

Original Paper

Research on the Problems in Chinese Classroom Teaching in Ethnic Regions —Taking Four Primary Schools in Nagqu City as an Example

Jing Li

Tibet University, 850000, China

Received: October 28, 2024 Accepted: November 25, 2024 Online Published: December 2, 2024
doi:10.22158/jecs.v8n4p171 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/jecs.v8n4p171>

Abstract

Classroom teaching is the main channel of Chinese language teaching, which is the process of imparting Chinese knowledge, cultivating Chinese core literacy and abilities through teaching activities in the classroom. By means of interviews and classroom observation, found that in the classroom teaching field, western China's primary school unified language textbooks have been put into use since the autumn of 2017, and have had problems in teacher teaching, student learning, curriculum nature and classroom culture. Based on this, it is proposed that putting literacy first, emphasizing teaching research, and striving for teaching effectiveness; Promoting student development through mutual aid in lesson observation and situational teaching; Based on text, combining reading and writing to enjoy the beauty of Chinese language; Integrating education into culture, creating an infectious atmosphere, and showcasing the art of teaching, with a view to improving the quality of Chinese education and teaching in western China.

Keywords

Ethnic regions, classroom teaching, Chinese class

1. Introduction

Currently, the problems and challenges in Chinese education in ethnic regions have become a hot topic of concern in the field of education. The use of the unified "Chinese Language" textbook in primary schools in ethnic regions is a major decision and deployment made by the Central Committee of China to strengthen the education of the national common language and script in ethnic regions. Since the promotion of new textbooks, problems and challenges in Chinese language education in ethnic regions have been constantly emerging. This study aims to improve the quality of Chinese language education

in ethnic regions by deeply analyzing the causes of these problems and exploring effective solutions. This is of great significance for promoting the development of education in ethnic regions, enhancing the cultural literacy of ethnic minority groups, and promoting ethnic unity and social stability.

The “Compulsory Education Chinese Language Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition)” (hereinafter referred to as the Curriculum Standard) put forward four teaching suggestions in the curriculum implementation section: based on core competencies, highlighting teaching objectives with a cultural oriented approach to educating people; Reflect the characteristics of the Chinese language learning task group and plan the overall learning content; Create authentic and meaningful learning contexts that highlight the practicality of Chinese language learning; Pay attention to the changes of Chinese life in the Internet era, and explore the reform of Chinese teaching and learning methods (2022). Based on the above understanding, the researcher conducted in-depth research in four primary schools in Nagqu City, using interviews and classroom observations. The interviewees were mainly four Chinese language teachers with over 10 years of teaching experience in each of the four primary schools, who had rich experience and ideas in classroom teaching; Observations were conducted on 10 Chinese language classes, and the classroom observation scale was designed based on the curriculum standards, using Professor Cui Yunhong's (2012) LICC paradigm for classroom observation as a blueprint. The observations were mainly conducted from the following four elements: teacher teaching, student learning, course nature, and classroom culture; The interview data will serve as a supplement to classroom observations, helping us to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the actual situation of Chinese language education in ethnic regions. Combining the above two methods to conduct investigation and research, the purpose is to explore the implementation of curriculum standards in classroom teaching in western China and how to improve the efficiency of primary school Chinese classroom teaching and achieve the effectiveness of classroom teaching through reflection and analysis of relevant Chinese classroom teaching problems.

2. Survey Results and Analysis

This survey took four primary schools, A, B, C, and D, in Nagqu City. Through understanding the basic situation of the four primary schools and their Chinese language teachers, semi-structured interviews were conducted to communicate with the case teachers (the basic information of the case teachers is shown in Table 1 below), and in-depth classroom teaching was conducted to analyze the following issues:

Table 1. The Basic Information of the Case Teachers

Teacher's ID	Gender	Teaching Experience	Teaching Grade	Education
T1	female	12	Grade 4	junior college
T2	female	15	Grade 3	undergraduate
T3	female	16	Grade 3	junior college
T4	female	17	Grade 6	undergraduate

2.1 Problems in Teacher's Teaching

2.1.1 Teachers have not had a Deep Understanding and Mastery of the Curriculum Standard

The implementation of unified Chinese language textbooks and the requirements of the Curriculum Standard require teachers to have higher language literacy. If a teacher interprets incorrectly, they cannot control the classroom. During the interview process, it was found that the teachers had a low level of understanding of the content of the Curriculum Standard. When asked about their understanding of the relevant content of the Curriculum Standard, they felt unfamiliar with some subordinate concepts such as “interdisciplinary learning” and “whole book reading”, and even had not heard of them; When asked about their views on higher-level concepts such as “core competencies” and “learning task groups” (see Table 2 for relevant interview materials), the following issues exist: T1 teachers have misunderstood and improperly applied the concept of “core literacy”. Core literacy is a comprehensive reflection of cultural confidence, language use, thinking ability, and aesthetic creation that students accumulate, construct, and demonstrate in real language use contexts through active language practice activities (2022). T2 teacher has an improper understanding of the concept of “learning task group”, which includes three levels: basic, developmental, and expanded learning task groups. T2 teacher narrows down its concept and only understands it as post class exercises; T3 teachers have difficulties in using “learning task groups”. The Curriculum Standard explains the content of the three levels of learning task groups in combination with different stages. Teachers can focus on the arrangement of learning task groups based on actual learning situations, indicating that T3 teachers have a low understanding of the curriculum content; The feedback from Teacher T4 is actually a problem that exists among the other three teachers. They are confused about how to integrate the curriculum content with the teaching process, and how to implement the top-level design into actual teaching.

Table 2. Recording and Summarizing Interview Materials on the Content of the Curriculum Standard

Teacher's ID	Interview Materials	Code
T1	"I have heard of core competencies, but they are rarely used. If they are mentioned in each unit, I will consider this issue. However, if they are not mentioned in the unit introduction, I will not pay much attention to them"	Misunderstanding and improper application of "core competencies"
T2	"I heard about the learning task group, but when I talk about these third grade texts now, I first ask students to read the exercises after class and use those questions to understand our learning content"	Misunderstanding of "learning task group"
T3	"I have heard of learning task groups, but I don't know how to apply them in the classroom"	Difficulty in using the "learning task group"
T4	"We usually emphasize the need to combine with the curriculum standards, including when we create questions, we should also try our best to combine them. Every time the head of the teaching and research group and the teaching and research department are talking about lesson preparation and teaching in accordance with the curriculum standards. But when we combined, we found it very vague and couldn't fully understand"	The process of integrating curriculum standards with teaching is vague

2.1.2 The Teachers' Classroom Evaluation Language is Single

Classroom teaching evaluation refers to the process of evaluating and providing feedback on teachers' teaching activities and students' learning situations in the classroom. It can help teachers identify problems and adjust teaching strategies in a timely manner, while also helping students understand their own learning situation and stimulate learning motivation. During classroom observation, it was found that the teacher's classroom evaluation language was single and lacked specificity, mainly consisting of vague comments such as "great", "really good", and "well said". Through interviews, it was also found that teachers lacked awareness of "teaching learning evaluation integration", resulting in a single form of classroom teaching evaluation. Among the 10 observed Chinese classes, only one class showed an active scene of peer evaluation between students. This is contradictory to the concept of the new curriculum. And the curriculum also emphasizes the diversity and flexibility of evaluation forms, and the evaluation of classroom teaching should be the same.

2.2 Problems with Student Learning

2.2.1 There are Differences in the Cognitive Level of Pastoral Students Compared to Textbook Content and Curriculum Standard

The promotion and use of unified Chinese textbooks for learning and applying Chinese language through literacy, reading, writing, and oral communication is questioned by the mother child for improving the language ability and cultivating language literacy of students in ethnic areas. However, for students in pastoral areas, the phenomenon of “going to school in Nagqu and returning to the pastoral area during holidays” is common, and students have relatively little knowledge and do not have a genuine understanding of the things mentioned in textbooks. For example, in the first unit of the third grade textbook, the assignment “My Plant Friend” requires students to write clearly about their observations and feelings about the growth process of plants. Through experiments and planting, they can mark the process of plant growth. Due to issues such as high altitude, low oxygen, and frozen soil, it is difficult for plants in the Nagqu area to survive and reproduce in such an environment, making it difficult for students to complete the assignment requirements. Due to differences in cultural backgrounds and living environments, they face difficulties in understanding and mastering textbook content, and it is even more difficult for them to meet the stage requirements emphasized in the Curriculum Standard.

2.2.2 There are Few Independent, Cooperative, and Exploratory Learning Methods in the Classroom

Primary school Chinese language classroom is a stage for teacher-student interaction and spiritual dialogue in primary school Chinese language subject teaching. Under traditional learning methods, students' Chinese language learning outcomes are not satisfactory, specifically manifested as difficulty in understanding the thoughts and emotions contained in the text, and inability to apply the language knowledge and skills learned in reading to oral communication and writing. The main reason is that they are pushed forward by teachers in their studies. The Curriculum Standard proposes a new learning method - “autonomous cooperative exploration”, emphasizing students' active learning, valuing the application of group cooperation in Chinese language teaching, and paying attention to autonomous exploration of knowledge and cultural phenomena, which has a positive effect on improving the effectiveness of Chinese language learning. However, in actual teaching, teachers have not been able to return the classroom to students, throw problems to students, and leave time for students. The classroom is mainly taught by teachers, and group cooperation and exploration activities are superficial. In the communication process with T4 teacher, I learned that the teacher actually realized this problem when doing learning situation analysis (The relevant interview materials are shown in Table 3). Over time, this has resulted in students having poor study habits and only learning under the guidance of teachers. The awareness of active learning is weak, which is extremely detrimental to learning.

Table 3. Summary of T4 Teacher Interview Materials

1	“The students in this class have low self-restraint ability and have not yet developed conscious study habits. They only learn under the guidance of teachers”
2	“Most students have poor learning foundations, single learning methods, and poor ability to actively learn. They still use rote memorization methods to learn knowledge from lower grades to learn knowledge from higher grades”
3	“Some students are lazy and have not completed their homework on time and with quality since the beginning of the school year. They have to be urged every time before doing it, and even do not do it”
4	“Students, for various reasons, do not like to actively memorize or ask teachers questions”

2.3 Problems with the Nature of the Course

2.3.1 The Classroom Learning Content Slides to the Pan-Chinese Tendency

Pan-Chinese has always been a chronic problem that is difficult to overcome in primary school Chinese language teaching. From the perspective of Chinese language teaching content, Chinese language teaching treats text content more as teaching content, thus teaching many non Chinese things, making Chinese language teaching lose its own “flavor” (Shi & Hu, 2011). The most prominent problem is teaching texts. Teachers often mistake texts for the entire content of Chinese language teaching, leading to a tendency towards pan-Chinese and forgetting that Chinese language is a course that allows students to learn language and writing, and to learn the methods and principles of language application. A teacher is teaching the third grade textbook “Burning Clouds”. Starting from pictures of burning clouds, students are asked to read the text aloud and appreciate the beauty of burning clouds. Then, students are guided to think about what burning clouds look like by looking at the pictures and imagine why they have such diverse shapes. This kind of class is like a natural course, with very little emphasis on Chinese language, because the main teaching objective of the article is to master the different expressions of describing color words, and to say a paragraph based on the key sentences in the text. Such classrooms result in poor effectiveness in Chinese language learning. In Chinese language teaching practice, it is necessary to design classroom activities and problems reasonably to ensure the effective implementation of Chinese language activities.

2.3.2 The Cultivation of Chinese Classroom Elements has Become the Teaching Knowledge

The unified Chinese language textbook adopts a parallel approach of “humanistic themes” and “Chinese language elements”. This writing method aims to guide students to think deeply and understand the text through humanistic themes, while cultivating their Chinese literacy and language abilities. However, based on interviews and observations, many teachers focus on the Chinese language elements of the unit when teaching the text, learn the reading and writing elements in the text, and then teach them one by one, categorizing them. This is detached from the context of students’ lives and the needs of Chinese language practice, alienated into teaching knowledge, without balancing the unity of

instrumental and humanistic aspects, and contrary to the nature of Chinese language curriculum. The Curriculum Standard emphasizes that the teaching content and language elements of each section are not isolated, but interconnected. For example, in the Chinese language elements of Unit 3 of the third grade textbook, the requirement of “collecting information on traditional festivals, exchanging customs and habits of festivals, and writing about the process of festivals” has a rich connotation, and the series of steps from searching to collecting and organizing have gradually improved in the teaching process of middle and high school. In this way, the elements of Chinese language in the entire teaching system are not isolated knowledge points, but closely connected organic whole. They are interrelated and jointly build a solid foundation for students' Chinese language literacy. Teachers need to pay attention to the correlation and complementarity between different language elements, and avoid conducting single training.

2.4 Problems with the Classroom Culture

2.4.1 Lack of Thinking and Innovative Atmosphere in the Classroom

Chinese language classroom teaching plays a crucial role in school education, but from the reality of the four primary schools in Nagqu City, the efficiency of Chinese language classroom teaching is not optimistic. Chinese language teaching is essentially language teaching, but the improvement of language application ability cannot be separated from the improvement of thinking ability, and the importance of thinking training is obvious.

There is a phenomenon in actual classrooms where reading instruction is biased and suppresses students' thinking. When a teacher was teaching lesson 26 “The Secret of the Treasure Gourd” in the second semester of fourth grade, the teacher first directly stated the three main parts of the article, and then asked the students to read it. There was a tendency of preconception, and the information conveyed by the teacher would occupy a dominant position in the students' minds, and then they would find reasons to prove and support the rationality and correctness of this information. This is a misleading way of thinking, which induces students to only do vertical targeted fixed thinking and focus on finding evidence and reasons to adapt to the already set conclusions, inhibiting the development of students' active thinking ability and violating the requirements of the Curriculum Standard for the second stage students. The Curriculum Standard require the second stage students to do so. Students of second stage should be able to grasp the main content of the article in terms of reading and appreciation, Understand the thoughts and emotions expressed in the article (2022). If the thinking ability cannot be trained and the students' classroom innovation ability is insufficient, there will be no new content generated in the classroom, which is not conducive to the comprehensive development of students.

2.4.2 Lack of Classroom Teaching Art

Chinese language teaching is the most literary, poetic, and culturally rich course among all subjects in primary school. Teachers need to fully demonstrate their teaching art and be engaging. Introduction, reading aloud, guiding sentence construction, blackboard writing, etc. are all arts and can also be

highlights of the classroom. However, in actual classroom observations, these arts are rarely displayed. The main analysis of the lack of teaching art is from the following two points:

Firstly, The teacher's classroom introduction method is single and lacks innovative art. Some teachers lack innovative consciousness and have always adopted a single classroom introduction mode, making the classroom monotonous and boring, difficult to attract students' attention, and unable to fully utilize the advantages of different introduction methods. Teachers should design and adopt various forms of classroom introduction methods based on changes in subjective and objective conditions such as teaching content, student learning situation, psychological characteristics, etc., such as story introduction, review introduction, multimedia introduction, problem introduction, etc. Observation shows that most teachers use multimedia import. Teachers make students watch relevant videos or pictures, treating them as the master key to teaching. Sometimes, they overlook necessary lectures and interactions, resulting in students being dazzled but their understanding of the knowledge floating on the surface. For example, the lesson "The Secret of the Treasure Gourd" is a realistic fairy tale. In addition to multimedia introduction, teachers can also use question introduction to encourage students to think about which fairy tales they have read and share them. This introduction can also be more closely integrated with the Chinese language elements of Unit 8 in Grade 4 -- "allowing students to experience the wonder of fairy tales".

Secondly, the teacher's handwriting on the blackboard is sloppy and lacks aesthetic art. Board writing and lesson plans may seem simple, but they actually embody the teacher's professional competence and personal abilities. The author found in classroom observation that teachers have the problem of too arbitrary font and sloppy handwriting on the blackboard. The quality of the teacher's handwriting on the blackboard can also have an impact on students, subtly guiding their aesthetic taste. In the world of education, every word and action of a teacher has a profound impact on students. Among them, the handwriting on the teacher's blackboard plays a crucial role in helping students memorize classroom content and cultivate good writing habits. Especially for primary school students, board design must be intuitive and visual, with correct, standardized, aesthetically pleasing, and artistic fonts, making it a model for cultivating students' writing habits and handwriting standards.

3. Countermeasures and Suggestions

In response to the problems that have arisen in the Chinese language classroom, the following four constructive suggestions are proposed:

3.1 Putting Literacy First, Emphasizing Teaching Research, and Striving for Teaching Effectiveness

Chinese language teachers should possess good subject literacy, have a deep understanding and mastery of the Chinese language subject, actively learn the content of the curriculum standard, and be familiar with the development trends and teaching requirements of the subject. The Curriculum Standards clearly list the teaching points and priorities for each stage. Teachers should have a deep understanding of these points and organically integrate the knowledge and skills points in the curriculum into teaching,

which is beneficial for students' learning. For example, a key point in the "Expanded Learning Task Group" is that "cross learning" aims to guide students to connect inside and outside the classroom, inside and outside the school, broaden their language learning and application fields, and improve their language and writing skills through the comprehensive application of multidisciplinary knowledge in Chinese practical activities (2022). Teachers should actively study the Chinese Language Curriculum Standards. Firstly, intensive reading is crucial. To do so, one must read word by word, sentence by sentence, and make good annotations to form a deeper understanding of the basic concepts, viewpoints, and ideas in the curriculum. Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the study of famous scholars interpreting the "Curriculum Standard". While studying the "Curriculum Standard", reading relevant literature and monographs is a comparative method and a reference method. It is the main way to enrich, deepen, eliminate bias and one sidedness, and is a process that teachers must go through to grow into expert teachers. In addition, it is necessary to summarize and reflect on relevant training activities, and then communicate and discuss with other teachers in Chinese language teaching and research activities, share one's own reading experience and teaching experience, learn from others' successful experiences, and jointly improve the level of Chinese language teaching.

3.2 Promoting Student Development through Mutual Aid in Lesson Observation and Situational Teaching

Mutual assistance among Chinese language teachers in observing and evaluating lessons is a very effective way of professional development. The Chinese language teaching and research group should establish a continuous mutual assistance mechanism, and observing and evaluating classes should not be just a one-time activity, but require continuous professional communication and mutual support. When observing, teachers should pay attention to various aspects of classroom teaching, including setting teaching objectives, organizing teaching content, applying teaching methods, and student participation. At the same time, attention should also be paid to the teaching style, language expression, and teaching skills of the instructors. Observing teachers should promptly record their observations and evaluations, propose specific improvement measures and suggestions based on the observed problems during class evaluation discussions, and jointly explore how to improve teaching quality. A Primary School has bound the teacher's suggestion cards into a booklet for teachers to discuss and learn together during teaching and research activities. This is conducive to strengthening cooperation and communication among teachers, promoting teaching improvement, and allowing students to benefit from learning. It is worth learning from and referring to by other schools.

In addition, the Curriculum Standard emphasizes the importance of situational teaching, which enables students to learn and apply Chinese language knowledge in a real language environment, and improve their language expression ability and application of Chinese language knowledge through independent, cooperative, and exploratory learning methods. Authenticity is very important in the context of education and learning. It not only means that knowledge or skills actually exist, but more importantly, these knowledge and skills can be connected to students' actual life and learning experiences, enabling

them to resonate. Due to individual differences among students and the individuality of teachers' teaching, this situation will also vary. This requires teachers to fully exert their subjective initiative in teaching, so that students can actively use the situation and engage in positive language practice activities. In the teaching of Lesson 13 "Poor People" in Grade 6, a scenario can be created where "What will the neighbors say to Sanna when she brings her two children home". Students seem to be immediately immersed in the story, needing to explore the root of the problem to understand the meaning of the article. Students are often more interested in such situational settings and enjoy discussing them. Situation creation can not only be used in the classroom, but teachers can also create situations in homework to stimulate students' enthusiasm for reading and writing. In the homework assignment for Lesson 9 of Grade 6 "Bamboo Knot Man", a situational task with the theme of "Finding Happy Childhood" can be created to share "Happy Childhood Games" - introducing one's favorite childhood toy or game. In such a situation, students learn and do while enjoying themselves, feeling the joyful childhood atmosphere.

3.3 Based on Text, Combining Reading and Writing to Enjoy the Beauty of Chinese Language

Solid Chinese language teaching advocates a teaching approach that is based on text and utilizes the development of content, with each link being interconnected and step-by-step. Developing and selecting specialized Chinese language teaching content through professional interpretation of texts not only directly affects the quality of Chinese language classroom teaching, but also directly determines students' Chinese language literacy (Mo, 2021). Chinese language teaching should be based on the text, based on the text, using the text as an example, but not just teaching the text, but guiding students to use different reading strategies such as prediction, reasoning, summarization, etc., to help them deeply understand the text. Summarize key information and important viewpoints based on text learning, and provide materials and ideas for writing. The key to learning Chinese lies in mastering reading and writing skills, and the two are inseparable.

However, currently many teachers limit classroom teaching to text learning and believe that composition should be taught separately, which makes it difficult for students to integrate their Chinese language knowledge and thus restricts their language ability improvement. In the classroom, teachers can effectively conduct writing training by stimulating students' interest in reading and creating a good reading atmosphere. For example, when explaining poetry, teachers can play background music that matches the content of the poem, allowing students to read aloud with the accompaniment of the music, thereby stimulating their emotions. On this basis, guide students to practice imitation or expansion. In addition, teachers can also use multimedia devices to display extracurricular articles related to the text, or play programs such as "Poetry and Book of China" and "China in Classics" to encourage students to write reflections. Through the mutual support and interaction between reading and writing, students can better apply knowledge, improve their language expression and writing skills, further consolidate and enhance their Chinese literacy, practice reading to promote writing, and cultivate their language and writing skills, thinking abilities, and aesthetic abilities through reading, writing, and oral

communication.

3.4 Integrating Education into Culture, Creating an Infectious Atmosphere, and Showcasing the Art of Teaching

Classroom teaching culture refers to a common set of values, behavioral norms, and communication methods formed during the teaching process. It includes the characteristics and features of the relationship between teachers and students, learning atmosphere, teaching methods, and other aspects. The establishment of Chinese language classroom culture should encourage students to respect and appreciate literary works, cultivate their literary literacy and aesthetic ability. Teachers can guide students to express their feelings and understanding of literary works, share reading experiences with each other, which is the embodiment of teaching in literature.

Classroom teaching should create a positive atmosphere of thinking, guide students to think deeply and interpret in multiple ways, encourage them to put forward their own opinions and insights, and stimulate thinking and creativity. The ability of primary school students to possess certain thinking skills is crucial for their growth. Therefore, it is essential to create a thinking atmosphere and strengthen students' thinking training in Chinese language classroom teaching. In classroom interaction, encourage students to actively participate in discussions and enhance their communication skills through various forms such as designated speeches, stage presentations, group discussions, and question and answer dialogues. In addition, by providing students with exercises such as supplementation, summarization, revision, and correction, their thinking agility and language organization ability can be effectively exercised. At the same time, teachers should guide students to explore the text in depth. For difficult sentences and paragraphs in the text, teachers should guide children to have a deep understanding; For easy to understand paragraphs, students should be encouraged to read and recite repeatedly to cultivate their emotional resonance and profound understanding of the text. In the autonomous reading stage, teachers can completely let go, allowing students to read independently, question independently, and solve problems on their own. For the more difficult parts, students should first be encouraged to have discussions among themselves, followed by appropriate guidance. In addition, there is no fixed method for teaching. Teachers should consider multiple classroom introduction methods in their teaching design, and should not overly rely on multimedia. By using multiple classroom introduction methods, students' interest in learning can be stimulated and their learning initiative can be mobilized; In teaching, it is also necessary to use neat, standardized, and creative blackboard writing to focus and attract students' attention. Good blackboard writing is the soul of the classroom, and attention should be paid to the perfection of content, refinement of language, handsome fonts, and reasonable layout. At the same time, students can be encouraged to participate in blackboard writing appropriately, which can stimulate their enthusiasm for participation. At the same time, it can also check the learning effect and timely fill in the gaps. Only in this way can Chinese language classrooms be rich in teaching art.

References

- Cui Yunhu. (2012). On the LICC Paradigm of Classroom Observation: A Professional Approach to Teacher Evaluation. *Education Research*, 33(05), 79-83.
- Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China. Mandatory Education Language Course Standards. Retrieved March 4, 2022, from http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A26/s8001/202204/t20220420_619921.html
- Mo Xianwu. (2021). Professional development and selection of language teaching content. *Language construction*, 2021(06), 19-23. <http://doi.org/10.16412/j.cnki.1001-8476.2021.06.006>
- Shi Chengming, & Hu Mengjie. (2011). What Not to Teach in Literature. *Educational scientific research*, 2011(04), 52-55.