

THE UNIQUENESS OF TONES IN TEACHING CHINESE

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Abstract

This article describes in detail the characteristics of Chinese tones. It is also emphasized about the meanings of words that differ in tones.

Key words: Chinese, tones, rhyming words, terminology, Chinese morphemes, etc.

Chinese language learners should learn Chinese idioms based on mastering certain Chinese characters and vocabulary. Learning Chinese cannot be rushed, it should be done step by step depending on the situation of the students. We first allow Chinese language learners to learn some basic idioms that are often used or seen in everyday life. Then refer to the situation where the students are mastering and move the idiom teaching from low level to high level. Strictly separate the difficulty levels of idioms, organize idioms in order and teach them step by step, the results will be even greater! This teaching method mainly adopts the direct meaning teaching method. Idioms are composed of four morphemes. The semantic teaching method is to study the relationship between four morphemes. This relationship is usually of two types, one is that the four morphemes are semantically related to each other. Learners of the Chinese language need only learn to connect four semantics to get the meaning of an idiom. Another relationship is that the general meaning of an idiom can be derived from a single morpheme. By using this method, Chinese language learners will not feel unfamiliar or intimidated by the idioms they know. This method is widely used in teaching Chinese phrases and it is also more effective. However, there are individual idioms that do not fit this pattern and we need to learn more. Improving the Chinese language proficiency of Chinese language learners is to develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, but most importantly, to improve their language communication skills. We need to establish mechanisms to create opportunities for foreign students to do internships. In order to teach idioms, I think what we should focus on is increasing the oral level of idioms in the daily life of Chinese language learners. Although we don't use too many idioms in normal life, we can use them during the conversation with the students during the lesson.

For one, Chinese grammar is a lot simpler and easier to learn than pretty much any European language. While there's definitely "correct" and "incorrect" grammar in Chinese, as a beginner you'll be amazed by how much you can get away with! In Chinese, individual words are like bricks that you're free to arrange in your own order. Common grammar obstacles in European languages like tense and gender are comparatively trivial in Mandarin. This means you'll be constructing your own sentences within a few months of studying the language, and you'll be understood more often than you expect. If you've ever studied any European languages, you'll realize how unusual this is. Let's take the phrase 我去超市 (wǒ qù chāoshì), meaning "I go to the store," as an example. You'd also use the same verb form whether you're going today, tomorrow, you went yesterday or you're making a general statement such as "on Tuesdays I go to the store." In English, you'd have to change the verb dramatically depending on the tense: will go, am going, went, etc. There's another, subtler advantage to learning a language and discovering a culture that appears totally alien to your own. While visitors to Paris or London are typically expected to speak the local language, foreigners in China are not. This means that even your tentative beginner efforts will be met with encouragement and appreciation by locals. There are four tones in Mandarin Chinese, which are:

- First tone: a level and higher pitch
- Second tone: rising, start from a lower pitch and end at a slightly higher pitch
- Third tone: falling rising, start at a neutral tone then dip to a lower pitch before ending at a higher pitch
- Fourth tone: falling, start the syllable at a slightly higher than neutral pitch then go quickly and strongly downwards

Teaching idioms as the main direction and difficulty of teaching Chinese as a foreign language requires us to quickly learn research methods that will help to develop Chinese as a foreign language in depth. This is the key to our idiom teaching work and the main purpose of this article. In a situation where the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language is rapidly developing in our country, we are witnessing the slow development of our language teaching manuals. Teaching Chinese as a foreign language is divided into three stages: elementary, middle and deep. However, the proportion of idioms included in advanced level textbooks is not high. This phenomenon directly shows that Chinese idioms are not emphasized in foreign language work, and it is really difficult to understand and learn Chinese idioms. But I personally think that it is necessary to pay attention to and develop the teaching materials of idiom teaching. The main purpose of teaching idioms in Chinese as a foreign language is to improve foreign students' ability to communicate with the language. Therefore, we need to create opportunities for Chinese language learners to speak Chinese idioms in everyday life and even in the classroom. It is important to use idioms correctly and appropriately, to clearly and clearly express the meaning you want to express in idioms. One of the great advantages of using a

pragmatic teaching mode to learn idioms is that it helps Chinese language learners understand the emotional and praiseworthy colors of idioms. Although there are some idioms that do not differ from other idioms on the surface, their emotional color is different.

As mentioned earlier, tones are used to determine which Mandarin Chinese word is being implied. For example, the meaning of mǎ (horse) is very different from mā (mother). Thus when learning new vocabulary, it is really important to practice both the pronunciation of the word and its tone. The wrong tones can change the meaning of your sentences. The following table of tones has sound clips which allow you to hear the tones. Listen to each tone and try to mimic it as closely as possible. Imagine someone reading a passage out loud with a monotonous voice, that's probably how the first tone would sound. It sounds flat and consistent throughout the whole syllable and is drawn with a straight line across. Now try reading this out loud: "like this?". Did you notice the increase in pitch when you read "this"? You got it! That's how a second tone sounds like. The second tone rises and is associated with the intonation used in English when asking a question. It looks like a rising diagonal line when written. The third tone is like a roller coaster ride, plunging deep down before it soars up. It is also called the "dip tone" and it is written with a letter "v" above a letter in the Pinyin. The fourth tone is the opposite of the second tone, falling sharply to the end of the tonal range, and is marked with a decreasing diagonal line. This tone can be associated with anger, so you could try saying "go away!" in an angry tone, and "away" should sound similar to the fourth tone.

Pinyin is the standard system of romanized transliteration of Chinese characters. It is an enormous help for Chinese learners. One great thing about pinyin in this digital age is that, you can type pinyin into your computer and they will give you character suggestions. This means that you can text or write emails in Chinese without needing to know each stroke of the character. As long as you know the pinyin and recognize the character you are looking for, you can type in Chinese. The common idea that learning Chinese means having to memorize three to four thousand completely unrelated characters makes the language seem completely impossible, fortunately this idea is also completely untrue. Learning one character opens up a whole world of other logically interrelated characters. For example, perhaps you already know the character for fire, 火 (huǒ), and the character for mountain, 山 (shān), but you're trying to figure out how to say "volcano". After looking up the Chinese word for volcano on your online dictionary, you realize it's incredibly straightforward: merely add fire (火) to mountain (山) and you get fire-mountain, 火山 (huǒshān), or volcano!

In a sense, the difficulty and inaccessibility of the Chinese language is an advantage: upon discovering that you are trying to learn their language Chinese people are almost always eager to help you in your learning journey. Chinese culture instills a deep sense of pride about China's millennia-old culture and its distinctive language. In addition, there are relatively few foreigners who ever try to learn the language because of its perceived difficulty, so having

even a few basic phrases and simple words under your belt will make a powerful difference in your relationships. If you mutter a few simple greetings in Chinese upon entering a restaurant or a shop it will almost unfailingly be answered by a surprised, slightly confused face that immediately transforms into a welcoming smile. By using Chinese, making friends in China is easy. Since chatting with friends is one of the best ways to attain Chinese fluency, this is another way learning Chinese is simple.

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