students were alerted that the FLP is like any regular subject to be completed and is a requirement for the program they applied for. The FLP facilitators likewise confirmed that students were actively involved, and are interested in the discussions.

### Learning Resources and Environment

**Table 7. Evaluation of Resources and Environment in the FLP**

Items	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. The Classroom (appropriateness, ventilation)	4.53	Outstanding
2. Teaching Resources/Technology (LCD, sound system etc.)	4.40	Very Satisfactory
3. Learning environment that allows teacher-student interaction	4.59	Outstanding
4. Over-all impact of resources and environment to learning	4.58	Outstanding
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.51</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

Among all areas of the USL FLP under study, this part received the highest evaluation, with an over-all mean of 4.58 or outstanding as reflected in Table 7. The class was conducted in an educational media center wherein, this was fully air-condition room and equipped with technology for instruction. The environment, as current thinking among experts of education, indicates that a good environment is favorable to teaching. Environment includes the ventilation and all the available resources that contribute to learning which as revealed in this study was well provided for.

The importance of learning resources and good environment is aptly supported by the Abu Dhabi Education Council [13] which states that: The power of the learning environment to influence and promote learning is significant and the learning spaces and learning resources provide important opportunities for students to explore ideas and knowledge, collaborate, solve problems and develop knowledge and skills.

The ease of having a good classroom equipped with educational or teaching resources was confirmed and appreciated by the learners as mentioned during the focused-group discussion, which as earlier stated, was rated outstanding by the students.

The FLP facilitators expressed contentment in the room that was utilized for the FLP that made the class successful, and hence, they suggested that future FLP should be held in the same or similar venue.

### Classroom Management

For this part, the respondents affirm that the FLP class was well managed as can be revealed by an over-all mean of 4.26 or very satisfactory. The students in the focus group discussion concurred that the teacher was able to ensure discipline and order in the class in the whole duration of the program. It must be good to mention as well that at the start of the program, an orientation was made to ensure that everyone knows what is expected of him/her to deliver.

According to CARLA [14], an effective classroom management is one in which learners are the center of the classroom in which teachers respect individual learning styles and create/select guided student-to-student activities to maximize proficiency-oriented practice and that these activities take into account the affective component of learning, which includes such factors as student motivation, attitudes, anxiety and specific interests.

**Table 8. Evaluation of the Classroom Management of the Foreign Language Instructor**

Items	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. Classroom Discipline	4.12	Very Satisfactory
2. Reinforcement or appreciation of good behavior	4.27	Very Satisfactory
3. Teacher's ability to handle the class	4.35	Very Satisfactory
4. Assurance of order in the different classroom routines	4.35	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.26</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

As seasoned educator himself, the researcher believes that success in learning begins with a good classroom management. As can be revealed even further in the Table 8, discipline is ensured, reinforcement or appreciation of good performance, ability of the teacher to handle the class and assurance of order were ascertained with a very satisfactory rating.

On the spot classroom visit made by the researcher also showed the ability of the FLP facilitators to manage the class even amidst the big class size of about a hundred. It can be said, that while the classroom was well managed, handling a big class size necessitates additional manpower to support the main facilitator.

### Outcomes

**Table 9. Evaluation of the Outcomes of the Foreign Language Program**

Items	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. Students' Mastery of the lessons every end of the lesson	4.17	Very Satisfactory
2. Students' Competence in Mandarin Chinese speaking	4.20	Very Satisfactory
3. Students' Competence in Mandarin Chinese writing	3.95	Very Satisfactory
4. Students' mastery of the Course and hence capacity to communicate in Mandarin Chinese	4.19	Very Satisfactory
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.12</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

The University in its shift to Outcomes-Based Education(OBE) has always put premium in the outcomes from the program or the course both after every lesson and the summative assessment in terms

of what was desired in the class as output. The Foreign Language Program of USL has two assessments, both oral and written examination, to ensure the competencies desired as reflected in the objectives of the course are attained.

Towers (1996), cited by Bustos-Orosa [15](2012) in a Conference in the Philippines, talks about four characteristics of outcomes as follows: 1) What the student is to learn must be clearly identified 2) The student's progress is based on demonstrated achievement 3) Multiple instructional and assessment strategies need to be available to meet the needs of each student and 4) Adequate time and assistance need to be provided so that each student can reach the maximum potential. These four important characteristics of making OBE work were evident in the FLP of USL.

Spady [16]( 1994 ) expresses that "An outcome is a culminating demonstration of learning. It is a demonstration of learning that occurs at the end of a learning experience. It is the result of learning which is a visible and observable demonstration of three things: knowledge, combined with competence, combined with orientations." Along Spady's thought on OBE, with an over-all mean of 4.12 from Table 9, the USL Foreign Language Program as a whole was very satisfactory. Individual items investigated under outcomes indicate individual mean ratings that are very satisfactory.

It is noted though that the students' competence in Writing Mandarin was the lowest among all means with 3.95. This result coincides with the result of the written examinations as revealed in the scores of the students. In the focused-group discussion with the students and concurred by the facilitators, they confirm that students were better in oral than in writing. The difficulty in writing is of course brought about by the adjustments of students into the sudden shift or writing alphabets with the Mandarin Chinese language requiring different strokes or styles.

In a paper by Rohrer [17] ( 2015) entitled "Student Instruction Should Be Distributed Over Long Time Periods", the author found out that with few exceptions, the results of his study showed that longer instructional periods produced greater posttest scores if the posttest was delayed by at least a month or so. In capsule he expresses that the best reading of the data is that long-term learning is best achieved when the exposures to a concept are distributed over time periods that are longer rather than shorter. In the case

of USL's FLP, from a crash course on a 10-day meeting basis, the school made it a point that the training was held more than a month maintaining the total of 54 hours as the usual 3-unit course in a semester or term. The said scheme provided opportunity for the students for more extended learning and review of lessons, hence the good outcomes. This was affirmed by the students in the focus group discussion.

### Summary of Evaluation

Over-all, the USL Foreign Language Program was rated very satisfactory as can be seen in Table 10, in that, it was able to help the University realize one of its institutional objective to make its graduate speak in English and the national language(Filipino) and at least one foreign language, in this case, Mandarin Chinese.

As was previously stated in the other tables, Objectives (including the specific ones as contained in the course syllabi), Learning strategies, lesson assessments, student engagement, classroom management were very satisfactory with one area, being the highest, learning resources and environment being rated outstanding.

According to NADSFL[18], a good Foreign Language program is characterized by "Culture is a natural component of language use in all activities".

**Table 10. Summary of Evaluation along the Different Areas of the FLP**

Items	Mean	Description
Objectives	4.24	Very Satisfactory
Specific Objectives ( of the Course)	4.28	Very Satisfactory
Learning Strategies	4.38	Very Satisfactory
Lesson Assessments	4.33	Very Satisfactory
Student Engagement	4.33	Very Satisfactory
Learning Resources and Environment	4.51	Outstanding
Classroom Management	4.26	Very Satisfactory
Outcomes	4.12	Very Satisfactory
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>4.31</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>

It is worthy to mention that two of the objectives of the USL Foreign Language Program are reflective of what experts or researchers have suggested. These objectives are 1) Distinguish the differences and similarities between Chinese and Filipino culture especially on respective professions and other related fields that require Human relations and 2) Show



respect on the Cultural influences and differences between Chinese and Filipino way of life.

In addition, ACTFL [19]discloses that Language Program must be able to 1) make the connection between language and culture explicit, and 2) foreign language instruction is implemented within a cultural context. Cultural awareness and understanding are explicit goals of the program. The program collaborates with other cultures and countries (exchange programs, pen pals, etc.) to assure language learning within a context of cultural experiences. With the foregoing, USL was able to ensure that culture was also incorporated in the training, which earlier on was stated to have been realized as indicated in the course objectives. The experience of students that culminated with a closing program where they shared songs and poems in Mandarin Chinese exemplified that learning occurred among all students enrolled in the FLP. While there was demonstration of learning, longer time would have allowed more participation by all students.

**Table 11. Difference of Respondents Views on the FLP when grouped to sex**

Areas	Sex	N	Mean	t-value	p-value
Objective	Female	106	37.84	0.130	0.897
	Male	83	37.72		
Strategies	Female	106	26.52	1.383	0.168
	Male	83	25.73		
Assessment	Female	106	17.31	1.408	0.161
	Male	83	16.72		
Engagement	Female	106	17.20	0.139	0.889
	Male	83	17.14		
Resources	Female	106	17.92	0.490	0.624
	Male	83	17.72		
Management	Female	106	17.05	0.613	0.540
	Male	83	16.78		
Outcomes	Female	106	16.53	0.431	0.667

\*Significant at 0.05

In this study, it is revealed in Table 11, that there is no significant difference in the different aspects of the university's FLP as viewed by the students regardless of gender, in that, classes in the university is co-educational. There are differing views about how people see language and gender, one such idea is that of Andrew Moore [20], and to quote: Studying language and gender is hard, because students can easily adopt entrenched positions or allow passion to cloud a clear judgment. Typically, students may mistrust a teacher's statements about language as it is because these show a world in which stereotypes

persist (as if the teacher wanted the world to be this way). On the other hand, any attempt to divide the world into two utterly heterogeneous sexes, with no common ground at all is equally to be resisted. As with many things, the world is not so simple - there are lots of grey areas in the study of language and gender. One example is sexuality - how far the speech and writing of gay men and women approximates to that of the same or the opposite sex, or how far it has its own distinctness. Tannen [21](1996)states further that Not all members of a particular sex may follow the specific gender roles that are prescribed by society. Both Moore and Tannen's point to one thing, that language may or may not be affected by gender.

**Table 12. Difference of Respondents Views on the FLP when grouped to Program**

Area	Course	N	Mean	F-value	p-value
Objectives	1	49	38.80	2.237	0.067
	2	21	39.14		
	3	42	37.81		
	4	34	38.38		
	5	43	35.49		
Strategies	1	49	26.69	2.653	0.035*
	2	21	27.19		
	3	42	26.45		
	4	34	26.50		
	5	43	24.56		
Assessment	1	49	17.31	1.527	0.196
	2	21	17.38		
	3	42	17.60		
	4	34	16.88		
	5	43	16.21		
Engagement	1	49	17.35	1.971	0.101
	2	21	17.43		
	3	42	17.69		
	4	34	17.32		
	5	43	16.23		
Resources	1	49	17.94	3.226	0.014*
	2	21	19.00		
	3	42	18.43		
	4	34	17.62		
	5	43	16.74		
Management	1	49	17.53	2.072	0.086
	2	21	17.43		
	3	42	16.71		
	4	34	17.26		
	5	43	15.95		
Outcomes	1	49	16.73	0.449	0.736
	2	21	16.71		
	3	42	16.26		
	4	34	16.71		
	5	43	15.93		

\*Significant at 0.05

In Table 12, it can be seen that there is a significant difference in the views of student-respondents when grouped according to program along two aspects of the FLP, which are the strategies and learning resources. There exists no significant difference along objectives, assessments, engagement, management and outcomes.

Simon Borg [22] in his research on the distinctive characteristics of foreign language teachers, found out that language teachers are seen to be distinctive in terms of the nature of the subject, the content of teaching, the teaching methodology, teacher-learner relationships, and contrasts between native and non-native speakers. This explains variations in the learners' views of the strategies of the FLP facilitators. The view of the learners of their teachers' strategies vary from one person to another, which in this case are true of the learners as represented by the different programs.

Moreover, students' views of the resources also varied, in that, students were grouped into two sets, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. It should be noted that its cooler to have class in the morning as revealed in the focus group discussion.

#### **Implications of the Findings of the Evaluation of the FLP for Future Action by USL**

From the digest of findings based on the evaluations made, there is a need for the University to look into the following: 1) Maintain the aspects of the program that were rated high and work on the aspects that were low; 2) Revise the syllabus of the FLP to address the findings which include the strengthening of the Mandarin Chinese writing competency of the students; 3) Culture component of the FLP needs to be improved in the light of the observation made by the facilitators that it was limited. Immersion activities can be thought of for instance in the market, in a Chinese Restaurant or in a Mandarin Chinese community; 4) Explore the possibility of the FLP to be offered on a regular basis with a Chinese professor of Mandarin; 5) Pursue collaboration with partner Chinese Universities along Mandarin Chinese teaching and Learning development by both universities by coming up with creative work like manuals and workbooks adapted to Philippine situation; 6) Eventually connect graduates for possible employment in China or in Chinese speaking communities abroad with the graduates' basic knowledge on Mandarin Chinese. And 7) Explore

ways by which a follow-up training after the basic Mandarin be made for interested students who want to further enhance their competencies above what is required by the university.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The USL Foreign Language Program was implemented in a manner consistent with the USL's institutional and course objectives. These objectives were achieved this early with the maiden years of implementation with the choice of Mandarin Chinese as course offering.

A successful Foreign Language Program which USL has implemented is an interplay of several factors that begins with the provision of a conducive environment for teaching and more so of learning. Even while the center or focus of any Foreign Language Program is the learner, the role teachers or facilitators play cannot be discounted. The strategies they use, the management technique they employ and the assessments they utilize all redound to the best learning that happened to the USL students.

Careful introspection of the implementation of the Foreign Language Program showed that with an outcome in mind that should be realized, success was ascertained at a degree higher than expected. But even then, there are areas within which USL can still work on to strengthen areas that needed more attention. The history of Mandarin Chinese as course offering with its early inception in USL proved successful.

The need to find out if there would be a difference in the implementation of the program if it were delivered by a Filipino instead of a native Mandarin Chinese speaker can be explored. On the part of USL Administration, the need to expand to other foreign language offerings and even better ways of administering FLP can be explored after a thorough and insightful reflection, in view of the fact that Mandarin was proven to have been delivered well. More foreign languages within Asia can be explored including, but not limited to Nippongo, and Korean Language.

The need to pursue the FLP in USL, in the light of ASEAN Integration, and moreso, in the light of providing better chances and advantage to its graduates to lend in a job in Asia and the world is of paramount importance.

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