Application of Xu Shen's "Liu Shu" Theory in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

The teaching of Chinese characters to foreign students should be aimed at the characteristics and difficulties of foreign students in learning Chinese characters. According to the characteristics of Chinese characters different from Pinyin characters, an effective method suitable for teaching Chinese characters should be designed according to its internal structure and rules. Xu Shen's "Liushu" theory systematically explains the rules of Chinese character making. We can classify Chinese characters according to the method of making characters, find the best entry point according to the characteristics of different categories, and combine the development of Chinese characters with History, fully demonstrate the rationale for the internal structure of Chinese characters to students, deepen their knowledge and understanding of Chinese characters, improve the interest of Chinese characters, and ultimately improve the efficiency of our Chinese character teaching.

Keywords

Liushu, Character Creation Evolution.

1. Introduction

The teaching of Chinese characters in teaching Chinese as a foreign language is referred to as teaching Chinese as a foreign language. It is a teaching activity aimed at mastering the use of Chinese characters in foreign language teaching methods with modern Chinese characters as the content and using foreign language teaching methods. The fundamental purpose is to clarify the shape, sound, and meaning of modern Chinese characters, to help students recognize Chinese characters, write Chinese characters, learn Chinese, and master written Chinese."[1]

In teaching Chinese as a foreign language, the teaching of Chinese characters is the most difficult and most overlooked link. After several years of study, foreign students can communicate fluently in Chinese, but in the HSK exam, their writing level of Chinese characters is far from the actual level of language application. "The most obvious reason is the difficulty of Chinese characters." [2]

This requires that our teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners should be based on the characteristics and difficulties of foreign students in learning Chinese characters, and adopt teaching methods suitable for them.

The current teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners often starts with structure. Foreign students, especially those who are not in the cultural circle of Chinese characters, know nothing about Chinese characters, and simply teach Chinese character strokes, parts, stroke order, and combination of parts, as well as monotonous and mechanical repetitive exercises. On the contrary, it will greatly reduce the interest of Chinese character teaching.
2. Characteristics of Chinese Characters and Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

Different brain mechanisms in word processing is one of the difficulties for foreign students in learning Chinese, especially students from Europe and the United States. For the processing of Pinyin text, often only the operation of the left brain is required. Therefore, students whose native language is the habit of using the left brain when processing text. When the brain processes Chinese characters, the left and right brains need to work together. This requires that learners whose native language is Pinyin text must establish a brain mechanism for left and right brains to process text information together. In addition, each Chinese character not only has its fixed strokes and stroke order, but also has a strong internal law. Because of the unique flat square structure of Chinese characters, we can treat each Chinese character as a picture, and the human brain can easily interpret the picture. Form a complete visual image. For such a visual image, the brain’s processing power is very powerful, and this visual image is stored in the brain for a relatively long time. Therefore, all of this requires us to design effective methods suitable for teaching Chinese characters based on the unique features of Chinese characters that are different from Pinyin in foreign characters teaching, rather than simply teaching strokes and radicals.

As ideographic characters, Chinese characters originate from pictorial characters, so the rationale of Chinese characters is inherent. Of course, modern Chinese characters are different from earlier ancient characters. In the period of writing and drawing, the picture characters of “seeing the form and knowing the meaning” are not modern Chinese characters. The change, simplification, and simplification of the evolution of Chinese characters have greatly reduced the justification of Chinese characters, and the text symbols have become more and more abstract. However, the rationale of Chinese characters still exists, and it is still of great significance to apply the rationale of Chinese characters to the teaching of foreign Chinese characters.

Xu Shen proposed the "Liushu" in Shuo Wen Jie Zi, which systematically explained the rules of Chinese character creation, and proposed "pictograms", "comprehension", "referring to things", "phonetic", "transliteration", "Fake borrowing" six kinds of word making. Of course, the "Liushu" cannot simply be regarded as the word-making method. The first four types: pictographs, pointing things, understanding, and pictophonetics are word-making methods, while remarks and false borrowings are word-writing methods.

This "Liushu" theory’s interpretation of the changing rules and composition of Chinese characters strongly illustrates the rationale of Chinese characters. The justification of pictographs, intelligible characters, and referential characters can be clearly seen through the evolution of Chinese characters, while the justification of pictophonetic characters can be seen directly from the side.

The forms, sounds, and meanings of Chinese characters are not independent but unified. Therefore, the teaching of Chinese characters should also be unified teaching of shapes, sounds, and meanings. Under the guidance of the "Liushu" theory, we can make full use of the characteristics of Chinese characters, analyze them, classify them according to the method of making characters, find the best entry point according to the characteristics of different categories, and combine the development of Chinese characters and History, fully demonstrate the reasons for the internal structure of Chinese characters to students, let students know what they are and why they are, in order to deepen students’ understanding and understanding of Chinese characters, help students to memorize the glyphs, sounds, and meanings of Chinese characters, and improve the fun of Chinese characters To deepen foreign students’ understanding of Chinese character culture, maximize student interest, and improve the efficiency of our Chinese character teaching.
Of course, in the teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners, we don’t need to delve into how the "Liushu" are defined or how the Chinese characters should be classified. This does not make much sense for our teaching. After all, it is not an ancient writing class. We cannot simply apply the traditional "Liushu" theory bluntly. We should design scientific and effective teaching methods based on the actual teaching situation to inject more skills into the teaching of Chinese characters.

3. "Liushu" and Teaching Chinese Characters to Foreigners

3.1. Teaching methods of pictographs

Pictographs are the most primitive method of making characters. Although there are not many pictographs in modern Chinese characters, even in "Said Wen", there are only 364 pictographs, accounting for only 3.8%. However, Chinese characters originated from pictorial characters, and pictographs are the earliest pictorial texts, and their importance is self-evident. Earlier we mentioned the rationale of Chinese characters. Pictographs are the strongest of the Liushu. Of course, the glyphs of some hieroglyphs can no longer see their original intent. However, most of the hieroglyphs can still be seen through the evolution process of ancient ancestors' understanding of heaven and earth, people, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, production and life, etc., which greatly helped foreign students to understand Chinese culture. In the teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners, hieroglyphs are the basis of Chinese character teaching. At the same time, many hieroglyphs are commonly used characters, and these hieroglyphs are often very important radicals and constitute an important part of pictophonetic characters.

Foreign students have a headache for the structure and strokes of Chinese characters. In order to eliminate this fear, we should make full use of the characteristics of pictographs. In the teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners, use physical objects or pictures to teach them. The expressed meaning can not only stimulate students’ interest, but also show the wisdom of the ancient Chinese ancestors accumulated in Chinese characters, and make students more interested in Chinese culture.

If the real thing is not convenient, you can use the graphic teaching method to display the picture first. This picture can be any picture related to the spoken Chinese characters, such as unearthed cultural relics, historical figures, cartoon pictures, and so on.

Secondly, we should show students the earliest typefaces we have mastered and the evolution process of their typefaces, that is, the evolutionary process of 甲骨文-金文-篆书--隶书--楷书.

The display of this evolutionary process can easily help students remember the glyphs of modern Chinese characters and let them know why the Chinese characters are written like this. In particular, some Chinese characters that are easy to mix or not distinguishable in the regular script phase can be distinguished by examining their diachronic forms.

Finally, the teacher told the students how to pronounce the Chinese character so that they can combine form, sound, and meaning well. At the same time, words relevant to the level of the student and related to the spoken Chinese character and related characters with the spoken Chinese character as the radical should be given. These Chinese characters are best learned or well understood by the student. This kind of knowledge can not only help students understand the Chinese characters they have learned, but also allow them to remember more Chinese characters and enhance their confidence in learning Chinese characters.

3.2. Teaching methods of referring to things

There are not a lot of Zhishi characters, but the teaching of Zhishi characters is an important part of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. It can help students who are new to Chinese
characters to understand the intention of Chinese characters and help them learn more Chinese characters.
In the teaching process of Zhishi, we can first explain the configuration of pictographs, and then explain the abstract meaning conveyed according to the number and position of the Zhishi symbols.

3.3. Teaching Method of Understanding Words
The comprehension word is basically a word with new meaning, which is composed of two or more parts. In the teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners, the teaching of connotative characters mainly focuses on how to make students understand the meaning of the new characters after the combination of these two components. We can explain each component first when explaining it.
After explaining the individual parts, it will be easier for students to understand the meaning of the Chinese characters demonstrated by the teacher: holding a piece of meat in one hand means "owning".
At the same time, words related to its meaning are given:
Interesting some interesting

3.4. Teaching methods of pictophonetic characters
"Explaining Characters in Shuwen" includes 9,353 Xiaoyao shapes, of which 7967 are pictophonetic characters, accounting for about 85%. The "Chinese Proficiency Test Vocabulary and Chinese Characters Level Outline" divides the Chinese characters that students need to master into four levels: A, B, C, and D. Among them, pictophonetic characters account for 68.6%. Obviously, pictophonetic characters are the focus of teaching Chinese characters to foreigners.
Because pictophonetic characters contain phonetic components, this method is also easier to understand for foreign students who use Pinyin as their native language.
The pictophonetic notes and ideographs are also created by pictographs, referring to things, and comprehension. Therefore, in the explanation, the methods used by the preceding pictographs, referencing and comprehension are still required. Then use the associative method to connect a group of pictophonetic characters with the same sign, by teaching a character, a group of characters, a group of characters. In this way, one can learn a long list, which not only increases the reserve of Chinese characters, but also makes it easier for students to understand and save time. And when teaching related new words, you can use the words (meaning symbols) you have learned to explain the meaning of guessing new words, and motivate students to think proactively, not just simple and boring explanations by teachers.
The function of liaison literacy is mainly two: first, to make students realize that although the number of Chinese characters is huge and the structure is complex, it is not a loose sand. Its composition is regular. As long as you master these rules, Chinese characters are relatively easy to learn.
The second is the use of liaison literacy, which avoids the need to isolate and memorize one character at a time, which not only saves time but also improves efficiency, so that it can achieve the effect of doing more by less.
This method of literacy has been tested in the teaching of Chinese characters at the elementary school level where mother tongue is Chinese. We can extend it to the teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners.
For example:
In pictophonetic characters, there are a lot of pictophonetic characters next to "meter". At this time, we can summarize and summarize this type of Chinese characters. For students to remember.
With the word "meter" mastered, many pictophonetic characters related to "meter" can be linked together. Such as:
Grain sugar powder coarse
Grain fruit sugar flour granules coarse

Teaching of pictophonetic characters is both important and difficult. Yifu, as a component of pictophonetic characters, carries a large amount of semantic and cultural information of Chinese characters. It is an important starting point for foreign students to understand and master Chinese characters. The meaning is abstract or transferred, and the difficulty is increased. The relationship between ideographs and vowels is also very complicated. Therefore, there is no one-size-fits-all method for teaching pictophonetic characters. Feasible. Between classes, some Chinese characters will continue to reappear. This not only conforms to the laws of cognition and acquisition, but also facilitates students' memory. At the same time, it also enables students to realize that the classification of classes can be diverse. The method of learning and memory can also be multi-channel, which will eventually allow students to acquire self-learning ability and rational cognition of Chinese characters in learning.

Of course, for foreign Chinese workers, how many Chinese characters students learn is not our ultimate goal in teaching Chinese. We should pay more attention to how to improve students' interest and enthusiasm for learning Chinese characters. The complexity of Chinese character strokes has indeed caused difficulties for foreign students, but "the unique shape of Chinese characters and the ancient civilization of the East it symbolizes are quite novel and attractive to Westerners" [3], the application of the "Liushu" theory, Can reduce the unsuitable response of foreign students, especially those who are not in the cultural circle of Chinese characters, from Pinyin to Chinese characters. The evolution of the Chinese characters shown to the students by the teacher deepens the students' understanding of Chinese characters and Chinese culture with unique visual impacts, which not only satisfies the students' curiosity, but also enhances their interest in learning, thereby improving the learning effect.

At the same time, summarizing the Chinese character radicals and common characters can also increase students' understanding of the rationale of Chinese characters, so that learning Chinese characters is no longer a mechanical accumulation. Such a Chinese character teaching strategy will lay a solid foundation for students to learn more advanced Chinese characters.

Mr. Chen Yinqu said: "Every word is a cultural history." [4] When the deep cultural connotation of Chinese characters is displayed in front of students through its image formation, the innate vision of Chinese characters The beauty and deep cultural accumulation will also attract more and more people to learn Chinese.

Guiding the teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners with Xu Shen's "Liushu" theory is a long-standing idea of the author, and I have also tried it in the practice of teaching Chinese as a foreign language at home and abroad, because the textbooks that have been used are based on the "word-based" concept. Literacy, so the teaching of Chinese characters is always sporadic. When encountering single characters with strong word-building ability, we analyze and link them. From the classroom effect and the response of students on social media, it really enhances the fun of Chinese character teaching. Students learn The interest and enthusiasm of Chinese characters and even Chinese characters have improved, and the efficiency of Chinese character learning has also been improved. Of course, to thoroughly implement the "Liushu" theory into the teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners is a long-term and continuous scientific research task that requires a lot of time and energy.

First of all, the characters in the "HSK Vocabulary and Chinese Character Level Outline" must be followed. Word classification is used to classify, then according to the level, and appropriate textbooks must be prepared. The textbooks must take into account the cultivation of students'
listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. This is a long and tedious task that requires scholars to explore. Complement theory and step-by-step verification through teaching practice.

References


