

The Application of the Story Teaching Method in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language—Case TCM Allusions

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Abstract: *As a special carrier of TCM culture, TCM allusions embody the unique diagnosis and treatment wisdom of TCM, the noble moral sentiments of TCM practitioners and profoundly reflect the essence of Chinese culture. In the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, TCM allusion can be used as a kind of teaching resource, which can help international students deeply understand TCM and Chinese culture, while improving their Chinese ability and stimulating their enthusiasm for learning. In the creative practice of classroom teaching, teachers cleverly introduce TCM allusions into classroom teaching through the Story Teaching Method. By taking the story as the main line, Chinese knowledge and TCM culture are organically combined, interlocking and fascinating. It can greatly improve the efficiency and interestingness of classroom teaching.*

Keywords: Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, Story Teaching Method, Traditional Chinese Medicine Allusions.

1. Introduction

As an important part of the excellent traditional Chinese culture, Traditional Chinese Medicine (abbreviated as TCM) is regarded as the treasure of ancient Chinese civilization. In recent years, with the frequent cultural exchanges and communication between China and foreign countries, more and more foreigners have learned about the therapeutic effect of TCM through personal experience or media reports. The overseas dissemination of TCM has entered the prime time. More and more Chinese medicine enthusiasts come to China to receive more systematic TCM education. International Chinese language teachers have integrated TCM culture into the classroom, spreading the knowledge of TCM and the concept of life cultivation and health preservation, and carrying forward the Chinese culture. TCM allusions carry profound cultural connotations in the form of limited Chinese characters and are a unique symbol of Chinese civilization. They are either from the stories of TCM practitioners, diagnosis and treatment experience, or from some myths and legends. In teaching Chinese as a foreign language, the vivid stories behind TCM allusion not only teach international students Chinese knowledge but also the rich emotional and cultural connotations. The use of the Story Teaching Method can stimulate students' interest, improve their Chinese application ability, and guide them to understand the profoundness of TCM culture through allusions, and then cultivate their interest for TCM and Chinese culture.

2. Connotations and Value Implications of the Story Teaching Method

The Story Teaching Method was first advocated by Prof. William Smith, a pioneer in British education. Andrew Wright, a British educator who has done a lot of research on the Story Teaching Method, pointed out that "storytelling is a very important teaching method in teaching; because storytelling can help students understand what they have learned and utilize their imagination to achieve the ideal teaching effect" [1]. Based on the predecessors, this paper

proposes that "storytelling refers to a teaching method in which teachers use stories as the basis in teaching and integrate the teaching knowledge into the stories, to enhance the learning efficiency of students.

The Story Teaching Method is conducive to enlivening the classroom atmosphere, increasing teacher-student interaction, and deepening students' understanding and application of language knowledge and culture [2]. This method transforms the teaching process into a journey full of fun and exploration in a relaxed and pleasant way. It not only achieves the teaching goals through stories but also integrates educational philosophy and cultural connotation, and students can understand the profound meaning of knowledge while having fun.

3. The Application of Story Teaching Method in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

The Story Teaching Method is crucial in the practical application of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. It conveys knowledge while stimulating students' imagination, promotes teacher-student communication, and builds a new interactive and cooperative classroom. Compared with traditional teaching methods, this method has greater advantages in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. It combines teaching content with storytelling, which is conducive to mobilizing learners' enthusiasm, arousing learners' attention and interest, and achieving better teaching results.

First of all, stories can greatly attract the interest of international students. It is clear that students often prefer vivid and interesting storylines to directly being instilled boring knowledge points. These stories not only add fun to language learning, but also stimulate students' infinite imagination. They can naturally integrate into the language environment when they enjoy the stories, thus stimulating a strong interest in learning.

Secondly, stories are valuable resources for Chinese teaching. The materials and ways of narration play a crucial role in creating a positive and active classroom atmosphere. Stories not only carry rich knowledge, but also contain rich emotions [3]. In language teaching, paying attention to students' emotional state, provoking students' empathy through stories, and bringing students a pleasant and profound emotional experience are the keys to promoting international students' values and comprehensive literacy. This is exactly the deep value pursued by Chinese as a foreign language teaching, and it is also its unique humanistic charm.

Thirdly, based on the peculiarity of Chinese as a Foreign Language classroom, that is, its features of cross-cultural and multi-lingual background there are significant differences in Chinese ability among students, so they often feel confused in understanding. Given the vastness and complexity of the Chinese system itself, the introduction of the Story Teaching Method has become an efficient teaching strategy. It can not only simplify complexity and reveal the essence of Chinese knowledge vividly and interestingly, but also penetrate the hearts of learners, leading them to have a deeper understanding of complex language phenomena, effectively solving learning problems, and improving the quality of teaching.

4. The Significance of TCM Allusions Stories in Assisting Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

4.1 Enhancing the Effectiveness of Chinese Teaching and Language Application Ability

The introduction of TCM allusion stories into the Chinese language teaching classroom is an effective strategy to improve the effectiveness of Chinese language teaching and students' language application ability. TCM allusions contain a large number of idioms with specific meanings and usages. With the continuous enrichment and development of the Chinese, some technical terms of TCM have become widely used in common Chinese vocabulary, such as: "the liver and gallbladder are mutually compatible", which originates from the TCM Zang-fu Viscera Theory of "the liver sharing an interior-exterior relationship with the gallbladder". It originally refers to the close physiological relationship between the liver and the gallbladder, and now it is used as a metaphor for sincere treatment with each other for people. This idiom also has some history stories. Teachers can lead students to know the origin of these Chinese idioms and the cultural connotation behind them by adapting or creating short stories based on the teaching materials. These allusions and idioms can enrich students' Chinese vocabulary, help them master more vivid and native expressions, and improve their oral and written expression ability. Chinese idiomatic allusions can be used as materials and cases for teaching Chinese as a foreign language as well as cultural background knowledge for Chinese language teaching, in order to help students better understand the cultural connotations and context in Chinese. Meanwhile, the plots and characters in allusion stories also provide students with rich materials, which help them to use idioms or allusion stories to describe and elaborate their thoughts in writing and oral expression.

4.2 Understanding TCM Basic Theories and Treatment Principles

Through vivid plots and characters, TCM allusion idioms often skillfully convey the esoteric theories and therapeutic principles of TCM to the public in an easy-to-understand way. For example, the idiom of "give the right prescription for an illness" originates from the story of Hua Tuo who prescribed different medicines for two patients with headache and fever. The story emphasizes the core concept of TCM—treatment based on syndrome differentiation, which means adopting different treatments according to the different causes of the illnesses. Similarly, the idioms and allusions of "hiding one's Malady from Doctors" and "learn about what is forthcoming by observing tiny clues" originated from the story of Bian Que's treatment of King Huan, monarch of Cai. Bian Que had repeatedly reminded the monarch of Cai to pay attention to his condition, but he ignored the warning, which ultimately led to his condition deteriorating to the extent that it could not be cured. This story reflects the importance TCM attaches to the prevention and early treatment of diseases. Therefore, these allusions and idioms of TCM reflect the profound philosophical wisdom, which enlightens students.

4.3 Appreciating the Value of Medical Ethics Contained in TCM Culture

The spirit of medical ethics of TCM, as a treasure of TCM culture, has been gradually formed and continuously improved through thousands of years of accumulation of medical practitioners' wisdom and practical experience. The core of this spirit is not only embodied in the strict requirements for personal moral cultivation of medical practitioners, but also permeates all aspects of their medical practice, moral pursuit, doctor-patient relationship, and interactions among fellow practitioners [4]. TCM pays attention to moral self-discipline and self-cultivation, such as Sun Simiao in the Tang Dynasty, who advocated the "A Master Physical Have Superb Skill and Sincerity", emphasized dedication and devotion, and devoted his whole life to the TCM cause, which demonstrated the relentless pursuit of self-discipline and cultivation of self-morals by medical practitioners. Regarding attitude and method of medical practice, Zhang Zhongjing of the Eastern Han Dynasty, for example, put forward the principle of "diligently searching for the truth of the ancient works and learning from others", encouraging practitioners to learn extensively from the experience of predecessors and to seek advice with an open mind, which embodies the spirit of dedication to the endless exploration of medical knowledge. Besides, under the profound influence of this principle of "medicine is a humane art with benevolence", countless healers have cured people's illnesses without fear of danger, such as Fuxi, who risked his life to make nine kinds of classical needles, and Shennong, who ever suffered 72 poisons in personally trying to taste hundreds of herbs. In the doctor-patient relationship, TCM emphasizes "universal equality and doctors need be in sense of compassion", which means require doctors to treat all patients equally and cure them with thoughtful compassion and care. In the peer relationship, they uphold an open and sincere mindset to jointly promote the development of the medical profession. In the face of interests, they show the noble moral sentiment of "justice outweighing benefit". They

are not influenced by fame and wealth in their medical practice, selflessly helping the poor and needy, which reflects their sense of social responsibility.

4.4 Understanding the Deep Cultural Connotations

There is a mother-child relationship between traditional Chinese culture and TCM culture, which is derived from traditional Chinese culture and has a feedback effect on traditional Chinese culture [5]. Chinese traditional culture is the cultural foundation for the formation of TCM theories; especially the ideas of Confucianism and Taoism have had a profound impact on TCM culture. For example, the idea of benevolence is the core of Confucius' thought. The benevolence of TCM is a direct embodiment of the benevolence of Confucianism, for medical practitioners of all times have emphasized the principle of "medicine is a benevolent art" in the practice of medicine [6]. "The Doctrine of the Mean" is also another important connotation of Confucianism, and this idea is also practiced in TCM. TCM emphasizes the idea of "a balance between Yin and Yang" and "harmonizing and compromising". The core of Taoist thought is to advocate "natural law" and "calm and content oneself with nature". For example, in TCM, the philosophy of "homology of medicine and food" shows the Taoist thought of "harmony between man and nature" and "Tao follows the law of nature".

5. Suggestions for the Application of TCM allusions Based on the Story Teaching Method in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

In the classroom, in order to efficiently attract and maintain students' attention, effectively organize teaching activities, ensure the smooth progress of the activities and achieve the set teaching goals, teachers should skillfully switch between the use of intentional attention and unintentional attention teaching strategies [7]. The Story Teaching Method, with its unique charm, is easier to naturally attract students' unintentional attention, making the learning process lively and interesting, thus achieving the teaching effect unconsciously and realizing the penetration and internalization of knowledge. However, teachers should pay attention to the following when using TCM allusions stories as teaching resources in the classroom.

5.1 Carefully Selecting Materials and Reflecting the Cultural Core of TCM Medicine

There are a number of TCM allusions, but not all of them can be appropriately integrated into the teaching of foreign Chinese learners. In view of the cognitive differences in different cultural backgrounds, those overly esoteric, complex and obscure allusions, if introduced into the classroom, often become obstacles to students' learning, not only making it difficult to stimulate their interest and enthusiasm in learning, but also triggering confusion and frustration, which in turn affects their overall cognition of the Chinese language and Chinese medicine culture. Therefore, when selecting and presenting Chinese medical tales, teachers need to screen them carefully and adapt them appropriately. For those stories

that contain mysterious colors, legendary elements or exaggerated plots, although they may be attractive, they may also mislead students to form a non-scientific and one-sided impression of Chinese medicine. For this reason, teachers should adopt a scientific and rigorous attitude and make reasonable adjustments to these materials to ensure that the stories can retain their cultural essence while conveying the scientific and positive values of TCM. At the same time, we must be clear that the role of these allusions in teaching is auxiliary. They should be used as an introduction or supplementary material for language learning, aiming at enriching the teaching content and enhancing the interest of the classroom, rather than becoming the core of teaching. Therefore, when using allusions, it is important to make sure that they are closely related to the language knowledge being taught, to avoid deviating from the teaching objectives, and to ensure that the introduction of allusions serves to improve students' language proficiency and intercultural communication skills.

5.2 Setting up Situation to Guide Students to Actively Participate

The Storytelling Teaching Approach is a student-centered teaching method. If it is used effectively, the teacher's role will change. Teachers are no longer traditional "knowledge transmitters", but become "partners" to communicate, interact and discuss with international students. In order to utilize this approach more effectively, teachers should carefully select Chinese idiomatic stories closely related to the curriculum as teaching materials. In the process of explaining the stories, teachers should abandon lengthy word-by-word explanations and instead use their personal understanding to capture the essence of the story, and vividly explain the main plot and development of the story in a language that is close to the students' way of thinking, so as to help them easily grasp the core of the story. In the classroom, teachers should actively build up the story situation, assist teaching with teaching aids, and encourage students to experience the plot of the story through group role-playing and other activities, to deepen their understanding and feelings of the story content. Subsequently, students are encouraged to share their thoughts and insights on the moral behind the story in the form of group discussions. As each student's way of thinking and cognitive perspective is unique, such a discussion will greatly enrich the classroom content and promote the collision of ideas. Students can also use their imagination to rewrite the end of the story, thus increasing interaction and encouraging thinking.

5.3 Enriching the Form and Practicing Input-Output Ability

The storytelling method encourages learners to actively share their personal feelings and insights after listening to a story. In the process of sharing, teachers should, on the one hand, identify and correct students' mistakes in language learning, assess learning effectiveness and recognize individual differences; on the other hand, they should pay attention to cultivating learners' thinking ability and understanding foreign learners' unique perspectives on Chinese culture, so as to adjust teaching strategies in time and realize more targeted teaching. At the same time, encourage students to express

actively. Teachers can express affirmation through their eyes, and raise the "scaffolding" at the right time, so as to help students better express their opinions and viewpoints, and improve the fluency and accuracy of spoken Chinese. In order to further enhance the learning effect, teachers can provide relevant reading materials to guide students to utilize key words to sort out the story line and grasp the main content. After the storytelling, students can work in groups to carry out creative activities, such as hypothetical processing, continuation writing, rewriting, or writing personal experiences based on their understanding of the characters' stories. This process not only enhances students' character recognition and writing skills, but also gradually challenges their language organization skills as the learning process advances, improving their Chinese spoken and writing skills from simple to complex sentences in a step-by-step manner.

5.4 Making Reasonable Arrangement to Arouse Students' Interest in Learning

Teachers need to plan carefully to ensure that the storytelling is both attractive and does not deviate from the teaching focus, when they utilize TCM allusion stories to assist in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. The duration of the story should be controlled within a reasonable range, not only to avoid being too long and taking up valuable time of formal teaching content, breaking the overall balance of the course and making it become a simple storytelling session, but also to prevent it from being too brief, so as not to interrupt the interest of the students who felt unsatisfied, or difficult to trigger empathy for a lack of depth, or even to produce a sense of boredom. After the end of the storytelling, teachers should skillfully guide and help students to deepen what they have learned, timely closing, in order to maintain the students' enthusiasm for learning, so that each story becomes an opportunity to motivate them to explore in-depth. At the same time, it is crucial to strengthen teacher-student interaction to avoid one-way lectures that weaken the effectiveness of teaching and learning, and to stimulate students' sense of participation through questioning and discussion to make the classroom full of vitality. Teachers should show professionalism, with rich knowledge and vivid language, convey the emotions and values in TCM allusion stories to each student, give guidance and encouragement at the right time, not only impart knowledge but also realize the cultivation of humanistic spirit, to ensure that the story teaching method really plays its positive role of teaching for fun and enlightening wisdom.

6. Conclusion

Teaching Chinese as a foreign language in the classroom has high requirements for teachers, and if you want to be an excellent teacher of Chinese as a foreign language, you must continue to learn and innovate. The Story Teaching Method, with its vivid and interesting form, stimulates learners' enthusiasm and imagination, and enhances their interest in learning. The overall level of teaching Chinese as a foreign language in the classroom directly affects foreign learners' absorption of Chinese knowledge and their comprehension of Chinese culture. It has been proven that the rational use of TCM allusion stories to assist teaching can teach Chinese medicine culture and Chinese knowledge in an interesting

environment, and enhance learners' cultural identity and language mastery. Therefore, teachers should continue to explore and integrate the essence of traditional culture into modern teaching to open the door to the Chinese world and Chinese culture for learners.

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