

A Comparative Study of MTCSOL Programs in Chinese mainland region and Hong Kong

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Keywords: *Chinese mainland region and Hong Kong; MTCSOL; Training Program*

Abstract: In recent years, with the rapid development of MTSCOL in Chinese mainland region, it has also been accompanied by obvious homogeneity. There are many problems such as the difficulty of corresponding employment and the urgent need to improve the quality of international Chinese teachers. Based on the perspectives of Chinese mainland region and Hong Kong, this study explores the similarities and differences in training programs from five aspects: training objectives, admission requirements, curriculum settings, credit requirements and internship arrangements. Through statistical quantification, descriptive analysis, and sociological methods, the pros and cons of project in the two regions were explored, and it was discovered that in the process of subject construction of this major, it is particularly necessary to increase admission requirements, clarify training objectives, optimize curriculum settings, and rationally allocate internship plans.

1. Introduction

With economic globalization and the growth of China's economic strength, the international demand for Chinese language learning has become increasingly obvious. At the same time, the cultivation of Master of Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (Abbreviated as MTCSOL) is also gradually advancing in Chinese mainland region and Hong Kong (two regions), and each has formed a corresponding training model. If they can learn from each other, they will be able to strengthen and prosper together.

Fifteen years have passed since the cultivation of MTCSOL in Chinese mainland region. While the number of degree-granting institutions is developing rapidly, there are also many problems waiting for scholars to explore and study. At present, the research mainly focuses on curriculum construction, thesis topic selection & writing, and practical ability training. Among them, Li Quan (2010)[1], Ding Anqi (2018)[2], Wu Yinghui (2021)[3], and Li Baogui (2020)[4] provide a macro perspective on the training principles, development history, professional degree level evaluation and comprehensive analysis of hot frontiers. Scholars such as Chen Wan (2020)[5], Wu Qiuping (2019)[6], Qi Haifeng (2018)[7], and Li Dongwei (2017) [8] have conducted specific discussions and empirical studies on the problems in the training process, involving the relationship between general-purpose talent training goals and oriented talent training goals, teacher competence, curriculum, overseas internships, etc., and puts forward a specific training model. However, in general, the current comparative studies are still insufficient. Only Wang Tianmiao (2017) [9] conducted a comparative study on the training models for master's degree students majoring in Chinese as a foreign language

education between Chinese mainland region and Taiwan region; Liu Yuping (2019) [10] conducted a comparative study on the cultivation of Chinese and American master's teaching practice ability; other comparative studies mostly focus on the differences between Chinese and foreign postgraduates in MTCSOL.

This article compares the development of the MTCSOL in different regions from the perspectives of Chinese mainland region and Hong Kong, sorts out problems, makes suggestions, and promotes development. In Chinese mainland region, Beijing Language and Culture University is the earliest and largest international university whose main task is to educate international students in Chinese and Chinese culture. In Hong Kong, it is represented by the School of Humanities and Linguistics and Language Research Center of The Education University of Hong Kong; between them, the Faculty of Chinese Language Education is the largest entity international Chinese language teaching and research unit at home and abroad. Based on this, this article specifically expands from the five aspects of training objectives, admission requirements, curriculum settings, credit requirements and teaching practice arrangements, in order to provide a reference for the construction and development of this discipline.

2. Method

This article mainly uses statistical quantification, descriptive analysis, and sociological methods to explore the similarities and differences in the cultivation of MTCSOL in the two regions. In practical terms, quantitative statistics are used to demonstrate the scale and level of training in the Chinese mainland region and Hong Kong; the reasons for the current development of each region are analyzed through descriptive and historical methods; and the historical background and reality of its advantages and disadvantages are analyzed in combination with sociological methods.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Professional traceability in Chinese mainland region and Hong Kong

3.1.1. The training process in Beijing Language and Culture University

In Chinese mainland region, as of July 2023, the number of universities and colleges for the MTCSOL has reached 197. Among them, Beijing Language and Culture University (Abbreviated as BLCU) ranked first. The predecessor of Beijing Language and Culture University was the Beijing Language Institute founded in 1962. Its Chinese Language Institute officially recruited undergraduates studying in China in 1978. In 2007, the Department of Degree Management and Postgraduate Education of the Ministry of Education (Office of the Degree Committee of the State Council) issued the "Notice on Launching the Pilot Program of the Professional Degree Education for the MTCSOL and Recommending the Candidates for the National Educational Steering Committee", approved 25 colleges and universities carried out the pilot work for the MTCSOL, and Beijing Language and Culture University also became the first batch of pilot units. In 2018, Beijing Language and Culture University MTCSOL's degree authorization point expert review meeting unanimously agreed that the university has obvious advantages in training goals, training programs, training scale, and faculty, and it is the best in China. It is one of the best master's degree programs in MTCSOL of China.

3.1.2. The training process in The Education University of Hong Kong

A total of 8 well-known universities in Hong Kong have begun to recruit similar majors of MTCSOL. The Education University of Hong Kong (Abbreviated as EdUHK) is the only normal

university among the 8 existing public universities in Hong Kong. It is based on the 65-year heritage of five former normal education institutions, and is the only institution that focuses on teacher training and professional development among the eight institutions of higher learning funded by the University Grants Committee. Its Master of Arts in International Chinese Language Teaching is the most similar type of MTCSOL.

3.2. Comparison of talent training in the two places

In an environment where the role of Chinese as a tool language is becoming more and more prominent, the two regions are paying more and more attention to the cultivation of MTCSOL. However, different cultivation modes have been formed due to their respective historical backgrounds and differences in the actual environment. This article will compare five aspects of training objectives, admission application, curriculum, credit requirements and teaching practice arrangements.

3.2.1. The similarities and differences of training goals

Table 1: Comparison of the training objectives of MTCSOL

BLCU	EdUHK
1. Master the basic theories of Marxism, possess good professional qualities and professional ethics. Love the international education of Chinese language, and has the spirit of dedication and pioneering consciousness.	1. Understand the theory of international Chinese teaching.
2. Possess proficiency in teaching Chinese as a second language, and be able to use modern educational technology and scientific and technological means to teach.	2. Master the Chinese language knowledge necessary for international Chinese teaching.
3. Have high Chinese cultural literacy and communication ability.	3. Master the Chinese cultural knowledge necessary for international Chinese teaching.
4. Be able to fluently use a foreign language for Chinese teaching and communication, and have cross-cultural communication skills.	4. Enhance the research ability of related topics in international Chinese teaching.
5. Have the ability to manage, organize and coordinate language and culture international promotion projects.	5. Develop professional practical ability in international Chinese teaching.
	6. Strengthen the individual's social and cultural awareness of teaching international Chinese in an international environment, and use effective communication strategies to optimize teaching effectiveness.

Among the elements of the master's training model, the "training goal" is the core element, which governs the three aspects of "training institution", "training process" and "evaluation system"; it is also the only criterion for evaluating the success of the master's training (Lin Xiuqin 2013) [11]. Therefore, the comparison of the training objectives of MTCSOL is most concerned. The training goals of the two places are similar in general, which are divided into 5 or 6 items. Two universities have placed great emphasis on students' international vision and ability to adapt to the international environment. However, after the mainland's training goals are uniformly formulated by the Office of the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council, each university will give full play to its specific characteristics. Hong Kong are independently formulated by universities according to their own characteristics. As shown in Table 1.

After comparison, it can be found that the commonality of the training objectives of MTCSOL in the two places is to cultivate high-quality international Chinese teachers, master the solid knowledge of Chinese language and the ability to teach Chinese as a second language. Two universities are supported by the most teaching courses.

Specifically (in Table 2), related to Chinese ontology knowledge and research capabilities. Both Beijing Language and Culture University and Hong Kong University of Education did not take the research ability of Chinese ontology as one of the training goals at the master's level of Chinese

International Education. This part only involves related courses in compulsory or optional courses, such as special research on Chinese language elements. Second, about the application of science and technology in Chinese as a second language education and teaching. Beijing Language and Culture University is involved. It has also established an online Master's Program for Chinese Teachers Abroad. Relatively speaking, the Education University of Hong Kong does not directly reflect in the training goals, but only has the courses of "Chinese Teaching and Information Technology Literacy" in the elective subjects.

Table 2: Differences in the training objectives of MTCSOL

	BLCU	EdUHK
Cultivate high-quality international Chinese teachers	+	+
Second language teaching practice ability	+	+
Chinese Ontology Knowledge	+	+
Modern science and technology application	+	-
Chinese Ontology Research Ability	-	+
Chinese cultural knowledge and overseas communication	+	+
Foreign language ability	+	-*
International environment and vision	+	+

(*Invisible expression, fully reflected in the curriculum.)

3.2.2. The similarities and differences of admission requirements

Entrance requirements are the starting point for talent training. Different universities have different requirements for application requirements, but the overall admissions are diversified. Domestic and international students of Beijing Language and Culture University are enrolled separately. In comparison, the Education University of Hong Kong has the most specific requirements for students majoring in Chinese as an International Education Master. Among them, the Chinese language proficiency section provides different kinds of Chinese test requirements: Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Bureau Putonghua Advanced Level Test (passed); or National Language Working Committee Putonghua Proficiency Test (Level 2 or above); or Hong Kong Education Bureau And the Teacher's Language Proficiency Assessment (Mandarin) by the Assessment Bureau (Spoken Language Paper, Grade 3 or above); or the Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK) of the National Chinese Proficiency Test Board (Intermediate Level C or above). The foreign language section also provides a variety of options: if the applicant's admission qualification is issued by a non-English-taught college, it generally must meet any of the following minimum English proficiency requirements: IELTS total score 6.0 or above; or TOEFL an Internet-based test score of 80 or more; or a national College English Test Band 6 (CET-6) total score of 430 or more valid in the past two years; or other equivalent qualifications. The details are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Comparison of admission requirements for MTCSOL

BLCU	EdUHK
1. College graduates.	1. Hold a bachelor's degree from a recognized university.
2. All kinds of personnel with a bachelor's degree or equivalent academic ability who are interested in engaging in the international promotion of Chinese.	2. A certain level of Chinese proficiency.
3. Overseas Chinese teachers or professionals with equivalent qualifications.	3. A certain level of English or other foreign language skills.

3.2.3. The similarities and differences in Curriculum

Curriculum setting is the center and basic link of talent training. The "Instructive Training Program for Graduate Students Majoring in Chinese to International Education" formulated by the Office of

the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council of the Chinese mainland region sets the professional courses of MTCSOL as three parts: core courses, extended courses and training courses. The extended courses are divided into three parts. Modules are elective; core courses and training courses are compulsory, and universities should refer to the "plan" and make appropriate adjustments based on their own characteristics (CaoYong 2017) [12]. The details are shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Comparison of curriculum for MTCSOL

	BLCU	EdUHK
Compulsory course	Degree public courses 1. Politics 2. Foreign language Degree core course 3. Chinese as a second language teaching 4. Second language acquisition 5. Foreign Chinese Classroom Teaching Case 6. Chinese culture and communication 7. Intercultural communication Training course 8. Teaching investigation and analysis 9. Classroom observation and practice 10. Teaching test and assessment 11. Chinese Culture Arts and Display	1. Chinese courses, teaching materials and teaching design 2. International Chinese Teaching Method: Speech, Listening, Speaking 3. International Chinese Teaching Method: Literacy, Read and Writing 4. Second language acquisition with Chinese learning 5. Modern Chinese
Elective course	Expand the course: Category 1. Chinese as a foreign language teaching Chinese language elements teaching/ Deflection analysis/ Han and foreign language contrast/ Course Design/ Modern language education technology/ Chinese textbooks and teaching resources Category 2. Chinese cultural communication and cross-cultural communication Chinese thinking history/ Country and regional culture/ Chinese and foreign cultural exchange topics/ Etiquette and international relations Category 3. Education and Teaching Management Foreign language education psychology/ Foreign primary and secondary education topics/ Teaching design and management/ Chinese International Promotion	1. Discourse analysis 2. Chinese language culture 3. Language Teaching Theory and Foreign Language Teaching Method 4. Language Teaching and Information Technology 5. Modern Chinese 6. Special study 7. Second language teaching research method 8. Intercultural communication 9. Diploma Programme (DP) of International Baccalaureate (IB) and Teaching Chinese as a Second Language 10. Classic study and cultural topics 11. School experience 12. Play and language art 13. Literature and Movies 14. Classic work selection 15. Network literature and popular culture 16. Children's literature research: rhyme language children's literature research

By comparison, we can find that the courses of two universities are more diversified, and all aspects of their respective cultivation goals are completely covered. Although their courses are slightly different depending on the use of language habits, it is generally equivalent, but also features. First, the number of elective courses is very different. Beijing Language University and the Education University of Hong Kong's curriculum are similar, but the content is particularly different. Second, in terms of language ontology, it is a research part of the Education University of Hong Kong in the elective and compulsory courses, Beijing Language University has more than the compulsory course, and the elective courses are more Emphasize the application of language, mostly as an overview. This is consistent with the lack of language ontology in the cultivation target. Third, regarding the international IB course, Hong Kong is unique. In the international curriculum, Beijing Language University has not been reflected in the curriculum system. In 2017/18 and later entered the MTCSOL of the Education University of Hong Kong, as long as the designated course is completed, IB certificates can be obtained. That means IB Chinese teaching can be engaged in. Such a part, Beijing Language University can learn from its successful experience and link the course study and the International Chinese Teacher Certificate to further expand the scope of employment.

3.2.4. The similarities and differences in requirements of credits

Two universities give a clear provision for the cultivation of the study, including the three parts of the compulsory, elective and practical, and the total demands were 30 credits and above. Among them, in the credit requirements of Beijing Language and Culture University, the training courses, teaching internships and dissertations are listed separately; The Education University of Hong Kong will put the school experience course in the elective course, mainly considering the original teaching experience and visa, etc. The details are shown in Table 5:

Table 5: Comparison of Credit requirements for MTCSOL

	BLCU	EdUHK
Compulsory course's credit	30 credits (including 6 credits, training courses, 6 credits, teaching internships, 2 credits of dissertation)	15 credits
Elective course's credit	8 credits, division modules	15 credits (With school experience 6 credits)
total	38 credits	30 credits

3.2.5. The similarities and differences in the teaching internship

Due to the practical needs of training high-quality teachers of international Chinese, the teaching practice is indispensable. Teaching practice is a transitional stage for students from theoretical study to teaching work. It is also a process to test whether master students majoring in MTCSOL have achieved the training goals, and it is a necessary part of training talents for MTCSOL (Feng Kangjing 2015) [13]. Therefore, regardless of whether it is an optional course, a compulsory course, or a separate requirement, the two places attach great importance to the internship and are accompanied by special personnel for follow-up supervision. In Chinese mainland region, the Department of Degree Management and Postgraduate Education of the State Council has also included teaching internships, but the specific number of class hours has not been specified, and each university will arrange it by itself (Wang Wenting 2016) [14]. Beijing Language and Culture University requires teaching practice not less than 40 hours. The practice content includes Chinese teaching design, observation and practice. At the same time, students are encouraged to participate in the teaching or cultural communication activities of Confucius Institutes and overseas primary and secondary schools as volunteers. The Education University of Hong Kong offers "school experience" courses in elective courses, including international school visits in the first semester and local or overseas internships in the second semester (including two teaching inspections). Details are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Comparison of Teaching Practice for MTCSOL

	BLCU	EdUHK
Internship period	Teaching practice not less than 40 hours	6 weeks
Internship location	Unlimited, some volunteers participate in the teaching activities of the Confucius Institute and overseas elementary and middle schools	International/DSS schools in Hong Kong* and primary/secondary/college schools in overseas schools
Internship nature	Separate request	Elective course

(* DSS schools in Hong Kong, means Direct-Subsidy Schools in Hong Kong funded by the Direct Subsidy Scheme, have relatively high autonomy and can customize their courses, fees and admission requirements, which are close to private schools.)

After comparison, it is found that the Education University of Hong Kong has the longer teaching practice. In addition, the Education University of Hong Kong clearly require counterpart internship units and provide relevant certificates and requires at least two teaching inspections. At the same time, due to the Education University of Hong Kong's own factors, internship units are more inclined to international schools, especially after obtaining the IB course certification, they are obviously

internationally competitive.

3.3. Suggestions on the cultivation of MTCSOL

Through the comparison of the similarities and differences among training objectives, admission requirements, curriculum settings, credit requirements and internship arrangements of MTCSOL in the two places, it is found that the talent training model is becoming more and more perfect, and has formed their own systems and characteristics, but still there are some things that can be learned from each other. Accordingly, the following suggestions are made:

First, optimize the goal of talent training, and effectively improve the research capabilities of master students. Part of the reason may be due to the existence of academic postgraduates in linguistics and applied linguistics in Chinese mainland region universities, resulting in a significant reduction in the scientific research requirements of postgraduates in MTCSOL. However, as a master's degree student, we should first have the ability to analyze and independently research and solve problems. However, the talent training goals and curriculum of Beijing Language and Culture University in Chinese mainland region lack corresponding special researches in both Chinese and cultural subjects. In particular, the cultural category is too knowledge overview category, which highlights the difference between "craftsman" and "teacher", which is bound to affect the effectiveness of actual teaching. International Chinese education must be expanded to the field of cultural connotation on the basis of language education, otherwise the cultural exchange will be superficial, and the formalization will not reach the deep collision.

Second, expand the optional scale of elective courses, adjust the ratio of elective courses to compulsory courses, and fully consider the individual development of each student. Today, when education is student-centered, we need to avoid the "one size fits all" model and break the basic framework of "Chinese + English + Chinese international education". The universities should pay attention to the students' own strengths and interests and combine the characteristics of the school, provide sufficient professional courses, appropriately reduce the proportion of compulsory courses, increase the proportion of elective courses, and tailor them (Yu Pingfang 2020)[15]. For example, we can selectively refer to international courses, study the four major courses of language, culture, learning and teaching and combine with its own characteristics to further deepen and expand our optional content.

Third, strengthen the awareness of serving society and further implement industry-university-research cooperation. Known as the "ivory tower", the university is facing a new challenge: what you learn is not what you use, and what you use is not what you learn. Behind the disconnection of learning and use reflects the lack or even lack of colleges and universities' awareness and ability to serve the society. At present, the employment rate of the MTCSOL is less than 30%. While we encourage students to cultivate their second or even third expertise or interest, we need to re-examine our talent training model (Wang Tianmiao 2017) [9]. As universities, they should actively integrate the concept of serving society into the whole process of talent training, scientific research, cultural inheritance and innovation, and international exchanges and cooperation. The community service project of the Education University of Hong Kong allows prospective teachers to take an active part in specific research plans and curriculum development practices to get out of the classroom and focus on the community to give back to the society. Its knowledge transfer activities have become the third pillar of the development of the Education University of Hong Kong, promoting the development of schools and society, and meeting the needs of educational development in the region. It is particularly important for Beijing Language and Culture University to effectively play the integrated role of the existing online education college, international Chinese teaching and research base, and other departments.

Fourth, promote the sharing and integration of resources for MTCSOL in two places. First, in terms of curriculum, the two places can learn from each other. Beijing Language and culture university can learn from the international courses, literature and culture topics of Hong Kong University of education; Hong Kong University of education can learn from the cultural and educational courses offered by Beijing Language and Culture University to achieve complementary advantages. Secondly, in terms of teaching practice arrangements, the Hong Kong University of education can realize students' diversified internships through the language cooperation center and related institutions; Beijing Language and culture university can also learn from the relevant measures of Hong Kong universities to implement the effectiveness of teaching practice, including the market practice of huge training institutions at home and abroad. In addition, the two places can continue to expand different forms of academic forums and non academic exchanges, such as Beijing Language and Culture University's exchange and study in Hong Kong; Hong Kong University of education's experience program in the mainland, etc.

In terms of the cultivation of masters of Chinese International Education and the application of science and technology, especially in the post epidemic era, the two places need to strengthen exchanges and cooperation. From focusing on offline to online/offline, support online Chinese teaching, pay special attention to Chinese learning in video games and Chinese learning in the "metauniverse" social state (Hu Yiming 2022)[16]. With the increase of overseas demand for local Chinese talents and the continuous development of new technologies, the cross-border distance Chinese international education implemented by the school of online education at Beijing Language and Culture University has gradually become one of the effective ways to cultivate overseas Chinese talents(Li Wei 2022) [17].

In a word, the training mode of master of Chinese International Education in the two places is equal and has its own characteristics. If we can learn from each other and develop together, it will promote the development of Chinese International Education and create a win-win situation. Just as Ma Jianfei, Secretary of the Party committee and director of the Chinese foreign language exchange and cooperation center of the Ministry of education, put forward the guidance of strengthening the "Five Modernizations" in his speech at the Fifth National Symposium on the construction of the undergraduate program of Chinese International Education in Colleges and universities in 2022, the construction of the master of Chinese international education also needs to consider the convergence of the training of undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral talents, multilingual, cross-cultural talent structure, the training of school characteristics, the emphasis on application practice and the endogenous development of the localization of overseas students.

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