

Study of Egyptian Students' Chinese as a Second Language Learning Strategies

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Abstract: Chinese as a second language learning strategies are essential for foreign students to use when learning Chinese. Based on the literature of Egyptian Chinese language teachers' classroom practice and the collection of the types of language learning strategies used by Egyptian students to learn Chinese, the data sources and the results of learning strategy training, the article discusses the research methodology of Chinese as a second language learning strategies.

Keywords: Learning Strategies; Types of Research; Data Collection Methods; Strategy Training Results.

1. Introduction

There are few research papers on Chinese as a second language learning strategies in the last decade. The concept of language learning strategies was first proposed by Rubin in the 1970s, which refers to the strategies that language learners use to develop the language system through self-organisation (Rubin, 1989). There are three main types of second language learning strategies: learning strategies, receptive strategies and communicative strategies, of which learning strategies are subdivided into direct strategies (including memory strategies and cognitive strategies, etc.), indirect strategies (including metacognitive, affective, and social strategies), and the learner's own and environmental factors (beliefs, motivation, personality, age, etc.); receptive strategies include involved strategies, planned discourse, and corrective discourse involved; communication strategies include students' learning styles, students' attitudes, students' English proficiency, and students' affective factors. Chinese as a second language learning refers to the formal teaching and learning activities of a second language in a school environment after people have acquired a first language. Regarding the research on Chinese as a second language learning strategies, many scholars have chosen Japan, Korea, Europe and the United States as their research targets, and the research on Southeast Asian countries is also increasing, while relatively few studies have been conducted on African countries. After 2016, researchers began to increase the analysis and research on Chinese learning strategies in Egypt, which shows that the types of countries studied on Chinese learning strategies have begun to diversify. With the continuous advancement of research, the methods adopted are also more diversified and scientific. The combination of multiple methods makes the data more convincing and feasible, which shows that our research methods are also maturing.

This paper takes the problems found in the process of Chinese language teaching by researchers who are teaching Chinese internationally in Egypt as a framework, and selects the research on the acquisition strategies used by Egyptian students in learning Chinese as the main content, and researches the articles that can be searched on the China Knowledge Network in the past ten years on the strategies used by Egyptian students in learning Chinese in the process of teaching and learning.

2. Overview of Acquisition Strategy Research

Chinese language teaching in Arab countries can be traced back to the 1960s. In recent years, with the proposal of "One Belt, One Road" initiative, Arab countries have actively responded to and established economic and cultural exchanges with China, and with the deepening of such exchanges, there are more and more people learning Chinese in Arab countries. However, Arabic (hereinafter referred to as Arabic) is a typical inflectional language, which has a flexible word order and expresses grammatical meanings mainly through morphological changes, and the root of a word can express its grammatical function through morphological changes. Chinese, on the other hand, is a typical isolated language, lacking morphological changes, and the way of expressing grammatical meanings is very different from that of the flexed language, which is mainly expressed through the word order and dummy words; and Chinese words, phrases, and sentences are basically the same in structure, and there are five basic structural modes, namely, subject-predicate, bias, verb-object, middle-complement, and union; Chinese quantifiers are very rich, and there are inflectional words, and inflectional words also indicate meanings in a certain sense. Therefore, it is difficult for learners whose mother tongue is Arabic to come into contact with a brand-new grammatical system when learning Chinese, and we will analyse the strategies of Egyptian students in learning Chinese accordingly.

2.1. Types of Learning Strategies

The literature selected for the article is mostly the data obtained from the observation and research of Chinese language teachers and volunteers who went to Egypt during their term of office, and the data in the article are mostly authentic and practical. In the selected literature, the types of learning strategy studies adopted by the researchers are relatively rich, but they mainly focus on the following concentrated types: naturalistic investigation, comparative study and correlation study.

1. Naturalistic investigative type is when the researcher observes, interviews, collects information, and traces the research subjects to analyse the facts and results of the learners in real-life situations over a longer period of practice.

The researchers of the selected literature observed and interviewed the students in the schools they taught during the period of teaching Chinese as a foreign language: for example, Zhang Wei (2015) conducted a questionnaire survey on the Chinese tone system for three grades of Chinese learners in his Chinese language practice school [1]; Ailan (2021) first took the method of comparing the definitions of the Arabic language and the Chinese language, analysing the similarities and differences and predicting the possible biases of the Egyptian learners. A questionnaire survey was designed to test the learners to see whether the predicted errors were correct or not, so as to prevent Egyptian students from making errors in learning determiners during the process of teaching Chinese as a second language. [2] ; and Chen Weixi (2021), for example, designed a questionnaire survey in combination with classroom practice and observation, analysed and researched on the writing textbooks, the writing curriculum, the teachers of writing, and the learners' personal situation, and summarized the current situation and the existence of the writing class of the Chinese department of the school where she teaches. The Current Situation and Problems of Writing Classes in Chinese Department [3] .

2. The comparative research type is mostly used to compare and examine the differences in learning strategies between successful and less successful learners by means of audio-visual thinking, interviews, etc., and the use of expert systems to improve learners' learning. In the selected literature, interviews are a very common method adopted by researchers to study learners' acquisition strategies: e.g., Commission Siro (Esraa Esmail Mohamed Ali) (2016) used questionnaires, interviews and students' essays to understand the learning of nominal quantifiers by Egyptian university students to analyse the types of bias in the learning of Chinese nominal quantifiers by Egyptian students [4] ; Wang Ningxuan (2020), in analysing the teaching of the grammatical point of convergent complements, which does not exist in Arabic, used a comparative analysis method to compare the expression of convergent meanings with the verb in the Arabic language and the Chinese language and used a questionnaire survey to assist the study of the use of convergent complements by Egyptian students. The method of comparative analysis is used to compare the expressions of tendency meaning with verbs in Arabic and Chinese, and the questionnaire survey is used to assist the study of Egyptian students' bias and reasons for the use of tendency complements, to guide the students to understand the commonality of the differences in the grammatical forms of the two languages and the complexity of the tendency complements, and to promote the improvement of the classroom teaching of the tendency complements in Chinese. [5] ; Su Moyuan (2020), in a more comprehensive way through the questionnaires, interviews and other ways to understand that in the process of teaching, students do not combine reading and writing well. In the process of teaching, the training mode is adjusted according to different writing themes and teaching contents, typical Chinese writing genres are displayed and practiced in teaching practice, and the teaching effect is analysed and reflected in classroom observation, post-class communication combined with questionnaire surveys and homework comparisons [6] .

3. Correlation studies investigate the relationship between learning strategies and academic performance, learning tasks, and learner factors, and it can reveal the factors that influence the mastery of learning strategies as well as the effects of

learning strategies on other abilities. In the selected literature, the correlation between what is learnt in Chinese as a second language acquisition and the Arabic language has often been an important factor influencing Egyptian students' choice of learning strategies: correlatives are also found in the Arabic language, the Hend Sayed Saad (Xiao Yan Zi) (2016) took intermediate and advanced Egyptian learners of Chinese as the object of investigation, selected learners' compositions and questionnaires as the corpus, and studied the learning strategies adopted by the students when learning Chinese related words by comparing the use of related words in Arabic and Chinese [7] ; in the process of teaching and learning, the sentence pattern of expressing comparison in Arabic will have native language transfer to the "Bi-Zi Sentences" in Chinese, which can be used to compare and contrast with other words. "The study of students' learning strategies in learning Chinese associative words Ihab (Ehab Samir Kabary) (2016) summarised seven types of bias in "Bi-Zi Sentences" by comparing "Bi-Zi Sentences" in Chinese and Arabic, and put forward teaching strategies and suggestions for "Bi-Zi Sentences" for Egyptian students. Suggestions [8]; Philo (2020) studied the four main categories of polite phrases (greetings, apologies, thanks, and wishes) in Arabic and Chinese, compared the effects of the pragmatic differences between Chinese and Arabic polite phrases on Egyptian learners of Chinese, and came up with the teaching suggestion that teachers should combine semantic culture and vocabulary teaching in classroom teaching [9] .

It can be seen that there is not only one type of strategy in the study of L2 acquisition strategies, but a mixture of strategies to achieve the best L2 learning effect. Especially for volunteer researchers who go abroad to teach Chinese as a second language, the use of interviews alone is time-consuming and cumbersome, which is difficult for those who have been in a foreign country for a short period of time; comparative analyses Comparative analyses and correlation surveys are relatively easier to operate, and it is also easier to draw results, which makes it easier to identify problems, make timely adjustments and get feedback during the teaching process.

2.2. Data Collection Methods

As we can roughly see above, there are many parallel methods of data collection used in the study of second language acquisition strategies, and our research methods are maturing. Compared to the traditional single method of data collection, the traditional corpus-based data collection methods are gradually decreasing, and directed and substantial research based on surveys and experiments is increasing: scholars nowadays are more likely to use technological means to assist collection, and many scholars are also adding data analysis by means of software, adding the original basis of listening to the voice of the native Chinese-speaking teacher to distinguish errors, and in the process of the research will be In the research process, questionnaires, software analysis, students' text analysis, Chinese teachers' listening errors and other methods are combined to make the data more convincing and feasible.

Questionnaires are among the most common means of data collection. Investigators mostly use the difficult language points in the teaching process as the content of the survey, and use questionnaires to investigate students' mastery of what they have learnt in the process of learning: Zhang Wei (2015) uses two approaches, namely reading aloud tone recordings

and listening to sounds to identify tones, to conduct a questionnaire survey on the Chinese tone system for Chinese learners in three grades in his Chinese language practice school; Shujing (2020) uses questionnaires to count the most commonly used (2020) used a questionnaire survey to identify the most commonly used Egyptian nationalised vocabulary and translated them into Chinese vocabulary, which was then used to prepare a nationalised Chinese textbook for Egyptian learners to supplement the teaching and learning of Chinese. [10]; Wanting (2021) screened out the verb blunders in the HSK Dynamic Composition Corpus, and combined them with the natural state of the classroom teaching observed to make the prediction table phrases, and designed a questionnaire for the Egyptian intermediate Chinese language learners based on the questionnaire survey data. Based on the data from the questionnaire survey, we analyse and summarize the reasons for the verb errors and give actionable teaching improvement strategies accordingly. [11]; Zuyao Zhang (2021) used the dynamic system theory to analyse the linguistic errors of the word "De" by taking the chatting records of Egyptian Chinese language learners with her in 124 weeks as a case study, and combined with the dynamics, nonlinearity and complexity of the language system of the learners in the real situation, we studied the linguistic errors of Egyptian intermediate and advanced Chinese language students in Egypt. Combined with the dynamics, non-linearity and complexity of the language system in real-life contexts, the study examines the developmental behaviour of Egyptian intermediate and advanced Chinese learners using the character "De" at [12].

Observation is the second common method of data analysis. The researcher observes learners using learning strategies in the daily teaching process and life, and this observation is mostly purposeful and structured: Su Mengyuan (2020), after discovering that the teaching problem of "difficult for students to learn and difficult for teachers to teach" prevails in the teaching of writing for Chinese majors in Egyptian universities, took the "Input hypothesis", "output hypothesis" and constructivist theory as the theoretical basis, adjust the training mode according to different writing topics and teaching contents in the teaching process, display and practice typical Chinese writing genres in teaching practice, combine "reading and writing" and "reading and writing" together through the teaching of Chinese writing in Egyptian universities. " together, and reflecting on the effect of the changed teaching through classroom observation, post-class communication, questionnaire survey, and homework comparison; Weixi Chen (2021) analyses and researches the writing textbooks, the writing curriculum, the writing teachers and the learners' personal situations through questionnaire surveys and classroom practice and observation; and the natural state of classroom teaching as observed by Wan Ting (2021) Investigating the verb bias of intermediate Chinese language students in Egypt.

There is another method that is more used nowadays is the experimental method. This method is mostly used in investigating students' phonological learning status, where the researcher uses relevant software or acoustic tests to test and study the learners. Zhang Xiaoru (2020) used Praat software for phonological practice, based on a study of vowel similarities and differences between Chinese and Arabic in thousands of people, and carried out a systematic acoustic experimental analysis of "single and compound vowels" [13]; Zhao Jinping (2020) used Praat software to test students'

pronunciation of single-word tones and double-word tones, and carried out analysis of tonal patterns and tonal values. The tonal patterns and tonal values were analysed at [14]. The data collected by this method is more precise and accurate, and the learning status of the students can be more accurately grasped.

It can also be seen that when collecting data on students' second language acquisition strategies, researchers do not use a single method of data collection, but more and more use modern science and technology and software to collect and analyse students' learning status, adopt the form of interviews and classroom observation to understand students' learning status in various aspects, and provide timely feedback and improvement on classroom teaching, so as to promote teachers' Chinese language classroom teaching and students' second language learning. The study is aimed at facilitating teachers' Chinese language teaching and students' second language learning.

2.3. Learning Strategy Training Effectiveness Test

In the above literature, the issues in testing the effectiveness of learning strategy training include two main types, the level of learners' sense of autonomy and the long-term training or not, and the main focus here is on the students' sense of autonomy. In the study of learning strategies among Egyptian students, the most significant influencing factor is the students' motivation to learn. Students' motivation is dynamic and can change in both directions, increasing or decreasing. Students' motivation affects their psychological perceptions, their interest in learning, and the learning strategies they use when learning Chinese as a second language. In the case of strong motivation, students' interest in learning will increase, learning efficiency will increase, and learning effect will become better, on the contrary, it is possible to give up the learning of a foreign language because of insufficiently strong motivation (Li Xiaofang, 2021) [15]; In addition, in the process of students' learning, the students with better level will reduce the use of abbreviation strategy and retrieval strategy (Wu Xuemei, 2016) [16], and the students' use social strategies most frequently and metacognitive strategies least frequently (Feng Wei and Zhu Wenfu, 2012) [17]. This means that the factor of language learning motivation is the most important factor in Egyptian students' Chinese as a second language learning process, which affects the level of students' sense of autonomy when learning Chinese, and determines how effective the students are when learning Chinese as a second language.

3. Concluding Remarks

The study of Egyptian students' Chinese as a second language learning strategies has revealed several types of research and data collection methods used by researchers to study Egyptian students' use of strategies in learning Chinese, as well as the detection effects obtained by students' use of the strategies. However, this literature is not detailed and comprehensive enough and lacks extensive and comprehensive comparative data studies, so we need more international Chinese language teachers to collect more classroom teaching data to improve the research on Egyptian students' Chinese as a second language learning strategies.

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