



Intercultural Communication Competence Enrichment Through Chinese Food Culture in Chinese as a Foreign Language Teaching

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Abstract

Intercultural communication competence (ICC) is an essential component of language learning; naturally, learning Chinese culture is inseparable from the Chinese learning process. Chinese culture is extensive and profound, as scholars have increasingly paid attention to its role in Chinese teaching. There are several types of Chinese culture, among which food culture is a significant feature: “Fashion is in Europe, living is in America, but the food is in China” (Lin, 2000). Indeed, Chinese food culture has developed since ancient times, is rooted in daily life, and is a cultural content that learners love to hear and learn. This article uses “intercultural communicative competence”, and “Chinese food culture” as the keywords, based on Byram's ICC model. Through the method of content analysis, research from five articles and related Chinese books were used to find out about the Chinese food culture suitable for teaching in CFL classrooms. Aims to integrate food culture into Chinese as a foreign language teaching (CFLT) to help teachers better conduct classroom teaching and put forward the corresponding teaching methods and suggestions for Chinese food culture teaching. The article also discusses the food culture background and the Chinese expressions derived from such culture with a teaching perspective. In this sense, the status of cultural teaching in language teaching cannot be ignored, and CFLT must be conducted from a cross-cultural perspective. Undoubtedly, this article puts forward higher requirements for the teachers; as it involves food culture, it hopes to enlighten future teaching practices.

Introduction

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) involves the knowledge of others, the knowledge of self, the skills to interpret and relate, the skills to discover or interact, the appreciation of others' values, beliefs, and behaviors, and relativization of oneself (Byram, 1997). “The study of [ICC] is increasingly important in a world

that is characterized by intercultural encounters due to population migration, travel, technology development, and cyber-communication” (Witteborn, 2003). Studies on intercultural language and culture pedagogy (e.g., Corbett, 2003) believe that language learning aims not merely to develop excellent linguistic skills or amass cultural information but also to become an

“intercultural speaker” who can mediate among cultures and viewpoints.

Food is inseparable to people's lives, especially among the Chinese. Maqian Si stated in Shi Ji History Recorded that “民以食为天(min yǐ shí wéi tiān),” which means food is the paramount necessity of the people. Indeed, food is the primary need of people in daily life, as Chinese people like to research eating very much.

Furthermore, the Chinese believe that eating can meet physical needs and provide harmony and intimacy to family and interpersonal relationships. Therefore, food culture is indispensable to Chinese traditional culture. The famous French sinologist Jacques Gernet said: “There is no doubt that in this sphere China has shown a greater inventiveness than any other civilization.” Truly, the Chinese are one of those that pay significant attention to food and eating. Throughout history, Chinese food culture has been formed since ancient times. It is deeply rooted in Chinese traditional culture and has become vital in Chinese life.

Objectives

This article aims to overview the intercultural concepts and framework. Furthermore, it integrates food culture into Chinese as a Foreign Language Teaching (CFLT).

Research Methodology

The research was based on two keywords, “intercultural communicative competence”, and “Chinese food culture”. Regarding the content about ICC, the author conduct a keyword search on “Google Scholar” with “intercultural communicative competence”, sort the English-language articles by relevance, and screened out the top 5 articles for research. In order to better realize the conversion process of CFL learners from “food culture” to “language”, in the “Chinese food culture” section, the author selected the content related to food culture from two Chinese books to research.

As for the data collection process. First, the author obtained 5 articles (Chun, 2011; Alptekin, 2002; Cetinavci, 2012; Young & Sachdev, 2011; Griffiths, 2011) related to ICC through keyword search on Google Scholar and sorted by relevance. By sorting and analyzing the content of these articles, the author selected the words that appeared more frequently in the articles. Selection of the content was decided based on the consistent with this article for research and analysis. Regarding “Chinese food culture”, the author mainly

summarized it through research and books related to Chinese food culture.

Result

For the convenience of statistics, the 5 articles are numbered 1-5. Then used the find function in Microsoft Word to count the number of words with high frequency in the article and received the results shown in Figure 1.

Then the author filtered out words that must be used in the connecting part of the article (prepositions, phrases, etc.). The statistical results showed that the five words included: Language, Culture, Intercultural, Foreign, and Byram had a high frequency of occurrence in the article. The results showed that ICC is mostly related to language and culture, but there is still a lack of research on improving ICC through food culture.

5 WORDS THAT APPEAR MORE FREQUENTLY IN THE ARTICLE

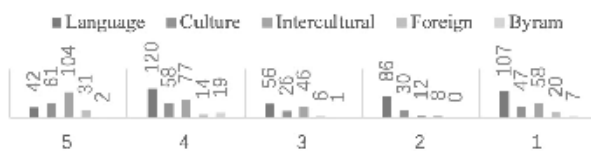


Figure 1.

Analysis and summary of data obtained from literature work on characteristics of Chinese food culture and the Chinese expressions extended from Chinese food culture. The main characteristics of Chinese food culture include five aspects (Figure 2): philosophical thinking in Chinese food culture, varied flavors for different seasons, aesthetic sense, and combining food and Chinese medicine.

Characteristics of Chinese food culture				
Philosophical thinking in Chinese food culture	Varied flavors	Different dishes for different seasons	Aesthetic sense	Combining food and Chinese medicine

Figure 2.

Chinese expressions extended from Chinese food			
"吃 (Eat) + X" structure			"喝 (Drink) + X" structure
(1) 吃 + edible words:			
(2) 吃 + non-edible words	1. 吃 + place, tool words	2. 吃 - taste words	
(3) 吃: source of life words			

Figure 3.

Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC)

● An overview of ICC

ICC is one of the leading developments in today's world. As early as the late 1980s, Belgian pragmatist Verschueren discussed: "The ability of human beings to live through the 21st century depends largely on our ability to deal with the complex situations of cross-cultural and cross-international communication." Likewise, Chinese scholar Zhang Hongling believes that "[ICC] is a requirement for training talent in the 21st century. " Zhuang Enping further declared that "[ICC] is a must-have for Chinese talent in the 21st century." Accordingly, ICC has been recognized as a vital quality for talent in the 21st century.

From the aspect of foreign language teaching, "the fundamental purpose of learning foreign languages is to achieve intercultural communication, that is to communicate with people of different backgrounds" (Liu, 2007). In this case, the nature of a second language major contains interculturality itself; its essence is dedicated to cultivating talent for intercultural communication.

● Concepts of ICC

Intercultural competence has been identified as one of the most significant and core concepts in intercultural communication. The term "intercultural communication" first appeared in the famous book *The Silent Language* by Edward T. Hall. Regarding the constituent elements of ICC, the opinions of scholars worldwide are not uniform. Early scholars believed that ICC involves language competence, sociolinguistic competence, textual competence, and communicative strategies (Canale & Swain, 1980). Meanwhile, later scholars believe that ICC comprises three levels: transcend ethnocentrism, appreciate other cultures, and perform appropriately in one or more cultural environments (Benet & Alen, 2003). According to Chinese scholars, ICC entails "to master certain cultural and communicative knowledge, be able to apply this knowledge to the actual cross-cultural communication environment, and have no fear in psychological manner, be active, positive, and enjoyable as well as to accept

challenges and show tolerance and appreciation for different cultures" (Zhang, 2007). In this sense, ICC includes explicitly three levels of abilities: attitude, knowledge, and behavior.

● Characteristics of ICC

ICC refers to the communicative competence among people of various cultural backgrounds. This kind of communication is mainly carried out through language; hence, it is also called cross-cultural language communication.

ICC typically includes the following characteristics:

1. cultural differences and communication barriers.
2. communication principles and values.
3. mother language's mindset and prejudice against different cultures.
4. the closeness and mutuality of the communication process seeking common ground; and
5. the result of communication—the mutual influence of culture.

Based on the characteristics, we can see how the fundamental feature of ICC entails discovering, recognizing, and treating the differences among the cultures.

● ICC framework

According to Byram's model of ICC shown in Figure 4, ICC is composed of communicative competence and intercultural competence, which are interrelated. Communicative competence comprises linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, and discourse competence. On the other hand, intercultural competence has five parts: skills of interpreting or relating, knowledge, critical cultural awareness, attitudes such as curiosity and openness, and skills of discovery or interaction.

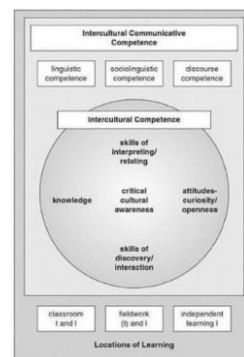


Figure 4 Byram's model of ICC. (By the researchgate.net)

The five primary parts of intercultural competence are interrelated. Byram further mentioned that “the basis of intercultural competence is in the attitudes of the person interacting with people of another culture.” In these five parts, if one of them is missing, intercultural competence will not fully develop. Regarding the CFLT process, Byram's model is highly suitable since learning a second language is not only focused on the language itself. Instead, it is composed of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Learning a second language does not merely pertain to talking about things on paper but also about improving the ICC skills and becoming an ICC talent in the future. Intercultural Approach

Intercultural origins in anthropology can be traced back to the 1950s, out of concern for national security post-World War II. The academic interest at that time was fundamentally in understanding the language and body language of specific cultural groups—that is, certain ethnic or indigenous groups. During the 1970s and 1980s, the scope of this research field became very broad, as it involved racial and interracial communication. Examples were the “interethnic” study proposed by Scollon & Scollon (1981) and the “interracial” study by Rich (1974) and Blubaugh and Pennington (1976). This shift resulted from a change in research interest—from the initial focus on establishing relationships with other cultures, including enemy cultures, to a focus on social contradictions, understanding the communication and influence among races, ethnicities, genders, and social classes or groups. The intercultural teaching approach to CFLT also enables CFLT students to understand Chinese traditional culture better and enhance their interest in Chinese learning.

Individuals from various cultural backgrounds have differences in cognition, attitudes, beliefs, and values. Thus, with increasing connections among countries, culture has become an essential topic for researchers. Relative to this, language learning and teaching is a process of interpersonal and intercultural communication. In this case, CFLT learners contact teachers and fellow learners face-to-face or through the Internet. Everyone has distinct histories, experiences, and perspectives. Therefore, as a fundamental cultural research approach in language learning, intercultural approach in the research, study, and application of knowledge of various cultures and their similarities and differences is vital.

The Relationship between Culture and Language

English anthropologist Edward Tylor defined culture in his work *Primitive Culture* as a complex concept, including knowledge, art, religion, and all abilities and habits that humans have acquired in society. In today's humanities, “globalization” and “intercultural” have become indispensable. As a vital part of culture, language is a meaningful approach to disseminate it. Through language learning, learners can quickly understand culture and humanities. Therefore, in CFLT, teachers should prioritize the teaching of Chinese knowledge and skills while emphasizing cultural competence, continuously building the cultural competence of international students, effectively integrating language and cultural teaching. In this sense, they should continue to use language teaching to infiltrate cultural teaching and promote and disseminate culture.

Characteristics of Chinese food culture

- Philosophical thinking in Chinese food culture

Several aspects of Chinese food culture can reflect traditional Chinese philosophy. The first is the Yin-Yang and the five elements. Yin-Yang represents two complementary aspects, while the five elements refer to metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. The Chinese believe that food naturally arises from the circulation, mutual promotion, and mutual restriction of the five elements.

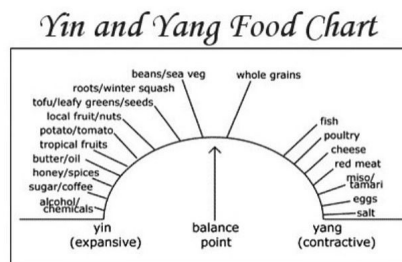


Figure 5 The Yin-Yang food chart. (By the pinterest.com)

In this case, what will become of Chinese food culture under this philosophy? According to 《周易·系辞》(Xi Ci Zhuan, Eastern Jin Dynasty), “一阴一阳之谓道 (A good combination of Yin and Yang is called Tao),” the food that grows between the sky and the land can also be divided into Yin and Yang. In food culture, Yin-Yang denotes two aspects of the human body (Figure 5), while the five elements mean that food has five categories: hot, warm, moderate, icy, and cold. Yin food nourishes the Yin to lower the fire in the body, clear heat, and stimulate a laxative effect; on the other hand, Yang

food raises the Yang by refreshing, sweating, and dispelling cold. A proper balance of Yin and Yang in the diet can make the body healthier the more one eats.

Another philosophy involving food is the unity of man and nature, which expresses that people's diet should adapt to the natural environment in which they live. For instance, people living in humid environments should eat more spicy foods because these foods can help expel moisture.

- Varied flavors

There are eight major cuisines in China: Chuan, Lu, Yue, Min, Su, Xiang, Zhe, and Hui (Figure 6). Each cuisine represents the taste of a particular place.



Figure 6 Eight major cuisines in China. (By the WordPress.com)

Chuan (Sichuan) cuisine is mainly spicy and numbing. Lu (Shandong) cuisine is famous for its fresh and tender taste. Yue (Cantonese) cuisine is delicate and smooth and with various colors. Min (Fujian) cuisine is beautiful in color and refreshing. Su (Jiangsu) cuisine is thick and light and possesses an original flavor. Zhe (Zhejiang) cuisine is like a scene — fragrant and crisp. Xiang (Hunan) cuisine is oily, while its color is highly appetizing, mainly hot and sour.

Regional differences also abound in staple food. In the south, particularly in the Yangtze River basin, rice is the main crop; thus, rice is the main staple food in the region. Meanwhile, the main northern crop is wheat, hence steamed buns and noodles are the staple food for most northerners. Seafood in coastal regions has become a unique dish; inland areas near the rivers are famous for their fresh water, while mountainous grasslands are prominent for their beef and mutton. Indeed, different landforms and climates make the Chinese cuisine rich and diverse and exhibit regional characteristics.

- Different dishes for different seasons

The Chinese change their dishes on the table as the seasons change. From food ingredients to cooking methods, different seasonings and side dishes are used depending on the season. In this case, the Chinese can eat the fresh ingredients corresponding to each season, while they can also change the food's taste according to the weather. In the cold winter, the dishes are strong and full-bodied. For instance, hotpot can make people feel warm. On the other hand, people usually have no appetite in the hot summer, hence most dishes taste light and refreshing, such as cold dishes. Generally, winter dishes are mostly stewed or boiled, while summer dishes usually have cold sauces.

- Aesthetic sense

Chinese cuisine pays significant attention to the taste and aesthetic sense of the dishes. There is a Chinese phrase explicitly used to describe food — “色香味俱全 (sè xiāng wèi jù quán).” It means that food should have a beautiful appearance, smell good, and taste delicious, which will make people want to eat it. The aesthetic sense of food can be expressed in various ways. Whether the ingredient is Chinese cabbage or carrots, it can be cut into different shapes to match the entire dish, allowing people to taste delicious food and enjoy it much (Figure 7).



Figure 7 An example of a Chinese dish. (the Weimeimei.com)

- Combining food and Chinese medicine

In the 《黄帝内经太素》 (Huang Di Nei Jing Tai Su, Shangshan Yang) of the Sui Dynasty, it was written: “空腹者食之为食物, 患者食之为药物” which means food is food only for people who are hungry, but it is medicine for those who are sick. In ancient China, medicine and food were homologous. China's traditional medicine is also world-renowned. Many traditional Chinese medicines are found in daily food, including orange, japonica rice, red bean, longan, hawthorn, ebony, walnut, almond, and honey. Thus, the curative effect is also a nutritious food that everyone typically eats (Figure 8).

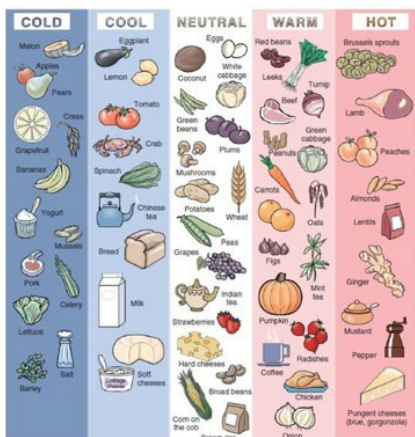


Figure 8 Energetic properties of foods. (The Shiatsu Theory & Practice, 2nd ed.)

The Chinese people believe that food provides nutrients to the body and can also cure disease. The idea of keeping healthy has long been practiced in China, and medicinal food is a delicacy derived from the idea of keeping healthy. Unlike bitter decoctions, a therapeutic diet regulates the body in its daily diet. The therapeutic diet is edible when sick and can reduce the occurrence of some diseases when there is no sickness.

Chinese expression derived from food

The ultimate goal of teaching food culture is also to learn the language. Food culture has produced many special Chinese expressions. These expressions are complex for Chinese learners to understand. The following selection are representative structures and words for these expressions to analyze and combine with actual teaching and suggestions.

- “吃 (Eat) + X” structure

“你吃了没 (Have you eaten?)” This is the most common phrase Chinese people use to greet each other when they meet. “民以食为天 (Food is heaven for people).” Eating has always been the top priority of the Chinese nation. Historically, China was a country characterized by a small peasant economy. The people who relied on heaven for food did the most to store food to prevent famine. Regarding national governance, the country leader expects that the weather will be good and that the people will have enough food and clothing. When disaster strikes, the most important thing for the government is to open its warehouses and release grain. Many successful strategies revolved around the food issue in the struggle to change dynasties and the Jiegan Uprising.

Loose policies on the food issue can win the hearts of the people, and whoever wins the hearts of the people will win the world. This history has created a “泛食主义” (Pan-food doctrine: means everything related to food including language). Jealousy in love is called “吃醋” (eating + vinegar), losing profit is called “吃苦” (eating + deficit), being slapped is called “吃耳光” (eating + hand), being unbearable is called “吃不消” (eating + cannot stand it), surprised is called “吃惊” (eating + surprise). There are too many idioms for the “eat + X” structure in Chinese.

There are no less than eleven meanings of “吃” (eat) in the 7th edition 《现代汉语词典》 (Modern Chinese Dictionary, 2016), but except for the first meaning of the original meaning of eating, which is, “put food in your mouth and swallow it after chewing (including sucking and drinking)”. The following are other meanings derived from “eating”. Such as:

1. Eating in a certain place, in a certain way or with tools: “吃食堂 (eating + canteen), 吃小灶 (eating + small stove)”.
2. Relying on something or someone to live: “吃老本 (Eat + The original saving), 吃父母 (eat + parents), 靠山吃山 (near mountain eat mountain)”.
3. Suffer, undergo, endure: “吃苦 (eat + bitter), 吃亏 (eat + deficit), 吃惊 (eat + surprise).”
4. Absorption: “纸不吃墨” paper does not eat ink. 5.

Comprehension, understanding, etc.: “吃透” thoroughly understand. 6

. Cost: “吃力” Strenuous

These meanings are derived from the original meaning of “eat”. For example, “靠山吃山 backing on mountains to eat mountains” in 2 refers to obtaining a livelihood from the mountain, which compares the source of livelihood to food eaten. “吃父母 (eating parents)” also refers to obtaining a source of life from parents. In 3, the words “吃” such as “吃苦 (suffers), 吃惊 (surprised)” and other “吃” are all non-positive words, which means eating bad things in, feeling uncomfortable, making the two sides of the conversation feel more specific and vivid. In 5, “吃透” means fully understanding and absorbing certain knowledge or things. It is like the food eaten is digested and finally absorbed by the body.

Many words like “吃+X” are constructed by metaphors and borrowings, and can be roughly divided into the following categories:

- (1) 吃 + edible words:

This kind of vocabulary usually follows

metaphorized words by shape or nature: for example, "吃鸭蛋 (eating duck eggs)" means zero points in exams or competitions. Since duck eggs have a similar shape to the number "0", the image of duck eggs is used as a metaphor. Zero points. "吃豹子胆 (Eat leopard gall)" describes the courage of people. Leopards are very fierce animals in nature. Leopard gall is used as a metaphor for the courage of people.

There are many structures of "吃...饭 (eating... rice)" in Chinese. For example, "吃百家饭 (eating from many families)" metaphorically gets help from many people in growing up. "吃官饭 (Eating official meal)" refers to working in the government and receiving government wages. "吃闲饭 (Eating idle meal)" refers to people who just eat but do nothing. These words are all made up of metaphors and such words as "吃软饭 (eating soft rice)", "吃阴间饭 (eating underworld rice)", "吃公家饭 (eating public rice)", "吃白饭 (eating plain rice)" etc.

(2) 吃 + non-edible words

1. 吃 + place, tool words

Eating places and tools can all be called food. For example, "吃小灶 (eat small stove)" is a place for cooking. Generally, everyone eats together with a large pot and stove. The small stove is usually used for cooking alone, a metaphor for special treatment. "吃铁饭碗 (Eating an iron bowl)" refers to living with a stable job, while an iron bowl means a stable and secure job. There are also such words as "吃大户 (eat big family)", "吃大锅饭 (eat big pot of rice)", "吃食堂 (eat canteen)" and so on.

2. 吃 + taste words

The taste of the food mostly determines the feelings that food makes people feel. Different tastes bring people different sensory experiences, which are also the source of metaphors. For instance, "吃苦 (eating bitter)", suffering generally brings people a bad experience. Typically, people use "bitterness" to express their hard life experiences. Therefore, enduring hardship is a metaphor for suffering from hard things and difficulties. "吃香 (Eating fragrance)" fragrance generally gives people a pleasant feeling. If one asks about the fragrance, everyone likes it very much. In ancient times, there was a saying "闻香下马 (smell the fragrance and get off the horse)". Furthermore, "吃香" is a metaphor for being loved and valued.

(3) 吃 + source of life words

The source of livelihood is also a source of metaphor. "吃救济 (Eating relief)" entails living on relief, "吃皇粮 (eating imperial food)" means relying on

government wages, and "吃老本 (eating one's capital)" means carrying on what one accumulated before. The meaning of these words is relatively simple, and most of them mean "to live (continue) with...".

The above is just a classification of some "吃+X" vocabulary. Additionally, there are many other words in this category. Due to metaphors and borrowings, this category of words is difficult for international students to understand and remember. Teachers can focus on teaching based on the classification, but they also need to distinguish between primary and secondary and not cover everything.

● "喝 (Drink) +X" structure

In Chinese, the two characters "吃 (eat)" and "喝 (drink)" often appear together but compared to the type "吃+X", "喝+X" is relatively rare. The meanings of "喝" in 7th edition 《现代汉语词典》(Modern Chinese Dictionary, 2016) are:

1. Swallow liquid or liquid food: drink water and tea. This is the basic meaning and the foundation.

2. Specifically refers to drinking alcohol, two sips.

The "喝 + X" structure derived from "喝" is basically not much. The most commonly used are: "喝墨水 (drink ink)", which refers to getting an education, and "喝西北风 (drink northwest wind)", meaning to have nothing to eat and starving. The meaning of "drinking" in these structures is basically like the basic meaning. They can be used as extended examples in teaching to support the learning of "drinking".

Notably, "喝" is a polyphonic word. When "喝 (hē)" appears as another pronunciation "喝 (hè)", it represents "大喊大叫 (yelling loudly)" such as "大喝一声 (shout)", "喝令 (calling on)", "喝倒彩 (booze)", etc. This kind of "喝+X" needs to be distinguished.

The Integration of Food Culture and CFLT

● Background structure of Chinese food culture

Chinese culture is a relatively broad concept. During the learning process, teachers need to help students construct a basic food culture background, which can support the study of food culture and help students better understand Chinese food culture.

There are six words that run through Chinese food culture all the time. "色 (color), 香 (aroma), 味 (taste), 形 (shape), 意 (meaning), and 养 (nourishment)" have always been pursued by Chinese food. Among them, "色 (color), 香 (aroma), 味 (taste), and 形 (shape)" is more

widely known, and students accept them more quickly in this aspect. However, “意 (meaning), and 养 (nourishment)” pays more attention to the cultural connotation and efficacy of food. “意” means “symbol” and “meaning”. Chinese food, especially traditional food, attaches great importance to the meaning of food. The ancients often pinned their thoughts and wishes on some external things, and food is no exception. And “养” means “to nurture the health”. Medicinal diet and diet therapy existed in ancient China. Chinese people pay more attention to nurture their health and they are also very particular about eating.

Food and medicine can be transformed into each other in Chinese cuisine. For example, “mung bean” it is not only a bean for food, but also a good medicine for detoxification, so there will be mung bean soup and mung bean porridge in summer. In Chinese food culture, each food has its own effect. People will choose and cook according to their own physical conditions, so as to recuperate their bodies. These six words are of great significance in Chinese food culture. Teaching these six words to students as a cultural background can help them better understand and learn Chinese food culture and understand the way of thinking and values of Chinese culture. It is also very helpful for students to learn Chinese culture in the future.

- Teaching design of Chinese food culture

Chinese language learners basically master Chinese through skill teaching and comprehensive course teaching, and rarely have a large amount of time to understand the relevant culture. Culture and language are closely related, and relevant cultural courses are essential. We can use food culture as a unique cultural perspective so that students can have a deeper understanding of Chinese culture and the language they have learned from food culture. It is hard to cover everything in the process of teaching food culture. Try to follow the “principles of practicality” and “principles of moderation” when teaching.

It is a general approach to setting up a corresponding topic. For example, a special topic of “eight major cuisines” can be set up, and the characteristics of the eight major cuisines can be radiated to the cultural background and regional characteristics of the corresponding area. Many students choose to travel in their spare time outside of learning Chinese, especially those who are current students in school. Before some holidays, teachers can open a special topic on tourism and food. Before setting up a topic,

teachers can first investigate the students' travel intentions, and then let the students tell their own travel plans and food tasting plans, and teachers can make supplements. In this way, students who have travel problems then together solutions can be developed, which can ensure the relative safety of students. This topic can also be explained by teachers first, radiating from local cuisine to scenic spots and historic resorts, local customs, and practices. When the students return from their trip, time should be spent letting them share and talk about their feelings and questions about local food. The teacher becomes responsible for answering their doubts and questions. The topic of eating etiquette is also very interesting and practical for students. It only needs explanation of what is often used in modern society, and the etiquette of ancient society can be expanded as an interest.

It is better to let students have field experience than acquire knowledge in textbooks. Some traditional

Chinese festivals or solar terms can organize students to have a “Food Journey”, such as the “Qingming Festival”, where students can go to the Jiangnan area to taste “青团” (Figure 9. Sweet Green Rice Ball), “Lantern Festival”, students can taste “元宵” (Figure 10. Tang-yuan), and “Winter Solstice” to eat “饺子” (Figure 11. Dumplings), etc. Teachers can also organize spring outings or autumn tours for the class, such as going to Xi'an to taste authentic noodles, Hangzhou to taste Jiangnan cuisine, Fujian to taste Fujian style, etc. Because such activities are time-consuming and require asking students' opinions and getting schools' approval. Teachers should do their best and can choose a place closer to the school to take students on a food journey experience.

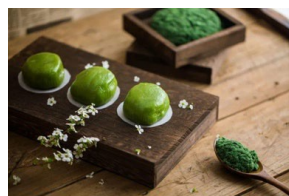


Figure 9 Sweet Green Rice Ball. (tzes0576.com)



Figure 10 Tang-yuan. (eatwkriss.com)



Figure 11 Dumplings. (lstockphoto.com)

Chinese food culture teaching can also be combined with other courses, such as Chinese movie courses for international students. Teachers can choose movies with Chinese characteristics. For example, “Kung Fu Panda” is a good choice, during the course international students can be introduced to the culture of “buns” and “noodles”. The teacher can give supplementary explanations on the variety of steamed buns and noodles in the movie, as well as the culture and allusions behind them. Teachers can also recommend authentic places for a food experience to students.

The teaching of Chinese food culture not only enriches the students' corresponding cultural background knowledge but also adds fun to the boring language learning and enriches the extracurricular life.

Conclusion

With the constant development of globalization, communication between countries is increasingly becoming more frequent, and the society also needs more talent with ICC. Therefore, ICC teaching is particularly important in CFLT. Language and culture are closely related and depends on and influence of each other. Language is an essential carrier of culture; culture has a limiting effect on language.

Chinese food culture represents five thousand years of Chinese culture and is a treasure that China is proud of. It is essential for promoting Chinese culture and has a non-negligible position in the CFLT. Food culture involves all aspects of learning the Chinese language, such as grammar, vocabulary, and culture. Appropriate teaching methods can play an auxiliary role in CFLT, which is also one of the interests of Chinese learners.

The food culture is rich and colorful and involves diverse content. Teachers need not be comprehensive but follow the principles of practicality and moderation and explain based on the level and needs of learners.

Recommendations

Chinese food culture covers a wide range of categories. Due to space constraints and limited level, we can only talk about it in general, without going into depth, and not comprehensively.

This article is primarily based on many literary works and daily observations. It lacks practical applications. It belongs to “talking on paper”, which is the idea of the author. In the actual application, there are certainly many shortcomings and issues, and the author will further improve and amend it in future practice.

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