

Reflection on Teaching of "Contemporary Chinese Language"*

Yawei Juan
Xi'an Fanyi University
Xi'an, China

Abstract—Contemporary Chinese Language is a basic course of Chinese Language and Literature and International Education of Chinese Language, but the teaching effect is not satisfactory in practice. Based on the teaching practice, the paper elaborates the reflection on the course from three aspects: "preparing for the course", "preparing for students" and "preparing methods", which is purposed to provide some references for the construction and the reform of this course.

Keywords—contemporary Chinese language; teaching; reflection

I. INTRODUCTION

As a basic course of Chinese Language and Literature and International Education of Chinese Language, Contemporary Chinese Language has the characteristics of tool course, theory course and practice course. The teaching objective of this course is to "impart language theoretical knowledge to students including phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, rhetoric and other systems of Contemporary Chinese Language, improve their ability to understand, analyze and use Chinese, so that the students can have good language literacy in the specific application of language, and truly become practical and application-oriented talents that adapt to social development." It can be seen from the teaching objective that this course focuses on both theory and practice. However, the actual teaching situation and effect are not satisfactory. In the context of paying close attention to "undergraduate education to realizing a new leap in education development", it is necessary to adjust the course to adapt the actual situation. Only in this way can it keep pace with the curriculum construction and truly realize the talent training goal. The paper talks about the reflection on Contemporary Chinese Language from three aspects: "preparing for the course", "preparing for students" and "preparing methods".

II. PREPARING FOR THE COURSE

Preparing for the course is a general concept, which is somewhat different from the traditional lesson preparation

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people usually talk about. "Lesson preparation" can be the preparation for a chapter or a period of a lesson, but the "preparing course" refers to systematic preparation of the whole course. That is, before giving a course, teachers must know fairly well about the teaching objective of the course, the selection of teaching materials, the grasp of key and difficult points, the implementation of the teaching process, the use of classroom language and so on, so they can give the course towards the teaching objective.

A. Setting of Teaching Objective

First, it is "the setting of teaching objective". As mentioned above, the teaching objective of this course is to "impart language theoretical knowledge to students including phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, rhetoric and other systems of Contemporary Chinese Language, improve their ability to understand, analyze and use Chinese, so that the students can have good language literacy in the specific application of language, and truly become practical and application-oriented talents that adapt to social development." Apparently, basic theoretical knowledge of the language is fundamental, so it is necessary to assign teaching hours scientifically and reasonably to theoretical study and practice according to the teaching objective. According to the current syllabus arrangement, the Contemporary Chinese Language course has 64 class hours in one semester, with theory class hours: practice class hours of 52:12. As a result, in actual teaching, students can truly feel that theory classes occupy much more time than practice classes that help students further understand the teaching content. Therefore, on the basis of controlling the teaching objective, teachers should set a certain proportion of practices to test students' mastery of theoretical knowledge and ability to apply language according to the actual teaching situation.

B. Grasping the Key and Difficult Points of Teaching

Secondly, the teachers shall grasp the key and important points of the course according to the talent training program and syllabus. For example, Xi'an Fanyi University uses the Contemporary Chinese Language textbook written by Huang Borong, Liao Xudong, and reasonably adjust the course content according to the new talent training program, syllabus, textbook revision, etc., such as deleting the outdated content and improper ideas as well as those obscure the textbook. For example, some adjustments have been made in Section 4: Tone — Ancient and Modern Tone

Category & Four Tones, and Section 7: Phoneme in Contemporary Chinese Language (Volume 1), as well as the grammar content in Volume 2. Teachers can also flexibly select appropriate contents in the teaching, which can not only make the teaching task of Contemporary Chinese Language clearer, but also relieve the learning burden of students, so that students have more time to focus on the language knowledge they are interested in. In addition, it is advisable to actively introduce the latest development of the course into the class, such as the current status of Chinese and the development status of contemporary Chinese, to make students understand the importance and practicality of the course.

C. Rehearsing the Teaching Process

Thirdly, it is recommended to rehearse the teaching process of each lesson. It is important to be familiar with and grasp the teaching objectives and key and difficult points, but it is also necessary to pay attention to the implementation process of each lesson. Normally, a lesson lasts about 90 minutes, and full and effective use of the 90 minutes is the guarantee of the smooth implementation of the lesson. In general, a teacher before giving a lesson will prepare a teaching plan and lecture notes, so it is necessary to rehearse the lecture quickly before each class. During the rehearsal, the teacher can conceive of the problems students may encounter, questions students may put forward in class as well as the corresponding answers, so that they can deal with unexpected problems in class with ease.

D. Paying Attention to "Classroom Language"

In addition, it is necessary to pay attention to classroom language. "In class, you have to act like an actor, so you can't mess around with what comes out in the first act and what comes out in the second act... What teachers say and do will influence the students, so teachers should say 'classroom language' in class" said Professor Li Jinghui from Beijing Language and Culture University. According to the research by many scholars at home and abroad, the teaching process of a language course generally includes five steps: opening, review, lead-in, expansion and concluding. Teachers shall use different classroom languages in different teaching links. Corresponding to the teaching links, classroom languages can also be classified into opening statement, review phrases, lead-in phrases, expanding phrases, and concluding remarks. Using the opening statement is to attract students' attention and bring them into the classroom environment quickly, which is the guarantee of smooth "lecturing". Review phrases can help students quickly recall the knowledge they have learned, and the lead-in phrases can well connect the contents that have been expounded and those to be expounded, which is the beginning of a good lesson. Whether the classroom teaching can achieve the teaching goal depends greatly on whether the expansion link is reasonable and effective, so it is self-evident that the expansion phrases is significant. The concluding remarks are used by teachers to lead students to summarize, consolidate, expand and extend the knowledge and methods they have learned, and to end the lesson. In a word, using classroom language properly and reasonably, on the one hand, is

conducive to the smooth implementation of classroom teaching activities, and on the other hand, also helps to establish a stable classroom relationship of information output and input between teachers and students. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to the use of "classroom language".

III. PREPARING FOR STUDENTS

At present, the main problem of students in learning Contemporary Chinese Language is poor learning effect. Students' examination results of this subject over the years are not satisfactory, marked by high fail rate and few high scores. In addition, students are commonly characterized by poor ability of language practice, expression ability and writing. In terms of topic selection of the graduation thesis, language major students are found to choose topics in a narrow range and the topics they choose are usually improper. In addition, in thesis writing, they have poor ability to organize sentences, phrases and paragraphs, and wrong words, wrong statements and other mistakes are often found in their theses. Therefore, in addition to preparing for the course, "preparing for students" is also very important. This will be analyzed specifically from two aspects:

A. Different Teaching Emphases for Different Majors

Teachers shall first know about the majors of students they give lessons to. For different majors, even if the same course, teachers should have different emphases in teaching contents and methods. Contemporary Chinese Language is not only a basic course for Chinese majors, but also an optional course for other majors, and obviously, the requirements for lessons to them are different. Here taking Chinese Language and Literature and International Education of Chinese Language for example, Contemporary Chinese Language is the basic course of both the two majors, so the two majors are consistent in teaching arrangement, teaching materials adopted and other aspects, the teachers are often the same, and accordingly, the teaching content, procedure and progress are also unified in the whole. However in fact, different majors have different training objectives, and students of different majors have different learning needs in the same course. Therefore, it is necessary to construct different teaching models according to different professional standards to meet the needs of students and of major development. For example, in addition to the common and basic theoretical knowledge of Chinese language, students of different majors should be taught in different teaching modes. The Contemporary Chinese Language curriculum for Chinese Language and Literature majors should focus more on students' writing expression and the practical application of rhetoric and grammar; for International Education of Chinese Language, in addition to teaching the basic knowledge of Contemporary Chinese Language, teachers may apply the second language acquisition theory to classroom instruction, and analyze some common errors in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and other aspects of Chinese language in Teach Chinese As Foreign Language (TCFL) specific to the employment orientation (TCFL teacher) of most students of this major, so

that students can master and learn how to teach ontological knowledge of Chinese language to future foreign students even if they are not in contact with foreign learners, so as to build a necessary pedagogical grammar system for students.

*B. Adjusting the Teaching Contents Appropriately
According to Student' Level of Learning*

At present, most colleges and universities that offer Contemporary Chinese Language courses use the textbook "Contemporary Chinese Language" by Hang Borong and Liao Xudong. The target students are mostly students of private undergraduate colleges. For this course, most of the students are characterized by weak learning ability and acceptance ability. Such students perform poor in concepts and theories that need to be thought about and understood; in addition, the students also show weak self-discipline, who often get distracted and play with mobile phone in class; it is undeniable that these phenomena are also results caused by the objective factors. In the era with well-developed Internet, diversified and interesting fragmented information is everywhere attracting students' attention, so it is really difficult for students to keep their attention on teachers and classroom contents for a long time; besides, compared with literature courses, Contemporary Chinese Language courses are more boring and dull, which are greatly detached from students' linguistic reality, and it is difficult to see any real effect in the short term in improving students' language performance. Therefore, teachers should consider students' language ability and relevant aspects, and give lessons using examples students are familiar with to explore the interestingness of Chinese language with their own feeling and connect the teaching with real language context, so as to help students improve their learning effect as much as possible.

IV. PREPARING METHODS

As one of the "three teachings" (teaching materials, teaching, teaching method), teaching method often trigger people's discussion. There are a large variety of different teaching methods. Mr. Lu Shuxiang once said, "If teaching method is a key, and then its name is 'flexible'". The word "flexible" gets the point of teaching method. No matter what kind of teaching method is used, it must be in line with the actual situation of students. By summarizing the teaching of Contemporary Chinese Language in recent years, the author found that "presenting briefly and succinctly, and leading students to more practice" is the method mostly used in class. Although it is not a new method, it is practical for this course. Students are relatively passive in the study of theoretical knowledge, so teachers can integrate theoretical knowledge into specific language facts and let students experience and feel by themselves so as to understand and accept the theory. For example, one of the important purposes of learning Contemporary Chinese Language is to learn the common language of modern Han people (mandarin). Nearly half of the students of Xi'an Fanyi University come from dialect areas, so there are some problems in their pronunciation of mandarin, which is the problem to be solved in the phonetics section of Contemporary Chinese Language. However, there

are many theoretical concepts in the phonetics section. If teachers explain all kinds of professional terms at the beginning, it will inevitably lead to students' fear of difficulties. Therefore, when teaching phonetics section of Contemporary Chinese Language, teachers often ask students to pronounce by themselves to feel the difference between their dialects and mandarin phonetically, and then put forward questions, such as why the distinction between the alveolar nasal and the velar nasal in your dialect is not obvious, and why do you have trouble pronouncing them? Then, teachers can lead students to learn phonetics knowledge with curiosity. For instance, when teaching consonant, teachers will not start with asking students to learn the concepts of the terms including "place of articulation", "manner of articulation", "plosive" and "fricative", but ask them to experience and feel the pronunciation sound by sound based on students' pinyin knowledge, and ask them to state the place of articulation and the method of articulation of each sound according to their experience of using vocal organ, and then summarize specific characteristics of each sound. It turns out this method works well. In addition, where the class hour allows, teachers also increase the practice class of correcting students' mandarin pronunciation to allow students after learning the basic phonetic principle to actively pronounce and read, and then establish a learning mode based on mutual help of learning teams in and after class, which not only stimulates students' interest in speaking mandarin, but also achieves the teaching objective and teaching effect. In this way, students not only study the theory effectively, but also develop their ability to find and solve problems. In terms of vocabulary, grammar, etc., teachers also employ this method, combine explanation and practice, lead students to concentrate in class, actively think and explore and then find and solve problems. Compared with the previous method of "emphasizing theory and explanation", this method achieves better learning effect among students. In a word, teaching methods are necessary in teaching but there is no a fixed method, and it is important to use the appropriate method. Therefore, teachers of Contemporary Chinese Language should be able to employ different teaching methods flexibly.

V. CONCLUSION

The nature of the Contemporary Chinese Language course determines the complexity of its teaching process. In actual teaching, teachers should not only fully know about the course, but also should understand the actual situation of students and use the teaching methods easy to be accepted by students, so as to realize combination of theory with practice in the teaching process. On this basis, the teaching of Contemporary Chinese Language should also adapt to the needs of The Times, and the teachers should explore and think about different teaching modes in consideration of the teaching content, characteristics of this major, employment orientation of the students, so as to achieve the teaching objectives of the course.

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