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The Planning of Instructional Designs for Comprehensive Lessons to Improve Oral Expression among the First – Year Students of University of Kelaniya

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මුද්‍රාපද: ශ්‍රී ලංකාව, කැලණිය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය, පුළුල් වීන පාඩම්, කථන භාෂා ඉගැන්වීම

සංඝිථනය

සිසුන්ගේ වාචික සන්නිවේදන කුසලතා වර්ධනය කිරීම උදෙසා විදේශ භාෂාවක් ලෙස චීන භාෂාව ඉගැන්වීමේ ක්‍රියාවලිය තුළ කථන භාෂා ඉගැන්වීම වැදගත් කාර්යභාරයක් ඉටු කරයි. එබැවින් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ චීන භාෂා ඉගැන්වීමේ ප්‍රධාන අඩුපාඩු වන සිසුන්ගේ කථන භාෂාවේ ප්‍රමාණාත්මක නොවන බව මඟහරවා ගැනීම සඳහා කථන භාෂා අන්තර්ගතයක් පුළුල් උපදේශනාත්මක සැලසුම් සමඟ ඒකාබද්ධ කරන්නේ කෙසේදැයි යන්න ගවේෂණය කිරීමට මෙම ලිපිය උත්සාහ කරයි. උපදේශනාත්මක සැලසුම් සකස් කිරීමේ න්‍යාය හා විදේශ භාෂා ඉගෙනුම් න්‍යාය, මත පදනම්ව සන්නිවේදන ප්‍රවේශ ඉගැන්වීම් ක්‍රමය භාවිතා කරමින් කැලණිය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ චීන අධ්‍යයන අංශයේ කථන චීන භාෂාව ඉගැන්වීමේ සහ ඉගෙනීමේ ගැටළු සහ උගුණතාවයන් විශ්ලේෂණය කරමින් පුළුල් උපදේශනාත්මක සැලසුමක් සමඟ කථන චීන භාෂාව ඉගැන්වීමට ආරම්භයක් ලබා දෙයි.

Introduction

Together with the increasing influence of China in the international arena, learning Chinese language has become a “new fashion” in Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka has set off a wave of learning Chinese. In this context, many universities, middle schools, Confucius Institutes, Confucius Classrooms, and social training institutions in Sri Lanka provide Chinese learning platforms. As the researcher of this paper has studied and taught Chinese Language at Kelaniya University has a deep understanding of Chinese teaching in Sri Lanka.

Previously, the Chinese department of University of Kelaniya had offered only comprehensive lectures which lead to lack the spoken language training opportunities for the students, and produce a negative impact to improve students’ oral communication ability. However, with the implementation of foreign language teaching, the language skills and oral communication skills training of students became particularly important. Also, the spoken language is a part of comprehensive teaching. Due to this reason, Kelaniya University has started individual spoken Chinese lessons currently. Although they have arranged individual spoken Chinese lessons, the allocated period of time is really insufficient. Students have only a one hour of spoken lessons per week. Consequently, students’ communicative ability is becoming more and more poor. Therefore, students' Chinese communication skills need to be improved urgently.

In order to overcome the shortcomings of Chinese language teaching in Sri Lanka and to improve students’ Chinese communicative competency, combining Chinese spoken teaching part to the teaching design of comprehensive lessons is a very effective and timely solution for the prevailing problem.

When mastering a language accurately, it is important to implement the four aspects of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among them utmost importance should be given to cultivate the oral communication skills of language learning. Otherwise, language learning without oral expression become an incomplete language teaching. However, the writer during the studies in China later has found that many Sri Lankan students in China have strong writing skills, but they still lack the ability to express themselves. The main phenomena are inability to express ideas, incorrect tones, incomprehensibility and feeling shy in speaking Chinese. Hence, it is on the basis of these questions that, the author decided to conduct research on the oral teaching of the first-year students’ comprehensive Chinese lessons in the Chinese department, University of Kelaniya. At the same time, hoping to provide suggestions and methods for the oral teaching and promote the oral Chinese teaching in Sri Lanka.

Research methodology

This thesis mainly adopts literature research methods, questionnaire survey method, classroom observation method and interview method to design oral Chinese teaching among the comprehensive lessons in the Chinese department of University of Kelaniya.

The current situation of the comprehensive lessons in the Chinese department of university of Kelaniya and shortcomings of oral teaching and learning.

Teaching materials and methods of Chinese language teaching

Teaching materials and usage: According to the instructional design theory, content of teaching is one of the important elements. Also, the choice of teaching materials is related to the knowledge and skills that students master, and it also affects classroom effectiveness and teaching efficiency. Therefore, the selection of teaching materials in Chinese teaching process is very important. But this does not mean that selecting more complex and comprehensive textbooks, is the better way. Everything should be based on reality and the selection of teaching materials should be combined with the special circumstances of Chinese teaching in Sri Lanka. Since Sri Lanka rarely offers individual oral classes, few Sri Lankan students can speak fluent Chinese. Therefore, in the process of teaching comprehensive Chinese lessons, the training of oral communication in Chinese has become a method for students to improve their oral expression ability.

In Sri Lanka, the textbook used for the first-year comprehensive lessons is “New Practical Chinese Reader 1”, which is a communicative textbook that takes into account functionality and institutional culture of the native country. But, when using the teaching materials, due to the usage of traditional teaching concepts and teaching methods, they seldom exercise students' communicative skills, and most of the time simply exercise students' writing skills. Under these circumstances, the textbook cannot really play its' role and the expected objectives are not gained.

Teaching method: The survey report of students and teachers shows that, the grammar translation method is most commonly used in Sri Lankan Chinese classes. There is very little communication and expression between teachers and students in this kind of classroom environment. Under this teaching method, the class mainly focuses on grammar and vocabulary and not enough attention is paid to improve students' expressive ability.

Teachers who teach Chinese as a foreign language

Recently, the number of teachers who teach Chinese as a foreign language in Sri Lanka are very few, and they are very young. There can be seen only three elderly teachers with rich teaching experience and PhD degrees in the Chinese department of University of Kelaniya. Therefore, such excellent teachers with rich teaching experience are in a pressing demand in Sri Lanka. Besides, most teachers do not have good knowledge of Chinese teaching and how to use various methods to teach.

The teaching condition of Chinese teachers: In Sri Lanka, there are only 5 class hours allocated for Chinese comprehensive teaching per a week, which is far from adequacy for teachers and students. In order to improve the teaching efficiency and students' Chinese ability these five hours should be fully utilized. Therefore, teachers must change their traditional teaching methods and concepts, and teach students the most critical and important things in these five class hours.

However, Sri Lankan Chinese language teachers generally follow the syllabus and do not use teaching plan or design to teach lessons. Therefore, little attention is paid to the elements of instructional design. The elements of teaching design are a very important phenomenon in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. But Sri Lankan teachers don't tend to think about teaching design elements such as teaching objects, goals, content, process, medium and evaluation. So, the effectiveness of teaching is very low and classroom activities are not scheduled. As well, the content may not be suitable for the target group. For this reason, the teacher should follow the instructional design to deliver lessons to attain the objectives of both teaching and learning. According to the comprehensive lessons teaching theory, the first task is to give the knowledge of classroom language. The second task is the training of classroom language skills. And third one is the focus of teaching should be on "transformation." Teachers should not only teach language knowledge, but should design a large number of exercises and activities. Therefore, the teacher should combine the oral exercises with the content of comprehensive lessons when preparing the lessons.

As mentioned above, a teacher doesn't have enough time for teaching per week. So, the teacher is also under a great pressure to finish most of the lesson content during a short period of time. Although teachers know that communication skills are the most important element for the students, due to the problem of time and the large number of students, it has become a difficult task to design communicative activities. As a result, the teachers are conducting a same classroom environment, except implementing new ideas. Therefore, the students' interest in learning cannot be improved and it directly leads to have low teaching efficiency.

Students studying Chinese, their difficulties and goals

Learning needs are the first factor to be considered when designing a teaching plan. Learning needs determine teaching objectives, teaching content and teaching methods. Therefore, students' requirements must be considered when teaching.

According to the survey, the vast majority of Sri Lankan students believe that their oral skills are not good because they rarely communicate in Chinese. Moreover, students have less time in learning Chinese, and their focus is on mastering Chinese characters and

grammar. At the same time students are shy to speak in Chinese and worry that they cannot speak Chinese well. However, most Sri Lankan students' purpose of learning Chinese is to find a job opportunity which related to Chinese language in future.

In recent years, with the development of China's economy, China and Sri Lanka have had a close relationship. Furthermore, China and Sri Lanka are neighbours with long-standing friendly cooperative relations. Therefore, many jobs related to Chinese have been developed in our country. Many Chinese are also coming to Sri Lanka for tourism. So, most students can find good jobs after they studying Chinese. According to the requirements of work for Chinese skills, the communicative ability of Chinese is far more important than writing.

In fact, most of the students learn Chinese for different purposes. It may be to have a good job, to go to China to realize their dream of studying abroad, or to travel in China. Although their purposes differ from one another, finally they all need to have fluent Chinese knowledge and good communication skills. So that they can communicate with Chinese people smoothly. Therefore, we can see that the importance of oral communication in Chinese teaching is far higher than the demand for writing and other skills. In this context, during the process of Chinese teaching, we should start with the needs of students and set up a reasonable teaching process to meet the learning needs of students.

Suggestions for improving oral Chinese teaching in the university of Kelaniya

Policy Aspect

It is estimated that, university policy should come into action in order to encourage students to learn Chinese. They can arrange more time for oral practice during class hours, create a good environment for Chinese communication, increase the oral class time and allow students to have enough time and opportunities to practice Chinese to improve students' communicative skills.

Teachers' Aspect

In this aspect teachers are responsible to use target language as much as possible when conducting the Chinese lessons. Also, the teacher should set a good example for the students and insist on speaking Chinese, and use less medium language and mother tongue. Teachers should enable students to develop four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and focus on cultivating students' communicative skills. Besides, teachers should pay attention to the teaching design in the classroom. The teaching design should be exquisite, practical, interesting, and effective in a way to improve the students' oral expression ability, communication and contact with other students in the classroom. In the teaching evaluation process, teacher must comprehensively evaluate students from all

aspects of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in order to achieve the teaching goals of teachers and students in the classroom.

Students' Aspect

With this regard, students must dare to open their mouths and actively express what they want to say in Chinese. Furthermore, they should actively participate in the Chinese activities organized by the school, and improve their Chinese proficiency in practical applications. Students need to increase their learning time of Chinese, attach importance to the cultivation of oral expression ability, work hard and practice hard in expression ability.

School Aspect

In response to these problems, schools should rationally arrange classrooms for the students, use state funding, improve the teaching environment, increase number of classrooms and multimedia equipment and expand laboratories for Chinese expression. Also need to arrange enough time for teachers and students and actively introduce excellent teachers in Chinese teaching.

Discussion on the Design of Oral Teaching in the Comprehensive Chinese Lessons

Since oral teaching is so important, and there are many shortcomings in the teaching of comprehensive lessons, we should prescribe the right medicine to eliminate this drawback. From the following aspects, we can have knowledge on how to use communicative approach method to design comprehensive lessons in order to improve the quality of oral teaching within comprehensive lessons. When designing oral teaching in a comprehensive class, the factors of teaching design should be tested first.

The main purpose of teaching design is to improve teaching quality and enhance teaching effects. In this context, teaching methods are effective means used to achieve the purpose of teaching. In this way, the usage of teaching design factors can maintain the comprehensive curriculum and correctly design the oral teaching in the comprehensive class.

Oral Teaching Method in the Comprehensive Chinese Lessons of the First-Year Students in the University of Kelaniya

The Importance of Communicative Approach Method in Elementary Oral Chinese Teaching

Recently, in the process of teaching Chinese as a foreign language emphasizes the cultivation of students' oral and communication skills. The communicative approach method can overcome the shortcomings of traditional teaching. This method is based on the actual needs of students and the teacher gives students the knowledge and ability of communica-

tion. The most prominent feature of communicative approach method is “communicative.” When learning Chinese, if the knowledge learned from the book is not used in real life, the learner will not be deeply impressed and the knowledge is easily forgotten. It can be seen that the process of application is also a process of review, consolidation and practice. The communicative approach method focuses on the combination of function-structure and situation. It starts from the function, designing real situations, and guiding students to acquire communicative competence. Therefore, the communicative approach has a special importance in oral teaching.

The Application of Communicative Approach Method in the Elementary Oral Teaching of the University of Kelaniya

Concerning Function as the Key point and Teaching

The communicative approach method mainly focuses on the social function of language. Therefore, if we are following the communicative approach method in teaching, the materials should be selected from the actual communication needs. And according to the communicative approach method, the teachers should focus on functional items and proceed their teaching design while paying attention to cultivate students' ability to express the corresponding expression of a certain “idea”. For example, if someone expresses a greeting how to reply immediately without any hesitation. In this regard, although the communicative approach and elementary oral teaching have reached a consensus in the case of insufficient oral class hours, the best way of overcoming this shortcoming is to combine the teaching content of the comprehensive lessons with the oral teaching content, and appropriately design the oral teaching part in the comprehensive classroom.

In this process, the first thing is that the functional items should be prominent. The textbook “New Practical Chinese Reader 1” which is currently used by the Chinese department of University of Kelaniya is quite communicative. Therefore, it is easy to mark the corresponding functional activities in each lesson of the textbook. Teachers and students should pay attention to the training of expressions of various functions, and teachers should design a large number of exercises for functional items, and it is better to not to put functional teaching after grammar teaching.

The second thing is to teach different expressions of the same function. For example, when asking about other people's current situation, can use different kind expressions such as “ni hao ma?”, “ni guo de hao ma?”, “ni zenmeyang?” except using the same sentence. During the comprehensive lessons, teachers should pay attention to this point which leads to improve student’s expression ability.

Combination of Function and Context

Communication should take place in a real situation and this situation determines the meaning of the words. When we are using a language, people must pay attention that according to different situations, the same sentence has different meanings. For example, the sentence “Have you eaten?” is used when you meet a classmate on the road, it means greeting. But, when you see your mother coming back home from work very late, and then this sentence is used, it means asking whether the other party has eaten instead of a greeting. Therefore, it is obvious that, oral teaching should start from real and concrete situations.

The Role of Teachers and Students

According to the traditional teaching method, the teacher is used to speak and the students are used to listen. On account of this, teachers become the main body in the classroom, and students passively accept knowledge. This method of teaching acts against to the improvement of students' oral and communication skills. But the communicative approach method follows the student-centered principle, and the learner is always the core of the teaching process. And teachers have to play many roles in the classroom under the communicative approach method. Consequently, teachers become organizers, leaders, prompters, participants and helpers in teaching. Therefore, students are no longer the recipients of knowledge, but the subject of teaching.

Focusing on the Intensive Practice more than Vocabulary and Grammar

Chinese teaching in Sri Lanka still has the influence of traditional teaching. It means the main focus is on vocabulary and grammar and neglect the skill training. Therefore, in the oral classes, students also don't like to speak and express their ideas. The main drawback of the Sri Lankan students is that, although their written exercises such as vocabulary exercises and grammar exercises are generally very good, but their ability to use them is not strong. It has been proved that, through the traditional method of teaching learners can only engrave vocabulary, grammar and other language knowledge in their mind. But they are incapable of applying the theoretical knowledge in oral expressions and communication activities in the day-to-day life. Therefore, the author believes that communicative approach method should be used when teaching vocabulary and grammar knowledge.

Setting up for poor information

The information gap is the prerequisite for communication. When one person has thoughts or opinions that another person wants to know, communication will proceed naturally. When two people have information that each other does not know, they will find the

answer through the communication. The communication task ends after both parties find their own answers. The advantage of this exercise is that, it can stimulate students' desire to communicate and train them to actively seek out the information they need.

Design of communicative activities

“New Practical Chinese Reader 1” is a highly communicative textbook. It is relatively easy for teachers to cultivate students' communicative ability in classroom teaching. Therefore, teachers should design more communicative activities such as paired dialogue exercises, group activities, role playing, discussion, and debate in the classroom to make classroom teaching more communicative and diversified.

The principle of error correction

The communicative approach pays attention to the meaning of language rather than the structure of language. Its main purpose is to enable students to complete communicative tasks, and errors that do not affect communicative skills are ignored. Most traditional teaching methods pay too much attention to the accuracy of the language, and the teacher immediately interrupts and corrects the mistake when the student makes a small mistake. This makes students lose enthusiasm and self-confidence, makes students embarrassed to speak, and seriously affects students' psychological state. Therefore, the author believes that error correction should be limited, and teachers do not need to correct vocabulary and grammatical errors that do not affect communication. Furthermore, the author advocates that as long as the other party can understand the speaker and both parties can complete the communication task, it should be the final outcome of this communicative method of teaching.

Based on the above research, after designing the oral training for the first-year comprehensive lessons, the advantages and disadvantages of self-evaluation can be raised as follows:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Classroom atmosphere is very relaxed and active	Overactive and poor discipline
Students interest on studies is high	Running out of time
Have good teacher – student relationship	Due to the number of many students, it's difficult to take care of everyone
Very effective	Teacher is tired
Students can correct their mistakes by themselves	

Conclusion

Oral teaching as the core part of teaching Chinese as a foreign language, the ultimate goal is to enable Sri Lankan students to speak fluent Chinese and dare to communicate with Chinese. This thesis is combined with a special situation of Sri Lanka and it is a teaching design for current students. Therefore, it is not universally applicable. This thesis mainly explores the improvement of oral skills within comprehensive lectures, rather than a separate design of spoken language improvement. Therefore, the teaching design of this thesis has a great practicality for the elementary Chinese teaching in Sri Lanka. Because it is affected by many factors such as teacher qualifications, class hours schedule, classroom tension, personnel and policies.

In Sri Lanka, it is difficult to increase the time of individual oral lectures in Chinese teaching in the first-year students of University of Kelaniya. Therefore, the teaching design of this article is very practical for the current Chinese teaching in Sri Lanka. It does not only meet the needs of current students, but also provide some enlightenment for the changes in Chinese teaching methods in the next few years. At the same time, it provides useful guidance for the oral teaching of comprehensive lectures in Sri Lanka and helps the Sri Lankan students to learn Chinese more efficiently, because it has a great effect on oral Chinese teaching as a foreign language.

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