

Brief Talk about the Cross-Cultural Education for Middle School Foreign Teachers

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Abstract: With the development of economic globalization, domestic middle schools pay more and more attention to the international construction and the training of international talents. A large number of foreign teachers begin to enter the domestic education industry for middle school students in recent year. However, due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, foreign teachers are prone to "acclimatization" in the actual teaching process, affecting the teaching quality. In order to solve the practical problems of foreign teachers in teaching, targeted training is necessary for them. Therefore, this paper first explains the necessity of middle school foreign teacher oriented Teacher Education and analyzes its feasibility. Then, based on the current situation of middle school's Teacher Education in recent years, this paper puts forward the implementation scheme of teacher education for foreign teachers.

1. Introduction

After entering the 21st century, the process of global economic integration is further accelerated, this situation not only improves people's living conditions, but also accelerates the internationalization of economic life, alleviating the imbalance of global economic development and the imbalance of economic factors among countries. Since education plays a role in cultivating labor force, it can be understood as the lifeblood of the economy, therefore the internationalization of education has become a trend of World Development^[1].

With the development of economic globalization, domestic middle schools pay more and more attention to international construction and the training of international talents. Recruiting foreign teachers is a direct way to enhance internationalization, thus, a large number of foreign teachers begin to enter the domestic education industry. Lu Ming, deputy director of the State Administration of foreign experts, once mentioned in the award ceremony of the fifth national competition 'I and foreign teachers': During the 12th Five Year Plan period, the number of overseas experts working in China increased from 52,9000 in 2011 to more than 62,0000 in 2015^[2]. Since the 1990s, cultural exchanges between China and other countries have become increasingly important^[14]. Due to the rapid development of economic globalization, countries will inevitably have cultural collisions in the process of communication. Therefore, in order to create a positive

coexistence between cultures, cross-cultural education is particularly significant. Cross-cultural education can promote people to respect and understand other countries' cultures while respecting their own national cultural background. It helps to enhance cultural identity and tolerance, facing world cultural differences with an open mind.

As for foreign teachers, due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, they are facing "acclimatization" in the actual teaching process. Their output knowledge may not be completely obtained by students, which affects the teaching quality. In order to solve the practical problems of foreign teachers in teaching, targeted cross-cultural Teacher Education is really necessary for them.

2. The necessity of cross-cultural teacher education for foreign teachers

This chapter expounds on the necessity of developing Teacher Education for foreign teachers from three parts: the unique advantages of foreign teachers, the problems existing in foreign teacher education at the present stage, and the reasons according to these problems.

2.1 Unique advantages of foreign teachers

Recruiting foreign teachers is an important way to improve internationalization^[5]. With China's current economic conditions and educational background, it is becoming more and more common to introduce foreign teachers into junior high schools and even primary schools to improve the international teaching level of our school^[14,15]. A large number of foreign teachers begin to enter the domestic education industry. Compared with local teachers, foreign teachers have the following advantages:

2.1.1 Improve the international teaching ability of the school

Since the reform and the opening up, China's schools have gradually realized the gap with foreign advanced teaching levels, and began to introduce excellent foreign teachers as an important measure to improve the internationalization of the school^[6]. For example, the model of PBL(Problem-Based Learning) is well-known in many foreign countries. They aim to set learning in a real, meaningful but a bit complicated situation, and ask students to explore the systematic knowledge inside the situation as a problem-solver. This kind of learning model helps cultivate students' interest and ability in autonomous learning.

At the same time, the teaching concept of quality education in the new era requires schools to pay more attention to all-round comprehensive ability of students instead of merely pushing students to master book knowledge^[7]. A large number of middle schools and even primary schools focus on improving the international talent training ability, further accelerating the introduction speed of foreign teachers.

2.1.2 Broaden students' horizons

Compared with local teachers, foreign teachers have unparalleled advantages in language, which can be considered as a part of culture^[8]. Therefore, the participation of foreign teachers in teaching can bring a different perspective to the student, and help the student understand western culture and history^[9]. For example, in the process of foreign language teaching, through actual scene dialogue with students or real cases about cultural differences, students' cross-cultural communication ability can be imperceptibly improved. Students' understanding and inclusiveness of culture can be enhanced, and misunderstandings caused by cultural background differences can be avoided. At the same time, it can also help to cultivate students' global vision, call for respect for the equality of

human rights, and finally create a diversified society. Thus, allowing foreign teachers to participate in the teaching process as soon as possible can broaden students' thinking and cultivate new talents with a global vision to a certain extent^[3].

2.1.3 Bring new management experience

When foreign teachers are integrated into the Chinese classroom, their role is not only to teach students academic courses, but also to bring some foreign advanced teaching ideas and teaching methods to promote classroom reform. Compared with Chinese traditional teaching methods, foreign teachers pay more attention to stimulating students' interest in learning and creating an active classroom atmosphere. These concepts focus on the development of students and pay attention to the development of students' personalities and potential. For example, the teaching method of “flipped classroom” can be regarded as a classical case. The flipped classroom in some high schools utilizes information technology to make full use of students' spare time before and after class and increase the opportunities for communication between teachers and students during the class period.

Take one of the high school's biology class "Protein Is The Main Undertaker Of Life Activities" as an example, students are given a research question before each class as the outline of the preview content. What they are expected to do is to solve the research question successfully after the learning of this section. What's more, they will also be given several questions for the basic part, like “List the functions of the protein”, “point out the structural characteristics of amino acid”, etc. These questions included in the basic part need to be done by watching videos on the network teaching platform before class. Thus, students and teachers can have more time to discuss and work on the questions they can't solve by themselves during the class period, which increases the learning efficiency. Students are no longer the object of being instilled with knowledge but are the learners who grasp learning autonomy.

2.2 Problems in foreign Teacher Education at the present stage and the cause analysis

Foreign teachers have advantages in improving the internationalization level of schools and cultivating international talents. However, in reality, many subjective and objective factors will greatly restrict the full play and utilization of foreign teachers' resources and affect the improvement of classroom teaching quality and talent training quality.

2.2.1 Cultural concept problem

Values are the patterns formed by individuals or groups mainly through cultural communication. A common view is that all people have values^[10]. Due to the great differences between Chinese and foreign cultures, foreign teachers are inevitably confronted with cross-cultural conflicts in their teaching and living. For example, Chinese tend to show self-modesty in front of others' praise, while foreign teachers are more inclined to accept praise. This difference leads to the phenomenon that Chinese teachers and students think foreign teachers are not modest enough, while foreign teachers think domestic teachers and students are too implicit. Due to cultural differences, when talking about a serious issue, an improper sentence can make the listener laugh or even belly laugh. A harmless word can make others unhappy or even angry^[11]. The differences between values, beliefs, ways of thinking and customs may easily lead to misunderstandings in the communication between Chinese and foreign teachers and students.

2.2.2 Educational philosophy

Dialectical materialism points out that truth is relative and conditional, and educational programs that are effective abroad may not be applicable in China. Without special adaptive cross-cultural education training, foreign teachers' teaching can't match well with students' requirements, which wastes the time and teaching resources. What's more, a brainstorm is a common activity in western classrooms, while Chinese students are always very shy to share their ideas in front of the classroom. Foreign teachers always encourage students to generate ideas by bringing together ideas from different people in a discussion. The lack of a good match between what is taught and what is learned leads to the formalism of teaching by foreign teachers, which is undoubtedly a great waste of educational resources and time^[12].

2.2.3 The problem of management assessment system

Different countries have different management and assessment systems. After coming to China, foreign teachers often maintain the habits of their countries of origin, and do not know much about China's management and assessment system. For example, some foreign teachers do not understand the shift system of some schools in China, and they are not responsible enough in the shifting process, thus, their work efficiency is low.

2.2.4 The quality of foreign teachers

Many schools pursue internationalization blindly, so the over-pursuit of a quantitative index for foreign teachers ignore the teacher quality. This phenomenon causes the decrease of some foreign teachers' professional quality. Even some foreign teachers haven't obtained qualifications for teachers of expatriates in China. Those teachers are lacking the basic knowledge of Chinese and teaching abilities, which can be regarded as a sign of extreme irresponsibility towards students^[13].

2.2.5 Life adaptability

Due to the historical and cultural differences between China and foreign countries, it is inevitable that foreign teachers will feel unfamiliar with the surrounding environment and can not adapt to the domestic life pattern and living atmosphere. At the same time, foreign teachers may not understand the connotation, language using situations, and applicable objects of daily Chinese. As for the local slang dialect and body language, there will inevitably be obstacles in the process of communication, and the situation of acclimatization.

3. Current situation of foreign teachers

In order to research the current situation of foreign teachers, a questionnaire which is based on the teaching quality of foreign teachers in the classroom is published. The questionnaire includes 8 different questions, 7 multiple choice questions, and 1 essay question. The time taken to fill in the questionnaire is about 5min.

3.1 Research object

On December 6th to 8th, the research group conducted a survey of people of different ages, including middle school students, University students, and even some students' parents. 112 valid questionnaires were collected.

3.2 Research steps

The content of the questionnaire was discussed by the group members, and the preliminary questionnaire was filled by three university students. These three students were tested in a small range, and the data were analyzed and sorted out. Through the discussion with some other experienced students, the questionnaire was revised and corrected.

3.3 Data analysis

The questionnaire is mainly based on the perspective of students and focuses on the feedback of students' learning effect when they are taking foreign teachers' lectures. The analysis results are as follows:

Question 1: Have you ever taken foreign teaching classes when you are in middle school (including extracurricular classes)? The result is shown in table 1.

Table 1: The result of the probability that students have taken foreign courses

Option	Total	Percentage
Yes	75	66.96%
No	37	33.04%
Total amount	112	

Thus, from table 1, it is explicit to get the conclusion that most of the students have taken foreign classes taught by foreign teachers during middle school years, only some of them haven't experienced foreign classes. Therefore, international construction and the training of international talents have become a trend in most domestic middle schools.

Question 2: Whether foreign teachers implement the rules and regulations of the school strictly. For example: never be late; never leave early; never suspend classes without reason or miss classes, etc. The result of the compliance of foreign teachers with the rules is shown in table 2.

Table 2: The result of the compliance of foreign teachers with the rules

Option	Total	Percentage
Very consistent	32	28.57%
Somewhat consistent	61	54.46%
Not very consistent	13	11.61%
Very inconsistent	6	5.36%
Total amount	112	

From the data above, a very obvious phenomenon is shown: most foreign teachers still abide by the school's attendance system, and even nearly 25% of them never arrive late or leave early or suspend classes without reason or miss classes. Only 17% of them are not very engaged in the attendance's rules. Thus, the current teaching attitude of most foreign teachers is good in general.

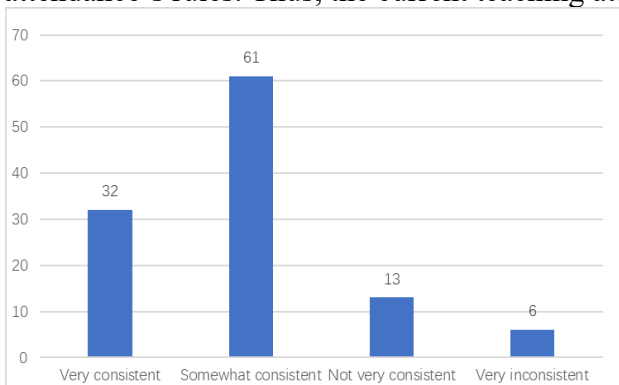


Figure 1: Foreign teacher's class preparation

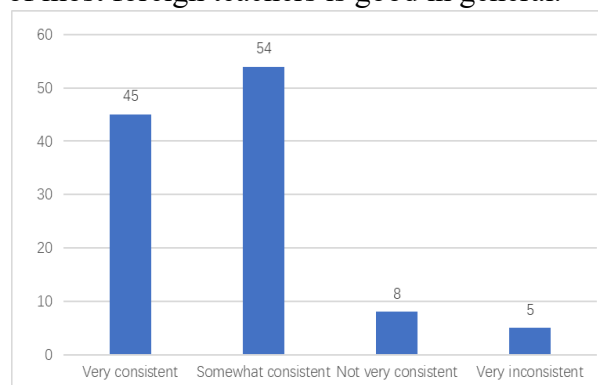


Figure 2: Foreign teacher's class atmosphere

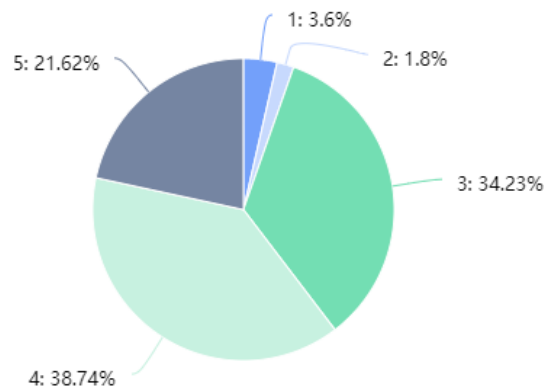


Figure 3: The result of foreign teachers' score

Questions 3,4,5 are based on the teaching effect in the classroom. Question 3 asks students to score their foreign teachers based on the statement “Foreign teachers are full of spirit, strong teaching organization ability, and sufficient class preparation.” While question 4 is based on the statement “The classroom atmosphere of foreign teachers is active and interactive”, and students are asking to choose from the four options in different degree. While question 5 asks students to score the teaching effect of their foreign teachers (the score ranges from 1-5). The results of question 3-5 are shown in figure 1, figure 2, and figure 3 respectively.

From the data shown above, it is explicit to figure out that most of the students are satisfied with the teaching effect and the class atmosphere during foreign teachers' classes. Though most of the students given foreign teachers a relatively high score, but the average of question 6 is 3.73, which reflects that there still exists some students who give them a relatively low score. As for those students, foreign teachers still need to work on the improvement of their abilities. Thus, the training situation of foreign teachers needs to be thought highly of.

Question 6,7 and 8 are based on the training situation of foreign teachers, while question 6 is according to the pre-service education, question 7 is according to the education after employment. Question 6: whether foreign teachers have received training before employment; question 7: whether foreign teachers are still receiving training after employment. The options are: Have received adequate training; Only received certain training; Not clear about the training situation. The results of questions 6 and 7 are shown in figure 4 and 5. Question 8 is an open-ended question which is about what kind of training has foreign teachers received before and after employment.

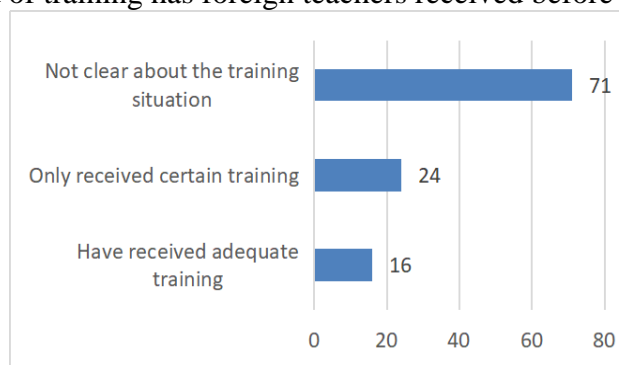


Figure 4: Understanding of pre-employment training

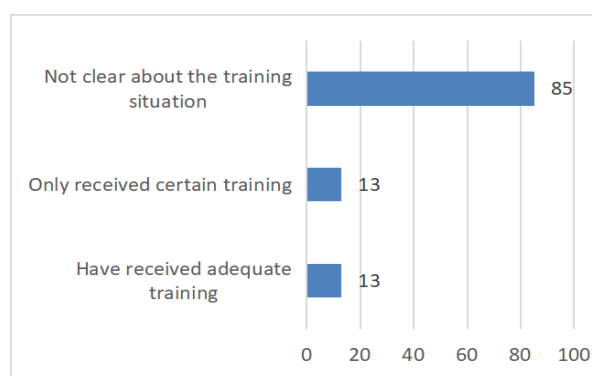


Figure 5: Understanding of training after employment

As for question 8, the answers' keywords are: Don't know; Not clear; Never pay attention to, etc. From the results above, it is obvious that most of the students are not clear with the foreign teachers' education program. Thus, it is very necessary to pay more attention to the foreign teachers' education in order to improve the teaching quality and teaching effect. Then, chapter 4 below is focused on the feasible intercultural teacher education program for those foreign teachers in middle schools.

4. Feasible intercultural teacher education program for foreign teachers

It is very necessary to carry out cross-cultural Teacher Education for foreign teachers promptly. This chapter proposes feasible plans for implementing intercultural teacher education for foreign teachers and demonstrates the feasibility of carrying out such Teacher Education. In line with the cross-cultural teacher education concept of people-oriented and combination of hardness and softness, the Teacher Education for foreign teachers described in this chapter mainly includes two parts: pre-service training before entry and continuous Teacher Education assessment after entry, with emphasis on the standardization and institutionalization of teacher education.

4.1 Pre-service teacher education

Foreign teachers usually do not have long-term living experience in China, so for foreign teachers, their pre-service education should not only include academic education in teaching but also include education based on Chinese culture and ideology.

4.1.1 Attach importance to the popularization of Chinese culture education

Due to the great differences in a growth environment, national conditions, culture and history, values between different countries, foreign teachers need to be accustomed to China's situation.

In order to enable foreign teachers to integrate into China's campus life as soon as possible and carry out teaching work smoothly, the popularization of Chinese culture is supposed to be taken seriously. Foreign teachers should be arranged to learn China's main cultural knowledge and be introduced to some local customs and historical traditions before starting teaching activities.

For example, the International Department should hold appropriate Chinese style competitions during the pre-service cross-cultural teacher education, and encourage foreign teachers to participate more. Therefore, foreign teachers can gradually experience the humanistic connotation of the Chinese nation, understand the character of the Chinese people, and strengthen foreign teachers' understanding and recognition of Chinese values under the influence of Chinese traditional culture. Only when foreign teachers understand and adapt to the differences between different

cultures, can they ensure that foreign teachers will not have cross-cultural communication problems. After building enough background knowledge according to Chinese national customs and values, foreign teachers will be able to solve some problems caused by cultural differences.

4.1.2 Receive academic teaching education

Foreign teachers should receive the same education as Chinese teachers before they take office so that they can have a certain understanding of the basic situation, educational concepts, and educational methods of China. During this period, foreign teachers can participate in Chinese teachers' classes as students, so that they can fully feel the Chinese teaching form, get familiar with the Chinese class process, and learn the overall teaching plan and teaching assessment method. In this process, it is necessary to strengthen the training of foreign teachers in selecting teaching materials, arranging the class schedule and making teaching plans. Chinese classrooms are always kind of traditional, and the class schedule is supposed to be scheduled at the beginning of the semester. Then, teachers will follow the class schedule to work on their teaching design. Thus, foreign teachers who are working in Chinese middle schools need to obey this kind of teaching rule and arrange their work appropriately before each class.

4.2 Teacher education after entry

After entry, foreign teachers may still feel kind of confused about how to teach courses acceptable to students in China, thus, they still need different kinds of teacher education to improve themselves and to improve the teaching effect.

4.2.1 Cooperative teaching

A cooperative teaching method can be adopted to improve teaching quality, that is, foreign teachers and Chinese teachers jointly teach a course. In the context of the current internationalization of education, cooperative teaching is a new approach to the reform and development of education and teaching^[4].

The classroom teaching of foreign teachers is usually more relaxed and free, focusing on stimulating students' interest and communicating fully between teachers and students^[16]. But there are problems with this approach. Many foreign teachers arrange teaching tasks randomly in the teaching process, not in accordance with the teaching syllabus or teaching plan, resulting in the lack of systematic learning of students. In order to improve the standardization of teaching, foreign teachers and experienced Chinese teachers can be arranged at the beginning of the teaching to write the teaching syllabus and make the teaching plan^[17]. In the actual teaching process, Chinese teachers mainly urge foreign teachers to teach according to the teaching schedule and improve the teaching efficiency. At the same time, Chinese teachers guide foreign teachers on how to timely adjust their teaching arrangements according to real-time teaching situations, and on the basis of fully investigating students' learning needs and personality characteristics, constantly improving their ability to tell courses^[18].

4.2.2 Assessment and evaluation

On the other hand, in the teaching process, foreign teachers should be constantly evaluated and assessed. Foreign teaching ability needs to be evaluated and assessed in accordance with certain standards in the semester, and through the result of the assessments and evaluations, they can figure out their shortcomings of teaching^[19]. In this way, appropriate and targeted suggestions for improvement will be worked out. According to the relevant system based on rewards and

punishments, the enthusiasm of foreign teachers can be stimulated, thus, the work efficiency will be highly increased.

5. Conclusion

In a word, foreign teachers have many unique merits in the teaching process, but due to the limitation of cross-cultural communication and other objective factors, their teaching effect is greatly reduced^[20]. Therefore, it is of great significance to carry out timely research on intercultural teacher education for foreign teachers and demonstrate feasible intercultural teacher education programs for the development of teacher education theories in the future.

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