

Thai Students' Typos and Instructive Strategy Research

Take Chumpuangsuksa School For Example

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Abstract—With the popularity of Chinese, teaching it to the foreigners has achieved good results, especially in Thailand. However, there are some problems about learning and teaching Chinese Characters. The article will apply theory of error analysis and language acquisition to practice. For example, design a questionnaire, collect students' writing materials, teach students themselves and so on. With approaches like these, researching students' typos. On this basis, analyzing the reasons for their error and then put forward corresponding instruction advices. Author hope that she can improve students' ability of writing Chinese characters, and also hope that this article can be engaged in the help to the Chinese teaching colleague.

Keyword—Thailand; Chumpuangsuksa School; Writing Errors; Typos; Instructive Strategy

I. INTRODUCTION

The fad of Chinese learning recently heats up again and again. According to the statistics, there are at least 40 million foreigners are learning Chinese. Similarly, "Mandarin fever" also hit the Thailand. More than 3,000 schools provide the Chinese language course now, including 12 Confucius Institutes and 11 Confucius Classrooms. The number of people studying Chinese in the school goes from 8 million in 2003 to 80 million.

Chinese characters is a kind of written symbols to record Chinese. Instruction of Chinese Character is an important part but a weakness part in teaching Chinese as a foreign Language. From the mistakes students possibly make in writing Chinese characters, it can be found out that it exists many problems which should be solved immediately, like typos.

Chumpuangsuksa School author taught is located in Nakhon Ratchasima Province in northeast of Thailand. The first foreign language here is English and the second language is Chinese. Currently, a total of more than 2,000 students , contains from Grade 1 of junior high school to Grade 3 of senior high school, are learning Chinese.

For this survey, the author collected data from 300 junior high school students who come from grade seven to nine, 100 students in each grade. Take the following two

forms:

A. Dictation

It includes 10 Chinese characters in all and each one points. Among them, Students in grade seven are given characters: 下、日、月、儿、子、女、六、九、三, grade eight are "大、小、个、不、太、多、少、同、午、分", grade night are "天、气、点、人、字、开、五、八、本、没". These characters within the scope of the HSK level 1 and have been studied .

The purpose is to investigate the probability of typos in different grades.

B. Collect Daily Homework

Because the process of learning Chinese is dynamic, so the author collected a lot of students' daily homeworks to study the probability of each kind of typos appears.

In addition, the authors also take questionnaires and interviews to look for reasons arising typos.

II. TYPOS STATISTICS

A. Typos in Dictation

In the dictation test,correct rates about writing Chinese characters from grade seven to grade nine in turn is : 60%, 75%, 54.2%. The results indicated that students' overall skill of writing Chinese characters is far from satisfactory, so it is necessary to improve the method of teaching.[Fig.1]

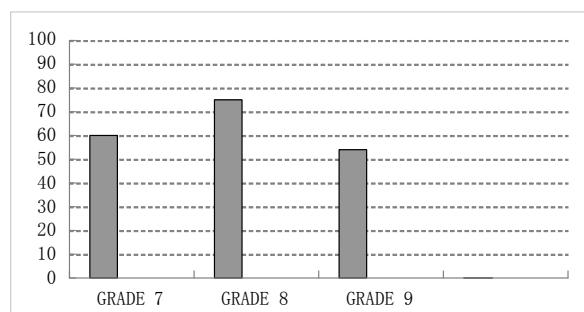


Fig. 1.

B. Typos in Homework

Author combine the dictation results with the collected daily homework and finally divide students' typos to the following four points:

1) Stroke Errors

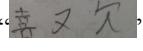
Sometimes, students change the shape of strokes in writing, for example change “四” to “” or change “水” to “”; Sometimes, students give character more strokes, for example change “说” to “” or change “心” to “”. In addition, students always forget to write some strokes, for example, change “景” to “” or change “小” to “”.

2) Component Errors

Character component is a unit which is composed of strokes and has the function of forming characters. There are three common mistakes students usually make when they writing. The first one is add component, for instance, change “弓” to “”. The second is decrease component, such as change “旦” to “”. The last one is change component due to confusion , for instance, change “休” to “”.

3) Structure Errors

Different component arrangement will form diverse structures and disparate Chinese characters. “Chinese characters Orthographic change” indicate that we should ensure the structure is correct. Students usually have the following error:

- a) Interchange Structure, namely students choice an incorrect structures in writing. For example change “吃” to “”.
- b) Write structure loosely. For example change “喜欢” to “”
- c) Write long stroke shortly or give the stroke an angle, for example, change “生” to “” or change “土” to “”.
- d) Deal with relations between strokes, namely "Separation", "connecting" and "intersection", wrongly. For example, change “八” to “”.

4) Misused Character Errors

In course of writing, students often substitute character A for character B, for example, change “下午” to “上午”.

III. REASONS FOR APPEARING TYPOS

A. Subjective reasons

Study motivation is a kind of inner impetus to drive students' study which is also required to prompt and direct students in their study. A quick look at the table above indicates that most of students in grade eight learn Chinese for their own reasons in stead of external reasons, so we can say that their own study motivation is higher than the other two grades. In addition, the investigation found that students in grade eight will to invest more time in learning Chinese, which cause their scores are above the others in spelling test. Thus, improving students' learning initiative is advantageous to raising their result.[Fig. 2]

	School teach the language	Be interested in learning Chinese	Be interested in chinese culture	Good for jobs
Grade 7	61%	9%	28%	2%
Grade 8	35%	15%	41%	9%
Grade 9	447%	48%	440%	55%

Fig. 2. Learning motivation questionnaire

In the survey about typos attitude, 89% of students have realize that it is nessary to correct typos in time, however, the other students believe that they can ignore any errors they may get as long as they could express their meaning. If students can not realize the importance of correcting typos, they would ignore the error. Error, if left correct unchecked, would lead others can not cognitive or cause misunderstanding. Therefore, teachers are required to repeatedly stressed the important of correcting typos. [Fig. 3]

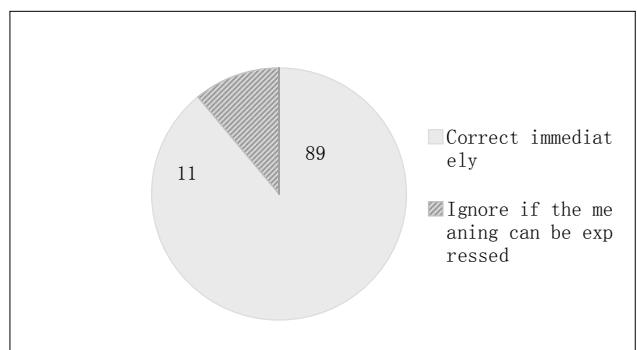


Fig. 3. Attitude to Typos

In a survey of 300 students, only 12% of the students get used to checking after finish homework and test paper. If students do not checked, mistakes caused by careless can not be find . Making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process while students should find and correct them immediately. As a teacher, we need to cultivate students' habit of self-examination. [Fig. 4]

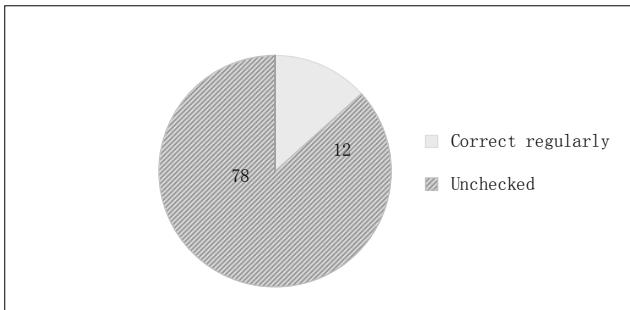


Fig. 4. Self-examination

B. Objective Reason

1) Language Itself

There are 3500 commonly used Chinese characters in "Modern Chinese characters Common Words", the average stroke of these characters is 9.7, which undoubtedly increase the hardness of recognition.

In addition, Chinese character not only numerous but also complex. Its construct can be divided into seven types: Left and Right structure, Left , middle and Right structure, upper and lower structure,upper , middle and lower structure, encompassing structure, semi enclosed structure,insertion structure, which students regard is complicated and hard .Besides, some two words such as “士”and“土” are very alike, so difficult to identify.

2) Language Transfer

Language transfer is a kind of common phenomenon in second language acquisition, which has a very important influence on second language acquisition. Learners' mother tongue has a dual function of positive transfer and negative transfer in foreign language teaching.

Chinese is ideographic character while Thai language is phonography. They are two completely different writing system, so the difference between them is great. Firstly,a large of Thai alphabet can be do in one stroke, such as “ີ”, however,Chinese character has a lot of strokes.As a result, students write “ 口” in one stroke sometimes. Secondly, the writing direction of Chinese character follow some rules ,such as“ from up to down”, but Thai alphabet has no this rule. Some alphabet , like “ີ”, has opposite writing direction compared to Chinese characters.All of this will affect students to write Chinese characters.

3) social Reason

First of all, Chinese is an important ethnic group in Thailand. There are about 7,300,000 Chinese who accounts for 12% of the total population. We can usually find complex-formed characters ,such as“恭喜發財”, in streets because people from Guang dong and Tai wan province use it . It is different from simplified Chinese character which is taught at school, so it is not conducive to the students memorizing simplified Chinese characters.

Besides, Although there are many ethnic Chinese in Thailand, it exists little in Chumpuangsuksa school. It means

that students have little opportunity to speak Chinese after class. This requires teachers to encourage students to communicate with each other in Chinese and put Chinese characters into daily life.

IV. CHARACTER ERRORS STRATEGY

The survey found that students in Chumpuangsuksa school often made mistakes in writing,especially typos, so teachers should improve teaching methods.

To solve the problem about strokes error, teachers are suggested to adopt following strategies:① In order to play an exemplary role and give students the right instructions in the meantime, teachers should keep strokes straightly when write on the blackboard, try not to write illegibly.②Teachers should tell students the position strokes appears. For example, “L ” usually exits on the top of Chinese characters,like “ 西”.③Add strokes and delete strokes usually are caused by carelessness, so it is necessary to urge students to develop a good habit to check. Meanwhile, strengthen the contrast between similar words, such as “李” and “季”.

Treat the question of component errors, teachers can use the following teaching strategies: ① Draw a matts and then write Chinese character there when teachers express characters on the blackboard, students do it on the notebook in same ways. Students will understand the correct position of each part of the characters by taking this approach, so the structure will not be wrote too loose.② Increase exercises on the structure of Chinese characters,for example, compete to see who can find more characters in "up and down the structure".③Explain the structure of Chinese characters (pictographs, instructions, knowing, Phonogram) and tell students structures' meaning and function. For example, “木”means tree and“ 休”means people have a rest near the tree.

To avoid misused character errors, teachers could improve teaching method in following ways: ①Urge students to form the habit of thumbing the dictionary when they do not know how to write②Ask students to prepare a notebook to record mistakes and peruse constantly ③In order to draw more attention, punish appropriately like copy 5 times when students stumble in typos.

V. TEACHING MODEL FOR CHUMPUANGSUKSASCHOOL

Depending on all above studies and experiments, the author summarize a practicable teaching programme to teach Chinese character accurately.

A. Run A Chinese Writing Course in the Early Stages

Survey found that students pay little attention to Chinese character which is a kind of reason they always write wrongly, so it is helpful to run a Chinese writing course in the early stage. Not only tell students the vivid shapes of Chinese characters in handwriting, which caused them to understand Chinese character's historical context, but also explain basic structures of Chinese characters. In this way students can get a glimpse of Chinese characters.Besides,

the deeper students learn, the more they realize how beautiful it is.

B. Teach From Easy to Difficult, Step by Step

It's easy to be confused which can only stimulate hatred towards study among students if they learned a lot at a time, so gradually actions come to play important roles.

After grasp Chinese character stroke, the stroke order and the writing rules in Chinese Writing course, students need a focused learning course. This course starts with single characters, it is composed mostly of pictographs which is easy to identify and strong in word-building.

C. Use Nimble and Diverse Teaching Methods

Motivating student learning is the most important issue in teaching, so there should be more flexible teaching methods to obtain the best teaching effect.

1) Play Chinese Games

For example, intentionally misspell Chinese characters they have learned on the blackboard, then let children be the teacher to put the words right. Or give students some simple characters to add strokes, like “— (二、七、十、丁)”

1) Taxonomy

Teacher could list the words with same radicals, then explain radicals' meaning. For example, give the words “袜”“裤”“袄”“衫”, to guide the students to summarize the meaning of “衤”. Once students meet the words consist of “衤”, they can guess that it is about clothes.

2) Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning strategies will not only improve students' participation in class activities, but also promote their interests in characters learning. For example, students can have a competition, with teams.

3) Integrate in the Chinese Culture

Thai students have a strong practical ability, students in chumpuangsuksa are no exception. We can use this to organize activities integrate in the Chinese culture. For example, write characters with a Chinese brush or cut them with scissors.

D. Form Good Habits

Develop a good study habits is help to improve scores. Teachers should cultivate their autonomous consciousness. For example, students should turn to a dictionary if they come across any words that they don't know how to write.

Beyond that, there are a large of nice ways we have yet to discover, it need be researched on the basis of theory and practice.

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