

Study on the Application of Linguistic Landscape Teaching from the Perspective of International Chinese Language Education

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ABSTRACT

This study takes international students at the intermediate level of Chinese as the research object. Through the empirical research method of combining linguistic landscape theory with classroom observation, this study mainly discusses how to apply linguistic landscape to Chinese reading courses. By assigning homework, teachers can observe how international students gradually master multimodal skills and verify the relevant theories of linguistic landscape teaching. Via the feedback of international students' assignments and end-of-term interviews, it is found that international students' views on linguistic landscape teaching have the characteristics of self-relevance, cultural specificity, and new information. based on the above research findings, suggestions are made from the perspectives of teachers, students, and textbooks on the application of linguistic landscape in International Chinese Language Education.

Keywords: *Linguistic landscape, International Chinese language education, Multimodal skills, Language awareness, Teaching practice.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Literature Review

Shang (2020) proposed that Linguistic Landscape (LL) can enhance language learners' language awareness, multimodal skills, and cross-cultural pragmatic ability, and incidental learning of language learners can improve the effect of language acquisition. Therefore, how to enhance the language awareness of Chinese language learners, train international students in multimodal skills and cross-cultural abilities to improve the effect of Chinese language acquisition that still needs corresponding teaching practice to verify. Relevant scholars have conducted certain teaching research, for example, Zhong (2021) combined the Third Space theory and Place Semiotics, used the LL of the network space, and conducted cross-cultural training for students from three aspects of code preference, inscription, and emplacement, enabling students to enhance cross-cultural capabilities while learning Chinese. At the same time, Fu (2023) believed that the LL

setting in an informal language learning environment can help students understand Chinese social reality and culture, improve students' interest in learning Chinese, and the LL setting of the Confucius Institute has a leading role in students' Chinese learning. This shows that incidental learning in an informal language environment is very important. How to enhance students' attention to the LL in living space is beneficial to their Chinese Language learning and understanding of Chinese culture.

By reviewing the literature, it can be found that there is less research on the combination of LL and a specific course type of International Chinese Language Education (ICLE), and the LL contains a large number of language structures reflecting social reality, which requires international students to read and learn, in order to facilitate their life and study in China. The combination of LL and reading courses are conducive to cultivate international students' reading ability in real contexts.

1.2 International Students' Awareness of Chinese LL

According to the interview, international student W reflected that in a rich environment in Chinese signs, he would not pay special attention to a certain language sign, but when he was in an environment scarce in Chinese signs, that is, when he was working in his own country, he would notice some Chinese language on Chinese-made products and trigger incidental learning. Incidental learning is similar to the concept of "Language Acquisition", which refers to the non-planned, non-volitional, incidental language learning that learners carry out in formal or informal learning environments (Shang, 2020). Although rich language signs objectively provide international students with a good input environment, the effectiveness of input is still worth to explore.

This is close to the concept of "Self Presentation" principle in the LL, but the perspective is different. The self-presentation principle emphasizes starting from the designer's perspective and studying how the designer makes his own sign stand out among many signs (Ben-Refeal, 2009). The previous international student noticed the Chinese sign in the scarce Chinese language environment, largely because the international student is learning Chinese language, and the change in the identity of the information receiver triggered his attention to Chinese language. In connection with the attitude survey of residents in eastern China towards urban LL, it can be found that students and workers have different views on the same LL. Their functional expectations for the LL affect their understanding of the LL (Shang, 2021). From this, it can be found that learning Chinese language can enhance international students' attention to Chinese language, or their "Language Awareness".

Although the LL is widely present in public spaces, most language learners will not notice and reflect on how and why these LL contents exist, that is, they should cultivate language learners' language awareness (Shang, 2020), so if ICLE teachers want to promote international students' Chinese learning through the LL, they should enhance their Chinese language awareness of the surrounding LL.

International student H once questioned the LOGO of a Chinese milk tea brand, that is, "Is CHAGEE pronounced as CHA GEE[kʰ]?", from which it can be observed that international students can realize the use of Pinyin to spell a brand's

LOGO in a Chinese environment. Although international students can pronounce the first "CHA" correctly, Chinese people know that the GEE here should be pronounced [dʒi:], because the Chinese name of the brand "Bawang Chaji" "ji" and GEE have a homophonic relationship. This situation may be due to the fact that international students do not know the pronunciation of the uncommon Chinese character "姬 ji", or they have not learned about the Chinese idiom allusions of "Bawang Chaji" borrowed from "Bawang Bieji", so it caused a misreading. At the same time, the mixed use of CHAGEE Chinese Pinyin and English also reflects the "Global Localization" characteristic of today's commercial signs. The "Code mixing" in the sign caters to the expectations of domestic and foreign consumers, which conforms to the "good reasons principle" (Ben-Rafael, 2008), after all, the sign setting in public space is not specially set for language learning, but objectively also causes trouble for international students.

Therefore, although international students have the awareness of reading Chinese signs, how to effectively enhance their reading of Chinese signs, the guiding and correcting role of Chinese teachers is particularly significant.

1.3 Research Questions

- (1) How to transform LL into teaching resources?
- (2) How does LL teaching affect international students' learning of Chinese language and culture?
- (3) What are the characteristics of international students' views on LL?

1.4 Research Object

The research object of this study is 17 international students in the intermediate class of a university in western China, aged between 20-30 years old, with Chinese level between HSK 4-5, including 10 females and 7 males, 16 Sudanese students and 1 Moldovan student. The course is a reading course, using the textbook *Developing Chinese Intermediate Reading Course 2*.

1.5 Research Process

This research adopts the method of empirical research, combined with the theory of LL teaching, and conducted a six-month teaching practice. By collecting urban LLs and using them for teaching,

the teaching process is for teachers to assign LL homework, students to complete homework, teachers to explain and expand. During this process, teachers continuously improve the way of assigning homework, and observe the results of student homework, summarizing the characteristics of students in LL learning. At the end of the semester, students are invited to evaluate all courseware including urban LL, through their views and feelings on LL combined with teaching observation, suggestions are made for teachers, students, and textbooks on how to better serve LL teaching.

2. TEACHING PRACTICE OF CHINESE LL

2.1 Training of Multimodal Skills

Urban LL exists in the form of multimodality, not only containing text, but also rich symbolic forms such as color, image, sound, etc., so language learners are actually undergoing multimodal skills training while observing urban LL (Shang, 2020). The cultural significance represented by the multimodal symbols contained in the LL of different countries will exist Differences, training and cultivating international students to read Chinese urban LL, is conducive to their understanding and feeling of Chinese culture through multiple modalities while learning Chinese.

The author collects the LL in Lanzhou city (in Gansu province) and assigns it to international students in the form of homework. In the classroom, as a "decoder", the teacher leads international students to understand and learn the internal and external meanings of multimodal symbols in language signs. Through a semester of teaching attempts, it is found that international students can gradually grasp the connection between surface symbols and inherent meanings.

2.1.1 Skill Training of Language Text Layer

The first landscape homework selected the cup sleeve of the "Moutai Latte" advertisement of Luckin Coffee in the campus ("Figure 1"). Although students were told in the example that they could think from both text and color, from the results of the homework, most students only noticed the text information in the picture. During the homework explanation, the teacher supplemented the color and pattern in the picture, connected the brand name of "Luckin" and the image of the deer, expanded the cultural knowledge of the "deer" as a symbol of Chinese lucky (auspicious) animals, and extended to the "Nine-Colored Deer" murals and stories of Dunhuang culture in Gansu province.



Figure 1 The process of first homework.

2.1.2 Skill Training of Color Pattern Layer

By comparing the results of the second homework, it is found that students' awareness of the color and pattern of the LL picture is enhanced ("Figure 2"). The second homework selected the opening commemorative ticket of the newly opened Gansu Bamboo Slips Museum, and students can

extract brown and green from the picture. And the pattern of camels and carriages.

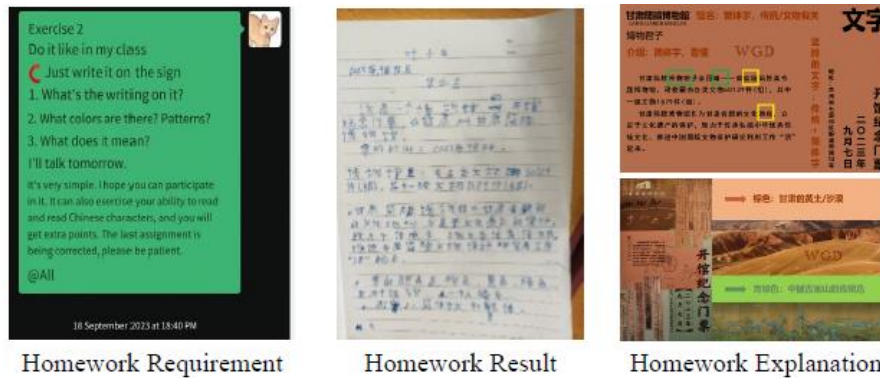


Figure 2 The process of second homework.

And combined with “Figure 3”, students noticed Luckin Coffee's shop and poster when they went out, which shows that the teacher's guidance can effectively enhance international students' attention to the LL in public spaces.



Figure 3 The student's attention to Luckin Coffee.

But international students' understanding of symbols still stays at the shallow cognitive level.



Figure 4 The process of third homework.

During the homework explanation, the teacher connected Su Shi's poem about reunion with the Mid-Autumn Festival, and guided students to understand Su Shi, a historical figure, through the

Through the teacher's explanation, students can understand the writing tools and text direction of ancient China,

2.1.3 Cultural Background Layer Skill Training

The third homework selected a festive poster "Moon View" from a Chinese milk tea brand ("Figure 4"). At this point, student R can already associate the color in the picture with the recent festival "Mid-Autumn Festival", and realize that this is the traditional Chinese color "Moon White" and "Osmanthus Fragrans Yellow", and also notice the "Seal" which is a traditional Chinese pattern. From this, it can be observed that international students are gradually moving from a superficial understanding of multimodal symbols to a deep understanding of social reality and its cultural characteristics.

poster's "Happy to say Dongpo (Su Shi's nickname)" and the cartoon pattern of Su Shi in the lower left corner. The purpose is to combine with the next class's "Survival in the Wild" courseware.

Su Shi, a Chinese ancient figure, was demoted from the economic center to the harsh ancient south during his tenure. He could still survive and remain optimistic in this environment. He can be used as an example of ancient wilderness survival. By telling his life experience and poetry works, it expands cultural knowledge and also combines modern urban LL with teaching materials, which is conducive to enriching classroom content.

The fourth homework, by reviewing students' homework, found that when students answer the question "What does it mean?", they don't know how to write, so the author reflects on and adjusts the homework requirements, and refines the questions to guide students to think about the purpose of text and image settings, that is, Huebner uses Participants (P) in the SPEAKING theory to examine who the creator and audience of the sign are (Hymes, 1972).

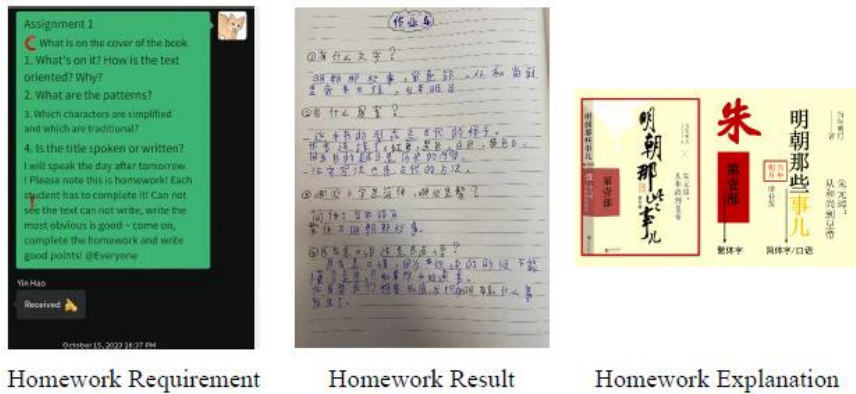


Figure 5 The process of fourth homework.

This homework selected the LL of the text "Casual Talk about 'Those Things in the Ming Dynasty'" and the book cover of "Those Things in the Ming Dynasty" ("Figure 5"). By asking "Is the book title colloquial or written language?" to guide students to pay attention to the setting of the book title and the connection with the text content, the text exercise requires students to answer whether "Those Things in the Ming Dynasty" is an academic work or popular literature, and by guiding students to understand that the book title "Those Things in the Ming Dynasty (Pinyin: Mingchao Naxie Shir)" uses the colloquial form of "Shir (Rhotic Accent in Mandarin)", it can assist students to understand that the book belongs to popular literature, and the audience is the popularized network readers.

By observing the results of the homework, it is found that students can already perceive the connection between the calligraphy font from of "top-bottom" and the ancient style, and also put forward their own thinking about the book title. By refining the questions, more specific answers can be obtained, which is conducive to observing the changes in students' views on LL. During the assignment explanation stage, the teacher connects the red color on the book cover with the favorite color of the Ming Dynasty and the emperor's surname "Zhu (meaning red)", indicating that the

preference for the color of the dynasty is related to the preference of the ancient ruling class, deepening students' understanding of the inherent meaning of color symbols.

2.2 Feedback on Chinese LL Teaching

It is not easy to operate to investigate which factors in the LL attract the attention of language learners, but the interview and questionnaire survey of learners' views on the LL have certain feasibility (Cenoz & Gorter, 2008). At the end of the semester, the author invites international students to evaluate all courseware involved in the classroom and attempts to observe their views on the LL. It is worth noting that the courseware content that international students are interested in is more online collected Non-sign courseware, and the courseware related to offline Sign (Moon View) is only mentioned once. Comparing Sign and Non-sign courseware, the reason why students are not interested in Sign courseware may be due to the pressure to complete homework, and Non-sign courseware does not have the pressure of homework, so it may more intuitively reflect their real views and feelings on LL, through thinking and sorting, the following table is obtained ("Table 1").

Table 1. The statistics of international students' attitude to courseware

Type	Frequency
Sign	1
Architecture	1
Vocabulary	2
City	3
Animal	4
Story	6

2.2.1 The Overview of International Student's Attitudes to the LL

The Architecture type was mentioned once because the student liked and wanted to have a set of Siheyuan; the Vocabulary type was mentioned twice, for the new word "naughty" in the courseware ("Figure 6"), students respectively reflected that they thought of themselves or their younger brother when they see the word.



小达是个顽皮的小孩。
不听话，一定要去做。

Figure 6 The courseware of word "Naughty".

The City type was mentioned three times, mainly because students have travel plans to Shanghai or Hong Kong cities. The Animal type was mentioned four times, mainly because students really like cats, which also conforms to the trend of cats as a popular subculture of contemporary youth. The Story type was mentioned six times, one of which was because students liked "The Little Prince" as a bedtime story, two times were because students had watched the cartoon "Ratatouille", and believed that watching this cartoon helped them understand the text "The Chef's Tall Hat" in reading class, and three times focused on students' interest in the changes of Chinese clothing and customs or the story of "Oracle Bones" in ancient China. Through observation, the views of international students on LL teaching can be summarized into

the following three characteristics: Self-relevance, Cultural Specificity, and New Information.

2.2.2 The Characteristics of International Student's Attitudes

First of all, Self-relevance, from the interview records of international students, it can be seen that their interest in LL mainly comes from the multimodal symbols involved in the courseware related to their own experience, whether it is out of love for Siheyuan (Chinese traditional residence), cats, or travel plans to Shanghai and Hong Kong, as well as interest in courseware due to emotional needs for themselves and their families, all reflect that international students' interest in LL is understood and felt from the perspective of self as the subject, and the Sign courseware related to urban LL in the assignment is rarely mentioned, which should attract the attention of teachers.

Secondly, Cultural Specificity, in the Story type courseware, international students like the courseware about clothing and custom changes the most ("Figure 7"). In terms of Clothing Culture, the teacher combines the text "Casual Talk about Those Things in the Ming Dynasty" to show the traditional clothing changes before the Qing Dynasty, and students are interested because they learn about Chinese clothing other than cheongsam; in terms of Custom Changes, the teacher combines the text "Beauty and Fashion" to supplement the historical event of Anti-Foot Binding Movement¹ and women's liberation, and students think because they compare their own country's outdated aesthetics.

1. Anti-Foot Binding Movement which began in the late Qing Dynasty, was a response to the practice of foot binding among women, as Western ideas began to permeate Chinese society, and foot binding came under criticism. In the first year of the Republic of China (1912), China gradually began to prohibit women from foot binding. It is one of the symbolic movements of the liberation of Chinese women.



Figure 7 The courseware of chaing dress and customs.

Thirdly, New Information, student feedback reflects their desire for new information, especially in the era of information explosion, breaking the "Information monopoly" of teachers, the adult identity of the students in this case already has a stable value system, so the teacher's role is more to expand the social and cultural knowledge of modern China, guide students to think.

Whether it is Cultural Specificity or New Information, they are all under the leadership of Self-relevance, so Chinese teachers should combine the cultural background and hobbies of international students in teaching, and cultivate international students' cross-cultural ability through the multimodal characteristics of LL.

3. TEACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR CHINESE LL

Using the tool of LL to teach Chinese language requires a comprehensive consideration of teachers, students, and textbooks. This paper discusses and proposes suggestions for the above research through teaching practice combined with theoretical verification.

3.1 The Teacher Level

For teachers, the most important thing is the handling of teaching language, that is, how to convert complex LL research into a language that international students can understand. During the teaching preparation stage, teachers can use the billboards, signs, etc, which can be seen everywhere on campus to give students a concrete concept of LL. During the homework requirement stage, teachers should gradually induce

international students from the external form of LL to the internal meaning, the language of the homework requirement should conform to the Chinese level of students, set specific questions to guide students to think, avoid questions that are too broad. During the homework explanation stage, on the basis of answering the original questions, clearly distinguish the narration of the language text layer, color pattern layer, and background culture layer, and lead students to deeply understand the social reality and cultural concepts contained behind multimodal symbols.

3.2 The Student Level

For students, the most important thing is to consider the Chinese level of international students. Because the students in this case are at the HSK 4-5 level, the language used in the classroom and homework is basically Chinese. When students cannot express in Chinese, they can use the language that both the teacher and the students understand. Secondly, teachers should understand the cultural background and hobbies of international students. For example, because Sudanese students write Arabic from right to left, so when explaining the commemorative ticket of Gansu Bamboo Slips Museum, teachers can use the ancient Chinese writing method is also "left-right" to attract students' attention, and then point out that the difference between ancient Chinese and Arabic is that Chinese is written from top to bottom. By allowing international students to experience cross-cultural, deepen their understanding of the content and historical culture presented by the LL. And teachers should reward students who complete their homework in time, include homework in their usual grades, and motivate students to continue learning, and strengthen international students' attention to LL from the two aspects of interest and reward.

3.3 The Textbook Level

In terms of textbooks, because the textbook of this case is the fixed "Developing Chinese Intermediate Reading 2", the selection of LL materials and assignments should fit the content of the text, supplement the lag of the textbook by adding modern Chinese LL, and the textbook also contains LL materials, should be used or updated, enrich the teaching form of reading class. Otherwise, the assignment of LL may become a burden. Because the course is a reading course, the main teaching content should serve the learning of

Chinese vocabulary and the improvement of reading ability. Teacher can broaden the knowledge by exploring the language structure in the LL, and find vocabulary or phrases that match the students' Chinese level.

In summary, as the main body of Chinese language teaching, teachers should handle the contradiction between the LL and the course materials. The collection, selection, and processing of LL materials will cost teachers a lot of time. How to balance the proportion with the course content and embed the LL better into the teaching requires a lot of energy and teaching skills.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the linguistic landscape, as a teaching resource, can serve as an effective supplement to language class, while guiding students to pay attention to contemporary Chinese society and culture. When the linguistic landscape in public spaces is applied to the semi-public private language class, its "emplacement" changes, completing a "re-semiotization" transformation. The factors involved, such as teachers, students, textbooks, and how they interact with the linguistic landscape, especially how students, as the main body, view and feel about the intervention of the linguistic landscape in language teaching, await further in-depth research.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Funding: This research is funded by the International Chinese Language Education Youth Research Program "Research on the Compilation of International Textbooks on the Chinese Language Education from Multimodal Discourse Vision" (Project Approval Number:22YH16D).

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