

Research on Ways to Teach Chinese Pinyin to International Students in China

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ABSTRACT

Hanyu Pinyin is an essential tool for learning Chinese. There are many difficulties for international students in learning Hanyu Pinyin, so Hanyu Pinyin is the first hurdle that foreign learners have to overcome in learning Chinese. How to optimize teaching methods, making it easy, interesting, and enjoyable for international students to learn the abstract and boring Hanyu Pinyin, and making the classroom lively and vibrant, is the direction that teachers of Chinese as a foreign language should think about and strive for.

Keywords: Chinese/Hanyu Pinyin, Initials, Finals, "Hanyu Pinyin Scheme".

1. INTRODUCTION

Hanyu Pinyin is the base in learning Chinese, but a completely unfamiliar language symbol for international students. If Pinyin teaching is conducted rigidly and mechanically according to the "Hanyu Pinyin Scheme", it will make the class dull and lifeless, depriving students of the joy of learning, and it will be even more impossible to break through the difficulties and challenges that foreign students face in learning Hanyu Pinyin. Therefore, learning Hanyu Pinyin in teaching Chinese as a foreign language cannot be achieved overnight. "Without interest, there is no motivation to learn". How to make Chinese Pinyin easy, interesting, and enjoyable for international students to learn is a big problem worth researching on, and making the classroom lively and vibrant is the direction that teachers of Chinese as a foreign language should think about and strive for.

In this article, the author will focus on practical teaching experience in teaching Chinese as a foreign language, as well as long-term study of teaching theories and research on classroom teaching methods. The author will tell from experience about various and creative methods to break through traditional phonetic teaching obstacles.

2. IMPORTANCE OF CHINESE PINYIN IN LEARNING CHINESE

Language is the most important carrier of communication in human society, and communication mainly takes two forms: oral and written. Oral communication has obvious simplicity, directness, and flexibility, so it plays a more important role than written communication in people's daily lives. The prerequisite for understanding and speaking is to master the pronunciation skills and rules of the language. For Chinese language, learning Pinyin is the base for speaking good Chinese.

In recent years, many scholars have advocated for the pinyinization of Chinese. Although there are many obstacles on the road to complete the pinyinization, it has been proven that relying on the conscious correction effect of pinyin and language flow can successfully complete 90% of the communication tasks. In many foreign language teaching, especially in functional language learning such as business and tourism, learners often ignore Chinese characters and rely on Chinese pinyin to complete their communications.

The Latin alphabet is the most widely distributed letter in human society, and the Pinyin writing of Mandarin Chinese officially uses the Latin alphabet. The unique universality and recognition of the Latin alphabet make learning

Chinese Pinyin inevitably popular, which is an indispensable "crutch" for foreigners when learning Chinese.

3. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF CHINESE PINYIN TEACHING

In teaching, it is not difficult to find that most of the current Pinyin textbooks still adopt the traditional teaching sequence formulated in the "Chinese Pinyin Scheme", and many problems have also arisen in practical operation. Because the order in the "Chinese Pinyin Scheme" is based on phonetics and phonology, many foreign students may encounter "subject barriers" that they cannot understand and recognize in their classrooms. In terms of subject positioning, the purpose of teaching Chinese as a foreign language is to cultivate students' language communication skills, not linguistic knowledge. Therefore, in phonetic teaching, it is necessary to overcome "subject barriers" and provide learners with a practical and effective teaching process. Enable learners to quickly grasp the rules of Chinese phonetics and develop a strong interest in further Chinese language learning.

If pinyin teaching is rigidly and mechanically carried out according to the "Chinese Pinyin Scheme", it will make the classroom dull, make students lose the joy of learning, and make it impossible for them to break through the difficulties and challenges in learning Chinese Pinyin. Therefore, how to teach Chinese Pinyin creatively and effectively has a long way to go.

4. DIFFICULTIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN LEARNING CHINESE PINYIN

4.1 Difficulties in Initial Consonants

The consonants j, q, x before the tongue and zh, ch, sh after the tip of the tongue in Chinese are difficult for international students to learn. Due to the absence of factors such as j, q, and x in their native languages, the consonants j, q, and x on the tongue surface and z, c, and s on the tip of the tongue are often confused. For example, "Qi Xi" is mispronounced as "Ci Si" in Chinese; "ji xu" is mispronounced as "zi xU". Because there is no retroflex sound in their native languages, when pronouncing the consonants zh, ch, and sh after the tip of the tongue, these are often pronounced as flat consonants zi, ci, and si. For African students,

South Asian and West Asian students, they have difficulties in pronouncing the retroflex consonants of zh, ch, sh in their pronunciation, so 老师 is always pronounced as "Lao Xi". Besides, the differences between aspirated and unaspirated initials in Chinese Pinyin such as b-p, d-t, g-k, j-q, z-c, zh-ch, are a big headache for international students.

4.2 Difficulties in Vowel Aspects

There is no rolled tongue vowel "er" in the native language of international students, which leads them to habitually pronounce 'er' as 'e' when learning Chinese Pinyin. For example, "二级 er ji" is pronounced as "额吉 eji"; "二号 er hao" is pronounced as "e hao 噩耗". Korean students seem not to know the differences between O and U.

4.3 Difficulties in Tones

The tones of Chinese Pinyin are always the weakest points among international students, while the tones of most languages other than Chinese only have rising tones and falling tones. Due to the fact that their mother tongues usually only have light and stress pronunciation, the tone pronunciations when speaking are often incorrect when pronouncing Chinese Pinyin. Yin Ping (55, the 1st tone) often only reaches 44, Yang Ping (35, the 2nd tone) also reaches 44, and the most difficult thing is the 3rd tone(214), often reaching 213. The 4th tone(51), they often pronounce it into the 2nd tone. So when we hear foreign students speak Chinese, we often hear foreign accent.

5. THE WAY TO TEACH CHINESE PINYIN INNOVATIVELY

5.1 Teaching According to "Hanyu Pinyin Scheme", But Flexibly and Creatively

In teaching, it is not difficult to find that most of the current Pinyin textbooks still adopt the traditional teaching sequence formulated in the "Chinese Pinyin Scheme", and many problems have also arisen in practical operation. Because the order in the "Chinese Pinyin Scheme" is based on phonetics and phonology, many foreign students may encounter "subject barriers" that they cannot understand and recognize in their classrooms. In terms of subject positioning, the purpose of teaching Chinese as a foreign language is to cultivate students' language communication skills, not linguistic knowledge. Therefore, in phonetic teaching, it is necessary to overcome "subject

barriers" and provide learners with a practical and effective teaching process. Enable learners to quickly grasp the rules of Chinese phonetics and develop a strong interest in further Chinese language learning.

In Chinese Pinyin, the order of initial consonants is determined according to the General Table of Phonetic Alphabet in Mandarin Chinese. The General Table of Phonetic Alphabet tells us that the combination of initial consonants and vowels is selective. For example, z, c, s can only be combined with compound vowels, j, q, x can only be combined with alveolar vowels and summary vowels... Therefore, the appearance of initial consonants in teaching is often due to the need to combine vowels into syllables, which is determined by vowels. Pinyin teaching should focus on vowels. But If Pinyin teaching is conducted rigidly and mechanically according to the "Hanyu Pinyin Scheme" or if we just talk about the theories, it would be boring and make the learning difficult.

It is necessary to consciously summarize teaching experience and find a teaching sequence that is truly suitable for cultivating "Chinese language communication skills". Provide a simple path for teaching Chinese phonetics as a foreign language.

It is also necessary to teach the initials and finals step by step, not much at a time according to the arrangement of the textbooks. In my class, I usually teach students 3 or 4 initials and 3 or 4 finals at a time from single vowels to compound vowels. Then teach the 4 tones of each final. And then combine them by playing games “找朋友”. In this way let them touch some simple Chinese characters, meanwhile understand Chinese Pinyin deeply.

5.2 Mastering Easily the Essentials of Pinyin By Comparing with the International Phonetic Alphabet

Although mastering Chinese Pinyin can be challenging for international students, as long as teachers pay attention to exploring the existing phonetic knowledge of international students and analyze, expand, and extend it appropriately in the process of teaching Pinyin, they can help students build bridges and construct a new framework for learning Chinese Pinyin on the basis of their existing phonetic knowledge structure. So how can teachers mobilize and awaken students' already existing phonetic -assistant structures?

A scholar once pointed out that "to solve the problem of phonetic acquisition of Chinese as a second language, it is necessary to study the correspondence and non-correspondence between the learner's mother tongue and Chinese language phonemes." In fact, whether it is Chinese, English, or other languages, they are all languages with commonalities and similarities. For example, the unit sound in English[i][u][e][o][A]is equivalent to the simple final i, u, e, o, a in Chinese Pinyin, and the consonant [b] [p] [d] [k] [g] [f] in English is very similar to the consonant in Chinese, such as:/b/p//d//k//g//f/. Therefore, in teaching, teachers can combine the pronunciation of Chinese initials and finals with the pronunciation of English consonants and vowels, and make scientific and effective use of the positive transfer effect of the International Phonetic Alphabet, which can help foreign students master the correct pronunciation of Chinese Pinyin and Chinese Pinyin Phonics. This can mobilize students' original phonetic cognitive structure, and gradually penetrate the pronunciation key points of Chinese Pinyin by comparison. Not only does it greatly simplify the pronunciation key points of Pinyin, making it easier for students to understand and accept, but classroom teaching is also more effective. After I teach the initials and finals of Chinese pinyin, I compare them with the International Phonetic Alphabet, students can distinguish between them and meanwhile can get a deeper recognition of Chinese pinyin.

5.3 Cultural Assistance, Consolidating Chinese Pinyin Appreciatively

Memorizing is the only condition for acquiring and consolidating knowledge. Confucius, the great thinker and educator in ancient China said that "reviewing the old to learn the new", which is the oldest but also the most effective means of memorizing the knowledge you have learned.

According to the "forgetting law" of human perception, in order for international students to truly master Chinese Pinyin, they should pay attention to reviewing and consolidating. If a simple and repetitive approach is adopted for mechanical review and memorizing it will only make students lose interest in learning and the knowledge they have learned cannot be truly consolidated. Learning is not just a process of mechanical memory. If teachers can use various strategies comprehensively during review, pay attention to the organic combination of review content and form, design interesting activities to

maintain students' enthusiasm and initiative in review, and give students the opportunity and feeling to achieve success, then review will be twice the result with half the effort.

How to make the tedious and mechanical review of Chinese Pinyin lively and interesting? How to make the Pinyin class for international students flexible and lively? Language and culture complement each other. Chinese is not only a carrier of traditional Chinese culture, but also an important part of it. International students studying Chinese not only aim to improve their Chinese communication skills, but also want to learn about the splendid traditional Chinese culture. Using cultural infiltration to promote teaching Chinese as a foreign language can facilitate the dissemination and influence of Chinese culture. International students studying Chinese language are full of interest in Chinese culture. If they can use cultural assistance to review Chinese Pinyin, it can not only improve students' attention and learning interest, but also help them review and code in a timely manner to quickly transform short-term memory into long-term memory, laying a foundation for future retrieval and applying Chinese language. For example, we introduce the Chinese term “我的家” in the Pinyin review class. During the review, let the students learn to spell the Chinese addresses: bàba, māma, fùqīn, mǔqīn, xiōngdì, jiěmèi, gēge, didi, jiějie, mèimei, wàigōng, wàipó, yéye, nǎinai

During the process of reviewing the spelling of Chinese titles, teachers not only consolidate and review pinyin, but also help international students understand the family structure and titles in China. Not only can they enjoy learning Chinese Pinyin but they are also deeply attracted to Chinese culture.

5.4 Game Assistance

Enjoying playing is human nature. Games are even more loved by students. If fun games can be cleverly integrated with Pinyin teaching activity, it can not only attract students' attention, but also enable them to learn or consolidate knowledge in a relaxed and cheerful way and stimulate students' initiative in learning. If games can be used to help students review and consolidate, it will also help them to strengthen and consolidate Chinese Pinyin happily without burden or pressure, and the teaching effect will be twice as effective. In my Pinyin teaching, I flexibly use various small games in class to help students consolidate Chinese Pinyin, such as driving trains, finding friends, word chains, being careful of bombs, card games, etc. These

games help strengthen the consolidation and memory of Chinese Pinyin, which is not only attractive and interesting, but also efficiently consolidate Chinese Pinyin knowledge in a tense but happy classroom atmosphere.

6. CONCLUSION

Hanyu Pinyin is the foundation for international students to learn Chinese. Although there are many difficulties, we can adopt vivid and enjoyable teaching methods in our teaching practice to inspire students' learning passion in a relaxed and active class. Good teaching methods can make learning more effective and interesting. As a result, students are fascinated, practice with enthusiasm, and have a high passion for learning Chinese Pinyin. Besides, we must keep reviewing what they have learned and help them consolidate. In a word, we, as teachers of Chinese to speakers of other languages, must be creative and keep constantly exploring innovative methods in the practice of teaching Chinese Pinyin.

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