

Original Paper

Theoretical Research and Path Exploration of Chinese Culture Input and Acculturation for Foreign Students from the Perspective of Chinese Character Teaching as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

With the quick development of China, the number of foreign students in China has soared. Teaching Chinese as a second language for foreigners with different backgrounds includes language knowledge, the individual cross-cultural adaptation the Chinese culture spread. Chinese characters is the key point in Chinese language learning for foreign students. The charming of Chinese culture is reflected and transmitted by Chinese characters which can help foreign students understand Chinese culture better. By sorting out the theories on Chinese cultural course and acculturation with the perspective of Chinese characters teaching, exploring the corresponding research paths, this paper proposes a reference for the research on conducting cultural course through the way of teaching Chinese characters for foreign students acculturation.

Keywords

Chinese character teaching, Chinese culture input, acculturation for foreign students

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1. Introduction

Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language refers to the teaching of Chinese to people of the nation or country who regard other languages as their mother tongue in addition to Chinese. It is also known as teaching Chinese as a foreign language or teaching Chinese as a second language. Through the study of the educational principles, methods and the process of Chinese as a second language, the essence and law of learning and teaching Chinese as a second language are revealed, and the basic principles and implementation methods of teaching Chinese as a foreign language are formulated to guide teaching practice and improve it.

Since the reform and opening up, the number of foreign students in China has increased hundredfold, and China's education for studying in China has developed rapidly, and Beijing Language and Culture University alone has enrolled more than 10,000 foreign students. From the perspective of the total number of foreign students enrolled and the number of foreign students enrolled per school, China can be described as a large country of foreign student education.

The diversity of foreign students in China will inevitably lead to the diversification of their cultural backgrounds. Foreign students' culture background, language level before coming to China, family background, personality, mother tongue and learning motivations, moral sense, self realization goals, all pose challenges to students who come to China for study. Among them, the cultural adaptation of foreign students in China largely depends on their understanding of Chinese culture personality.

Cultural personality is the basic premise of each nation's cultural charm. To understand the cultural personality of our country, Chinese character teaching plays an important role.

The study of cultural input in Chinese character teaching for foreign students in China is in line with the main proposition in educational philosophy, which is the relationship between people, society, culture, life experience and education. Experts in educational culture believe that education is a cultural process, including the preservation, transmission, innovation and organic combination of culture. If educators use educational ideas to implement the process of cultural input and enrich the cultural teaching theory of Chinese characters as a foreign language, the cultural process is also an educational process, and the educational process is also a process of cultural infiltration.

If only the noumenon knowledge of Chinese is instilled and taught during the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, ignoring the input and cultivation of Chinese culture, under this kind of education foreign students may have the ability to recognize Chinese characters, write Chinese characters, understand Chinese, and speak Chinese, but they have no special emotions for China, no sense of belonging or culture adaptation during their stay, thus the teaching significance is getting half the results with double the effort, missing the true meaning of education to "awaken" the mind.

The practical significance of carrying out research on the cultural input of Chinese character teaching is that people are a relational and valuable existence, and the development of teachers and the improvement of teaching quality are difficult to achieve by external forces alone. Through the practice of teaching and learning, it provides a reference for teachers of teaching Chinese as a foreign language

in the study of adaptive development of students in China, which also coincides with the theory of scientific management of teaching.

For foreign students, with the deepening of Chinese learning, their culture adaptation to China is getting better and better. They are cultivated with a good love for China, and realize “self-identity”, “other identity” and “group identity” after coming to China. It plays an irreplaceable role in reflecting on the teaching of Chinese characters as a foreign language, especially the essence of Chinese as a foreign language in course learning, helping foreign students to better integrate themselves into with Chinese culture, and establish a friendly Chinese cultural outlook.

Culture is a social phenomenon, also a historical phenomenon and a unique phenomenon of human society. It is the sum of material and intangible products created by human beings to meet their own needs. Culture is embodied in material and non-material forms, including country or national history, local customs and practices, literature and art, code of conduct, mode of thinking, options of values, etc. It is a widely recognized and inheritable ideology when people communicate with each other.

It can be seen that the discipline basis of CSL covers linguistics, pedagogy, culture and other disciplines. Its teaching object determines that its teaching nature is different from general language teaching, and it is a kind of cross-cultural language teaching. In the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, it is inevitable to combine language knowledge and culture. Even if students have a good command of Chinese and can communicate with Chinese smoothly, they also need to combine subject teaching with culture teaching.

On the other hand, we should also pay attention to cultural innovation, open up a model for cultural innovation to go global, and enhance the international influence and competitiveness of Chinese culture. Chinese language teaching is the best carrier to promote Chinese culture to the world. In order to better meet the purpose of promoting Chinese as a foreign language and the needs of foreigners to learn Chinese, it is necessary to establish a Chinese character teaching mode that takes Chinese culture as the core and combines language and culture.

Lv Shuxiang defines Chinese characters as a combination of sound, form and meaning. Chinese characters are also cognitive tools. Chinese characters are divided into six types: pictographic, self explanatory, associative compounds, phonogram, mutually explanatory and phonetic characters. Most Chinese characters are pictophonetic characters composed of form parts and sound parts. The shape of Chinese characters defined by Lv Shuxiang is the shape. It refers to the form of characters formed by strokes such as horizontal stroke, vertical stroke, left-falling stroke, right-falling stroke, and dot. Chinese characters have structure, and the shape can be divided into two aspects: components and structures. Character form is the noumenon carrier of Chinese characters and the communication between written language and spoken language. At the same time, it can be a portrayal of things in the human brain, expressing a specific meaning. For example, the words “sun” and “mountain” are used by human beings to imitate the things in nature, so as to give meaning to these words. Yang Runlu mentioned in the General Theory of Modern Chinese Characters that “force, soil, and engineering” are

all independent characters and sign characters. However, as characters, they participate in the formation of “Gong”(功), “Qiao”(巧), “Di”(地) and other characters, which are related to the meaning of the characters and act as ideographs.

The so-called sound is the pronunciation of Chinese characters. Chinese character pronunciation, with cross-spatial nature. Character sound, in the process of conversion from written to spoken language, plays a considerable role. phonetic transcription identifies the pronunciation of Chinese characters with different tones (level tone, rising tone, falling tone, entering tone, and soft tone). Different tones and the same tone can correspond to different Chinese characters. For foreign students in the “non-Chinese character cultural circle”, because there is no concept of tone in their mother tongue, they are not proficient in the mastery of tone, which has also become a “roadblock” for learning Chinese characters. When I speak to foreign students with different homophones or similar sounds, such as “约” and “月”, “化” and “花”, I need to emphasize the difference in pronunciation to prevent students from misunderstanding in daily communication.

The so-called content refers to the meaning of Chinese characters. The calligraphy and painting of Chinese characters are of the same origin, and the meaning depends on the meaning of things that people give to Chinese characters. It is a bridge between sound and shape. In the teaching of Chinese characters, emphasizing the principle of motivation is also a shortcut to teaching. For example, “sun” pronounces “rì” by showing students pictures of word sources, let students make associations and draw a conclusion that the meaning of its expression is “sun”. Wan Yexin mentioned the attributes of Chinese characters in the Outline of Applied Chinese Characters, “referring to various information contained in Chinese characters, including the attributes of sound, shape and meaning.” The pronunciation, shape and meaning of Chinese characters are the natural attributes of them. Character shape is the objective existence of Chinese characters and the basis of displaying the pronunciation and meaning of Chinese characters. And the pronunciation and meaning of Chinese characters convey the content and meaning of existence of them. If there is no meaning or pronunciation, there will be no shape. In practical teaching experience, the meaning expressed by simple pictographic characters such as “mountain, sun and earth” is not difficult for foreign students to understand and remember through teacher’s explanation and picture demonstration. However, it is difficult for foreign students to understand, write and memorize the Chinese characters that have experienced the changes of inscriptions on bones or tortoise shells, inscriptions on bronze, large seal character, small seal character and regular script. Fortunately, the transformation of ancient and modern Chinese characters is more like the process from description to writing, which is gradual. Ancient Chinese characters are inextricably linked with today’s Chinese characters. For example, in modern times, many Chinese characters are still fixed in shape to express fixed sounds or meanings. Therefore, it can also be said that the development of Chinese characters is the historical precedent of the transformation of object symbols into phonological symbols. This is also the vein of Chinese culture inherited by Chinese characters for thousands of years.

Therefore, the characteristics of Chinese characters require us to analyze the characters and link them

with the teaching of Chinese character culture as a foreign language, which will play a direct role in foreign students' recognition and memory of Chinese characters. Only by focusing on both form and meaning can we realize the standardization of Chinese character teaching, effectively avoid foreign students' writing errors, and better understand Chinese culture. Teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language is not only a second language teaching, but also a cultural teaching. The purpose of teaching Chinese as a foreign language is not only to cultivate students' ability to use Chinese to communicate and understand Chinese culture, but also to achieve cultural mutual understanding.

The cultural adaptation to the environment is mainly manifested in the adaptation of tools and technologies, concepts, and organizations.

Characters of a language, reflecting the essence and values of a culture, can best reflect cross-cultural differences, especially for foreign students who have just arrived in China, cross-cultural adaptation is a long process: the living customs, thinking values, interpersonal communication, and communication styles that accompany foreign students for many years may change. This is due to the long-term experience of physical and mental pressure changes brought by cross-cultural adaptation, affecting whether foreign students can successfully adapt themselves to China life or smoothly complete their study career. The cultural adaptation experienced by foreign students in China is actually a dynamic process.

In the process of Chinese learning, there are difficulties in cultural adaptation, especially the confusion caused by learning Chinese characters and cultural understanding, which will aggravate the embarrassment in foreign students life.

2. Theoretical Basis and Teaching Enlightenment

The researchers believe that the theoretical basis can be: organizational behavior theory, personality development theory, cultural circle theory, moral cognitive development theory.

Organizational behavior theory provides behavioral guidelines for the behavior understanding of individuals, groups, and organizations. Since teaching is a behavioral activity that promotes students' development, it is natural to find a theoretical basis from organizational behavior theory.

Foreign students are those individuals living with different attitudes towards world. Their knowledge learning and motivation will shift with the change of environment and situation. Although foreign students are with different cultural backgrounds, they are also groups that can communicate and understand each other. They acquire information and knowledge through mutual communication. In the process of education, Chinese teachers blindly instill language ontology knowledge while neglecting the communication with foreign students, which easily leads to poor learning results.

The concept of cultural circle is one of the concepts commonly used to describe the distribution of culture; The geographical scope involved is broader than the cultural area. A cultural circle can include many tribes and nations, including various parts needed by human life, such as artifacts, economy, society, religion, etc. As long as some cultural elements are interlinked, all regions may belong to the

same cultural circle, such as the East Asian cultural circle, the North American cultural circle, etc. Foreign students from the Western cultural circle (Latin cultural circle) attach great importance to consumption and enjoyment, and their individualism is relatively strong. They often have great difficulties in understanding China's traditional culture, and the cultural impact is obvious. The course of Chinese characters as a foreign language, especially through the cultural content of Chinese character teaching, should be divided into classes according to the theory of cultural circle, or the actual cultural differences of these foreign students should be considered more directly in teaching. 2. China's Han nationality is characterized by a large number of people, wide distribution, and large mixed residences, which can unite the entire nation. Since the feudal society in ancient China, China has formed a multi-ethnic, multi-level and multi type structure. The teaching of Chinese as a foreign language should also adapt to local conditions, analyze the culture of the region where the foreign students are studying, and reduce the possible cultural friction. 3. The ethnic groups of the Sino Tibetan language family have some kinship with the Han language. Compared with other language families, it is easier to accept Chinese characters. The teaching of Chinese characters and Chinese character culture (such as Chinese character component teaching) in teaching Chinese as a foreign language can be combined.

3. Cultural and Educational Moral Cognitive Development Theory

The research perspective of educational culture is from the humanities and cultural philosophy. Its main research contents are education and life experience, education and people, education and society, education and culture, etc. The main point of view of educational culture is to use culture to cultivate students, and advocate the cultivation of personality and the development of personality. Educational culture believes that the central issue of education is to awaken people's hearts, educational activities need to be based on cultural understanding, and human activities must be based on cultural understanding to be complete; Through the influence and edification of culture, it can be "cultivated". Cultivation can harmonize the relationship between people's inner spirit and external behavior, so that people can cultivate their nature and make them real people.

The enlightenment of educational culture in the introduction of cultural connotations in Chinese characters as a foreign language is:

Human personality can be formed and developed through education, and this form of education can often be obtained through cultural influence. 2. To some extent,

The learning and cognitive development of Chinese language of foreign students can solve the common problems of cultural adaptation of foreign students in China. The formation of values is gradual, and the understanding and love of foreign students for Chinese culture should also be cultivated in a reasonable and orderly way. The use of Chinese character teaching can realize the input of Chinese culture to foreign students invisibly. 3. The development of cultural personality and the adaptation of other cultures can promote the internal and external coordination of foreign students, give play to their

potential, and develop themselves happily. Teaching Chinese as a foreign language is not only the teaching of language ontology, the school is not only the place of life, the foreign students' coming to China to receive the education of Chinese as a foreign language is also a process of immersion of Chinese culture. The curriculum settings and arrangements have the responsibility to let the foreign students face the cultural reality and accept the life in China as soon as possible, so as to make full preparations for the future life, and also lay the foundation for cultivating a good Chinese complex. 4. Humanities contains the essence of human culture, such as national spirit and values, which have a strong impact on people's minds and can promote the harmonious development of foreign students' values. 5. The cultivation of foreign students' Chinese cultural personality is a process of self realization from inside to outside, and teachers' indoctrination may be counterproductive. It is wise to understand and care about students' thinking growth. Proper teaching reflection and evaluation can help teachers of Chinese as a foreign language perceive the thoughts and behaviors of foreign students and their cultural adaptation to China.

4. Literature Review

The historical starting point of teaching Chinese as a foreign language in China is that in the 1950s, Tsinghua University officially established the Eastern European exchange students' Chinese language learning class as a symbol of the beginning of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. Later, the stage of teaching Chinese as a foreign language can be roughly divided into two periods, namely, the formation period of 30 years before the implementation of reform and opening up, and the development period after the reform and opening up. Among them, the formation period of 30 years before the reform and opening up can be divided into three stages: the initial stage (from the early 1950s to the early 1960s), the development stage (from the early 1960s to the "the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution"), and the recovery stage (from the early 1970s to the late 1970s).

After the Chinese eleventh CPC Central Committee Third Plenary Session, the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language in China has achieved a leap and breakthrough. Especially in the past decade, with the enhancement of national strength, teaching Chinese as a foreign language has been greatly developed. The Chinese Proficiency Test was issued in 1992, which established Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) as a national test. Today, the Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK) is the most influential and authoritative Chinese proficiency test in the world, and it is also one of the most important foreign language or second language proficiency tests. The study of Chinese teaching culture in the mainland began in the last century. Some scholars proposed the importance of introducing cultural background knowledge in foreign language teaching (Lv, 1986). More scholars believe that cultural introduction must be incorporated into the language teaching system (Zhao, 1992). Zhang (2009) studied the education of Chinese as a foreign language in China since the Ming and Qing Dynasties from the perspective of language education. And the development of Chinese language education in modern countries such as America, East and West Europe, Southeast Asia, East Asia and other countries. Xing (2010) explained

the teaching content of Chinese culture at different stages. Jiang (2011) started with the concepts of culture, civilization and media, discussed the communication path of Chinese language and culture, and proposed to promote the construction of a new inclusive and harmonious world order. Other scholars, including Zhou (2019), Feng (2016), Shen Fuwei (2006), Xu (2002), Chen (2002), Xu (2001), have been trying to introduce the relevant content of Chinese and Western cultural exchanges, infiltrate cultural education concepts, and form a more systematic cultural outline in Chinese language teaching. At present, the more influential works on the teaching of Chinese character culture as a foreign language include *The Crisis of Mother Tongue and the Cultivation of Chinese Language and Writing Application Ability* written by Shan (2015), *Some Thoughts on Chinese Character Culture Research and Chinese Character Teaching* written by Li (2012), etc. The achievements of domestic research on teaching Chinese culture as a foreign language have basically established the status, direction and content of cultural teaching in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. However, the relevant empirical research on the cultural input of Chinese character teaching as a foreign language in China alone is still insufficient, and a set of maturely systematic and standardized Chinese character teaching culture textbooks has not yet been fully formed. The influential teaching mode of combining Chinese as a foreign language with language teaching culture has not been completely established.

The research of foreign language and culture teaching is roughly divided into two directions: one is the research of cultural teaching in general applied linguistics and educational sociology, the other is the cultural teaching research for foreigners to learn Chinese. The more general view is that cultural teaching should run through the entire language teaching, and that language acquirers should have different teaching priorities and teaching methods at different stages of learning. As far as the research on cultural teaching in general second language teaching is concerned, there are many research results in countries around the world. In terms of cultural teaching research on foreigners' learning of Chinese, there are many studies on national and intercontinental boundaries because of the distribution of different language categories: such as *Chinese Language Teaching and Chinese Culture Dissemination Go Hand in Hand: An Introduction to Osaka Junior Chinese College Affiliated to the Osaka Prefecture's Japan-China Friendship Association* written by Wang (1992) and *Survey on Chinese Teaching in Australian Chinese Schools* written by Lv et al. (2015), which reflect the development of Chinese language teaching abroad and also involve the factors of cultural teaching in Chinese language teaching. These researches mainly focus on the second language teaching, such as cultural teaching orientation and concept, cross-cultural communication, case studies, curriculum standards, teaching practice and so on. But the research on cultural input in teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language is very limited.

5. Research Hypotheses and Methods

Based on the analysis of the above status quo and literature review, if cultural teaching is infiltrated through Chinese character teaching, the research can be extended to understand what difficulties

foreign students encounter when learning Chinese characters; What kind of living and learning difficulties did the overseas students encounter after they came to China due to their insufficient grasp of Chinese characters. In Chinese character ideographic culture, how do foreign students choose themselves, build themselves, shape themselves, and integrate into local life. What role does the cultural infiltration of teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language play in the cultural adaptation of foreign students. If effective teaching of Chinese characters as a foreign language has a positive impact on the cultural adaptation of foreign students, seek the most effective way of cultural infiltration teaching in the perspective of teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language.

According to the general idea of “infiltrating ideographic culture into Chinese character classes as a foreign language and promoting cultural adaptation of foreign students in China”, on the one hand, it can help foreign students better integrate into Chinese culture; On the other hand, effective solutions are proposed for the current implementation of cultural infiltration of Chinese as a foreign language curriculum, the lack of guidance in curriculum design and teachers’ teaching methods, and the difficulties encountered by foreign students in cultural adaptation. Explore effective ways for the teaching and development of Chinese as a foreign language culture course, and find out the root cause of the problem, discover the problem and make suggestions for the cultural adaptation and cultural conflict of foreign students in China and the teaching of Chinese culture as a foreign language.

Through observation, researchers can participate in the natural situation of cultural adaptation of foreign students and teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language. Instead of using an artificial and controllable experimental environment, they can fully collect and record relevant data through observation, including but not limited to cultural input and adaptation of foreign students coming to China from the perspective of teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language, and explore the process of occurrence and development of these two aspects. The focus of the research is on the dynamic changes and the overall exploration.

By summarizing ideas, collating and analyzing data, forming theories; we observe and interact with the research subjects, understand the behavior of foreign students in the Chinese character teaching class, and explore the significance of Chinese culture as a foreign language course for the cultural adaptation of foreign students in China. According to the questionnaire and different cultural circle backgrounds, we conducted classified in-depth interviews, and conducted in-depth interviews on cultural adaptation in China. The purpose is to analyze the curriculum and charm of Chinese culture through their narrations, and understand their confusion about cultural adaptation both in life and learning. Second, through observation and interview, we analyze and compare the data results obtained, find out the commonalities and summarize the rules. Third, through the Delphi Method, more than a dozen senior professors majoring in Chinese as a Foreign Language were selected to conduct in-depth interviews, feedback problems, and exchange experience, in order to analyze the possible paths of Chinese culture input for foreign students from the perspective of teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language through their suggestions, and to understand the confusion they encountered in teaching Chinese

characters as a foreign language about Chinese culture courses and the cultural adaptation of foreign students. Fourth, comprehensively integrate the situation of all parties and put forward countermeasures and suggestions based on the results and analysis of the investigation.

Literature analysis method. Because the research of teaching Chinese as a foreign language culture needs synchronic and diachronic aspects, the teaching of Chinese characters as a foreign language in different backgrounds and at different times and its cultural input to foreign students have specific significance. Therefore, the literature collection method is used to analyze and sort out relevant data for building the overall framework.

The questionnaire is designed according to different cultural circle backgrounds. The purpose of the questionnaire is to understand the opening and teaching status of cultural courses for Chinese as a foreign language majors, collect the language learning objectives of foreign students in China, cultural conflicts encountered, cultural teaching of Chinese characters for foreign students in our school, etc., and understand the curriculum setting of Chinese courses for foreign students, the source of the entry point of Chinese cultural characters and puzzles about the cultural adaptation of Chinese characters encountered by foreign students in their studies.

Interview method refers to the basic research method of understanding the psychology and behavior of the interviewee through face-to-face conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee. It can be divided into structured interview and unstructured interview. This paper can follow the research order of literature collection - questionnaire - interview. Through interviewing several foreign students who have participated in the questionnaire, we can deeply understand their confusion about cultural adaptation in life and learning (especially in Chinese character culture), and conduct in-depth interviews on their cultural adaptation in China. On the other hand, more than a dozen senior professors majoring in Chinese as a foreign language were selected to conduct in-depth interviews to give feedback on Chinese character teaching problems, and to exchange the cultural emotions and knowledge penetration experience of Chinese character teaching, in order to analyze the source of the charm of Chinese as a foreign language teachers through their suggestions, and understand the confusion they encountered in teaching Chinese as a foreign language about Chinese culture courses and the cultural adaptation of foreign students.

6. Research Limitations

To fully reveal the current situation and relationship between the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language and the adaptation of foreign students, the best way is to carry out sampling surveys, comprehensive questionnaires and field interviews within a large enough range. Obtain the information about the Chinese culture input of foreign students from the perspective of teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language from different groups (such as students, teachers of Chinese as a foreign language, schools or administrators).

However, due to the limitations of time, ability, resources and other aspects, it is not easy for

researchers to achieve all the above contents in the current actual situation. To be specific, the input of Chinese culture of foreign students from the perspective of teaching Chinese characters as a foreign language, the country, cultural background and individual differences of foreign students, and cultural adaptation are numerous and varied. The improvement of foreign students' communication ability and teachers' teaching reflection ability in the actual Chinese communication situation cannot be completely listed. The research direction and teaching research focus of cross field have changed from a single "how to teach" - "how to learn" to a circular reflection of "how to teach", "how to learn" and "how to infiltrate". Improving the effectiveness of teaching still requires more exploration in practice.

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