

RUOHAN ZHAO (Rita)

Chinese Language Education | Generative AI in Education | Teacher Cognition
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RESEARCH PROFILE AND INTERESTS

Profile: Chinese language educator and emerging researcher with experience in technology-enhanced language learning, teacher cognition, curriculum design, qualitative inquiry, corpus development, and academic project coordination.

Research interests: Generative AI in Chinese language education; teacher beliefs, professional learning, and technology-related agency; sociocultural and corpus-supported pedagogy; Chinese culture and context-based instruction; technology-enhanced curriculum design, assessment, and learner feedback.

EDUCATION

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), Hong Kong Sep 2023 - Oct 2024
MA in International Language Education (Teaching Chinese as a Second Language) / CGA: 3.425/4.300

- Selected graduate training: research project design, teaching practicum, language teaching methods and curriculum design, phonetics and phonology, morphology and syntax.

Huaqiao University, Xiamen, China Sep 2019 - Jul 2023
BA in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages / GPA: 87.12/100

- Selected coursework: introduction to teaching Chinese as a foreign language, linguistics, philology, pedagogy, modern and classical Chinese, and Chinese literature.

PUBLICATIONS

Rao, E., & Zhao, R. (2026). The application of ChatGPT in creating Chinese cultural context scripts: An activity theory perspective. *International Journal of Chinese Language Teaching*, Online First.
<https://doi.org/10.46451/ijclt.260603>

Rao, E., & Zhao, R. (forthcoming). An initial exploration of the design and development of a micro-learning series on Chinese Pinyin. *TechCLE 2026 Conference Proceedings*.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Rao, E., & Zhao, R. (June 2026). The application of ChatGPT in creating Chinese cultural context scripts: An activity theory perspective. Paper presented at the 9th International Forum on Linguistics and Chinese Education (IFOLCE-9), City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

Rao, E., & Zhao, R. (June 2026). An initial exploration of the design and development of a micro-learning series on Chinese Pinyin. Paper presented at the Conference on Technology-Enhanced Chinese Language Education (TechCLE 2026), HKUST, Hong Kong, and the 15th International Conference on the Modernization of Chinese Language Education, Yunnan University, China.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

From Scepticism to Pedagogical Action:

Teacher Mediation of Generative AI in Advanced Chinese Language Teaching

Independent researcher / Manuscript in preparation

- Conducted an embedded qualitative case study and retrospective reanalysis of two teachers, auditing seven raw transcript files and 87 analytically relevant teacher turns.
- Developed a 29-code, six-dimension framework and cross-source matrices in MAXQDA; an approximately 8,000-word manuscript is under major revision.

Corpus-Based Blended Learning Task in Differentiating Chinese Near-Synonyms

Research collaborator / Ongoing

- Supports data and materials reconstruction, data checking, manuscript restructuring, interpretation, and Chinese-language editing.
- The study combines corpus evidence with survey data from 31 advanced Chinese learners and semi-structured interviews with six participants.

SCOPA-Assisted CBI for Comprehending Affective Metaphors: The Case of Huo ("Fire")

Independent researcher / Course-based study

- Conducted a two-learner pretest-intervention-posttest study using a visual SCOPA, testing, and interviews to examine metaphor comprehension and transfer.

RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROJECT EXPERIENCE

HKUST Center for Language Education (iLANG), Hong Kong

Mar 2025 - May 2026

Instructional Assistant and Research Collaborator

- Designed and executed mixed-methods research on ChatGPT-assisted cultural-context scriptwriting; conducted thematic coding in MAXQDA and descriptive analysis.
- Drafted core manuscript sections, including methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion, and coordinated revision milestones and co-author workflows.
- Co-developed a Pinyin micro-lesson series for L2 learners and authored the learner self-reflection framework; supported Articulate 360 integration, multimedia production, and evaluation.
- Recorded standardized Putonghua demonstration audio, provided targeted learner support, and wrote the educational script "Putonghua: One Voice, One Language" for a university-language promotion initiative.

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Hong Kong

Mar 2024 - Jun 2026

Research Assistant and Student Helper / Multilingual Writing by Sinophone Hong Kong Writers

- Developed a Putonghua-Cantonese writing-conversion corpus by defining collection and annotation standards and collecting, cleaning, structuring, and validating more than 10,000 language records.
- Completed cross-language classification and manual quality assurance across Cantonese, Putonghua, and English materials; used MAXQDA and JASP for coding, processing, and validation.
- Conducted a structured literature review on multilingual writing and language conversion, supported the research framework, drafted manuscript sections, and edited for argumentation, terminology, and journal compliance.
- Managed project timelines, priorities, risk points, and supervisor communication across concurrent research tasks to meet submission and reporting deadlines.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Kunming Industrial Vocational and Technical College, Kunming, China

Aug 2026 - Present

Incoming Lecturer, College Chinese / Appointment confirmed; curriculum development in progress

- Designing a 48-contact-hour, 24-session College Chinese course for four cohorts, covering literary reading, practical writing, oral communication, career-linked tasks, project work, and assessment rubrics.
- Adapting instruction to varied vocational-student preparation through close reading, scenario-based practice, scaffolded writing, formative diagnosis, and individualized support.

New Oriental · Bling Chinese

Feb 2026 - Present

Chinese Language Teacher (TCSL), Remote

- Teaches international K-12 and heritage learners across beginner (L1-L2) and advanced (L5-L6) proficiency bands using individualized learning plans and culturally responsive materials.
- Uses TPR, gamification, multisensory literacy tasks, and multimedia courseware for Pinyin, characters, situational communication, grammar, idioms, classical literature, and advanced discourse.
- Conducts formative assessments, tracks developmental milestones, and provides detailed feedback to learners and parents.

Kunming Runcheng School, Kunming, China

Nov 2024 - Jan 2025

Secondary School Chinese Teacher

- Designed diagnostic and differentiated instruction in reading and writing and delivered a schoolwide demonstration lesson adopted as a reference case by the department.
- Used assignment, assessment, and classroom data to develop tiered interventions, improving the class's overall Chinese ranking from 16th to 3rd within two weeks.
- Maintained a diagnosis-feedback-adjustment-tracking cycle and shared individualized progress reports and learning recommendations with families.

Affiliated High School of Yunnan Minzu University, Kunming, China

Sep 2024 - Nov 2024

Teaching Intern

- Taught classical poetry and prose, modern reading, and argumentative writing; observed lessons and participated in collaborative planning, feedback, and reflection.

HKUST Center for Language Education, Hong Kong

Mar 2024 - Aug 2024

Teaching Assistant Intern

- Supported Effective Chinese Communication: Speaking and Writing and Advanced Putonghua for Non-Chinese Language Background Students through lesson planning, selected teaching, differentiated materials, and one-to-one tutoring.
- Delivered phonetic diagnosis and individualized feedback and integrated Mentimeter, Articulate 360, Padlet, discussion, AR, and immersive games; the courses received an 88% positive overall evaluation.
- Coordinated pacing, feedback, and transitions across teaching teams and received A ratings from supervising instructors and students.

Heartfulness Chinese Project, Hyderabad, India

Mar 2020 - Dec 2021

Volunteer Chinese Language Teacher (TCSL), Hybrid

- Co-developed a beginner Chinese curriculum, objectives, sequence, and teaching materials covering everyday communication, foundational language knowledge, and culture.
- Combined online and face-to-face teaching, adapted pacing from learner feedback, and coordinated teaching assignments and instructor workshops.

ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION EXPERIENCE

Kunming Industrial Vocational and Technical College, Kunming, China

Oct 2022 - Mar 2023

Academic Affairs Assistant

- Supported course scheduling, mid-term and final examinations, English proficiency tests, exam-paper preparation, admission-ticket verification, and cross-department coordination.
- Assisted with student records and status changes, post-exam data organization, teaching-quality evaluation cases, and education-reform summary reports.

Kunming University of Science and Technology, Kunming, China

May 2022 - Oct 2022

Academic Affairs Assistant

- Organized and archived course plans, transcripts, student-status applications, and academic records; supported score entry, preliminary statistics, and instructor feedback.
- Coordinated examinations, invigilator schedules, rooms, materials, student-status queries, academic exchange events, teacher training, and student lectures.

INTERNATIONAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, USA

Mar 2023

Exchange Student and Chinese Student Representative

- Collaborated with students from the United States, France, Nepal, and other countries and facilitated discussions on cultural similarities, differences, self-awareness, and otherness.
- Organized a Chinese culture showcase on festivals, language conventions, and social norms, strengthening cross-cultural communication and cultural interpretation.

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2021-2022 Huaqiao University Second-Class Scholarship (top 2%).
- 2020-2021 College of Chinese Language and Culture Second-Class Scholarship (top 3%).
- CATTI Cup National Translation Contest, Chinese-English Group A, Third Prize.
- Second National College Student Artificial Intelligence Knowledge Competition, First Prize.
- National College Student English Vocabulary Challenge, First Prize.
- Readers' Cup National Youth Literature Contest, Semi-Final First Prize.
- National College Student New Media Contest, Short Video Category, Third Prize.

RESEARCH METHODS AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

Methods: Qualitative case study; embedded case study; semi-structured interviews; classroom observation and transcription; thematic and framework analysis; mixed-methods and descriptive analysis; corpus development and corpus-supported pedagogy; systematic literature review; audit trails, source triangulation, data cleaning, annotation, coding, and quality assurance.

Research software: MAXQDA, NVivo, JASP, Microsoft Excel, and WPS Spreadsheets.

Educational technology: Mentimeter, Padlet, Articulate 360, Quizizz, multimedia courseware, online teaching platforms, and generative AI tools for teaching-material development and information synthesis.

CREDENTIALS AND LANGUAGES

Credentials: Certificate for Teachers of Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CTCSOL); Senior Secondary Chinese Teaching Certificate; CATTI International Chinese-English Translation Certificate; NCRE Level 2 (WPS Office); KOS Excel Expert.

Languages: Mandarin Chinese (native; Putonghua Proficiency Test Level 2-A); English (IELTS 6.5; academic and professional working proficiency).