

Study on the Acquisition Strategies of Chinese as a Second Language in Different Environments

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Abstract: With the vigorous development of Chinese teaching today, the research on Chinese as a second language acquisition strategy is increasingly abundant in China. But due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Chinese language teaching activities have been forced to move online. Most Chinese learners live abroad in the environment of non-target language. What are the similarities and differences in the acquisition strategies of Chinese learners in different environments? Based on previous studies, this paper will conduct a comparative analysis of the acquisition strategies adopted by Chinese learners in different environments to explore their commonalities. In order to help international Chinese teachers clear teaching strategies, promote the better development of international Chinese teaching cause.

Keywords: Chinese; Second Language Acquisition; Learning Strategies; Target Language Environment.

1. Introduction

With the outbreak of COVID-19 and the tightening of epidemic prevention policies in various countries, the physical and mental health of Chinese learners has been affected to varying degrees. As a result, international Chinese teaching has suffered a certain impact. The combination of online teaching and offline teaching has formed, and the number of Chinese learners in China has decreased to a certain extent. In the past, offline teaching and online teaching basically operated separately, and there was a lack of thinking and action on the two teaching methods, especially how to combine offline teaching with online teaching. Therefore, this study will select some scholars' articles on the investigation of learning strategies of Chinese learners in different environments for comparative analysis, so as to find common learning strategies for Chinese teachers to give priority to in the blended teaching ecology, so as to help the smooth progress of international Chinese teaching.

2. Second Language Acquisition Strategies

2.1. Definition

Approaches: Different scholars hold different views on the definition of second language acquisition strategies. H. H. Stern (1983) believes that strategies refer to the general trend or characteristics of approaches adopted by language learners. techniques are used to describe specific forms of visibility. Weinstein & Mayer (1986) believed that language acquisition strategies are the practices or ideas in language learning, which constantly affect the coding process of learners. Ann Uhl Chamot (1987) believed that learning strategies are the skills, methods or deliberate actions taken by students for the purpose of improving learning effect and easy recall of language form and content. Philip Rubin (1987) proposed that learning strategies are conducive to the development of learners' self-constructed language system, and these strategies can directly affect language development. Rebecca L. Oxford (1990) believes that second language acquisition strategies are special actions, behaviors, steps or techniques

adopted by students in order to make progress in developing second language or foreign language skills. Andrew D. Cohen (1998) proposed that language learning strategies refer to learners' conscious or semi-conscious behaviors and psychological activities, which have clear goals. One goal is to make the learning of language knowledge and skills easier; the other goal is to use the language or make up for the deficiency of learners' language knowledge. Wen Qiufang, a Chinese scholar, believes that foreign language learning strategies refer to various strategies adopted by learners to achieve better results in foreign language learning, including strategies adopted by learners to better complete a learning activity or task, as well as macro strategies adopted by learners to plan, regulate and evaluate their own learning objectives, processes and results. And learners' understanding of foreign languages and foreign language learning. Each scholar gives a different definition of second language acquisition strategy. We adopt the general definition, that is, the activity ways and means adopted by learners to design, plan, organize, monitor and feedback the whole learning process in order to achieve the best learning effect according to their own actual situation when learning a second language.

2.2. Classification

Learning strategies can also be classified according to different classification criteria. For example, Andrew D. Cohen (1998) classifies learning strategies differently. First, learning strategies are divided into language learning strategies and language use strategies according to their uses. Secondly, it can be divided into explicit behavior and internal thinking activities according to the expression form of learning strategies. Third, according to the users of learning strategies, learning strategies of successful learners and learning strategies of less successful learners are divided into two categories; Fourthly, according to the psychological process, the learning strategies are classified into cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, emotional strategies and social strategies. In addition, there are some classification methods, such as: first, (England, Oxford,1990) according to whether the strategy has a direct effect on the learning process can be divided into direct learning strategies and indirect

learning strategies; Second, (Americans, O'Malley & Chamot, 1985) it can be divided into primary learner strategies, intermediate learner strategies and advanced learning strategies according to the level of learners. Third, (Americans, Rubin & Thompson, 1994) can be divided into language knowledge learning strategies and language skill development strategies according to the purpose of use.

2.3. Status Quo

Most studies are based on the classification of acquisition strategies by Rebecca L. Oxford. According to the relationship between strategies and language materials, Rebecca L. Oxford divides acquisition strategies into direct strategies and indirect strategies. Direct strategy refers to that the use of strategy is directly related to the language learned, which is subdivided into memory, cognition and compensation (guessing, deviously, etc.). Indirect strategies are those whose use is not directly related to the language learned, and are subdivided into metacognitive, emotional, and social.

3. Different Learning Strategies of Chinese Learners in Different Environments

3.1. Review of Chinese Acquisition Strategies in Different Environments

If you search on CNKI with the keyword "Chinese learning strategies", you can find that many scholars have conducted research on the selection of learning strategies for Chinese learners. Most studies are based on Oxford's (1990) Scale of language learning strategies, focusing on the influence of learners' language environment on their choice of learning strategies.

For example, in the study of Li, N. (2021), 56 Chinese learners from several universities in the United States were investigated through questionnaire survey and semi-structured interview to study the learning strategies of Chinese learners in the non-target language environment. According to the survey, social strategies and metacognitive strategies are relatively frequently used by Chinese learners in non-target environments. The strategies with low mean value are memory strategy, cognitive strategy, compensation strategy and affective strategy, among which affective strategy has the lowest mean value. At the same time, we pay attention to the relationship between gender and strategy use and find that male learners are higher than female learners in the other five learning strategies except memory strategies. However, among the 50 specific learning strategies in the questionnaire, only four of them were used more frequently by male learners than female learners. The researchers believe that there is little difference in the use of learning strategies between male and female learners in the United States. The use of Chinese learning strategies by male learners is slightly higher than that of female learners. Finally, by referring to the self-rated Chinese language ability of the respondents, the researchers found that learners with high self-rated scores used more common learning strategies than those with low self-rated scores. Moreover, the comparison between the common strategies of self-rated high group and self-rated low group shows that the learning stage of learners has a great influence on the use of some strategies. To some extent, the self-rated value of language ability reflects the self-efficacy

of learners, that is, their subjective judgment and evaluation of their language ability in various aspects of Chinese learning. Previous studies have also shown that self-efficacy has a significant positive correlation with learning strategies. The research conclusion suggests that Chinese teachers should enhance the awareness of learners' strategies, select appropriate strategic learning materials, promote the diversity and differentiation of teaching, and help learners experience different learning strategies and use them correctly.

Wang, J. (2021) conducted a questionnaire survey for Chinese learners on the Future Learn MOOC platform in the UK, and obtained 174 valid questionnaires. The study set the basic personal information of the respondents, which mainly includes three items: nationality, length of learning Chinese and HSK level. The survey results show that according to the standard of Oxford (1990), Chinese learners in MOOC use six learning strategies in descending order: cognitive strategy, memory strategy, metacognitive strategy, social strategy, compensation strategy and emotional strategy. In order from high to low, the most commonly used learning strategies for overseas students are: social strategies, metacognitive strategies, compensation strategies, cognitive strategies, memory strategies, and emotional strategies. In the investigation of influencing factors, the author found that the cultural circle has a significant impact on the use of compensation strategy, emotional strategy and social strategy. The use of these three learning strategies is significantly higher in the Asian culture circle than in the European and American culture circle. Chinese learning duration has a significant impact on the use of compensation strategies, emotional strategies and social strategies. With the increase of learning duration of Chinese learners, the utilization rate of these three learning strategies also increases. Obtaining HSK certificate has a significant impact on the use of emotional strategies and social strategies, and the use rate of high level HSK certificate holders is obviously higher than that of low level HSK certificate holders. The study suggests that MOOC help beginners clarify their learning motivations and goals, and assign study groups according to the HSK level of Chinese learners, to help learners improve each other.

Liao, P. (2020) took 50 primary Chinese learners from Schwarzman College of Tsinghua University as research objects and compared the changes in learning strategies of the subjects before and after they came to China for four months. Most of the learners in the study are motivated by their interest in Chinese, while a considerable part is motivated by the needs of study, work and travel in China. The conclusion is that the frequency of learning strategies used in the non-target language environment is ranked as metacognitive strategies, social strategies, memory strategies = affective strategies, compensation strategies, and cognitive strategies in descending order. Although metacognitive strategy is the most frequently used learning strategy, learners rarely use "making learning plans" and "clarifying learning objectives" in metacognitive strategies because they are in a non-target language environment, their learning tasks are not very clear, and learners are zero-basis students. The three most commonly used strategies were "summarize mistakes", "focus" and "find ways to learn". The average value of Chinese learning strategies in non-target language environment is 3.2967. The use frequency of learning strategies is medium frequency, which is the result of the combined effect of three factors: non-target language environment, Chinese learning level and characteristics of

online courses. In the target language environment, the frequency of learning strategies in descending order is social strategy, metacognitive strategy, memory strategy, affective strategy, cognitive strategy and compensation strategy. The average value of Chinese learning strategies in the target language environment is 3.8067, with a high frequency of use, indicating that the change of language environment has a significant impact on the change of learning strategies. However, this does not mean that the use frequency of all learning strategies will definitely increase in the target language environment. For example, Lin Jiaxin's (2016) research on Chinese learners in Thailand shows that the use frequency of learning strategies in Thailand is higher than that in Beijing. Language environment affects learners' choice of learning strategies indirectly by changing their natural language environment and classroom language environment, but language environment is not the only factor affecting the change of learning strategies. In this study, some changes in learning strategies are affected by learning content, learning time, Chinese level, personality and motivation.

Zhou, M. and G. Lu (2021) further explored the influence of individual factors on the learning strategies of Chinese scholars under the Middlebury Language-Teaching Model, and the research objects were 56 overseas students in Kunming. The research results show that the frequency of learners' use of learning strategies in Middlebury Language-Teaching Model is listed in descending order: compensation strategy, memory strategy, cognitive strategy, social strategy, metacognitive strategy and affective strategy. In the non-moral mode, the frequency of learners' use of learning strategies is listed in descending order: compensation strategy, cognitive strategy, memory strategy, metacognitive strategy, social strategy and emotional strategy. According to the results of the survey, learners in Mingde group and non-Mingde group have a relative consistency in strategy use preference. But, the average usage of memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies and social strategies among Mingde students is higher than that of non-Mingde students, and they are better at using memory strategies. Further analysis of the correlation between individual factors and foreign students' learning strategies shows that gender and personality have no correlation with the use of Chinese learning strategies. Multiple comparative data of age and learning strategy use show that there are significant differences in the use of emotional and social strategies between the age group of 21-30 and the age group over 40. According to the research data on the existing Chinese proficiency of Chinese learners, the utilization rate of social strategies and cognitive strategies of junior Chinese learners is lower than that of intermediate and advanced Chinese learners, while the utilization rate of social strategies and metacognitive strategies of intermediate Chinese learners is lower than that of advanced Chinese learners. In general, language level is correlated with Chinese learning strategies and can be regarded as one of the influencing factors.

3.2. Comparative Analysis

Based on the above researches on the use of learning strategies by Chinese learners, it can be seen that in the non-target language environment, the learning strategies that are frequently used by Chinese learners are metacognitive strategies and memory strategies in descending order. In the context of the target language, social strategies,

metacognitive strategies, compensation strategies, and memory strategies are used in descending order of frequency. Therefore, it can be concluded that metacognitive strategies and memorization strategies are indispensable learning strategies for all Chinese learners in whatever language learning environment they are in. At the same time, the utilization rate of social strategies and compensation strategies will be greatly increased when Chinese learners are in the target language environment, because the target language environment will provide more convenient conditions for Chinese learners and enhance their willingness to socialize in Chinese. Finally, the comparison also confirms that in addition to the language learning environment, the age of Chinese learners, the cultural circle they belong to, the Chinese learning time, the existing Chinese level and the self-evaluation of Chinese language ability will also have a certain impact on the selection of learning strategies.

4. Conclusion

Based on the selection of learning strategies of Chinese learners under different conditions, this paper draws the following conclusions: First, metacognitive strategies and memorization strategies are the two most frequently used learning strategies of all Chinese learners, regardless of whether they are in the target language learning environment. Second, when Chinese learners are in the target language environment, the use of social strategies and compensation strategies will be improved. Third, in addition to different language learning environments, Chinese learners' personal factors will also affect their choice of learning strategies. Therefore, in order to help Chinese learners, acquire Chinese better and faster, international Chinese teachers should give priority to formulating learning tasks for Chinese learners according to metacognitive learning strategies and memory strategies in the process of international Chinese teaching, regardless of the target language environment of learners. Secondly, when Chinese learners are in the target language learning environment, international Chinese teachers should consciously guide and teach students to use more and better social strategies and compensation strategies to learn Chinese in Chinese teaching. Finally, international Chinese teachers should deepen their understanding of each Chinese learner's personality and Chinese learning situation, so as to help each Chinese learner develop a personalized learning plan in the teaching process.

After the COVID-19 epidemic, the international Chinese teaching has been undergoing rapid reform. Nowadays, the international Chinese teaching is in a complex form, with a combination of offline and online teaching. Through a comparative investigation of learning strategies of Chinese learners, this study hopes to put forward specific suggestions to help the continuous development of international Chinese teaching under any teaching situation. However, due to the limited research time, research ability and knowledge reserve, this study still lacks in-depth research on learners' personal factors that affect learning strategies and personal investigation and verification of research conclusions. It is hoped that the number of cited articles can be further expanded in the follow-up research for comparison, and the teaching verification and optimization of the research results can be carried out.

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