

The Practical Significance of Guanzhong Dialect in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

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Abstract: China is a country with a long history and a vast territory. Different nationalities and regions have different dialects. As early as the beginning of twentieth Century, many scholars studied Guanzhong Dialect. With the introduction of the strategy of "one belt and one road", as the starting point of the ancient Silk Road, Xi'an also welcomed a large number of foreign students studying Chinese. In the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, the teaching of Mandarin, supplemented by the infiltration of Guanzhong Dialect cultural knowledge, can eliminate the misunderstanding in the communication between the overseas students and the local people, realize the real cross-cultural communication, and attract the high-level talents studying and studying in Shaanxi from the aspects of economy and culture.

Keywords: Guanzhong Dialect; Chinese as a Foreign Language; Cross-cultural Communication; Practical Significance

1. Introduction

The study of dialects in China can be traced back to the late Western Han Dynasty with Yang Xiong's "Yóuxuān Shǐzhě Jué Dài Yǔ Shì Biéguó Fāngyán" ("Writings from the Chamber of Exotic Inquiries: A Comparative Study of the Languages of Different States").

[1] Subsequently, researchers from various dynasties have continued this tradition. Dialect research in China began in the early years of the People's Republic, focusing initially on promoting Mandarin. Scholars initiated dialect surveys, leading to comprehensive research. Over the decades, the study of dialects has evolved from survey work and regional gazetteer compilation to a comprehensive and extensive exploration of dialect research.

At the beginning of the 20th century, scholars at home and abroad began to use modern

descriptive means to study Chinese dialects. With the increasing popularity of Chinese language and the increasing number of foreigners coming to China, the two seemingly impossible language types, Chinese as a foreign language and Chinese dialects, collide under the general trend of real development. Since the development of teaching Chinese as a foreign language in the 1950s, it has established a relatively complete discipline theory. Among them, the theory of Chinese as a foreign language is the basis of application in teaching. Language is inseparable from culture. Language is the carrier of culture and also a cultural phenomenon. Since the 1980s, many scholars at home and abroad have called for the introduction of knowledge of Chinese dialects and dialects into TCFL from the perspective of promoting Chinese culture and promoting cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries. For example, Zhang Zhenxing's "dialect research and teaching Chinese as a foreign language", Ding Qizhen's "on the relationship between Chinese dialects and teaching Chinese as a foreign language", Gu Yue's "try to talk about dialect problems in teaching Chinese as a foreign language" and other research results were published. Obviously, the research topic of the relationship between TCFL and Chinese dialects has been put in front of us. People have also paid attention to the historical and cultural information carried by Chinese dialects, and realized that dialects are also a way of communication in TCFL. [2]

In the 1950s, many scholars made a breakthrough in the comparative study of Guanzhong Dialect and Putonghua, with the purpose of popularizing Putonghua. Works like Du Songshou's book "How Northwesterners Learn Standard Chinese" have played a positive role in guiding people from the Northwest in learning Standard Chinese and mastering the corresponding relationships with

Pinyin letters. Subsequently, Yang Chunlin and Sun Fuquan's book "How Guanzhong People Learn Standard Chinese" used Pinyin letters to annotate Mandarin pronunciation. It mainly discusses the understanding of learning Mandarin, basic training, methods to master Mandarin phonetics, corresponding rules, common knowledge of connected speech, and simple comparisons of vocabulary and grammar. The book has played an active role in guiding people from Shaanxi in learning Standard Chinese [3].

However, in recent times, many scholars have delved systematically into the study of Guanzhong dialects. Guo Qinna's "An Explanation of Guanzhong Dialect Words" mentions that many ancient Chinese vocabulary are still preserved in Guanzhong dialect words. The author provides explanations for some dialect words in Guanzhong, which is positively significant for further research on Guanzhong dialects in relation to ancient Chinese and Chinese culture [4].

Li Wei's book "Guanzhong Dialect and Standard Chinese" provides a comprehensive exposition of Chinese language theory and knowledge. It correlates Guanzhong dialect with Standard Chinese, offering rich materials and detailed summaries. The book includes reflections and exercises, featuring diverse content and strong entertainment value, providing significant assistance for those learning Guanzhong dialect. Additionally, the book "Shaanxi Dialect and Standard Chinese," edited by Song Wencheng and Zhang Weijia, is a university textbook with high practicality. It is academically important, rich in dialect data, and compiled meticulously. It stands as a crucial academic work.

In recent years, with the increasing globalization of the world economy, teaching Chinese as a foreign language has become more and more crucial. Many individuals have also come to recognize the significance of learning Chinese. In this context, foreign language instruction in Chinese is not just about teaching the language as a second language. Language cannot exist independently of culture, and the goal of language instruction is to cultivate students' practical communicative abilities. Therefore, cultural education and Chinese language instruction are closely intertwined. Learners

are not only acquiring grammar and vocabulary but are also placing a strong emphasis on understanding Chinese culture, history, and societal context. This approach aims to enhance their overall communicative competence, enabling them to adapt to the increasingly diverse and globalized social environment. Our Chinese culture consists of mainstream culture and different regional cultures. This paper mainly discusses the practical significance of Guanzhong Dialect, the carrier of regional culture, in teaching Chinese as a foreign language, so as to promote the spread of Shaanxi's history and culture and build the Silk Road in teaching Chinese as a foreign language.

2. Expound the Relationship between Dialects and TCFL

Teaching Chinese as a foreign language is the teaching of Chinese as a second language. The teaching object is mainly for foreigners whose mother tongue is not Chinese. Language is the carrier of culture. It is a common theory that culture teaching must be infiltrated in TCFL. As a part of the unique culture in dialects, it is also a research category in TCFL. As carriers of culture, dialects and regional cultures mutually promote, influence, and propel each other in the process of formation and development. In the broad sense of Chinese, in addition to Putonghua, foreigners are more likely to contact and accept dialects in their lives, and often wander in the dual context of Putonghua and dialects. Sometimes there is no consensus on the interpretation of Chinese vocabulary. Therefore, in the teaching of TCFL, the acquisition of Putonghua is the main part, supplemented by the penetration of dialect culture in life. The relationship between the two should be complementary, not mutually exclusive. As far as the narrow sense of Chinese is concerned, Chinese dialect is also a language of Chinese, which is the "language variant" of Putonghua. That is to say, a language which is different from standard language and only used in one area has its own value. Mandarin has been popularized, but dialect is still the main communication tool of Chinese people in a dialect area. In recent years, some scholars and colleagues have proposed that it is one of the important goals of TCFL to improve the communicative competence of foreigners.

Therefore, dialects in the context of life cannot be underestimated, and the influence of dialects on foreigners' second language acquisition still exists. Therefore, we believe that in TCFL, the teaching of Putonghua should be supplemented by dialect cognition and the penetration of dialect culture, so that the dominant Putonghua teaching is richer, more conducive to foreigners' Chinese learning, more convenient for foreigners' work and life in the place where they live. It can be seen that dialects are closely related to TCFL.

3. Discuss the Influence of Guanzhong Dialect in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

With the development of the strategic thinking of "one belt and one road" in the central area, Xi'an is also an important historical opportunity for the extension of the development of the cultural and historical town and the starting point of the silk road. Xi'an is not only the political and cultural center of Shaanxi today, but also the core of Guanzhong culture. With the rapid development of the times, foreigners urgently need to know Xi'an, and Xi'an also needs to introduce itself. In recent ten years, with the rapid development of Shaanxi's economy, many foreign companies have settled in Xi'an, and Chinese as a foreign language has ushered in the best period in history of great promotion and development. Taking Samsung company of South Korea as an example, there are millions of people who take the Chinese proficiency test every year. It is an indisputable fact that more and more foreigners are learning Chinese in Xi'an. Therefore, in the process of Chinese acquisition, many foreigners reflect that they cannot understand the local people and have language communication barriers. Although there are many reasons, one of the reasons is that the native Xi'an people often use Guanzhong Dialect as their daily communication language. The "negative transfer" of this dialect results in the language communication block. What dialect brings to foreigners is not only a negative transfer of language communication, but also a negative transfer of cultural identity. In this way, foreigners will be confused by language barriers, and their interest and enthusiasm in learning Chinese and understanding Chinese

culture will be frustrated. Therefore, it is important for foreigners living in Xi'an to learn standard Mandarin, but as the communication language of most Xi'an people, the influence of Guanzhong Dialect language environment can not be ignored. Therefore, the understanding and learning of Guanzhong Dialect should also be the auxiliary part and necessary means of Chinese culture learning. Let foreigners who study Chinese in Xi'an have more social competitiveness than those who study Chinese in other areas. In this kind of teaching, in addition to Mandarin teaching, the auxiliary teaching of Guanzhong Dialect culture in life also has a catalytic effect.

4. The Significance of Guanzhong Dialect in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

First of all, through the input of Guanzhong Dialect culture teaching, strengthening the publicity and communication of Chinese and Shaanxi History and culture is not only the communication tool of people's thoughts and life, but also the carrier of historical and cultural information. Guanzhong Dialect, as the carrier of historical and cultural information of China and Shaanxi, has more irreplaceable and unrepeatable characteristics of the times. Shaanxi is known as the "natural history museum". This is because there is a thick cultural accumulation of Chinese historical evolution in the land of Guanzhong, Shaanxi Province. So far, not only many historical sites are still preserved, but also many Chinese historical books and records are inextricably linked with this land. In our opinion, teaching Chinese as a foreign language should not be a simple language teaching, but also a teaching of Chinese culture and the spread of Chinese culture, so should the teaching of dialect culture. As Guanzhong Dialect has a unique historical and cultural genetic gene, it is natural to use the cultural knowledge of Guanzhong Dialect to teach the historical and cultural knowledge of China and Shaanxi, which is of great significance to the intercultural communication of foreigners [5].

Secondly, the strategic background of "one belt and one road" is not only a promoter of economic development, but also a new opportunity to develop Shaanxi culture and Guanzhong culture. The Silk Road in One Road and One Belt was the gateway of land

trade and cultural exchange between eastern and Western civilizations initiated by ancient Chinese in Luoyang and Changan at the beginning of Han Dynasty. Today, it aims to borrow the historical symbols of the ancient Silk Road, take hundreds of rivers as the sea, and inherit the open tradition of the ancient Silk Road. It is not only the exchange of goods, but also an indispensable part of cultural exchange. Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, also known as Chang'an, was the capital of the thirteen dynasties emperors. It is known as "there is a state of emperors in the Qin Dynasty". Guanzhong Dialect was bred in this long historical and cultural environment. With the development of the whole area and the teaching of teaching Chinese as a foreign language, dialect culture teaching will naturally become a hub for better linking Chinese and Western cultures. The penetration of Guanzhong Dialect culture is conducive to foreigners' understanding of Shaanxi's historical culture and regional traditional culture. In the cultural exchange between China and foreign countries, Shaanxi culture will go abroad and further expand the influence of extensive and profound Shaanxi culture in foreign countries. In addition, it has made a lot of preparation for further introduction of foreign investment and foreign talents, which is conducive to optimizing the exchange mode between foreigners and Chinese, and promoting the economic development of Shaanxi Province. This is also a true response to the strategic thinking goal of "one road, one belt" initiative [6].

Thirdly through the penetration of Guanzhong Dialect culture in teaching Chinese as a foreign language, it is conducive to attract more foreign people who are interested in Guanzhong literature and art and other fields of Humanities in Shaanxi Province and have a higher level of Chinese to study Chinese and Shaanxi culture in Xi'an. Especially for foreign students studying Chinese, the improvement of literary accomplishment mainly lies in the study of original works. *Bailuyuan*, written by Chen Zhongshi, a famous writer in Shaanxi Province, can be said to be a pearl in the literary world in the 20th century [7]. Chen Zhongshi used Guanzhong Dialect Words which he was very familiar with in *Bailuyuan*. He switched Putonghua and dialect freely, and built a real era. Through the use of dialect, he

showed a vivid image of people. With the ingenious application of different characters and dialects, Chen Zhong's unique Guanzhong Dialect conveys unique folk culture. Only by understanding Guanzhong Dialect and folk culture, can we better understand the subtlety of this work, feel the breath of farmers' life in Guanzhong, and grasp the theme of this article. In addition, Shaanxi opera Qinqiang, Shaanxi folk culture, Shaanxi human history and so on all require a certain knowledge of Guanzhong Dialect culture to have a thorough understanding [8]. Therefore, adding Guanzhong Dialect elements in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language culture can attract more high-level researchers who come to China to learn Chinese.

Finally, Understanding the culture of Guanzhong dialect contributes to a better grasp of the diversity within Chinese culture, enhancing cultural identity and fostering respect for the various regional cultures. Dialects, to a certain extent, exemplify the flexibility of our language. Learners in China can adeptly employ different languages in diverse social contexts, facilitating interpersonal relationships and deepening communication with Chinese individuals. Mastering the Guanzhong dialect and understanding its cultural nuances makes learners more sensitive to cultural differences, helping them navigate potential conflicts and improving communication effectiveness with Chinese people. Proficiency in the Guanzhong dialect allows learners to immerse themselves more deeply in local culture, experiencing an authentic way of life. Therefore, the Guanzhong dialect is a practical component in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, playing a catalytic role in enhancing the cross-cultural communication skills of those studying in China [9-12].

5. Conclusions

In summary, language reflects culture, culture shapes language, and within culture lie values, beliefs, customs, and other elements that require language for transmission. Differences between cultures may manifest in language, customs, daily life, and the environment. The existence of dialects serves as a means to convey the unique expressions of Shaanxi culture within specific environmental contexts. Every culture possesses its unique beauty and

history, deserving to be known and understood by people from other countries. When foreigners come to China to learn Mandarin, they are not merely entering a Mandarin language environment; each city still retains its regional cultural characteristics, and Xi'an is no exception. At times, dialects serve not only as tools of communication but also as expressions of social identity and cultural understanding. Foreigners studying Mandarin inevitably encounter diverse linguistic environments. Beyond classroom learning, daily life is filled with various people communicating in local dialects. For foreign students, this presents obstacles in engaging with and communicating effectively with locals. The ultimate goal of foreign students learning Mandarin is to proficiently apply the language in real-life situations, achieving genuine cross-cultural communication.

The study of Guanzhong dialect culture is more than just an enhancement of language skills; it is a form of recognition and respect for the diverse cultures within China. Particularly in cross-cultural communication, understanding dialect culture helps establish closer and more trusting relationships, enabling foreign learners to better adapt to the diverse cultural environment in China. Therefore, the study of Guanzhong dialect plays a pivotal role in the cultural teaching of Chinese as a foreign language.

Acknowledgments

Relying on: Ministry of Education,
Industry-University Cooperation Collaborative
Education Program

Project Name: The Use of VR Education in
Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language;
Project No.: 220401867242342

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