

Analysis of the Cultural Connotation of Chinese Characters from a Cross-Cultural Perspective and Its External Communication and Teaching



Xiaolin Xue ^{*,1}

¹Lanzhou Petrochemical University of Vocational Technology, China

Abstract: As a treasure of Chinese civilization, Chinese characters have had a wide impact worldwide due to their unique form and profound connotation. However, with the advancement of cultural globalization and the increasing trend of diversification, it has become an important task to overcome cultural barriers and showcase the unique charm of Chinese character culture to the world. This article will deeply analyze the meaning of Chinese character culture from a cross-cultural perspective, and propose several suggestions for its external dissemination and teaching strategies, to make positive contributions to promoting the internationalization process of Chinese character culture.

Keywords: cross-cultural perspective; the cultural connotation of Chinese characters; external dissemination; teaching strategies

Introduction

Chinese characters, as an important component of China's traditional culture, carry rich cultural connotations. With the development of globalization and the increasing frequency of cross-cultural exchanges, more and more people have developed a strong interest in Chinese character culture. Therefore, from a cross-cultural perspective, exploring the meaning of Chinese character culture and its ways of external dissemination and teaching has become the focus of this study.

1. An Analysis of the Cultural Connotation of Chinese Characters from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

Chinese character culture is an important component of Chinese civilization, with profound historical origins and rich connotations. From a cross-cultural perspective, one can better understand the unique charm of Chinese character culture and its similarities and differences with other cultures. Firstly, the historical origin of Chinese character culture can be traced back to the period of oracle bone inscriptions over 3000 years ago (Cai, 2022). Chinese characters, as a unique form of ideographic

writing, not only record the history, culture, and ideas of the Chinese nation but also add a unique symbol system to the world's cultural treasure trove. At the same time, the development of Chinese character culture has also been influenced and integrated by surrounding cultures, such as Indian culture and Arab culture, which have had an impact on Chinese character culture. Secondly, the connotation and extension of Chinese character culture are very rich. The strokes, structure, and rhyme of Chinese characters all contain profound cultural connotations, such as the character "人" representing humanity, human nature, and human sentiment; The word "道" representing morality, philosophy, culture, etc. In addition, Chinese character culture also includes various aspects of traditional Chinese culture, such as Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhist culture, etc. These ideas have endowed Chinese character culture with deeper connotations and extensions. Finally, there are similarities and differences between Chinese character culture and other cultures. In East Asia, Chinese character culture has had a profound impact on the culture of countries such as South Korea and Japan, forming a unique East Asian cultural circle. In the West, Chinese character culture has also received increasing attention and research, such as traditional Chinese painting, calligraphy, poetry, etc., which

Corresponding Author: Xiaolin Xue

Lanzhou Petrochemical University of Vocational Technology, China

Email: 754104691@qq.com

©The Author(s) 2023. Published by BONI FUTURE DIGITAL PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED This is an open access article under the CC BY

License(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

have been widely recognized and appreciated in the field of Western culture. However, due to the differences and barriers between different cultures, cross-cultural communication and exchange also face many challenges.

2. From a Cross-Cultural Perspective, the External Dissemination of Chinese Character Culture

2.1. The influence of Chinese characters worldwide

Chinese characters are a unique form of pictographic writing with rich cultural connotations and historical origins. With the advancement of globalization, Chinese characters, as an important component of China's traditional culture, are gradually moving towards the world and exerting widespread influence on a global scale. On the one hand, Chinese characters have a wide influence in the Asian region. As the main language in the East Asian cultural circle, Chinese characters are not only widely used in countries such as Japan and South Korea, but also an important language in many countries in Southeast Asia (Shao, 2018). In Japan, Chinese characters are known as "Kanji" and play a very important role in Japanese culture. They are not only used for writing, but also in various fields such as naming, art, and architecture. In South Korea, Chinese characters are also one of the official languages. Although there are fewer Chinese characters used in modern Korea, the level of understanding and learning of Chinese characters among Koreans is still very high. On the other hand, with the improvement of China's international status, the influence of Chinese characters on a global scale is also increasing. More and more foreigners are starting to learn Chinese characters, hoping to better understand Chinese culture. On a global scale, Chinese characters have become a popular learning object, and schools in various countries have also started offering Chinese language courses to cultivate students' interest and understanding of Chinese character culture. In addition, Chinese characters have also had a wide influence in the fields of art and culture. Many international artists have created many

artistic works with Chinese characteristics by learning Chinese characters, and in fields such as music, film, and literature, Chinese characters are often used as tools to express and disseminate cultural connotations. It can be seen that Chinese characters have had a wide influence worldwide, playing an important role in promoting global cultural diversity and cross-cultural communication.

2.2. Challenges and opportunities in the external communication of Chinese characters

From a cross-cultural perspective, the external dissemination of Chinese characters faces some challenges. Among them, the complexity and difficulty of learning Chinese characters are one of the main challenges. Chinese characters, as a form of pictographic writing, each character has a unique shape and structure, requiring memorization of a large number of glyphs and stroke sequences. For non-native Chinese language learners, learning Chinese characters requires more time and effort, which may reduce their interest and motivation, thereby limiting the scope and influence of Chinese character dissemination to the outside world. At the same time, Chinese characters carry rich historical, cultural, and philosophical ideas, including many concepts and symbols related to China's specific cultural and social background. For learners from non-Chinese cultural backgrounds, understanding and applying these cultural connotations can pose certain difficulties. For example, learners need to understand the symbolic meaning of Chinese characters, allusions, and stories, as well as concepts related to traditional Chinese culture and values. This cultural difference can lead to misunderstandings or inaccuracies in learners' understanding and application of Chinese characters, thereby affecting their correct understanding and application of Chinese characters.

However, from a cross-cultural perspective, there are also many opportunities for the external dissemination of Chinese characters, which can promote their widespread dissemination. Chinese characters, as a unique writing system, have rich historical and cultural connotations. By learning Chinese characters, learners can gain a deeper

understanding of traditional Chinese values, philosophical ideas, literature, and art, and thus deepen their understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture. This cultural exchange not only helps to promote mutual respect and understanding among different cultures, but also enriches people's perspectives, broadens their ways of thinking, and promotes global cultural diversity and exchange. With China's rise on the global stage and rapid economic development, Chinese characters, as a representative symbol and cultural symbol of China, are increasingly receiving attention and interest from all over the world. This provides a huge opportunity for the external dissemination of Chinese characters. By learning and applying Chinese characters, learners can better participate in business, cultural, and academic exchanges related to China, enhancing their competitiveness and international perspective. In addition, with the development of information technology and the popularization of the Internet, the channels and methods for the external dissemination of Chinese characters have been greatly expanded (Liu et al., 2023). Through online platforms, social media, and mobile applications, learners can more conveniently access Chinese character learning resources and communicate with other learners. At the same time, the digital processing and intelligent application of Chinese characters also provide learners with more learning tools and methods (He et al., 2023), such as online Chinese character courses and Chinese character input methods. The application of these new technologies not only improves learning efficiency but also provides a broader platform and audience for the external dissemination of Chinese characters.

3. Teaching Strategies for Foreign Chinese Character Culture from a Cross-Cultural Perspective

3.1. Introduction to cultural background and historical origins

From a cross-cultural perspective, it is important to introduce cultural background and historical origins in the teaching strategy of Chinese character culture to foreign students. By explaining the origin, development, and evolution of Chinese characters, students can better understand the deep meaning and cultural background of Chinese characters (Li, 2021),

thereby enhancing their interest and identification with Chinese characters, and improving their language and cross-cultural communication skills while applying Chinese characters. To help students better understand the unique structure and expression of Chinese characters, it is necessary to introduce the principles of Chinese character construction. The principles of pictographic, referential, semantic, and phonographic construction of Chinese characters are the foundation for understanding Chinese characters. By comparing the forms of Chinese characters in different historical periods, students can understand the evolution process of Chinese characters and enhance their understanding and cognition of Chinese characters. For example, by comparing the differences between ancient and modern Chinese characters, students can gain a deeper understanding of the changes and development of Chinese characters. In addition, introducing the close connection between Chinese characters and Chinese culture is also an important part of the teaching process. Chinese characters are an important component of China's traditional culture, containing rich cultural connotations and values. During the teaching process, teachers can guide students to understand the cultural background and historical significance of Chinese characters by explaining allusions, idioms, and poems related to Chinese characters (Ma & Xia, 2021). For example, introducing the evolution and pictographic meaning of the word "人" can guide students to think about the essence and values of human beings. Of course, introducing the use of Chinese characters in other East Asian countries is also an important aspect of the teaching process. Chinese characters, as a form of pictographic writing, are also widely used outside of China. For example, Japanese kanji (i.e. "Kanji" or "Kanagana Kanji"), Korean kanji (i.e. "Kanji"), etc. By comparing the application and understanding of Chinese characters in different countries, students can better understand the diversity and cross-cultural characteristics of Chinese characters.

3.2. Pay attention to the combination of form, sound, and meaning of Chinese characters

In the cross-cultural perspective of teaching Chinese characters to foreign students, a teaching method that emphasizes the combination of form, sound, and meaning of Chinese characters can help students better understand and apply Chinese characters, thereby improving their ability to apply Chinese characters and cross-cultural communication. Teachers can guide students to observe and analyze the appearance of different Chinese characters by showcasing their structural and morphological characteristics. For example, introduce the principles of character construction for pictographs, reference characters, and ideographic characters to help students understand the evolution and changes in the form of Chinese characters. At the same time, teaching phonics systems and tone rules can help students accurately pronounce Chinese characters. By comparing the pronunciation similarities of different Chinese characters, it can deepen their understanding of Chinese syllables. In addition, explaining the basic meaning and etymology of Chinese characters can help students understand the connotations and semantics of Chinese characters. For example, by explaining the pictographic, referential, and cognitive meanings of Chinese characters, students can understand the etymology and meaning extension of Chinese characters. In addition, exploring the sound and meaning relationship of Chinese characters is also an important link. Through the teaching of example words and phrases, students can be guided to discover the sound and meaning patterns and changes in Chinese characters. For example, by analyzing the composition of some commonly used vocabulary, students can understand the syllable combinations and word meanings of Chinese characters; Design various scenarios and activities, such as organizing phonics competitions, word relay games, etc., to help students improve their understanding and application ability of Chinese characters in competition and cooperation; Utilize multimedia technologies such as images, videos, and audio to more intuitively display the characteristics and patterns of Chinese characters to students, allowing them to understand the form,

pronunciation, and meaning of Chinese characters (Jiang, 2023). This not only improves students' understanding and application abilities of Chinese characters but also cultivates their interest and love for Chinese character culture.

3.3. Organize various experiential and practical activities

Organizing various experiential and practical activities from a cross-cultural perspective is one of the effective strategies for teaching Chinese character culture to foreign students. These activities can help students better understand and apply Chinese characters, and improve their ability to learn Chinese characters. In this regard, teachers can organize students to participate in Chinese character calligraphy experience activities and invite professional calligraphy teachers to guide students in the correct writing posture and skills. By writing Chinese characters, students can gain a deeper understanding of their structure and form, while cultivating their aesthetic awareness and artistic creativity; Students can be organized to have group discussions or personal speeches, allowing them to study and share the origin, evolution, and stories related to Chinese culture of Chinese characters. Through sharing and communication, students can gain a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural connotations of Chinese characters, and expand their horizons and ways of thinking. This helps to enhance their cross-cultural communication skills; You can design various interesting Chinese character games and competitions, such as Chinese phonics competitions, word relay games, or Chinese character blank-filling challenges. These activities can help students consolidate the phonics and meaning of Chinese characters, and improve their memory and application abilities. Meanwhile, through competition and cooperation, students can learn and communicate with each other, expanding their horizons and ways of thinking; Students can be organized to participate in on-site inspections and experiential activities related to Chinese character culture. Visiting calligraphy exhibitions, traditional cultural villages, or historical sites can help students

more intuitively experience and understand the charm of Chinese character culture, and enhance their sense of identification and interest in Chinese character culture through personal experience and observation; Students can also be organized to participate in creative activities such as designing Chinese character logos, posters, and book covers, allowing them to apply the knowledge of the form, sound, and meaning of Chinese characters in practice. Through creation and design, students can improve their understanding and application of Chinese characters, while cultivating their artistic expression and innovative thinking (Wen, 2020). These activities not only enhance students' learning motivation and interest but also cultivate their creativity and collaborative spirit.

Summary

In summary, in cross-cultural communication, a deep understanding of the connotation of Chinese character culture is of great significance for promoting mutual understanding and respect between different cultures. Through external dissemination, the values and ways of thinking of Chinese character culture can be transmitted to people around the world, promoting the exchange and integration of cultural diversity. Meanwhile, in the teaching of Chinese characters, teachers should also focus on cultivating students' cultural cognition, adopting diverse teaching strategies and methods to help them better understand and apply Chinese characters. Through these efforts, not only can we better inherit and promote Chinese character culture, but we can also promote further communication and dissemination of Chinese character culture worldwide.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that she has no conflicts of interest to this work.

References

- Cai, H. (2022). A study on the cultural connotation of Chinese character forms. *Writers' World*, 2022(21), 119–121.
- Shao, X. (2018). Cross cultural communication of Chinese characters. *Journal of Harbin Vocational and Technical College*, 2018(05), 170–172.
- Liu, Z., Chen, Y., & Chu, Z. (2023). Research on the communication of new media and Chinese character culture. *Chinese Character Culture*, 2023(07), 1–3.
- He, Z., Qin, J., & Han, L. (2023). Analysis of the transmission channels of Chinese character source culture in the internet era. *Comparative Study of Cultural Innovation*, 7(17), 62–67.
- Li, Y. (2021). Research on teaching Chinese character culture as a foreign language. *Journal of Jilin Provincial Institute of Education*, 37(05), 159–162.
- Ma, G., & Xia, G. (2021). Exploring the new path of Chinese character teaching. *Chinese Character Culture*, 2021(16), 34–36.
- Jiang, H. (2023). Modern media activates traditional Chinese character culture transmission genes. *Cultural Industry*, 2023(16), 135–137.
- Wen, X. (2020). Teaching Chinese as a foreign language: Using Chinese characters as a carrier to spread Chinese culture. *Literature and Education Materials*, 2020(10), 40–42.

How to Cite: Xue, X. (2023). Analysis of the cultural connotation of Chinese characters from a cross-cultural perspective and its external communication and teaching. *Journal of Global Humanities and Social Sciences*, 04(06), 299-303. <https://doi.org/10.61360/BoniGHSS232015340607>