

Effective Strategies to Motivate Primary and Secondary School Students to Learn Chinese

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Abstract. Chinese learning motivation is the internal motivation that directly promotes students' Chinese learning, and for primary and secondary school students, strengthening Chinese learning motivation plays an important role in the improvement of their performance and overall development. In order to address this often talked about issue, this paper starts from analysing the conceptual composition of Chinese learning motivation, collating and analysing and synthesizing the current empirical research, and arriving at the factors affecting students' Chinese learning motivation. Chinese learning motivation is mainly divided into internal factors including students' personal Chinese learning motivation and learning interest, and external factors including family, school and society. On this basis, this paper refers to the first-line research results on enhancing Chinese learning motivation at home and abroad, and combines the author's investigation and teaching practice experience to explore effective strategies to enhance students' Chinese learning motivation from internal factors including reasonable attribution, internal motivation for learning, self-regulation ability, and external factors including Chinese classroom teaching, the role of Chinese teachers' transformation and students' learning life.

Keywords: Chinese learning motivation, learning interest, internal drive, teaching context.

1. Introduction

Regarding the research purpose of this paper, learning motivation has been an important topic explored by Chinese scholars and educators, and it is an important influence on independent Chinese learning. From a psychological point of view, learning motivation is a tendency to find learning activities meaningful and to endeavour to obtain the desired learning outcomes from them. It is an intrinsic motivation that inspires and pushes a person to act in order to achieve a certain purpose [1]. This study will start from exploring the internal and external factors affecting Chinese learning motivation, discuss how to adopt effective strategies to improve Chinese learning motivation of primary and secondary school students, and prove the practicality of the measures by combining them with teaching examples in specific measures.

The existing related studies in China and other countries have mainly focused on the level of general principles of motivation, and mainly explored the learning motivation of English. In contrast, Chinese or Chinese learning motivation needs further research. Research on Chinese learning motivation focuses more on Chinese classroom teaching, and the main body of research is naturally the teachers. On the basis of previous studies, this paper not only researches the strategies from the teachers' aspect, but also researches the composition of learning motivation, the use of information technology, the influence of internal and external factors, etc. In addition, this study also takes the actual Chinese learning motivation into account, which is the most important factor in Chinese learning. In addition, this study also combines actual Chinese teaching cases to demonstrate the research results.

This study attempts to analyse the existing scale data with the concept of Chinese learning motivation and the current situation of Chinese learning among primary and secondary school students. The study then discusses the methods of improving Chinese learning motivation in the form of a literature review, starting from the internal factor of the composition of Chinese learning motivation. External factors will be classified according to different subjects in this study, and finally,

this paper will discuss how to improve students' Chinese learning motivation with specific teaching cases.

Learning motivation is an important non-intellectual factor that affects students' learning. Regarding motivation, a lot of fruitful researches have been carried out by the predecessors, and a wealth of insights have been formed, which mainly include behaviourism, humanism, cognitivism, socio-cultural view of motivation and self-regulation integration of motivation, which lay a solid theoretical foundation for the formation of the concept of Chinese learning motivation. Among them is the self-regulatory integrated motivation theory, which contains three elements: internal causes, external causes and mediated regulation [2]. The self-regulation model of motivation integrates the views of the remaining four major schools of motivation and presents the interrelationships between each of the major factors clearly, which provides a certain theoretical reference for the study of Chinese learning motivation.

As mentioned above, focusing on the integrated motivation theory of self-regulation, the following definition of Chinese learning motivation can be given: Chinese learning motivation is an internal process or internal mental state that stimulates and maintains students' learning behaviours and makes them move towards certain Chinese learning goals. The core of Chinese learning motivation is the question of "why learn a Chinese", which is related to the questions of aspiration, knowledge and interest [3]. Based on the discussion of the concept of Chinese learning motivation, this paper divides Chinese learning motivation into internal motivation for Chinese learning, i.e., cognitive, self-improvement and collateral motivation, self-regulation of Chinese learning, and attribution of achievement in Chinese learning.

2. The Current Situation of Chinese Learning Motivation and Related Surveys

2.1. Weakness of Chinese Learning Motivation of Primary and Secondary School Students

In view of the weakening of Chinese learning motivation of primary and secondary school students, the author has analysed the weakening of Chinese learning motivation and the current situation of Chinese learning of the samples. The author did this paper by reviewing the previous articles and combining them with the classroom observation [4]. So author found that the students' performance mainly includes the following points: students' indifference to learning, fear and boredom; students' misattribution of performance; students' disregard for teachers; declining interest in Chinese learning with the rise of grade; students' low self-regulation of Chinese learning, etc. [5].

2.2. Reasons for the Weakening of Chinese Learning Motivation of Primary and Secondary School Students

Citing the "*Motivation System Scale*", it can be concluded that primary and secondary school students lack clear Chinese learning goals [6]. Referring to the questionnaire of "*Chinese Learning Motivation of High School Students*", it can be concluded that the factors affecting the motivation of Chinese learning include: the lack of attention of the people around the students; the students' own belief that it is useless to learn; the students' misattribution of the Chinese learning performance; the students' weak self-control; the difficulty of learning and the lack of obvious progress effect; the teachers' teaching methods are dull and uninteresting; the Chinese curriculum is loosely organised; the pressure brought by parents' expectations; and students' lack of self-confidence in themselves. All of the above facts lead to students' reduced interest in Chinese learning. Two aspects can be summarised as follows: the first is external factors, including school, family and society. School factors include the single teaching method in the Chinese classroom, the fixed and dull role of teachers, and the lack of extracurricular learning activities for students. The second is personal factors, which include unclear learning goals, lack of interest, low self-efficacy, misattribution, and weak self-regulation and control ability [7].

3. Enhancing Chinese Learning Motivation from Internal Factors

3.1. Guiding Students to Make Reasonable Attributions for Chinese Learning

Before analysing the theory of attribution in Chinese learning it is necessary to analyse what is self-efficacy in Chinese learning. Liu Jingyuan (2004) believes that "self-efficacy in Chinese learning is the subjective judgement made by the students in Chinese learning activities about their ability to complete the learning tasks and carry out specific learning activities [8]."

There is a very close relationship between attribution and self-efficacy, and the two work in both directions. In general, a person attributing his success to his ability will lead to an increase in his self-confidence, a high sense of self-efficacy, and will lead to better results in subsequent actions. For the primary and secondary student population, most of them have difficulty in making correct attributions and developing high self-efficacy for Chinese learning. Therefore, teachers should make use of attribution theory to enable students to make correct psychological attributions and generate high self-efficacy, which will motivate them to put more efforts in their future learning. For example, in dealing with Chinese learning results, students are encouraged to attribute the results to their own level of effort, which will enable them to have a better understanding of themselves. It will achieve the results that good students will not be proud, and backward students will not be discouraged and frustrated, which will in turn stimulate or enhance their motivation to learn.

3.2. Stimulate Students' Internal Drive for Chinese Learning

3.2.1 Cognitive internal drive - stimulate students' interest in learning

Learning interest is exceptionally important in enhancing learning motivation. Strategies to enhance learning motivation can be drawn from the study of Lazarus's interest experiments: first, teachers should repeatedly explore topics that can stimulate students' motivation and desire to learn, and at the same time emphasise students' subjectivity in the classroom, return the initiative of learning to them, and make their thinking more open. Secondly, teachers should make good use of multimedia, adopt the way of teacher-student interaction and student participation, change the classroom rhythm and the form of teaching. The teacher can play some songs, or some video materials, so that the students can be more intuitive, more graphic experience of the images described in the text and the emotions conveyed. These ways are so beneficial to stimulate the students' interest in learning the Chinese, and to enhance the internal drive for learning [9, 10]. Thirdly, according to the behaviourist school of thought, successful experience is a kind of positive feedback of learning effect. It is exceptionally important for Chinese learning to generate successful experience and gain a sense of achievement in Chinese learning, and the key to motivation is to find a breakthrough in Chinese learning. If a breakthrough can be found, the first breakthrough in a certain place, with a successful experience, then it can inspire the fighting spirit, and lead to breakthroughs in other points. As a result, students will be able to sustain their successes and thus truly develop an interest in Chinese learning. Once the interest is really cultivated, the original "want me to learn" will be changed to "I want to learn", from passive to active, the students' internal drive for Chinese learning will naturally be stimulated.

3.2.2 Self-improvement of internal drive - mobilising students' desire for knowledge

Self-improvement of internal drive mainly refers to the pursuit of students to improve their Chinese knowledge. Teachers can arouse students' desire for knowledge by taking into account the characteristics of Chinese subjects and teaching materials, teaching practices and students' psychological characteristics. The teaching of Chinese subjects in primary and secondary schools is mainly divided into two categories, namely, Chinese and literature and Chinese characters, and reasonable teaching of the two main sections of Chinese subjects can effectively enhance students' desire for knowledge. Firstly, in the teaching of literature, the teaching should be linked with the milestones of literary works, such as The Book of Songs, Songs of Chu, Tang poems, Song lyrics, Yuan operas, novels of Ming and Qing Dynasties, operas and so on. Teachers telling stories, showing

slides, organising visits to calligraphy exhibitions and watching films and videos can create familiarity with and understanding of the script of the mother tongue, thus arousing a strong desire to learn.

Secondly, the development process of Chinese characters is closely related to the production and life of the working people, so there are many different characteristics. These characteristics of Chinese characters are conducive to stimulating students' interest in learning, and it is also easy to arouse their curiosity. Schools can organise, for example, competitions related to the Chinese Character Dictation Competition, to enhance the students' desire for knowledge. Thirdly, the main body of Chinese teaching materials for primary and secondary schools is the Chinese text, which also includes hints, reflective questions, practice questions, and so on. These are bridges to higher levels of knowledge carefully built by educators and Chinese scholars in accordance with the age and psychological characteristics of students. Taking the unified version of the compulsory high school Chinese textbook as an example, it attaches importance to the nurturing requirements of moral education, implements the core literacy with the Chinese learning task groups, and promotes the unfolding of the learning objectives with the learning contexts, which helps to cultivate the four major Chinese core literacies of the students. This can achieve the effect of enhancing students' Chinese learning, which is more conducive to mobilising students' desire for knowledge [11]. In the actual Chinese classroom, teachers can creatively use the teaching materials, choose the appropriate level of difficulty, and selectively use the learning modules in the textbook, so as to achieve the ideal teaching effect.

3.2.3 Subsidiary internal drive - innovative evaluation of learning outcomes

In the context of the new curriculum reform, it is particularly important to update the evaluation of Chinese learning. Chinese learning evaluation refers to the process of making value judgements on students' psychological and behavioural changes through Chinese learning based on certain evaluation objectives and using certain evaluation methods [12]. The main body of evaluation is the Chinese teacher, and the target of evaluation is all the performance and final results of students in the learning process. The focus of the evaluation is to develop value judgements on students' learning methods, attitudes, habits, learning outcomes and changes in personal behaviour. The innovation of the assessment method is reflected in the following aspects, firstly, the combination of summative and formative assessment. This approach emphasises the importance of focusing on students' development while focusing on their learning outcomes. Secondly, a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation is adopted. "*The New Curriculum Standard*" states that "qualitative and quantitative evaluation are combined, and more emphasis should be placed on qualitative evaluation." [13] In the design of evaluation items, people should pay attention to both quantitative evaluations such as the amount of reading, writing, calligraphy practice and other quantitative evaluations, as well as qualitative evaluations such as semester rubrics and stage rubrics. Thirdly, people should attach importance to adopting multiple evaluation targets, involving both students and parents in the evaluation, and forming an evaluation system for the learning process, including students' self-evaluation, study groups, parents' and teachers' evaluations. Fourthly, the use of file bag evaluation, file bag in the selection or presentation of what information, can be collected by the collector and the presentation of information students or teachers to decide by mutual agreement, its content material should pay attention to the theme of a clear, and to be checked regularly, to take a multi-subject evaluation method [14].

3.3. Improving Students' Self-regulation of Chinese Learning

Sizman's (2012) study of students participating in online courses showed that students with strong self-regulation ability among these students were more willing to overcome difficulties and were more motivated to learn. Wang Jingqiong's (2010) study of school college students pointed out that there was a significant positive correlation between academic performance and students' self-regulation ability, and that the stronger the self-regulation ability, the higher the student's grades, and the stronger the motivation to learn. This requires teachers to not only impart basic theoretical

knowledge to students in teaching, but also guide students to make positive self-regulation of Chinese learning, so as to stimulate students' learning motivation [15]. Teachers can change the classroom teaching mode, through the creation of open, self-study classroom, to create the appropriate space and atmosphere for students, so that the students' Chinese expression ability and independent learning ability to continue to improve. The students themselves should improve the self-efficacy and will quality of Chinese learning. According to Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, high self-efficacy students have a significantly higher learning regulation than low self-efficacy students. According to Zhou Qingyuan's (1999) research, willpower is the psychological process by which a person governs and regulates his/her actions according to his/her goals in order to achieve the set goals. Willpower in Chinese learning refers to the psychological process in which learners consciously set Chinese learning goals and regulate their own learning activities according to the set learning tasks to complete the tasks. In Chinese learning, only with strong willpower can people maintain an optimistic state of mind and improve our self-regulation ability [16].

4. Enhancing Chinese Learning Motivation from External Factors

4.1. The Development of Chinese Classroom Teaching

4.1.1 Creating a learning situation and building a positive atmosphere

Situational teaching method is more favourable to students' learning than traditional teaching methods. It can concretize and visualize abstract Chinese knowledge, use concrete things to bring students into a learning situation, so that students can understand the article in a short time. At the same time, the rational use of contextual teaching method, and build a positive atmosphere, so that students in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere to learn the Chinese can effectively enhance the students' interest in learning, reduce learning pressure, into a good learning state. This requires teachers based on the learning situation and teaching content, so that students' thoughts, feelings and teaching content resonate. First of all, you can break down the Chinese learning into a separate task, with the context as a carrier, set up teachers and students to participate in the discussion of teaching activities. For example, in the teaching of the "*Short Songs*", "*Red Cliff*", "*The Sound of the Voice*", there is a "poets and wine" teaching design, the teacher and the wine. "Teachers can guide students step by step from reciting poems to discussing emotions, then to the aesthetic appreciation of the differences and similarities, and finally to organise the class activities of the "Flying Flower Order". This combines context, tasks and activities to effectively enhance students' appreciation and learning interest [17]. The application of contextual pedagogy also contains many elements. For example, according to Li Jilin's contextual pedagogy, it can reasonably use physical context, simulation context, Chinese expression context, imaginative context, and reasoning context, so that students can feel the positive emotions contained in the textbook [18,19].

4.1.2 Enriching classroom sessions with psychological guidance

Improving students' motivation for Chinese learning requires teachers to enrich the teaching and learning process in the classroom. This requires teachers not only to sort out the content of the textbook, but also to use some typical examples in the text to cultivate students' positive psychology and ensure the effectiveness of Chinese classroom teaching. For example, when teaching "*The Poem of Mulan*", teachers can guide students to read the text carefully and analyse the psychological characteristics of the characters. At the same time, let students to "I say Mulan" as the theme of the speech contest, in the process of mutual exchanges, to help students understand the character of Hua Mulan. Students can feel the spirit of patriotism of Hua Mulan to protect her family and the country on behalf of her father in the army, thus shaping a positive and healthy psychology.

When teachers create psychological situations related to the content of the text, they can incorporate content related to educational psychology to improve the effectiveness of classroom teaching. This requires teachers to create a psychological atmosphere conducive to motivating students to learn and improve the teaching environment. Teachers can also instruct students to be

good at discovering and creating a sense of well-being from the little things in life, and if students gain a sense of fulfilment, their interest in learning will naturally increase their learning motivation [20].

4.1.3 Respecting individual differences and enhancing emotional identity

Teaching according to ability is the focus of every educator must pay attention to. In the traditional teaching, more than to take the class teaching system teaching mode and one-size-fits-all teaching method, which limits the development of students. But differentiated teaching is effectively focusing on the development of each student, is conducive to guaranteeing the fairness of teaching, and promote the overall development of students [21]. Teachers should also pay attention to let students gradually change from generating emotional identification with the teacher to emotional resonance with the text when carrying out differentiated teaching. Emotional identification, as a positive emotional orientation, has the role of stimulating and enhancing learning motivation.

When studying the role of differentiated teaching in enhancing students' motivation to learn Chinese, teachers first need to analyse the sources of students' Chinese ability. According to the study, partly comes from "listening" in the classroom, partly from reading, and partly from "practice" in Chinese teaching [22]. Therefore, in the process of differentiated teaching, teachers should flexibly choose teaching methods according to the learning situation of students, and be good at combining different teaching methods organically, trying to make teaching activities meet the learning needs of students.

In the process of differentiated teaching, teachers should endeavour to make students emotionally identify with the teachers themselves and the content of the text. According to research findings, primary and secondary school students are generally easy to identify with the "democratic" teachers. Teachers need to respect the students' personality, feelings and sense of independence, so that the students "respect and pro-teacher". When students identify with the Chinese teacher, the need for belonging and love in the hierarchy of needs is satisfied. Because only when this level of need is satisfied can people move to the cognitive level, the interest and motivation to learn can grow, which is one of the sources of external motivation to learn. As for how to improve the emotional identity between students and texts, *"the Chinese Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education"* (2011 edition) points out that reading teaching is a process of dialogue between students, teachers and texts. Chinese teaching is a process full of various dialogues, in which the dialogue between students and texts is the core and the dialogue between Chinese teachers and texts is the foundation. It can be concluded that if students form an emotional identity with their teachers, then they will naturally accept the effective dialogue between teachers and texts, approve of the effective interpretation of texts by Chinese teachers, and internalise the emotions of texts into their own knowledge system. If students reach an effective dialogue with the text, then students will change from external teacher emotional guidance to internal spontaneous emotional resonance with the text [23, 24]. Therefore, both the teacher's tailor-made teaching and helping students to achieve emotional identity can effectively improve their motivation for Chinese learning.

4.2. Role Change of Chinese Teachers

4.2.1 Shift from the transmitter of knowledge to the instructor of the teaching process

The concept of Chinese education lies in cultivating a sound personality and realising one's own value. The new curriculum reform has put forward higher requirements for teachers' professional development and self-growth, and for this reason, the role of teachers in classroom teaching is crucial. *"The Outline of Basic Education Curriculum Reform"* clearly pointed out that, "The teaching process should be an interactive process of teacher-student interaction and common development." This interactive process requires teachers to change the identity of the knowledge transmitter and advocate collaborative learning between teachers and students [25]. Teachers need to change their teaching methods, create a good learning atmosphere for students, and provide them with inspiration and guidance. Only in this way can students actively acquire and construct knowledge systems,

organically combine knowledge and ability, and transform knowledge into ability. In order to achieve this goal, teachers should firmly establish the "student-centred" educational ideology and pay attention to the process of building healthy emotions and correct values in students. Teachers should also dare to create situations that stimulate students' interest in thinking, and create a learning environment in which students can think and judge independently, which is a key step towards role transformation.

4.2.2 Shift from implementers of textbooks to developers of classroom resources

Textbooks have always been the main curriculum resources for school education in China. However, with the development of modern media technology, audio-visual and internet are becoming more and more important curriculum resources. Therefore, teachers should not "read from the textbook", but actively carry out curriculum design and curriculum innovation, from "teaching the textbook" to "teaching with the textbook", and develop a variety of teaching resources inside and outside the classroom. They should develop a variety of teaching resources both inside and outside the classroom, and use a variety of teaching methods to effectively enhance students' motivation to learn. Teachers should, first of all, develop a systematic view of optimisation. Teachers should prioritise the development and utilisation of many resources and form a progressive sequence to maximise the educational value of curriculum resources. As a result, students can gain practical benefits in the Chinese classroom, thereby enhancing their motivation to learn. Secondly, teachers should establish the concept of "latent curriculum". The "latent curriculum", also known as the "hidden curriculum", refers to the content that appears during the teaching of the main content and has a subtle educational impact on students. These may lead students to pay attention to and think about various aspects of their families, schools and societies. Teachers need to guide students' thinking in a timely manner, generate positive emotions and enhance autonomy in Chinese learning [26]. Therefore, teachers should take into account the "subcurriculum" factors as much as possible when teaching the curriculum and developing teaching resources. Teachers should broaden students' thinking patterns, so that the explicit curriculum and the "subcurriculum" can complement each other and enhance students' motivation for Chinese learning.

4.3. Students' Learning Life

4.3.1 Exploring extracurricular activities to enhance learning interest

Under today's "double-decrease" policy, extracurricular Chinese activities provide a possibility for better and more comprehensive training of students, which should be more planned, creative and interesting [27]. Teachers can organise activities according to the four components of "listening, reading and writing". For "listening" and "speaking", teachers can organise students to take part in thematic debates, role-play recitation of plays, and lectures on study skills given by experts. In terms of "reading" and "writing", teachers can set up class reading corners to allow students to read freely, as well as compile and print newspapers, organise blackboards, handbills, learning methods newspapers, etc., and encourage students to actively contribute. Through these activities, Chinese learning is integrated with students' lives, effectively supplementing classroom Chinese teaching and stimulating students' interest in Chinese learning, thus enhancing their motivation for Chinese learning.

4.3.2 Combining with real life and creating real situation

Teachers effectively create real teaching situations and combine them with students' learning life, which can enhance students' real experience, stimulate their interest in learning and strengthen their motivation. Chinese as a mother tongue, Chinese learning permeates all aspects of life. Therefore, Chinese classroom teaching should return to the soil of life, in order to make students more sensitive to the Chinese and text. Teachers can create a real situation through the integration of Chinese, action, character expression and other elements, so that students have an overall grasp of the content of the article. Teachers can also put students in authentic situations. In particular, the use of natural pedagogy, which was originally proposed by Terrell (1983). It refers to a process of acquiring a

second Chinese that highlights the natural environment, the non-institutional setting and teacher instruction [28]. Here, the application of natural pedagogy to the teaching of Chinese texts is to allow students to personally observe and experience and empathise with the emotions expressed in the texts.

4.3.3 Combining information technology and providing diverse contexts

The emergence of multimedia technology has brought about changes in traditional education. Teachers can create diversified teaching situations through the use of this kind of information technology, which can greatly enhance the quality and value of education and teaching. For example, when teaching the text “*Deng Jiaxian*”, teachers can start with questions as the teaching guide. The questions raised by the teacher include why researchers and leaders are so eager to make atomic and hydrogen bombs, and why it is said that the successful manufacture of the two bombs can raise China's national defence strength to the world's advanced level. Some students may not be able to understand these questions, which requires teachers to use multimedia to display relevant videos and pictures to deepen students' understanding and appreciation [29]. By stimulating students' visual and auditory senses, multimedia keeps students interested in classroom teaching and achieves the purpose of learning motivation enhancement. Similarly, multimedia can provide a variety of ways for teaching in the Chinese classroom, so that students can feel emotions more intuitively and achieve a personalised teaching mode [30].

5. Conclusion

This paper discusses the strategies to enhance the motivation of Chinese learning, and in the process of research, the author summarises its theoretical and practical significance. The theoretical significance is that it provides a scientific theoretical basis for the study of strategies to stimulate Chinese learning and improves the motivation model of Chinese learning motivation. However, any strategy must be applied in combination with the actual situation, and this paper lists the actual cases of Chinese teaching. In actual Chinese teaching, methods to improve the current situation of students' Chinese learning motivation can be found, which can be used to guide students' Chinese learning and teachers' classroom teaching, so as to promote the progress of China's Chinese education. However, due to the limited time and energy, the study still has many shortcomings, with fewer case sample studies and imperfect strategy exploration. Therefore, further research is needed on strategies to enhance Chinese learning motivation. For example, how to seize the opportunity of Chinese education and broaden the space of Chinese teaching to stimulate students' learning motivation, how to add qualitative research methods and new statistical methods when exploring motivation strategies, and whether the strategies to enhance Chinese learning motivation can be applied to other subjects. These are the future research directions of the author and Chinese educators.

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