



The Research on the Cultivation Mode of Teachers Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages

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Abstract

The present major of Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (TCSOL) take on a vigorous trend of development. However, there are also some some deficiencies in the cultivation of teachers. For example, the training of TCSOL didn't match with the employment; students didn't get enough teaching practice; the cultivation of overseas Chinese teachers didn't have strong pertinence; Confucius institutes and overseas Chinese teaching institutes didn't play enough part in the cultivation of teachers. In this regard, we need to innovate the training mode of TCSOL teachers from the following aspects: 1. Strengthen the running of schools, and transform the Chinese teaching institutes for international students into school-run enterprises. 2. Lay down complete rules for teaching practice and strictly enforce them. 3. Adopt the way of training based on the order to meet the quality and quantity requirement for overseas Chinese teachers. 4. Give full play to the role of Confucius institutes and overseas Chinese teaching institutes in teacher training. At last, we also need to further elaborate the teaching levels of *the standard for TCSOL teachers*, pay more attention on the research of TCSOL teachers' employment and major development, and strengthen the cultivation of local Chinese teachers.

Key words: TCSOL; Teacher training; Mode research

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INTRODUCTION

The present arrangements for the cultivation of TCSOL teachers suggest that there should be enough number of teachers. However, the present situation indicates that there is a serious lack of teachers no matter at home or abroad. This situation is greatly correlated with the deficiencies in TCSOL teachers' training.

The Disjunction Between the Training and the Employment of TCSOL Teachers

The main purpose for TCSOL major is to cultivate teachers engaged in teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages. But more and more research results showed that few students graduated in TCSOL chose to work in the teaching field of Chinese as a second language. Even in Beijing Language and Culture University where the major TCSOL was first set up, the ratio of graduate who entered into the teaching filed of Chinese as a second language was also very low. Judging from the employment situation of undergraduate graduates of Chinese as a Foreign Language, this major has already lost the function of providing the teachers resource for the career of teaching Chinese as a foreign language, and gone against the original intention of setting up this major.

Overlook of the Cultivation of Students' Teaching Ability

Firstly, from the perspective of the undergraduate major development of TCSOL, the undergraduate students can hardly enter the field of TCSOL, on the other hand, the number of the universities opening TCSOL major has been growing. Many of those universities neither have experience in the Chinese education of international students, nor can they find the training base which deals with the education of TCSOL and provide internship opportunities for their students. As a result, students didn't practice any teaching abilities at all after four-years undergraduate life, and they even didn't get any

experience in observing the class where Chinese is taught as a second language.

Besides, the development of master of Teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages (MTC SOL) takes on similar trend. MTC SOL is established for satisfying the requirement of overseas Chinese teachers resource, thus this major should cultivate applied talents with the ability of teaching Chinese overseas. However, many universities that has opened this major finish all the teaching at home, and the curriculum and training mode resemble the cultivation of academic master students following the direction of teaching Chinese as a foreign language.

Weak Pertinence of the Cultivation for Overseas Chinese Teachers

The target of current MTC SOL is to train overseas Chinese teachers with universality, and cultivate the graduates who are competent for teaching Chinese around the world. But this target has a weak pertinence, can hardly be realized. As a matter of fact, many schools in the end cultivate teachers who can only teach Chinese in English-speaking countries. The education of TCSOL is widespread around the world. The characteristics of teaching objects, teaching environment, teaching objectives and teaching policies, etc are different among different countries. If the MTC SOL can set up different training direction for different countries, there is no doubt that those graduates can better qualify the teaching job in the country of his/her major direction. However, there is no such universities set up specific MTC SOL cultivation direction for certain countries existing at home.

Confucius Institutes and Overseas Chinese Teaching Institutes are Under Work in Teacher Training

Confucius institutes are located at the country where the teaching objects come from, which have advantage in further investigating the teachers' situation of this country. If the Confucius institutes can extend the cultivation of teachers, the training priorities and requirements can be better mastered. What's more, it also provide great convenience for the local teachers in service to take part in the training. However, judging from the present situation, Confucius institutes didn't play enough role in teachers training. They still focused on the diversified Chinese learning demand of local community, didn't take any major initiatives in the cultivation of TCSOL teachers.

Meanwhile, in order to improve the quality of local Chinese teachers, some countries founded Chinese teaching institutes and teachers organization like *National Association of Chinese Teachers in Primary and Middle Schools in America*, *Association of Chinese Teachers in France*, *Chinese Teachers Association in Singapore*, etc. Sometimes, some training courses for Chinese teachers are also extended. They hope China can provide some help to improve the quality of training. However, China,

at present, has little cooperation with those institutes. Hence, the supportive strength is not strong enough.

The primary and secondary teachers in most countries belong to civil service establishment, and they must pass the examinations conducted by the local education administration, and training assessment conducted by the local teaching institutes before they formally enter teacher establishment. Thus if China wants to assist other countries replenish Chinese teachers, China must have a positive negotiation with the local education administration and try to form an official cooperation, as well as joint training with local teaching institutes. At present, this kind of cooperation is still short of construction, which mainly embodied in the following two aspects: firstly, this cooperation only formed with several countries like *British Language Assistant Programme*, which is a cooperation project between Hanban, a Chinese public institution affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education, and British Council; secondly, this cooperation often adopted a mechanism of direct output, as many teachers can adapt to the local class teaching and usually result in a bad teaching effect. That directly leads to the further development of this cooperation. Therefore, the only effective way to make up this shortage of teachers is what we mentioned before: form a cooperation mechanism with the universities at home and cultivate TCSOL teachers by adopting the mode of joint training.

1. THE INNOVATION OF THE CULTIVATION MODE OF TCSOL TEACHERS

1.1 Enhance the Running of Schools and Change Chinese Teaching Institutes Overseas Into School-Run Enterprises

An important reason that the TCSOL undergraduates can't find a job that match with their major is that most teaching job of TCSOL is conducted by the universities at home, but it is impossible for a undergraduates to teach students in a university as limited by policy. As a result, a number of undergraduates are unemployed, but TCSOL teachers are still very tight. To solve this problem, in document (2002) 216, the office of Hanban put forward a specific request: Since undergraduates can't stay in universities as a teacher, all the universities should pay more attention to the construction of TCSOL contributed by postgraduates, and consider linking undergraduates and postgraduates; make a planned, step-by-step transition to postgraduates while improve TCSOL undergraduates major.

Therefore, the way to solve the problem of TCSOL undergraduates is to break through the present system. For example, the present teaching institutions for TCSOL in universities can be transformed into school-run enterprises which receive academic guidance and management from

universities in aspects of enrollment and teaching, but the personnel files of their teachers don't stay in university establishment. TCSOL undergraduate was the threshold in teacher recruitment, and the teaching effect will be the criteria for evaluation of their promotion and raises. Only the scientific research institution of TCSOL is kept in the universities establishment, which can provide academic guidance for the teaching institution of TCSOL. In order to make sure a scientific effective guidance, the research staff of TCSOL research institution must teach a certain amount of courses in the teaching institution of TCSOL, and their professional title appraisal will be influenced by their teaching effect.

In this way, not only the problem of TCSOL undergraduate is solved, but also the shortage of TCSOL teachers is also solved at the same time. Besides, it also guaranteed that the scientific research of TCSOL can get a good development, thus provide more accurate instruction for TCSOL teaching.

1.2 Lay Down Complete Rules for Teaching Practice and Strictly Enforce Them

As for the situation that there is a lack of attention on the exercise of teaching ability of the TCSOL teachers, it is very necessary to lay down complete rules for teaching practice and strictly enforce them. Using rules guarantees that students can get enough chance of training and practice.

For the undergraduate of TCSOL, the following practices are suggested: at the first year, students are supposed to observe the class and have primary understanding for teaching Chinese to international students; then at the second year, they are supposed to assist TCSOL teachers, help them deal with the teaching service in and out of class while they are observing the class; at the third year, they are supposed to be able to conduct a classroom teaching in the meantime of observation; at the third year, they need to start a three-month practice before graduation, and independent classroom teaching under the guidance of a tutor. During the four-year study, students are supposed to learn the theoretical knowledge while practicing teaching ability. They can find problems while observing class and practicing teaching ability, thus they can locate and make up the deficiencies, and improve the knowledge structure which they need to master as TCSOL teachers, as well as the teaching skills, so as to enhance their teaching ability.

As for the MTCSOL students, they are supposed to start teaching practice of teaching Chinese as a second language both at home and abroad. Teaching [practice at home can help them realize the characteristics and regular patterns of Chinese as a second language. On the premise of that practice, they can quickly grasp the characteristics and patterns of overseas Chinese teaching when they practice abroad and acquire certain teaching abilities. When they are practicing abroad, they can better

apply what they learned at class into practice, and quickly master the characteristics and patterns of overseas Chinese teaching by comparing the teaching at home with that abroad. Thus they can find their deficiencies in knowledge and abilities, try to improve them in the future.

1.3 Adopt the Way of Training Based on the Order to Meet the Quality and Quantity Requirement for Overseas Chinese Teachers

In the face of the shortage of TCSOL teachers both at home and abroad, training based on the order is a better way to guarantee enough number of TCSOL teachers. The training units of MTCSOL get their orders by signing an agreement with an education department in a country or an overseas Chinese institutes, then start a specific teachers training. As the number of universities opening TCSOL undergraduate major increases, the employment pressure of those undergraduates will grow higher and higher if all the training units still aim to provide TCSOL teachers at home. Facing the serious shortage of overseas Chinese teachers, some universities can dispatch Chinese teachers overseas by way of order training, which meanwhile can also guarantee those students find the job match with their major when they graduate.

Besides, the quality of those teachers dispatched overseas should be guaranteed. Those training units which are able to get overseas orders, at first, should send their experts to the country that needs to import Chinese teachers. These experts go to the Chinese classes, make full investigation of all aspects of their Chinese teaching, fully understand all aspects of knowledge and skills that a good Chinese teacher is going to master in this country. The teaching plan is made on the basis of that, which is used for cultivating good teachers suitable for that country. Then it is best to employ good Chinese teachers from the country that need to import Chinese teacher, to take part in the training of teachers. Those Chinese teachers are very familiar with the education policy, teaching objectives, teaching environment, as well as the characteristics of teaching objects, and assessment system, etc in the country. If they can share their knowledge of those aspects and their teaching experience, there is no doubt that the training units can cultivate a number of Chinese teachers that can adapt to the environment of the country, qualify for classroom teaching within shorter time.

1.4 Give Full Play to the Role of Confucius Institutes and Overseas Chinese Teaching Institutes in Teacher Training

Confucius institutes can play a role in the following two aspects:

Confucius institutes should assist and guide the training organized by the local teaching institutes. Confucius institutes should not only play a role in teaching institutes, but also become a research institutions for local Chinese teaching, so as to provide better suggestions and guidance for the training of local Chinese teachers, as well

as provide accurate information for China to make correct publicity policy of international Chinese. The teachers sent to Confucius institutes must be guaranteed with strong ability in scientific research as well as teaching. They will become experts in training local Chinese teachers, through their research and practice on the local teaching of Chinese. If there are some training units for Chinese teachers, Confucius institutes should positively assist and guide them, and try to improve their training quality.

Some Confucius institutes can also set up a team of experts to train local teachers. In this team, it is best to employ good Chinese teachers with rich experience in teaching local Chinese to teach courses like didactics, because they are most familiar with the local class, and they have gained a set of effective teaching method after so many years' exploration. It is sure that the teachers trained by them will be qualified to teach local Chinese.

Meanwhile, Confucius institutes should strengthen the cooperation with overseas Chinese teaching institutes, jointly cultivate teachers that are fit for local Chinese teaching. Comparing with other majors, it is reasonable to adopt joint training mode on overseas Chinese teachers. Students will work in the place where they learn knowledge and skills after graduation. After one or two-year study, they will know more about the situation of local place, get familiar with the local culture, and are better at communicating with the local people in local language. They are able to play their role sooner after their graduation. This is also one way to cultivate TCSOL teachers based on the characteristics of a country.

2. PROSPECTS FOR THE TRAINING OF TCSOL TEACHERS

Through several years' development, the training, cultivation and construction of TCSOL teachers have taken shape on a large scale. The group of TCSOL teachers have been playing important role in Chinese teaching and cultural communication in every corner of world including China, which is unprecedented in history.

Meanwhile, the training of TCSOL teachers also takes on the following features:

2.1 Local Chinese Teachers Form a Larger Part of TCSOL Teachers

Here overseas Chinese teachers include both volunteer Chinese teachers from China or Chinese teachers dispatched by China, and overseas local Chinese teachers. Many aspects that these two groups of teachers have encountered when they are teaching abroad become the focus of research, including the cross-culture communication, cultural adaptation and communication, institutional warrant, the ability and quality and role consciousness, etc. Just as Xiliang Cui has said, "people

who come to China learn Chinese are in the environment of target language. And we have accumulated lots of experience in terms of the teaching plan, teaching content, teaching design, teaching language, teaching method as well as teaching mode, thus have formed feasible formula; however, we will find this formula seems to be unworkable in the environment of students' body language when we go abroad. Therefore, it is natural to train Chinese teachers in non-Chinese environment." Certainly, it is also related to the expanding demand of overseas Chinese teachers.

2.2 A More Specialized Requirement for the Ability of TCSOL Teachers

Nowadays, TCSOL teachers are supposed to not only master solid theoretical knowledge, but also excellent practical ability. They should have higher state of cross-cultural consciousness and communicative abilities. Besides, they should have good teaching image, such as, they have good command of teacher language, wear suitable outfit, and have good teaching manners, etc.

2.3 More and More Focus on the Professional Development of Individual Teachers

Nowadays, Researchers of new era start to put their focus on the growth and development of individual teachers. For a long time, the common way to train teachers is to convey various theoretical knowledge, teaching methods and teaching techniques to them. There is very little consideration on the effect of social background, working environment, etc on their teaching idea and teaching practice. In the research field of Chinese teachers, training has went through a transition from outside-centered to inside-centered. In terms of teachers' development stages, this transition can be regarded as a transition from attaching importance to preservice training or in-service training to the further self-development after entering the post. Meanwhile, this also suggests that there are a change of concept from quantity priority to quality priority for TCSOL teachers.

In future, we still need to do the following jobs in aspects of training TCSOL teachers:

Firstly, the teaching levels of *the standard for TCSOL teachers* needs to be further elaborated. The present standard for TCSOL teachers has listed detailed requirement for the knowledge and abilities of teachers, but vertically, the training standards and ability rating need a further scientific specification. In this way we can have clearer basis and goals in the selection, training, and development of volunteers and teachers. Secondly, we needs to pay more attention to the development of TCSOL teachers' profession and major. The construction of teachers has always been the first issue that both our country and the researchers have been keeping an eye on. Hence, our country and the researchers focus on whole group of teachers. Recently, more and more scholars

catch sight of the development of teachers' profession and major, start to become interested in the aspects relating to those, such as teachers' feeling, mind, qualities, abilities, development paths, etc. However, because TCSOL teachers are facing complicated teaching objects, teaching environment, and influencing factors, their teaching motivation, job pressure, feeling and aims relating to teaching needs further exploration and discussion. Thirdly, the cultivation for local Chinese teachers should be strengthened. As the overseas Chinese learner increases, the number of volunteers and Chinese teachers dispatched by China is still limited, and far away from satisfying the demand of overseas Chinese teachers. What's more, local teachers can better activate learners learning motivation and efficiency. Therefore, how to scientifically mobilize, train, and cultivate the local Chinese teachers overseas, and improve their qualities and abilities becomes an urgent problem in front of the present cause of TCSOL education

CONCLUSION

The cultivation of TCSOL teachers is a research on "human", which involves the cognition, feeling and behaviors and teachers, mainly including the characteristics of teachers' personality and psychology, their qualities, teaching skills, teaching consciousness, teaching standard, professional development, management systems, etc. The present essay reviewed the past research, and put forward some points that need to be improved, in hope of providing some help for the cultivation of TCSOL teachers in future.

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