

Study on Application of Film and Television Teaching Method in Teaching Chinese Culture

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Abstract: Films and television works are an important medium to present Chinese culture, as well as an effective way and important resource for learners of Chinese as a second language to understand and learn about Chinese culture. Based on the theories of film and television teaching approach, this paper designed a lesson which used the clips of films and television works to assist Chinese culture teaching, and the teaching effect is verified by a comparative experiment. The study shows that it is feasible to apply the method to teaching Chinese culture. The application of film and television teaching method can mobilize learners' subjectivity, and has a positive effect on the improvement of learners' language cognition ability as well as cross-cultural communication ability.

Keywords: film and television teaching method, learners of Chinese as a second language, Chinese culture teaching

1 Introduction

As an art form, films and television works not only include films and television programs, but also include micro-movies, micro-videos, documentaries and other video programs, covering a wide range. Films and television works create story plots, convey and express meaning through vivid pictures and contextual discourse, showing how things develop and change, which can make the viewer feel as real as experiencing the content of the image. Therefore, it is an ideal medium for teaching and learning language and culture.

The use of films and television works in second language teaching can not only enhance the learners' interest of learning, but also help cultivate learners' cross-cultural competence. Chinese films and television works contain multiple Chinese language and culture elements, for example Chinese literature, art, opera, music, art and other forms, which comprehensively reproduce China's natural scenery, social life, history, culture, science and art, and traditional customs. The rich content has opened a window for foreign students to understand Chinese culture and social life, and conveyed information through vivid language, and pictures, so that the audience can get intuitive experience and feelings. This is especially helpful for those students whose language performance is average and poor, because the use of films and television resources works as a strong interest in film prompts them to focus their attention and develop a latent love of language [1]. In teaching Chinese as a foreign language, films and television works can be used as important teaching resources and teaching approach, which has been widely recognized. However, there are also some shortcomings in this teaching method, such as the random selection of the teaching materials, the improper teaching design,

as well as neglecting the evaluation and feedback from students. So how to make full and effective use of this resource to teach and cultivate Chinese learners' interest and cross-cultural competence is worthy of further discussion.

2 Literature review

Film and television teaching method has a long history, and it has risen with the development of the audio-visual method and situational method in the field of second language teaching. The common feature of these teaching method is that it emphasizes the combining auditory perception with visual (picture, film and television) perception in a certain situation. In short, it is a practical language teaching method that combines the learners' five senses to learn a second language.

2.1 Theoretical foundations for application of films and television teaching method in language teaching and learning

Film and television teaching method is theoretically based on cognitive science, psychology and education science. The study of cognitive linguistics shows that the formation of human language is a very complex process, which mainly goes through several important stages, such as physical sensation, perception, representation, image schema, cognitive model, categorization, concept and meaning. Physical sensation is the first stage of language formation, in which people mainly rely on the sensory system to establish the connection between language and external things, and then extend these connections in turn to express more complex meanings and concepts [2]. So in the process of second language learning, learners also rely on sensory system to establish the association between the second language form and its meaning.

Psychological research also shows that people use not only words but also nonverbal means to communicate with others. These nonverbal means include symbols such as body language, images, sounds, music, etc. Language and nonverbal communication behaviors work together to provide semantic information, express emotions, and organize conversations. For example, Mehrabian & Ferris measured the listener's perception of stimuli by analyzing spoken words, prosody, and body language, and found that 38% of the information in the communicative process was attributed to the ways of speaking; the use of words was only 7%; the remaining 55% was due to facial expressions, postures, feedback and other actions [3]. This study shows that learners' watching movies and television programs is a multi-modal interaction that integrates elements such as text, picture, audio, video, etc. Learners' multi-sensory acquisition, cognition and understanding of information effectively mobilize the synergistic effect of the five senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch, which help students to absorb and experience in a multi-sensory way, and promotes the cultivation of listening, speaking, reading and other language skills, thus comprehensively promote the second language competence as well as the second language communicative competence in an all-around way.

In the fields of psychology and education, the concept of multi-modal teaching is proposed by the New London Group in 1996. It advocates that teachers can use the internet, video, pictures, sound imitation, role-playing and other teaching methods and means to mobilize students' five senses so that students can actively participate in teaching activities with a full range of multi-

sensory experiences [4]. In recent years, Richard E. Mayer, the outstanding expert in the field of educational psychology, has been paying attention to learning in a multimedia environment, and has constructed a cognitive theory of multimedia learning after many experiments. He believes that multimedia can promote learners to establish two psychological models of language and image, and integrate the relationship between the two [5].

It is also put out that audio-visual method, situational method, communicative method, activity-based teaching method and other second language teaching methods provide educational support for teaching by using films and television materials and resources. The common features of these teaching methods are reflecting learners' subjectivity and making learners immersed in various language learning environments. Teaching materials such as films and television works provide an effective language input and virtual environment for second language learning and improve the learners' language communicative competence [6].

2.2 The practice of films and television teaching method in L2 context

Studies on the practice of films and television teaching method are abundant, and most of them focus on the field of second language teaching. Bahrani & Sim proved that compared with the learners who were taught second language by using the traditional approaches, the learners taught by films and television teaching method have a higher language proficiency [7]. Based on the commonly used topics in spoken Chinese teaching, Liu & Fang attempted to set up a database of sorted and ranked film and video clips, labeled the different scenes, so as to assist spoken Chinese teaching [8]. Hu confirmed that the use of film resources could create authentic and vivid situations for contextualized teaching, which could effectively improve students' language communication ability [9]. Zhang & Huai conducted a questionnaire among the overseas students at the intermediate-advanced level and found that the film and television teaching method could significantly improve students' learning motivation, and also had a very significant effect on improving learners' language proficiency, especially listening and speaking ability. And their research provides a reference for the compilation of Chinese audio-visual teaching materials and the selection of classroom teaching materials [10]. Li & Li in their research found that in the process of promoting Chinese language and culture in France, Chinese film and television programs have always played an important role, which are perfect teaching material to achieve the ideal effect of teaching [11]. Li pointed out that Thai film and television teaching method can stimulate students' interest in learning Thai, make up for the deficiencies in the current Thai teaching, improve students' Thai language application ability, and promote the improvement of Thai teaching quality [12]. Yuan demonstrated how to combine TPRS and other teaching activities to implement film and television teaching method in the classroom, taking the Disney cartoon *Bridge* as an example. And her study shows that the benefits of this comprehensible input method of Chinese language instruction of listening, speaking, reading, and writing [13]. And Zhao et al. implemented the visual-oriented teaching test to 53 overseas and the results showed that there were positive effects on developing learners' listening and speaking skills [14]. Du & Li made a teaching practice based on the film *Legend of the Demon Cat*, and concluded that the application of film and television works in Chinese teaching has the effect of audio-visual combination and the advantages of spanning space-time, so it should be strengthened in studying these works in Chinese teaching [15].

Through the above research, we can find that films and television teaching method is recognized by more and more scholars, and it plays an important role in teaching Chinese as a second language. However, it also can be seen that most of the studies focus on the practice of films and television teaching method in teaching Chinese as a whole, and lack of specific research on culture teaching practice. Little attention has been paid to the influencing factors of the application of film and television teaching method in Chinese culture teaching, and there is still much room for exploration in the applied research of Chinese culture teaching. Therefore, the author puts the perspective of this paper in the field of Chinese culture teaching, and tries to conduct a deep analysis of the existing advantages and problems of the application of film and television teaching method in teaching Chinese culture, so as to put forward some valuable suggestions for teaching Chinese as a second language.

3 Research design

This section elaborates the research design of this teaching experiment, including research questions, research subjects, teaching procedure.

3.1 Research questions

In order to verify the effectiveness of the application of films and television teaching method in teaching Chinese culture, the following questions are discussed: (1) Does the application of films and television teaching method in teaching Chinese culture can improve Chinese learners' cross-cultural communication ability? (2) What is the attitude of the experimental group towards the films and television teaching method in teaching Chinese culture?

3.2 Research subjects

Next is a teaching practice conducted by the author for a short term Chinese program in Overseas Education of Guizhou Normal University in 2022. There are 48 international students, including 24 students in elementary Chinese class one and 24 in elementary Chinese class two. Most of them are from Thailand, Russia, Korea and Vietnam. They have studied Chinese for four or five months and all were fluent in English. They have strong learning motivation, but they don't have enough time to learn Chinese after class. Concerned about their short study time and language proficiency, the author decided to use Chinese films and video clips to design the lesson and practice the teaching method in class one and the traditional teaching for class two as a comparison.

3.3 Selecting of the teaching materials

The author has made a survey about what Chinese culture and customs the students want to know most. The questionnaire indicates that 100% of the students are interested in Chinese food, and 80% are interested in Chinese festival customs. Therefore, the author choose the TV program "The Beauty of Chinese Civilization" as the teaching material. "The Beauty of Chinese Civilization" is a program produced by Hunan TV in China, aiming at promoting the Chinese traditional culture. The program uses interactive and humorous dialogue that mimics the ancient school teachers and elementary school children. The language used is simple and

spoken slowly. The style is funny and humorous, and the content is easy to understand, so it is more suitable for Chinese beginners and junior students to follow.

The program is composed with a number of episodes, and each episode takes 8-10 minutes to introduce various traditional Chinese festivals, ancient celebrities, classic literature works, idioms or sayings, food culture, traditional costumes and handicrafts, etc. to show the beauty of Chinese traditional cultures. Since Spring Festival, the most important festival in China, covers various Chinese foods, as well as traditional customs and folk cultures. Thus, the author makes use of the selected episode in the program. After video editing, a specific teaching plan for Chinese culture is designed.

3.4 Teaching procedure

The author has carried on the teaching design of the Chinese culture course based on film and television teaching method. The Chinese culture course of Overseas Education College of Guizhou Normal University is themed with four cultural contents: Chinese calligraphy, painting, Chinese food and tea culture, Chinese clothing and handicrafts, and Chinese traditional festivals.

This cultural course takes Chinese elementary class one and class two as the teaching subjects, and both classes carry out the same cultural teaching content. Among them, Class one adopts films and television teaching method assisted by using multi-media projector and writing on the blackboard, while class two adopts the way of traditional teaching method assisted by using multi-media projector and writing on the blackboard. After a semester of teaching, the two classes are tested in the form of tests to compare whether the traditional teaching method and films and television teaching method had different effectiveness on improving the students' understanding of Chinese culture and cultivating their interest of Chinese culture. At the end of this course, students are interviewed to see whether the films and television teaching method had positive effects on Chinese culture teaching.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Analysis and discussion of the tests

The following table is a description of SPSS data on the test results of the class one and class two.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and comparison between the two classes

Groups	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	t	P
Class one	24	89.31	12.670	6.6563	0.000
Class two	24	80.29	12.393		

After a semester' teaching practice, the two classes were tested at the same time by using the same final examination papers, which include the following items: multiple choice questions (25%), blank filling (20%), noun explanation (25%), short-answer questions (30%), etc. SPSS19.0 was used for statistical analysis of test scores. Numerical variables in the experiment were described by mean and standard deviation. Comparison between the two

groups was performed by T-test. $P < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant. As can be seen from Table 1, there is a statistically significant difference between the total scores of class one and class two ($t = 6.6563$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), and the total scores of class one were higher than those of class two. It can be seen that the students in class one who learn Chinese culture by means of film and television resources are better than the students in class two who learn Chinese culture by means of the traditional teaching method. And the teaching method can improve the quality of Chinese culture teaching.

The result also confirms the findings by Zhong Xueyi in her study that film and television art works undertake the function of cultivating the learner's aesthetic taste, enlightening and influencing their spirit, and enabling them to establish correct values. To some extent, its art education effect is more extensive and penetrating than traditional classroom teaching [16].

4.2 Learner's attitude towards film and television teaching method

After class the author carries on the interview in class one to see if the teaching is effective or not. When asked if students like the use of films and videos in teaching, students all expressed their appreciation for the teaching method. Student A said she often watched Chinese TV series after class, and this teaching method was interesting and she was very satisfied. Student B said she liked Chinese stars very much. Being able to watch movies and television series in the classroom was very happy for her, and she could also learn Chinese culture a lot. When the author asked students if they thought watching films and television works was helpful to understand Chinese culture, the students all said that it was very helpful. When asked what Chinese culture they like best, student C said that she liked Chinese calligraphy and Chinese painting in the television program very much. She thought it was interesting to write Chinese characters, and every character seemed to have a story, which attracted her very much. Student D said that he liked Chinese foods and Chinese calligraphy very much. He hoped that he could be able to learn Chinese well, so as one day he could attend the world famous contest "Chinese Bridge" as a contestant. When asked if they thought it was necessary to offer a special Chinese culture course through films and videos, the students said that if there were such a course, they would be very interested. Student C stated that watching videos was more interesting than making sentences and reading texts, and he could learn more about culture and understand it through real dialogue and understanding the Chinese way of thinking. Finally, the author asked if the students were more interested in Chinese culture after the lecture, the students all said they were more interested in Chinese culture, hoping to continue to have such culture course in the future. Student A said she recently watched a Chinese TV series that made her want to study Chinese harder to understand the plots. Student B said he was interested in learning more about Chinese culture, and he even learned how to make dumplings through video at home. Although he failed, he felt he knew a little more about Chinese culture. Student E said that the new approach to learning foreign cultures was novel and interesting, he hoped that the school could continue to offer such a special course in the future.

In a word, the results tests and interview prove that the use of Chinese films and television works for culture teaching has certain advantages. First of all, the learning atmosphere is more relaxed, and students are more motivated. When students watch videos in class, most students are able to maintain a high level of concentration. During the group discussion, whether it is to summarize the culture focus that appears in the video, or to compare the cultural customs in

different countries, the enthusiasm of the students is obviously higher, and the classroom atmosphere is more active. In addition, the beautiful picture and the vivid illustration can naturally attract students, and students can find relevant videos of interest after class to continue watching. In the long run, it cannot only improve students' understanding of Chinese culture, history and society, but also improve students' cross-cultural abilities to use synthetic language in a subtle and all-round way.

5 Conclusions

This research explores the application of films and television teaching method in teaching Chinese culture as a second language. We have selected the episode of the television program "The Beauty of Chinese Civilization" as teaching materials, and apply them in culture teaching. Through the feedback after a semester's teaching practice, we find that this teaching method is well received by learners of Chinese as a second language and it brings a good teaching effect. Although this teaching method has increased the workload for teachers in preparing lessons, and has higher requirements for teachers' video editing skills, film and television teaching method can help to overcome the shortcomings of rigid and inflexible traditional language teaching, help students to understand the profound Chinese culture more vividly and straightforward, and help students to understand how to use language appropriately to communicate in different contexts, which can not be achieved by relying on traditional teaching materials alone. And of course, with the development of the educational technology, Chinese international education will enter the era of new media and new technologies. The application of modern science and technology such as AR and holographic technology will make the teaching of Chinese culture more flexible and diversified in the future.

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