

CHINESE TEACHING METHODS IN INTERNATIONAL CHINESE EDUCATION
(research of Chinese character decomposition and composition)

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Abstract:

This research is applicable to the Chinese character's teaching in the field of International Chinese Education, and it aims to benefit the studying quality to foreign students who have difficulties in memorizing Chinese characters. The supported theory bases on the image operation and cerebrum cognition relations and attempts to utilize the method of decomposition and composition to indicate the way how internal glyph combination influenced the conception of characters. Additionally, this research also attempts to seek an effective cognition way to help learners to recognize characters, keeping firmly in mind and enrich Chinese culture knowledge.

Key words: Chinese character teaching, memorization techniques, glyph combination, cognitive methods, phonetic and semantic effects, cultural knowledge, proficiency testing, structural analysis, simplified characters, language acquisition.

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1. Current Chinese Character's Teaching

The career of International Chinese Education can be traced back to 1950s, and it grew rapidly after 1980s. In 1987, the establishing of Office of Chinese Language Council International, which was well-known as Hanban, signified the teaching career was operated systematically and officially. Up to the data of 2023, China has promoted 498 Confucius Institutions and 773 Elementary Confucius Class in more than 160 countries. Over 25,000,000 people learn Chinese as second language globally. Even the scale has been declined after Pandemic, but the truth is Chinese language becomes an uprising popular language, playing an important role of international communication in politics, economy, culture and other fields.

However, accompanying with the education developing, the problems arises. Characters' learning is absolutely tough for the students from the countries which use phonetic characters merely. As the writing carrier of Chinese language, characters bear the important task of spreading Chinese culture and transmitting the spirit of Chinese civilization. But the cognition and writing have always been difficult points, besides of pronunciation. Writing strokes, writing orders, components, and structures ... all of those make the glyph square written form invincible in some learners' eyes. The research of new teaching methodology needs to be added on an agenda.

2. The importance of proposed research

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China is one of the four most ancient civilizations in the world and the only civilization that has been continuously passed down. Chinese character, as the writing form of Chinese language, which is the only one official language in China, acts the role of history recording, civilized communication and culture exchanges. Therefore, learning Chinese characters is an essential tool for foreign students to understand Chinese culture and survive in China. Relatively speaking, Chinese pronunciation system is not difficult to learn, but Pinyin has no relating to the concepts and semantic. Only Chinese characters own the function of conceptualization. So, by knowing the meanings of Chinese characters, it will be immediately realized the majority of words and expressions which are constituted by the combining existing characters, except a few binomes words and transliterated load words. Secondly, the utilization of characters is one of the standard testing candidates' level in Chinese proficiency.

3. Research aims

This research aims to provide an effective and interesting Chinese characters' teaching reference to the Chinese language educator; to help Chinese language learners to acquire the cognition of Chinese characters by vivid images or stories, achieving to consolidate the memory; to offer a new ponder direction of research in Chinese as second language for nonnative speakers. In addition, those words are sufficient corpus to survive in China.

4. Research problem

There are some problems need to be clarified in this research.

Although the number of researched characters has been limited, only the high frequency character, but it is still a large number. Secondly, not all Chinese characters can be investigated to the origins. According to the six formation and usage methods in Chinese characters: Pictograph, Ideogram, Combined Ideogram, Phonetic-semantic Compounds, Mutual Explanatory and Phonetic Loans, some of them can be explained but some fail. In that case, it requests researchers have high capability of creativity and rich imagination. Thirdly, be cautious of selecting the meaning from a polysemy character. It needs to consider carefully from the original meaning, extended meaning to the most preferable usage in the contemporary, which directly effect on the selected stories. Therefore, the researchers must have abundant knowledge on history, science, culture, etc., as well as strong observing and associating. At last, this research demands cartography ability and excellent digital technology.

5. Literature review

It agrees that Chinese character teaching is not the accessory of grammar studies and glossary research. It deserves to be treated independently, which claimed in Zhang Haimei's paper *The Present Situation and Fond in Foreign Chinese Character Teaching* (《对外汉字教学的现状与思考》). The Chinese characters' cognition achievement mainly depends on analyzing characters' shape and feature. Mr. Liu Ming's paper and Mr. Li Baogui's thesis provides the theoretical supporting in psychology and linguistic. In Mr. Liu Ming's *Relation between the Image Operation of Chinese Character Decomposition and Composition and the Learning of Chinese Character Forms*, he explains the physique characteristic in Chinese characters mainly refers to strokes, components and structures, which may affect on learner's psychological features, like feeling, consciousness, understanding and memorizing.

What is more, Mr. Li Baogui raises the problem in simplified characters. Since the Chinese characters Simplification Scheme happening in China in 1950s, the controversial argument emerged. On one hand, the standardization of simplified characters indeed popularized the elementary education to the whole country, eliminating illiteracy in the short time; on the other hand, to the character itself, it lost the expressive parts of glyph which can trace the origin. Fortunately, Mr. Li Luxing analysis the construction of simplified characters in the overall characters in *Simplified Characters and Characters' Motivation* and concludes that "the simplified characters have no tremendous influence in motivation theory". He lists down 4 reasons to support his statement: 1) 80% of simplified characters have existed since beginning, and simplifying the components to a series traditional characters shared same components has corresponding rule to minimize transformation; 2) parts of simplified characters strengthen Chinese characters' motivation, especially the phonetic part in phonetic-semantic compounds becomes more accurate after simplification; 3) some simplified characters do not affect the motivation because of remaining the concepted part; 4) outline font in simplified characters have no nature of motivation. Hence, even it is a simplified character, still has the chance to decompose and assembly the character to improve cognition.

6. Methodology

Some methodologies for who concerns: 1) Collect massively about ancient characters resource and historical literary references; 2) Classify the collected character on the standard of 4 production ways (pictographs, indicatives, ideographs and phonetic-semantic compounds); 3) Use component methods, phonetic effect, semantic effect, functional effect and orthographical awareness flexibly; 4) Adapt prompt test and time delay test to exam the outcomes.

Attaches two samples for my research.

Tiān
天

Glyph Explanation
二 + 人
Father and mother propped up a piece sky at home.



Original Meaning
天 originally meant the head of a man, or the top of the head, but it has gradually come to mean the sky above the human head, and even more generally the whole natural world.

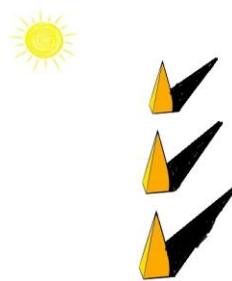
Extended Meaning
【天空】: sky
【今天】: "the current sky" refers to "today".

Allegation
Before the modern invention, the world was just a big black ball of chaos with no order, what he does? Inside this chaos there was Pan, he had started for 10,000 years. One day, when he, he felt upset with the deep darkness. He found an axe and with all his might reach the hill tops. When the heaven and the heavy dark level was making the earth. Pan to stand steadily on the space and he climbed the hill. He stepped on the earth and held the sky. When he grew bigger and bigger, the distance between heaven and earth further and further. After a long time, the earth and heaven were formed steadily. Pan the had grown up to 3 million miles when the sky and earth were just open. Pan to dead.

His breath became the wind and clouds. His voice the ceiling thunder. One eye became the sun and one the moon. His body and limbs turned to five big mountains and his blood formed the covering water. His veins became the stretching roads and his muscles formed land. The appearance of man in the sky came. Pan his hair, his beard, and fingers and toes. From his skin and the five hairs on his body, six rivers turned to jade and pearls. His sweat flowed like the good rain and sweat dew that nurtured all things on earth.

Yīng
影

Glyph Explanation
Semantic part: 日 + 京
Phonetic Part: 京: jīng, contributes the final "ing" to the pronunciation in "ying".



Original meaning
The shadow of an object when it blocks light.

Extended meaning
【电影】: "electrical shadow" refers to "movie".
【摄影】: "shoot shadow" refers to "photograph".

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