

# Second Language Acquisition Strategies in Chinese Language Teaching Internationally

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**Abstract:** With the increasing influence of Chinese in the world, more and more foreigners have a strong interest in Chinese culture and language, and begin to learn Chinese. Under this background, in order to better improve the quality and efficiency of teaching, it is particularly important to study second language acquisition strategies. Second language acquisition strategies are various means, methods and measures adopted by second language learners in order to achieve their learning objectives. Based on the analysis of the connotation and classification of second language acquisition strategies, this paper discusses the application of second language acquisition strategies in Chinese international teaching, the implementation of teaching principles and the use of teaching methods. In addition, the paper also points out that the second language acquisition strategy suitable for students' age and psychological characteristics should be adopted according to their cognitive development rules, psychological characteristics and language learning and acquisition rules, so as to guide students to learn to observe, think, judge and choose in the learning process, so as to improve their learning efficiency and complete their learning objectives.

**Keywords:** Second Language Acquisition; Second Language Acquisition Strategies; International Teaching of Chinese.

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## 1. Introduction

Second language acquisition strategies refer to the various means and methods adopted by learners in the learning process in order to achieve the learning objectives. It is generally believed that second language acquisition strategies refer to the design, planning, organization, monitor, regulation and feedback of the whole learning process according to the learner's own situation in order to achieve the best learning effect or to make up for the learning deficiencies in the learning of a second language. The study of second language acquisition strategies has a long history, but it was not until the 1960s that it gradually received attention. Since the 1980s, with the continuous development and improvement of learning theories and teaching theories, second language acquisition strategies have also received different degrees of research and attention. However, research on second language acquisition strategies is mainly conducted for second language learners, while in Chinese international teaching, international students and teachers often come from different countries with different cultural and educational backgrounds, which makes it difficult to carry out in-depth exchanges, so it is necessary to introduce second language acquisition strategies into the research on Chinese international teaching, so as to provide a new way of thinking to improve the quality of Chinese international teaching.

## 2. Connotation and Classification of Language Acquisition Strategies

There are many kinds of classification for language acquisition strategies, here we adopt the classification of language acquisition strategies by American linguists O'Mally and Chanmot (1998), who classify language acquisition strategies into metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and social/emotional strategies. Among them, metacognitive strategies are students' strategies for their own cognitive processes, including students' knowledge and control of their own cognitive processes, which are used for

students to evaluate, monitor, and manage the use of cognitive strategies, i.e., learners reflect on and study their own cognitive processes through planning, monitoring, and evaluating. The term "metacognition" refers to "cognition of cognition", a deep cognitive activity[1]. Cognitive strategies refer to the methods and techniques used by the learner to process information in the cognitive process, aiming at effectively extracting information from memory. In fact, cognitive strategies are the process of processing information in memory. Social/emotional strategies are strategies used to promote student cooperation and interest in the learning process, which aims to provide learners with as many opportunities as possible to get close to the language. Second language acquisition is a complex and long-term process, whether teachers or students, subjective or objective factors, can affect the level of learners' second language acquisition. In international Chinese language teaching, learners' different cultural backgrounds, teaching environments and conditions, teachers' mastery of acquisition strategies and skills, the degree of difficulty of the learning tasks, and the learning conditions of the learners all affect the effectiveness and level of learners' second language acquisition. In addition, learners' personal factors, including different levels of motivation, attitudes towards learning, learners' personality, age, intelligence level, learning styles and so on, can all influence the results of second language acquisition.

Therefore, in the process of teaching, teachers should provide effective guidance to students and guide them to formulate learning strategies according to their own situation and actual needs. Only when students have a certain sense of strategy can they really master the learning skills and improve the effect of language learning. In the international teaching of Chinese language, teachers should also adopt appropriate acquisition strategies according to students' age, cognitive development and language learning.

### **3. The Application of Second Language Acquisition Strategies in the International Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language**

Scholar Liu Junlu believes that the classroom of Chinese language international teaching should, "follow the order of acquisition and increase comprehensible input, indeed, teachers need to eliminate affective filters and the appropriate use of monitoring tools." [2] In second language teaching, learners usually do not have enough knowledge about learning strategies, and just learn something passively according to the teacher's teaching arrangement. Teachers, on the other hand, are the organizers, designers and instructors of teaching, so they should consciously and purposefully guide students to learn by using appropriate learning strategies in the teaching process. Since the mother tongue of students in Chinese language international teaching may be two different language systems from Chinese, which are very different in terms of phonology, vocabulary, grammar, etc., teachers have to guide students to use different learning strategies for learning and enable learners to use these strategies correctly for acquisition. This requires teachers to guide and instruct learners in the classroom in a purposeful and planned way so that students can achieve their learning goals through various activities. The following discusses the application of second language acquisition strategies in Chinese international teaching from three aspects: teaching principles, teaching content, and teaching methods.

#### **3.1. Teaching Principles**

Scholar Gao Yanying points out that the principles of foreign language teaching are: improving teachers' theoretical knowledge and communicative competence, dealing with the relationship between language input and output, determining practical teaching methods, dealing with the relationship between teaching and learning, advocating the concept of lifelong learning, and creating a favourable language environment [3]. The teaching of Chinese as a second language can take the example by the principles of second language teaching, but Chinese has its own uniqueness, so the teaching principles of teaching Chinese as a second language also have their own uniqueness. In the practice of international Chinese language teaching, the use of teaching principles should be combined with the rules and strategies of second language acquisition, and the following principles need to be followed in teaching:

##### **3.1.1. The Principle of Gradualism**

The principle of gradual progression, that is, different strategies should be adopted in the teaching process according to students' different learning abilities and learning styles. This principle requires international Chinese language teachers to follow the learners' mastery, the degree of difficulty of the learning content, and the learners' age and psychological stage in arranging the teaching content and organizing and implementing the teaching activities, so as to choose the activities and content suitable for the learners to teach. In addition, teachers need to arrange different teaching tasks according to learners' learning abilities and learning levels, trying to move from the simple to the complex, one ring linked with another.

##### **3.1.2. Principle of Pertinence**

The principle of pertinence, i.e. teachers should make

appropriate adjustments and guidance in the teaching process according to the different situations of different students. This principle requires teachers to teach differently according to different levels, abilities and styles of learners, and it also requires teachers to have an in-depth understanding of the learning environment, motivation and background of students so that they can choose different teaching projects. For example, different teaching methods are needed for South-East Asian students and European and American students, and the focus of the teaching content is also different.

##### **3.1.3. Principle of Intuitiveness**

The principle of intuitiveness, that is, in teaching, teachers use intuitive means to develop students' observation and imaginative thinking by guiding them to carry out various forms of perception, stimulate their brains in a direct and powerful way, and enhance their understanding and memory of knowledge. In international Chinese language teaching, for abstract and difficult-to-understand contents, teachers can use visual means to explain different contents to students, so that students can process and understand the contents by themselves using cognitive strategies. Similarly, the principle of intuition can be applied to simple and easy-to-understand content, for which boring textual explanations are not as helpful as visual images.

##### **3.1.4. Principle of Linking Theory with Practice**

The principle of linking theory with practice means that the knowledge taught by teachers needs to be combined with reality, and emphasis is placed on cultivating students' ability to apply knowledge in practice. For the learners, they need to be exposed to the real language and environment of the target country as much as possible, and learn the language and understand the culture in the real situation, so the teachers need to focus on what the students need and can use in the real environment in the arrangement of teaching, no matter it is the selection of teaching materials and the use of teaching materials, or the organization of the teaching content and the exercises.

##### **3.1.5. Principle of Intensive Teaching and More Practice**

The principle of speaking and practising is the principle that students should focus on the training of speech and verbal communication skills under the guidance of language knowledge. [4] "Speaking and practice are essential factors in any kind of teaching, but for Chinese language teachers, the content, proportion and principle of speaking need to be carefully thought out, and the method, form and proportion of practice also need to be carefully arranged by teachers in their teaching. Similarly, the methods, forms and proportion of exercises also need to be carefully arranged by teachers in their teaching. For different types of courses, teachers need to use different methods of practice; for different course contents, teachers need to use different forms of practice.

In conclusion, teaching principles are closely related to teaching content and acquisition strategies, and teaching principles need to be reflected in the whole teaching process. The combination of teaching principles and acquisition strategies can make Chinese language international teaching improve teaching efficiency on the basis of its own characteristics.

### **3.2. Teaching Content**

According to Sun Yanling, "The implementation of teaching content as the core stage in external classroom design, from which students can contact, acquire, memorize,

transform, apply and refine new knowledge, determines the overall level of classroom design in a sense, and it occupies the largest proportion of the whole classroom design." [5] First of all, teaching content is the basis of teaching, and teachers should develop teaching content suitable for the age stage of students according to the actual situation of students, the curriculum plan, and the content of teaching materials. For example, at the elementary level, the three main elements of Chinese phonetics, vocabulary and grammar should be highlighted, starting with the most basic ones such as "sun", "one", "rain", and then teaching phrases. In the intermediate stage, we should focus on cultivating students' Chinese thinking ability, i.e. pragmatic ability. By analyzing the structure of the discourse, students can master the basic ideas and patterns of Chinese expression. Through the introduction of Chinese culture, students can understand the social and cultural background of Chinese society and the way of life of Chinese people. At the advanced stage, students will be able to understand Chinese thinking patterns and language habits through the explanation of more difficult texts or the introduction of poems and idioms, at which time difficult and abstract cultural contents can be introduced.

Secondly, in specific teaching, we should choose teaching contents suitable for students' age according to their cognitive level and psychological characteristics. For example, for lower grades students, we should add topic-based exercises in oral teaching, so that students can learn to use some oral expressions in daily life to communicate, and the topics at this time can be simple self-introduction, shopping and other commonly used topics; for upper grades students, we can add language use training or communicative training, and this communicative training is the students' social and emotional learning strategies to acquire a second language. Of course, teachers should pay attention to selecting appropriate teaching content according to the specific situation in the teaching process, and the selection of learning content needs to take into account the learner, the learning environment, nationalization and other problems.

Finally, the acquisition strategies used should be different for different types of courses. For example, in a phonics course, teachers and students are required to use simulation, performance, repetition and other strategies to explain and understand knowledge; in a vocabulary course, teachers and students can use classification, transfer, translation and other strategies to accomplish the teaching objectives; in a reading course, teachers and students can use learning strategies such as note-taking, using key words, using context and other learning strategies to enhance their understanding of the content of the chapters; and in a speaking course, communicative strategies can be used to improve the students' communicative level and language use ability.

### 3.3. Teaching Methods

Language teaching methodology refers to the purposeful and planned training and cultivation of students by teachers in the process of language teaching and learning, using a variety of teaching means and resources and applying a variety of teaching tools and methods according to the students' psychological characteristics, ways of thinking, cognitive characteristics and so on. In this sense, teaching method is a special kind of education method, which is the means and methods adopted to educate or train learners. Therefore, the selection and use of appropriate teaching methods in a targeted manner is crucial to improving the

language teaching ability of teachers and the language learning ability of students.

In international Chinese language teaching, the use of teaching methods also needs to rely on the support of second language acquisition strategies, because acquisition strategies run through the whole process of teachers' "teaching" and students' "learning". Firstly, teachers need to teach learners different BSL acquisition strategies, including the meanings, contents and classifications of BSL acquisition strategies; secondly, teachers need to teach students to use different BSL acquisition strategies to achieve the learning goals, so that learners can have their own understandings and comprehension of different knowledge contents, and really and actively learn to learn a language instead of passively and briefly learning the language knowledge; thirdly, teachers need to use BSL acquisition strategies in different courses, so that learners can learn the language in the most effective way; and thirdly, teachers need to use BSL acquisition strategies in different courses, so that learners can learn the language in the most effective way. Teachers need to choose different teaching methods to teach different types of knowledge in different courses and at different stages of the curriculum. For example, reading courses need to teach students how to use key words, context, background knowledge, etc., to understand chapters, and writing courses need to teach students how to summarise and organise their ideas. Another example is that the communicative method of teaching can be used in speaking classes so that students can communicate and interact with each other, and the learning pressure and psychological barriers of students can be reduced by creating a relaxing learning environment [6] Finally, Chinese language teaching is a nationalised, regional and cross-cultural teaching, so teachers need to adapt to local conditions and use different types and forms of teaching methods according to the learning characteristics and styles of students in the country or region they are teaching, e.g. for primary and secondary school students in Thailand, they need to incorporate different forms of culture, songs and dances into the teaching process, because Thai primary and secondary school students are active and like to sing and dance. For example, in the case of Thai primary and secondary school students, it is necessary to incorporate different forms of culture, songs and dances into the teaching process because Thai primary and secondary school students are active and like to sing and dance.

Different teaching methods combined with different acquisition strategies present different results, and the same teaching method may produce different results for students in different areas, so teachers need to choose different teaching methods and acquisition strategies according to learners' styles, characteristics, learning backgrounds, etc. to optimise teaching results.

## 4. Conclusion

The study of second language acquisition strategies is an important part of the study of second language acquisition. Workers in Chinese language international education have to adopt second language acquisition strategies that are suitable for learners according to the age characteristics of their students. Specifically, teachers should firstly choose suitable strategies according to students' learning objectives, learning contents, learning environment and other factors; secondly, teachers should also choose suitable strategies according to the cognitive developmental patterns, psychological characteristics and language learning patterns of students of

different ages; finally, teachers should choose suitable teaching methods according to the second language acquisition strategies used by students. In addition, teachers should choose appropriate strategies according to the cognitive development rules, psychological characteristics and language learning rules of students of different ages. Finally, teachers should choose appropriate teaching methods according to the second language acquisition strategies used by students, moreover, teachers need to pay attention to the use of second language acquisition strategies in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language.

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