

Research on the Method of Children's Chinese Characters Education

Lina Zhang¹, Xiaodong Pan¹, Guantong Zhou²

¹Teachers' College Shenyang University, Shenyang, China;

²Kindergarten affiliated to Shenyang No.7 Middle School, Shenyang, China.

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Abstract. This paper aims to propose an effective method to carry out Chinese character education for children through the analyzation and research with the feasibility, in order to promote the effects of Chinese character education and further promote their psychological development and inheritance of traditional Chinese culture. With the method of literature review and object of children's Chinese character teaching methods, this paper makes a further research with the application of related methods and concludes a more practical Chinese character teaching methods for children by analyzing its significance and possibility. Namely, the method of word source literacy, associative thinking, literacy sensitive period, division to integration, introduction of traditional stories, scene creation, game literacy and image literacy. It is innovative that this paper connects the former theoretical research and real teaching to conclude the Chinese character teaching methods corresponding with children's psychological development characteristics.

1. Definition Of Related Concepts

1.1 Chinese characters

Chinese characters are the writing system for recording language and the most significant auxiliary communication tool. The simplified Chinese characters used now mainly are involved in this paper[1].

1.2 Chinese character education

The purpose of Chinese character education is to know the shape, phonetic and meaning of Chinese characters and understand their bearing cultural content. In addition, it involves training good reading habits[1].

1.3 Education methods

Education methods refer to the strategic approaches to realize the education thought under the guidance of certain education ideas, which are the reflection and concrete expression of objective laws and principles of education.

2. The Significance of Teaching Children Chinese Characters

2.1 Helpful to improve children's perception abilities

The first step for children to understand and explore the world is sensory perception, which is the foundation of psychological activity development.

Children will have the shape perception soon after the birth, so the Chinese characters presented by teachers are like a picture for children. The explanation and introducing the background of Chinese characters stimulate children's sense of vision and hearing so as to promote the development of their perception abilities.

2.2 Helpful to improve children's image thinking and abstract thinking abilities

Children may gradually form their thinking about two years old, which is realized by means of action and language. It is a superior psychological activity of human being.

Chinese character is one kind of abstract symbol system with the characteristics of pictographic understanding. It is the unification of image and abstraction. Therefore, children's image and abstract thinking abilities will be improved in the process of learning Chinese characters. For example, the word of "dry" means that the fields are dry every day by the great sun.

2.3 Helpful to improve children's observation and imagination

Children's perception will form "observation" when it develops to a relatively perfect phrase. Meanwhile, their intentional imagination, reconstructive imagination and creative imagination will gradually develop under the conscious education of adults, so adults should actively guide children's observation and imagination. For example, children will adopt the method of picture to observe Chinese characters in the learning process, and they can gradually discover the structural principles and find the shadow of old Chinese characters when learning new ones.

2.4 Helpful to enrich children's knowledge experience

Besides of the specific communicative function of language, Chinese characters also shoulder to inherit culture and deliver the unique thinking methods of our predecessors. Teachers can impart knowledge experience for children through the shape explanation. For instance, the word of "rain" represents the cloud from the first one above and the below four points show the dropping rain in terms of the word shape.

2.5 Helpful to the inheritance of national culture

If we want to make traditional culture stand out in the global multi-culture, we are supposed to carry out traditional culture education with children. Teaching the stories behind words, idioms and proverbs in the context can arouse their interest in traditional culture to promote the inheritance of fine traditional Chinese culture.

3. The Possibility of Chinese Character Education for Children

It is found that Chinese characters are not difficult to understand in the eyes of children. Because the composition of Chinese characters and its unique thinking mode behind Chinese characters echo with that of children.

3.1 Children have the consciousness to actively accept Chinese character education

The experimental research, aiming at the inner literacy requirements of children made by Mr. Chen Heqin in the 1930s, showed that "Children are urgent to learn Chinese characters". He pointed out that "Indeed, Chinese characters are not mystery, and all the methods of children expressing their opinions including the picture, hand-making and pronunciation are allowed[2]". It can be seen that Chinese character education is urgently needed by children, which is one kind of activities to communicate and of great benefit to them.

3.2 The structure of Chinese characters resonates with children's thinking ways

"Three hills experiments" theory of Piaget showed that children in the pre-operational stage will regard what they see as the answer to the question. But our ancestors also made characters with themselves as the center. For example, "I", "you", "up" and "down" were made based on their own position, which is consistent with the "self-centered theory" of children. So, the thinking in the construction process of Chinese characters resonates with children's thinking.

3.3 The structure of Chinese characters resonates with children's attention

Kamel thought that there are many visual nerve units sensitive to the contour in children's visual system. So, the outline of the figure affects children in the process of attention. And more intensive contours can attract children's more sensitive attention. Chinese scholars Liang Zhixin and Li Jing found in the diversified education experiment of Chinese characters that "square graphics", the contour density of Chinese characters, are one of the most suitable patterns for children. So, the structure of Chinese characters resonates with children's attention.

4. Suggestions on Carrying Out Chinese Character Education Methods for Children

4.1 Develop Chinese character education based on the structural features of Chinese characters

Children can know the origin of Chinese characters by learning according to their structural characteristics, which can lay good foundation for the later learning of Chinese characters.

4.1.1 The method of word source literacy

It means using the method of tracing the source to explain the character shape meaning of current Chinese characters, which is the traditional method of Chinese character education. *Characters Inspiration* by Wang Jun of the Qing dynasty advocated the word source literacy to reduce the phenomenon of wrongly remembering words. And teachers are supposed to explain the respective meaning of each part in the character to children, which requires that teachers must master the correct meaning of Chinese characters. For example, the “ri” that can be interpreted as the sun, is written as ☉ on oracle bone inscriptions. Adding a symbol 一 in the circle ○ of celestial body represents the luminous features of an object. And its original meaning of creating the character is the celestial body that moves and glows in space; And because the sun shines in the daytime^[3].

4.1.2 The method of associative thinking

“My conclusion is owing to the logistics of creating Chinese characters. Such characters will make users use ‘association’ that is beyond the pronunciation and increases the ‘shape’ than other characters. Chinese characters have been taking this advantage all the time,” referred in the *Solving the Puzzle of Chinese Characters* written by An Zijie. Each character is an individual as well as a combination of graphics, pronunciations, symbols and semantics^[4]. The characteristics of Chinese characters are intuitive and vivid. For instance, the word “crooked” is composed of “not” and “erect”; and the word “rest” is connected by “people” and “wood”, which means that people rely on the wood to have a rest.

4.2 Develop Chinese character education according to children’s cognitive characteristics

The social psychologist Bandura pointed out that human beings have the strong ability to use symbolic symbols, a “special” ability that has been shown since they were young. So, it is particularly important whether to carry out children’s Chinese character education according to their psychological development characteristics.

4.2.1 The method of literacy sensitive period

Montessori believed that children use schemata to remember before the age of three, and they remember “figures” on the contours. Children will begin to gradually distinguish the differences between words and understand the strokes, structures and meanings of Chinese characters with the development of image thinking after three years old. Then the psychological development of children at four or five years old has developed to the sensitive period of image intuition, also called “literacy sensitive period”, which can last for two or three years. Hence, more efforts should be made in the process to motivate children’s interest in Chinese characters so as to strengthen their reading and interpersonal communication interest.

4.2.2 The method of division to integration

This method means connecting two simple Chinese characters to form a new one^[5]. It can be adopted after children have accumulated several simple Chinese characters. For example, the “nan” (a gender) can be divided into “tian” and “li”, and “li” (equal to inside) is composed of “tian” and “tu”, and “zao” is formed by “ri” and “shi”. In this teaching method, teachers can also guide children to divide the new Chinese character into those ones they know. For instance, “mie” (put out), formed by “yi” that is above and “huo” that is below, represents the fire is put out by “yi”. Children’s abilities of observation and imagination can be exercised and strengthened by such method.

4.3 Create the Chinese character education through the situation

It is crucial to create an environment suitable for children to accept the Chinese character education in the process of carrying out the Chinese character education for children.

4.3.1 The method of stories introduction

In the field of Chinese character education, stories introduction is the first step to arouse children’s interest in learning. For example, small stories can be introduced when teachers teach the idiom of “The pestle becomes a needle” to extend that no matter what you do, you will surely succeed as long as you have perseverance. Children will feel easier to understand the meaning of these four words and raise learning interest in Chinese characters through the story.

4.3.2 The method of situational presentation

Psychologist Treicher found that, for those learners accepting new things, they can remember more than a half when they simultaneously experience with eyes and ears, while those who experience by

themselves can remember things more than eight-tenths^[6]. Therefore, education effect can be improved by creating a situation to change the environment of children in the process of the Chinese character education. For example, when children learn what Mencius' mother did in order to let him study hard, teachers can make children respectively play the role of Mencius, his mother, the neighbor and his child so as to help children understand the extending meaning of every character.

4.4 Carry out Chinese character education in an interesting way

Interesting teaching can improve children's interest in learning Chinese characters and deepen their cognition and understanding with Chinese characters.

4.4.1 The method of game literacy

Mr. Chen Heqin said that from the aspect of teaching, children like games very much. We can use the teaching method of game. For example, pre-school students can learn Chinese characters by means of the game of "greeting one by one". In this game, teachers can published the characters on the cards in the game and read them loudly. In addition, teachers will introduce themselves with the tongue of children. 'I am the child of *. Nice to meet you.' And then children are require to pick out which one is proper and eventually let children read this word.

4.4.2 The method of image literacy

This method combines with multi-media and gives children an object they are familiar with. For instance,



Fig. 1 The vivid expression of the word of "cao" (grass)

In the picture above, the two clouds in nature constitute "cao", the sun compared with "ri", and grass also seen as "ten". By this way, we can connect three common things together and equip them with corresponding animations and text explanations to facilitate children's memory.

5. Conclusion

Chinese is the native language of the Chinese nation and Chinese characters belong to the Chinese nation. Scientific Chinese character education is of positive significance to children's physical and mental development as well as the inheritance of traditional Chinese culture. This paper, with the method of literature review to study the related teaching methods, proposes the following suitable Chinese character education methods for children, word source literacy, associative thinking, literacy sensitive period, division to integration, introduction of traditional stories, scene creation, game literacy and image literacy. This paper only researches the methods of Children's Chinese character education from the prospect of theory. The research results lack the exploration and research of practice and the discussion with the related education methods are not deep enough.

6. References

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