

# Research on teaching methods of Chinese characters in international Chinese language education under the new situation

Caizhu WU

Krirk University, Krung Thep Maha Nakhon 10220, Thailand

---

**Abstract:** As global interest in Chinese culture and language continues to grow, the importance of international Chinese language education is also constantly increasing. Against this background, the teaching of Chinese characters, as a key component of Chinese language learning, has received more attention. By analyzing the characteristics of Chinese character teaching, the characteristics of the teaching audience, and the problems faced in the new situation, this paper puts forward a series of suggestions for the improvement, aiming to improve the effectiveness and quality of Chinese character teaching in international Chinese language education and promote the development of Chinese character teaching.

**Key words:** international Chinese language education; teaching Chinese characters; teaching methods

---

## 1 Introduction

In the past twenty years, China has become more and more influential in the world, and has taken this opportunity to show its strength to the world. The charm of the Chinese language is gradually penetrating into more and more foreign friends and constantly spreading to friends all over the world. China's economy is developing rapidly, and its status in the international arena is increasing. Its heroism in the global arena has impressed the Chinese people and the whole world. At the same time, the number of people learning Chinese has been increasing. However, due to the complexity of Chinese characters themselves and the different cultural backgrounds, there are still many problems in teaching Chinese characters. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore the research on the methods of teaching Chinese characters in international Chinese language education in the new situation, and provide feasible suggestions for improving the teaching of Chinese characters.

## 2 An overview of Chinese character teaching in international Chinese language education

### 2.1 The characteristics of Chinese characters

Chinese characters are the core of the Chinese writing system and have unique formal and structural characteristics. First of all, Chinese characters are ideographs, and each character represents an individual meaning or concept. This is different from pinyin writing, which indicates pronunciation through a combination of letters, whereas Chinese characters express meaning directly [1]. Secondly, Chinese characters come in a wide variety of shapes, including both simplified and traditional forms. Each Chinese character consists of a certain number of strokes, and the order and shape of the strokes are crucial to the correct writing of Chinese characters. In addition, the combination of sound, shape, and meaning of Chinese

characters makes it necessary for learners to understand the connection between the shape of the character and its meaning while mastering the phonetics, adding to the complexity of learning [2].

## 2.2 The characteristics of the teaching targets

The main feature of the Chinese character teaching classroom in international Chinese language education, which is to teach Chinese characters to non-native Chinese-speaking students, are as follows:

Firstly, Chinese characters appear to the teaching target as a brand-new script, and the teaching target is completely unfamiliar with Chinese characters. Second, Chinese culture has a long history, and the target students are unfamiliar not only with Chinese characters, but also with traditional and modern Chinese culture, so it is almost impossible to learn Chinese characters independently of the language environment. Thirdly, language transfer in the process of second language acquisition leads to the fact that the target learners will instinctively bring in their own native culture's thinking, writing and behavioral patterns when they learn Chinese characters, which will affect the learning effect by involuntarily assimilating the new knowledge into the existing knowledge.

## **3 Problems facing the teaching of Chinese characters in international Chinese language education under the new situation**

### 3.1 The complexity of Chinese characters and the difficulties in teaching them

As a kind of hieroglyphic characters with complex structures and patterns, learning Chinese characters is a challenging task for non-native learners. Firstly, Chinese characters have a large number of strokes and combinations, and learners need to master a large number of Chinese character shapes and stroke sequences to ensure that they are written correctly. Secondly, the internal structure and meaning recognition of Chinese characters also require learners to have certain linguistic analysis and thinking skills. In addition, the association of shapes and syllables between different Chinese characters also needs to be learned and memorized. Therefore, the complexity of Chinese characters brings certain difficulties to the teaching of Chinese characters in international Chinese language education.

### 3.2 The differences in cultural background and cognition

Students in international Chinese language education often come from different cultural backgrounds and lack understanding and cognition of Chinese culture. As an important part of Chinese culture, Chinese characters have a profound cultural connotation and historical background. Students need to understand the relationship between Chinese characters and Chinese culture and integrate the meaning of Chinese characters with their cultural background. However, due to students' linguistic and cultural differences, they may not be able to fully understand or feel the cultural connotations represented by Chinese characters [3]. This poses a challenge to the teaching of Chinese characters and requires teachers to focus on cultivating students' interest in and identification with Chinese culture to help them better understand and apply Chinese characters.

## **4 Suggestions for improving the teaching methods of Chinese characters in international Chinese language education under the new situation**

### 4.1 Firming up the goal of teaching Chinese characters

In the new situation, one of the suggestions for improving the teaching methods of Chinese characters in international Chinese language education is to firmly establish the goals of teaching Chinese characters. This means that in the teaching process, the core objectives of teaching Chinese characters need to be clearly defined and the teaching activities should be centered on these objectives. Specifically, first, students' learning needs and goals should be clearly defined. Teachers should understand students' backgrounds, learning objectives and specific needs for learning Chinese characters, for example, whether they are for daily communication, business applications or academic research. According to the needs of

different students, the key contents and the depth of Chinese character teaching should be determined to ensure that the teaching objectives are in line with students' expectations. Secondly, establish a systematic and perfect teaching objective system. The objectives of teaching Chinese characters should be hierarchical and organized, gradually unfolding from simple to complex, from basic to extended. Teachers can design different levels of objectives according to students' levels of Chinese characters and learning abilities, and gradually guide students to improve their abilities in Chinese character literacy, writing accuracy and contextualization. At the same time, focus on cultivating students' motivation and learning strategies. Teachers should stimulate students' interest in learning Chinese characters through various ways, so that they can realize the importance and practicality of learning Chinese characters. In addition, students should be guided to master effective learning methods and strategies, so that they can learn and master Chinese characters more efficiently, for example, a variety of practice methods and teaching resources can be used to stimulate students' interest in learning and improve their learning results. Finally, the teaching objectives should be evaluated and adjusted regularly. Teaching objectives should be dynamic and need to be assessed and adjusted in a timely manner according to students' learning and teaching effectiveness [4]. Teachers should understand students' learning progress and problems through regular tests, homework assessments and feedback exchanges with students, and adjust the teaching objectives and teaching strategies in time to ensure the realization of the teaching objectives.

#### 4.2 Strengthening systematic teaching methods

In view of the complexity and difficulty of teaching Chinese characters, it is recommended to strengthen systematic teaching methods in international Chinese language education. First of all, teachers can rationally arrange the process of teaching Chinese characters according to students' learning level and cognitive ability. By setting up learning objectives and clear stage-by-stage tasks, students can be gradually guided to master the knowledge of writing, construction and the meaning of Chinese characters. Secondly, step-by-step teaching methods can be used to break down the learning of Chinese characters into specific, easy-to-understand and operational steps. For example, the basic strokes and stroke order of Chinese characters can be taught first, and then the combination and construction rules of Chinese characters can be gradually taught to help students master the basic skills of Chinese characters. Finally, teaching activities of consolidation and expansion can be used to help students review and apply what they have learned about Chinese characters and improve their proficiency and application of Chinese characters.

In addition, in order to improve the effectiveness of teaching Chinese characters, teachers can create diversified teaching environments and teaching resources. For example, teaching videos, online interactive platforms and other technological means can be used to provide students with diversified resources for teaching Chinese characters. At the same time, a Chinese character learning group or partner system can be set up so that students can work together to learn and improve themselves. Teachers can also organize Chinese character competitions or cultural activities to stimulate students' motivation and interest in learning Chinese characters. Through these methods and measures, students can better master Chinese characters, improve their learning effectiveness, promoting the development of Chinese character teaching in international Chinese language education.

#### 4.3 The production and use of quality teaching resources and tools

In the new situation, one of the suggestions for improving the teaching methods of Chinese characters in international Chinese language education is to produce and use high-quality teaching resources and tools. Initiatives in this area can effectively improve the attractiveness and effectiveness of Chinese character teaching. First of all, produce teaching resources for different levels and needs. Teachers can create teaching resources of different difficulty levels and types to meet students' individual learning needs according to their Chinese character levels and learning goals. For example, for

beginners, games or interactive courseware for basic Chinese character cognition can be designed, while for advanced students, in-depth teaching materials covering Chinese character writing skills, contextual use and cultural connotations can be provided. Second, multimedia technology and interactive teaching tools are utilized. The use of modern technology can make teaching Chinese characters more lively and interesting. Creating teaching software, applications or online platforms that are interactive can help students better understand and master Chinese characters through participation. For example, by creating animated tutorials on Chinese character writing, online Chinese character games or contextualized interactive exercises, students' learning will be made more interesting and their interest and motivation in Chinese characters will be enhanced. In addition, develop teaching materials with cultural connotations. As unique symbols of Chinese culture, Chinese characters have rich historical and cultural connotations behind them. When producing teaching resources for Chinese characters, relevant cultural backgrounds can be incorporated to help students better understand and feel the deeper meanings of Chinese characters. For example, by introducing the origin and development of Chinese characters, or explaining traditional Chinese festivals and literary works related to Chinese characters, students can experience the unique charm of Chinese culture while learning Chinese characters.

## **5 Conclusion**

In the new situation of international Chinese language education, the teaching of Chinese characters faces many challenges, but also contains great opportunities for development. Clarifying teaching objectives, strengthening systematic teaching methods, and creating and using quality teaching resources and tools are the keys to improving the effectiveness of teaching Chinese characters. With the continuous improvement of teaching concepts and technologies, it is believed that the teaching of Chinese characters will play an even more important role in international Chinese language education and promote the development of cross-cultural communication and understanding.

## **Conflicts of interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

## **References**

- [1] Yang RY, Cao CC. 2023. Chinese character teaching strategies in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. *Transactions on Comparative Education*, 5(4). DOI:10.23977/TRANCE.2023.050404
- [2] Hu HP. 2022. Effective methods of teaching Chinese characters in American middle schools: the case of Gentry middle school in Missouri, USA. *Translating China*, 8(4).
- [3] Xu Y, Jin L, Deifell E, et al. 2021. Chinese character instruction online: a technology acceptance perspective in emergency remote teaching. *System*, (prepublish), 100102542. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102542>
- [4] Li M. 2020. A systematic review of the research on Chinese character teaching and learning. *Frontiers of Education in China*, 15(2): 39-72.