

Analysis of the Current State and Future Trends of Chinese Language International Promotion

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Abstract: With the acceleration of globalization and the rise of China's international status, Chinese, as an essential carrier of Chinese culture and a tool for international communication, has garnered widespread attention in its international promotion. This paper systematically reviews the current status of Chinese language international promotion, analyzes the problems and challenges it faces, and predicts future development trends, aiming to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the further development of Chinese language international promotion.

Keywords: Chinese language international promotion; Communication media; Educational policy; Future trends; Chinese teaching

Introduction

The history of the spread of the Chinese language and characters is long, with its influence reaching far across the world. From the Silk Road opened by Zhang Qian in the Han Dynasty to Chang'an becoming the center of world economic and cultural exchanges in the Tang Dynasty, Chinese character culture spread widely. In the Ming Dynasty, Zheng He's voyages to the Western seas left traces of Chinese characters on ceramics in the African seas. Today, with the advancement of the "Belt and Road" initiative and the unfolding of new-era Chinese foreign policy, the international dissemination of Chinese has welcomed unprecedented opportunities^[1].

1. Background and Current Status

1.1 Establishment of Confucius Institutes and International Cooperation

In 2004, the Confucius Institute project was launched by the Chinese Language and Culture Exchange Center. Currently, there are 563 Confucius Institutes (classrooms) globally, spread across 162 countries and regions. This data indicates the broad distribution and influence of Confucius Institutes worldwide. As an important platform for Chinese language international promotion, Confucius Institutes not only offer Chinese language courses but also organize various cultural activities, such as Spring Festival celebrations, Chinese medicine lectures, calligraphy, and tea art demonstrations, promoting cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries. Many countries and regions have independently compiled textbooks, such as the "We Speak Chinese" textbook edited by the Confucius Institute at the University of Rome, and the "UK Standard Chinese" and "Learn Chinese" series compiled by the 18 Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms in the UK^[2]. These Confucius Institutes have become important windows for people in various countries to understand Chinese culture, greatly promoting Chinese language international promotion.

1.2 Policy and Legislation Formulation

The Chinese government has formulated a series of policies and regulations to provide legal and policy support for Chinese language international promotion. For example, the "13th Five-Year Plan for the Development of the National Language and Characters" explicitly proposed the goals and tasks for Chinese language international promotion. In addition, the Chinese government has established cooperation with other countries' educational departments and institutions to jointly promote the development of Chinese language education. By signing bilateral agreements, setting up scholarship programs, and organizing Chinese teacher training, the Chinese government actively expands international cooperation, enhancing the international status of Chinese^[3]. According to the latest data, 81 countries have incorporated Chinese language teaching into their national education systems. These countries have officially included Chinese courses in their education systems through decrees and regulations, as part of China's "Going Out" strategy for language and culture^[4].

1.3 The "Belt and Road" Initiative

In recent years, the "Belt and Road" initiative has brought new opportunities for Chinese language international promotion. In promoting

civil exchanges among countries along the "Belt and Road," language learning plays a crucial role. Strengthening Chinese language education in these countries has profound impacts on deepening mutual understanding, promoting project cooperation, and supporting local economic and social development^[5]. This consensus has been widely formed among countries participating in the "Belt and Road" initiative, particularly those directly involved in cooperative projects. Through Chinese language training, cultural exchanges are promoted, local residents are provided with more employment opportunities, and their ability to participate in international cooperation is enhanced. The initiative aims to promote economic cooperation and cultural exchanges among countries along the route, further emphasizing the importance of promoting Chinese as a bridge connecting China with these countries.

2. Problems and Challenges

2.1 Insufficient Teaching Staff

The shortage of qualified teachers is one of the most prominent issues in Chinese language international promotion. Although many teaching points have been established worldwide through Confucius Institutes, the number of qualified Chinese teachers still cannot meet the growing demand of learners. It is particularly challenging to find teachers capable of teaching Chinese in local languages in non-English-speaking countries. Additionally, professional training and continuous education for teachers are crucial to improving teaching quality, which requires more resources and investment.

2.2 Lack of Teaching Materials and Resources

The lack of teaching materials and resources is also a significant issue. Although some Chinese textbooks have been translated into various languages and are widely used, these materials often fail to meet the needs of learners from different cultural backgrounds and learning habits. For example, in Southeast Asia, the existing textbook content lacks integration with local culture, affecting learners' interest. The development of localized textbooks requires an in-depth understanding of local culture and educational systems, which is a long-term and complex process. Moreover, the development and utilization of digital teaching resources need to be strengthened to adapt to the development of modern educational technology.

2.3 Cultural Differences and Communication Barriers

Cultural differences pose another challenge in Chinese language international promotion. Chinese is not only a language but also a carrier of Chinese culture. Different cultural backgrounds have varying ways of learning and acceptance, requiring Chinese teaching to not only impart language knowledge but also introduce Chinese culture, promoting cross-cultural exchange and understanding^[6]. Additionally, communication barriers, including language policies, educational systems, and social attitudes, can also affect the promotion of Chinese.

2.4 Single Teaching Mode

The current Chinese teaching mode is relatively single, primarily based on classroom lectures, lacking interaction and experiential segments. For instance, in some countries, Chinese classes still adopt traditional teacher-centered teaching modes, and students lack participation. This traditional teaching mode is difficult to stimulate students' interest and initiative in learning, especially for the younger generation of learners, where more diversified and interactive teaching methods are particularly important.

In summary, Chinese language international promotion is a long-term and complex task requiring joint efforts from the Chinese government, educational institutions, teachers, and international partners. By addressing issues such as insufficient teaching staff, lack of teaching materials and resources, cultural differences, and communication barriers, the international status and influence of Chinese can be further enhanced. This not only helps promote the exchange and integration of world cultures but also contributes significantly to building a community with a shared future for mankind.

3. Future Trends

3.1 Growth in Global Chinese Learners

With the rise of China's international status and the enhancement of cultural soft power, the number of people learning Chinese worldwide has significantly increased. According to statistics, the number of Chinese learners globally has exceeded 100 million. Especially in countries along the "Belt and Road," the enthusiasm for learning Chinese is high. For example, in Thailand, over 3000 schools offer Chinese courses, and more than 800,000 students are learning Chinese. In South Korea, more than 100 universities have Chinese language programs, and the number of learners continues to grow. Additionally, in the United States, over 200,000 students are learning Chinese at the elementary and secondary school levels, with more universities and community colleges also offering Chinese courses. The number of people taking the HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) is also increasing yearly, with over 2 million registrants globally in 2019.

3.2 Application of New Media and Technology

The development of new media and educational technology provides new opportunities for Chinese language international promotion.

Future Chinese teaching will increasingly utilize online platforms, mobile applications, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR) technologies, offering more flexible and personalized learning experiences. These technologies can help learners study Chinese anytime, anywhere, and enhance their language practice ability by simulating real communication scenarios.

3.3 Diversification of Teaching Modes

Chinese teaching modes will become more diversified to meet the needs of different learners. In addition to traditional classroom teaching, hybrid learning, flipped classrooms, and project-based learning will be more widely applied. These modes encourage learners to actively participate and explore, helping to improve learning efficiency and interest. Meanwhile, by combining language learning with cultural experiences, such as organizing language practice trips and cultural exchange activities, learners' understanding of Chinese and Chinese culture can be deepened [7].

3.4 Strengthening Teacher Training and Resource Development

To address the shortage of teaching staff, strengthening teacher training and resource development will be key to future development. The Chinese government and educational institutions may increase investment in teachers' professional development, providing more training programs and career development opportunities. Additionally, the development of teaching materials and resources will focus more on localization and diversification to meet the needs of learners from different countries and regions. By establishing an international Chinese teacher alliance, sharing teaching experiences and resources, the teaching level and cross-cultural communication ability of teachers can be improved.

3.5 Role and impact of cultural soft power

Cultural soft power plays a significant role in the international promotion of the Chinese language. By disseminating traditional Chinese culture such as Confucianism, traditional painting, and music, it attracts global learners to study Chinese. Integrating language learning with Chinese culture deepens learners' understanding and sense of identification with Chinese culture. Organizing cultural activities and exchange programs, such as festival celebrations and calligraphy exhibitions, provides rich language practice opportunities, fosters cross-cultural communication, and enhances international learners' understanding and goodwill towards China. This comprehensive cultural dissemination not only enhances the international influence of the Chinese language but also promotes mutual understanding and integration between Chinese and foreign cultures.

The future of the international promotion of the Chinese language is full of challenges, but also full of opportunities. Through enhanced policy support and international cooperation, the utilization of new media and technologies, the development of diversified teaching modes, and the strengthening of teacher training and resource development, the international promotion of the Chinese language is expected to achieve more rapid and in-depth development. This will not only promote the spread of the Chinese language globally, but will also help to enhance mutual understanding and friendship among the peoples of the world and contribute to the building of a more harmonious international society.

4. Conclusion

This paper discusses the current status and challenges of Chinese language international promotion and predicts future development trends. Despite the issues of teacher shortages and lack of materials, the prospects for Chinese language international promotion remain broad through policy support, teacher training, and the application of new media technologies. With these efforts, the international status and influence of Chinese are expected to be further enhanced, contributing to the promotion of global cultural exchange and integration, and building a community with a shared future for mankind.

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