

摘要

海德堡大學中文系自1989/90年冬季學期起，開設“漢語初級課程”當做必修課。課程主要重點如下：

三十三週現代漢語速成（兩個學期和一期寒假班的語言課，總共六百六十個小時，另加兩門初級專題研究課：“中國概況”及“參考工具書”。

採用的教學方法有：

1) 聽說法 2) 施壓法 3) 程序教學法。

每日設計的課程包括：語言實驗室課，會話課，文法，及實用練習和深入練習。

使用教材：實用漢語課本第一二三分冊（北京商務），新選廣播劇（台灣大學），等。

許可註冊的學生人數計 34 名，教課老師計九名。

考試成績：很好 (7)，好 (13)，滿意 (4)，尚可 (0)，暫時沒通過的有 4 名。

A Study of Oral Methods of Teaching Beginning Chinese

George C. Y. Wang

Because I teach in the United States, my comments are based on the situation there. Because I teach in a university, I have focused on working with university students.

A beginning Chinese course should emphasize listening, speaking, reading and writing--all aspects of using the language. This paper, however, is limited to speaking. A comprehensive discussion of oral methods would include several theories and realities and would take many hours. Today I would like to bring up some ideas on which we could have an exchange of opinions.

I. The growing importance of oral methods of teaching Chinese

At the beginning of this century foreign language teachers used grammar-translation methods. These methods stressed remembering rules, memorizing new words, using the dictionary and translating the foreign language into English. Speaking received little attention. Many Chinese language teachers accepted these methods. Those who studied Chinese learned to read and to make written translations. Oral communication was emphasized very little.

After World War II began, Western foreign language teachers began to emphasize oral practice and communication. Teachers adopted many new teaching methods, including audiolingual methods, the oral approach and the communicative approach. These new methods stressed pronunciation and practice of basic sentence patterns and commonly used sentences. The final goals of these methods were to prepare students to speak, to express themselves, to communicate with native speakers. Because all the new methods stressed oral practice, I call these all oral methods.

Although in recent years language teachers have had a tendency to change their ways of teaching, the basic principles have remained essentially the same. Teachers still stress pronunciation and sentence patterns and encourage students to think as well as memorize, to express their own thoughts, to conduct conversations.

The audiolingual methods, oral approach and communicative approach all emphasize that the purpose of teaching foreign language is to enable students to use that language to communicate. These methods try to prepare students to carry on conversations on daily life, not to teach language as literature. It is no longer acceptable to teach students to read but not to speak.

Some may think that emphasizing oral methods means losing sight of the importance of reading and writing. This actually is not true. Oral methods can foster students' abilities in reading and writing, for when students read silently, they hear the words in their heads. If students don't practice pronunciation and sentence patterns adequately, they will cultivate incorrect habits as they read silently, hearing the words incorrectly. In the end, the incorrect habits will obstruct their reading and writing skills. If the student can build a good foundation in pronunciation and sentence structure, when they read silently, they will reinforce all skills and consolidate all they have learned.

II. Pronunciation practice

A. Research into similarities and differences in pronunciation between Chinese and the students' mother tongue

Learning a foreign language always means encountering sounds not found in your mother tongue. Some new sounds will be very difficult to pronounce. Chinese language teachers should conduct research into the similarities and differences in pronunciation between Chinese and the students' mother tongue in order to know which sounds are difficult and why these are difficult. With this knowledge the teacher can try to help students overcome pronunciation problems.

First impressions are the strongest. Students have the pronunciations of their mother tongue deeply ingrained. Their pronunciation habits interfere with their learning new pronunciation habits. The teacher who has done research will find it easy to point out the need to add new pronunciation habits. When you teach pronunciation, you should draw a simple picture on the blackboard showing the way to produce a sound. You should indicate where the tip and the center of the tongue are and the position of the lips when a person makes a specific sound. You can use dotted lines to represent the movement of the tongue. All textbooks have these kinds of pictures, but students find these very complicated and difficult to interpret. You may use a sheet of very thin paper in front of your mouth to show when a sound is aspirated. After you have taught a sound, you should give sufficient practice for the students to master it. You should make a comparison between similar sounds and teach students to distinguish the difference between them. The Chinese language has four different tones and tone changes. These present many difficulties for foreign students. You cannot escape these. You must face these one by one, practice one by one and overcome one by one. In short, when you teach pronunciation, you should enable to students to do three things: Hear the sound; distinguish the sound; make the sound.

B. Repetition

Many language teachers often use repetition in practice exercises. It is a necessary step. Usually the teacher reads the

passage a few times and then leads the class in repeating it loudly, imitating the teacher's sound and intonation. After a few repetitions, when students become fluent, the teacher may divide the class into several small groups and let the students practice by themselves in those groups (if you have fewer than twenty students, you may work with the entire class). The next step is having individuals speak so the teacher can correct each one.

When an entire class imitates the teacher, the students benefit. Shy students do not feel self-conscious and afraid of making mistakes. If the class repeats the words together, those who speak correctly balance those who are incorrect and would be embarrassed by their mistakes. Even though a few students may have incorrect tones or intonations, the entire class should sound very close to the teacher's tones and intonations. Students have an opportunity to discover their own mistakes and try to improve.

C. Pile-up fluency drill

In repetition exercises, the sentences must be short. If a sentence is too long for students to repeat in one breath, they will have problems. Chinese language teachers in the United States usually divide a long sentence into several sections. Teachers have students begin by repeating the last part of the sentence and then preceding sections one by one. Gradually students come to repeat the entire sentence. This method looks very simple, but it has many good points. According to educational theory, when we hear someone say a sentence, we always remember the last part of the sentence better, give it more importance than the rest. Because the pile-up fluency drill starts from the last part of the sentence and moves backward, the students have more opportunity to practice the last part of the sentence than the other parts. Determining how many times to break a sentence means considering both the words and the meaning.

III. Introduction of new words

Many language teachers like to tell students the meaning of word in their own language. That is not enough. The meaning of the new word is very important, but it is not the entire answer to teaching the new word. When students remember a word's meaning, they still may not understand what people mean when they use it, and students may not be able to use the word correctly. When teachers introduce a new word, they should use three steps.

1. Pronunciation, as explained above
2. The meaning of the word

In explaining a word, it is best not to use the students' mother language--except in cases where it is absolutely necessary. Teachers cannot always avoid direct translation at the beginning level, but at the intermediate and advanced levels teachers usually don't need to use direct translation.

3. Practice in using the word

Students who are told the meaning do not necessarily understand how to use the word correctly. Practicing using the word correctly is vital. Practice can take many forms. You may use sentence patterns already learned, substitution drills, question and answer, sentence-making. The more methods you use the better results you will have. Many words serve as more than one part of speech. Teachers should tell students of the dual function but have students practice only the function being studied. Before you ask students to practice, you should give an example. Give students an opportunity to practice individually with you. When you ask students to practice, call on better students first. Ask poor students later. Poor students may become aware of what you are doing, but most prefer this to being asked before they are able to do fairly well. Education psychologists consider it better to give the poor students time to benefit from the learning they receive by hearing the good students give correct answers. No matter which students make mistakes, you must correct these immediately.

IV. Dialogues

A dialogue is a short conversation between two or three people. Teaching with dialogues is one of the very old methods. Many other teaching methods have almost disappeared, but dialogues are still important.

Many people think dialogues are suitable only for advanced classes, but these are useful at any level--if the teacher uses these properly.

A. Value of the dialogue method

1. Dialogues can provide a natural environment for learning the language. Dialogues give two or three people a chance to exchange thoughts, to communicate as they would in an actual situation. The exchange is lively and vibrant compared to repetition. The unexpected is possible.

2. When you converse with others, you must pay attention to pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence structure. Dialogues allow students to practice all of these at once.

3. Because the dialogues have genuine content, they make a relatively deep impression. Students find these easy to remember and practice.

4. Dialogues related to daily life and social activities present many new words in the context of their use, so students learn to use these as native speakers do. The teacher may need to introduce a few new words to make the dialogues realistic.

5. Through dialogues, students may build their confidence in using the language.

Although dialogues give one of the best methods of practicing Chinese, if the content of a dialogue is dull, it may not capture students' interest. If the dialogues in your textbooks are not interesting, prepare your own.

B. Three important principles of dialogue practice

When you prepare dialogue materials, you should consider three important principles.

1. Simplicity

If you are preparing a dialogue for two people, eight sentences will be enough. If it is a dialogue for three people, nine sentences will be enough. Each sentence should be short. Long sentences are hard for students to remember.

2. Naturalness

The contents of the dialogues should follow normal speaking habits of native speakers. The words you choose, the pronunciation, the speed, the sentence pattern should reflect a real situation. Only through doing this can you prepare students to speak naturally.

3. Balance

Each student should have an equal opportunity to speak. One student should not dominate the dialogue. They should have the same number of times to speak, and their sentences should be approximately the same length.

Materials for dialogues should coordinate with the contents of the textbook. Materials also should be related to the students' lives.

The teacher may ask the students to practice the dialogue more than once, changing roles each time. Before students practice a dialogue, the teacher may read it once or twice to provide a model. Encourage the students to speak from memory and knowledge rather than to read the dialogue.

V. Conclusion

No matter how serious, how responsible teachers are, they cannot succeed if students are not also serious and responsible. Students must work hard. They must show initiative. Teachers also must work hard to hold and promote the students' interest in the language. When students have problems, teachers must help them overcome these. Many teachers try to evoke students' interest by using games, helping students learn through play. Teachers should prepare supplementary materials, modify textbooks. They should encourage the students to use the language lab--and make sure they will have varied, interesting materials to work with there.

Oral methods require giving considerable attention to oral practice. At the same time, the teacher must not neglect reading and writing. We must teach language as a whole, giving sufficient weight to each of its parts.

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摘要

作者在美国任教。本文内容系根据美国情形。

I. 口语教学渐受重视:

四十年代以后口语教学才开始受重视。

II. 发音教学:

A. 汉语教师应该对汉语发音和学生母语的发音作详细的对比研究, 以便于辅导学生。务必使学生达到(a)能听出这个声音, (b)能辨别这个声音, (c)能发出这个声音。

B. 会诵练习: 全班会诵分个别辅导。

C. 堆砌式练习的重要和理论根据。

III. 怎样教生词:

A. 生词的发音

B. 生词的意思

C. 生词的用法

IV. 对话练习:

A. 对话是提供语言环境的一种方法。

B. 对话练习是发音、句型、用字的综合练习

C. 对话练习是一种最古老而仍被采用的有效语言教学法之一。

V. 结论:

A. 学生一定要主动、努力学习。

B. 教师要不断地培养学生的兴趣。

C. 加强口语教学, 不要因而忽略读、写。