

Research on Teaching Methods of Comprehensive Chinese Courses for International Students from ASEAN Countries under the Background of "Chinese + Vocational Education"

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Abstract: Under the background of "Chinese + Vocational Education", comprehensive Chinese courses for international students from ASEAN countries need to break through the framework of general language teaching and construct a teaching method system that integrates vocational orientation. Based on the vertical hierarchical characteristics of Chinese communication needs in the ASEAN regional vocational field, this research proposes the coupling mechanism of Chinese vocational competence and general Chinese courses as well as the selection principles of task-based language content. At the level of course design, it develops the knowledge organization sequence driven by vocational contexts, the embedding methods of vocational corpora for comprehensive skill training, and the flexible teaching units for multiple vocational fields. At the level of interaction strategies, it establishes classroom activity configurations based on vocational procedures, feedback mechanisms on language forms with cross-cultural vocational communication awareness, and the response paths to positive and negative transfer of native language vocational contexts. The above method system provides an operational teaching logic for the systematic cultivation of vocational Chinese competence of international students from ASEAN countries.

Keywords: Chinese + Vocational Education; international students from ASEAN countries; comprehensive Chinese courses; teaching methods; vocational language competence

Introduction

With the deepening of vocational exchanges between ASEAN countries and the Chinese-speaking region, international students studying in China generally face language application barriers in vocational fields after completing general Chinese learning. Existing comprehensive Chinese courses are mostly based on daily life and academic scenarios, lacking systematic responses to the communicative needs of vocational fields such as manufacturing, service industries, and cross-border trade. This leads to an obvious gap between learners' language competence and the requirements of vocational posts. Therefore, conducting research on teaching methods of comprehensive Chinese courses under the background of "Chinese + Vocational Education" for international students from ASEAN countries has practical necessity. This research aims to form a complete method chain from needs identification, content organization, module construction, to classroom interaction strategies, thereby improving the integration efficiency of Chinese teaching and vocational competence cultivation.

1. Theoretical Framework of Chinese Vocational Integration Courses for International Students from ASEAN Countries

1.1 Hierarchical Levels of Chinese Communication Needs in the ASEAN Regional Vocational Field

The differences in industrial structures among ASEAN countries in manufacturing, service industries, and cross-border trade give rise to a vertical hierarchical phenomenon of Chinese communication needs within the vocational field. The basic level comprises instruction comprehension and simple responses in basic operations, which involves the recognition of vocational vocabulary and short-sentence replies in standardized procedures. The intermediate level consists of information

exchange and problem description in technical collaboration, which requires learners to master procedural discourse related to equipment operation and quality inspection. The advanced level involves task coordination and conflict resolution in management communication, which demands the use of relatively complex vocational texts for making suggestions, providing explanations, and conducting negotiations. These three need levels are not isolated from one another but appear alternately in different task scenarios of the same vocational post, imposing dual requirements of vertical articulation and horizontal compatibility on the content organization of comprehensive Chinese courses.

The identification of need levels provides a quantifiable basis for the goal setting of comprehensive Chinese courses. The basic operation level corresponds to the initial activation of Chinese listening and speaking skills, with emphasis on phonetic recognition and reaction speed to high-frequency commands. The technical collaboration level requires the involvement of reading and writing skills, demanding that learners can read simple work manuals and fill in process records. The management communication level rises to discourse-level expression and comprehension, covering report writing, meeting speeches, and pragmatic strategies in cross-departmental coordination. The instructional design targeting international students from ASEAN countries needs to embed the above levels into the language competence framework of comprehensive courses, so that the needs at each level can be transformed into assessable communicative tasks, thus avoiding the blind accumulation of vocational language content^[1].

1.2 Coupling Mechanism of Chinese Vocational Competence and General Comprehensive Chinese Courses

Chinese vocational competence can be deconstructed into four dimensions: vocational vocabulary reserve, vocational sentence pattern application, vocational discourse construction, and vocational communication strategies. The general comprehensive Chinese course takes phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, Chinese characters, and comprehensive skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing as its core knowledge system. The coupling logic between the two lies in the following fact: general Chinese provides the underlying rules of language forms, such as the completeness of syntactic structures and the coherence of discourse cohesion; vocational competence, in turn, endows these rules with specific usage scenarios and functional orientations. For example, the "ba" sentence pattern in Chinese is a grammatical item in general teaching, but in the vocational field, it often appears in operational instructions such as "fix the component properly," thereby establishing a direct correspondence between grammatical forms and vocational functions.

The specific operation of the coupling mechanism is manifested in two paths: competence mapping and content intersection. Competence mapping refers to breaking down each dimension of vocational competence into micro-skills of language that can be trained in general courses. For instance, it maps "vocabulary reserve" into semantic field clustering in vocabulary teaching and maps "vocational communication strategies" into contextualized feedback training in listening and speaking teaching. Content intersection means adding vocational topic modules to the original topics of life, study, and social interaction in general courses, so that the same language point appears repeatedly in different topics, thereby enhancing the transfer efficiency from general competence to vocational competence. This dynamic integration avoids the simple superposition of "Chinese" and "vocational education" and instead forms a teaching closed loop in which language forms and vocational functions support each other.

1.3 Principles for Selecting Vocational Language Content Based on Task Types

The communicative behaviors in the vocational field can be divided into three major categories according to task types: transaction-processing tasks, interpersonal communication tasks, and technical operation tasks. Transaction-processing tasks include order verification, inventory reporting, shift scheduling communication, and the like; these tasks require language content to have a high degree of formulaic features and the ability to extract numerical information. Interpersonal communication tasks cover customer reception, colleague collaboration, superior-subordinate reporting, and the like; these tasks focus on politeness strategies, opinion expression, and emotion regulation language items. Technical operation tasks involve equipment usage instructions, safety protocol transmission, fault description, and the like; these tasks require accurate verb sequences and spatial orientation expressions. Different task types have significantly different demands for language content. When selecting content, one must take task frequency and the severity of communication consequences as the priority criteria.

Based on the above classification, this research further establishes three selection principles to guide content decision-making. First, the principle of task typicality, which gives priority to the language content corresponding to the task types with the highest repetition rate in the major industries where ASEAN international students are mainly employed, such as inquiry and quotation statements in the business field. Second, the principle of language load capacity, which evaluates whether a certain language content can serve multiple tasks simultaneously. For example, the structure "need + noun/verb phrase" can be used for both transaction processing (need an invoice) and interpersonal communication (need help). Third, the principle of transferability, which determines whether the learned vocational language content can be transferred from simulated tasks to real vocational scenarios, emphasizing the authenticity of the context and the vocational standardization of material sources. The language content screened out through the above principles not only meets the urgent needs of immediate vocational communication but also reserves an interface for the continuous development of comprehensive Chinese competence^[2].

2. The Teaching Modularization Design Logic of Comprehensive Chinese Courses

2.1 The Sequence of Language Knowledge Organization Driven by Vocational Contexts

The organization sequence of language knowledge determines the efficiency of learners' cognitive pathways from input to output. Under the drive of vocational contexts, the sequence design takes the vocational work procedure as the timeline and arranges the knowledge of Chinese phonetics, vocabulary, syntax, and pragmatics according to the occurrence order of job tasks. For example, in the vocational context of cross-border e-commerce, the knowledge sequence starts with nouns and quantity phrases required for product information reading, then moves to interrogative sentences and imperative sentences used in customer inquiry responses, and finally proceeds to billing terms and confirmation patterns at the order processing stage. This sequence breaks away from the traditional model of progressing according to grammatical difficulty found in general textbooks. Instead, it takes the logic of vocational action as the primary organizing principle, so that language forms acquire their initial presentation rationality within real operational steps.

The vertical articulation of the sequence requires one to balance the intrinsic difficulty levels of language knowledge with the external temporal order of vocational contexts. When a certain grammatical item appears early in the vocational procedure but its formal complexity exceeds the learners' current level, the strategy of partial input and progressive complete presentation should be adopted. That is to say, one first presents the core structure of the grammatical item to complete simple tasks, and then gradually supplements modifiers and transformation forms in subsequent tasks. Similarly, for vocabulary that is simple in form but infrequently used in vocational settings, one can postpone its intensive treatment to the corresponding task stage. This two-way constraint mechanism ensures that the language knowledge sequence not only serves the immediate needs of vocational contexts but also follows the cognitive laws of second language acquisition, thus avoiding the fragmentation of the grammatical system due to excessive concession to vocational logic.

2.2 Embedding Methods of Vocational Corpora in Comprehensive Skill Training

Comprehensive skill training covers the integrated application of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The embedding of vocational corpora requires differentiated strategies across different skill dimensions. In listening training, the embedding of vocational corpora mainly takes on-site recordings of job posts or simulated dialogues as the primary sources, preserving original features such as speech rate, accent, and background noise, and trains learners to extract key vocational information from non-standardized speech streams. Speaking training adopts methods of vocational role rotation and task-driven practice, allowing learners to alternately play the roles of service provider and receiver, and to acquire fixed expressions and adaptive speech for vocational settings through turn-taking. Reading materials focus mainly on short vocational texts such as work tables, operation instructions, and simple reports, emphasizing the abilities of information locating and format recognition. Writing tasks focus on record-type texts in vocational scenarios, such as work logs, handover checklists, and problem remarks, with control over text length and sentence complexity^[3].

The embedding of vocational corpora needs to maintain the integrity and coherence of language skill training, avoiding the fragmentation of the four skills into isolated vocational practice modules. An effective approach is to design a cross-skill task chain around the same vocational event: learners first

listen to a vocational dialogue (listening), extract key information, and then fill in a form (reading and writing); subsequently, they conduct a simulated negotiation with a partner based on the form content (speaking). In this process, the same set of vocational corpora appears repeatedly across different skill segments, which not only reinforces the memory retention of vocabulary and sentence patterns but also restores the real-world condition of using multiple skills simultaneously in vocational communication. The selection of vocational corpora should also take into account the communicative conventions in the native vocational cultures of ASEAN international students. For example, in service-oriented vocational corpora, one should incorporate differences in address forms based on the age and status of customers, so that the language input is closer to the actual working environment.

2.3 Construction of Flexible Teaching Units for Multiple Vocational Fields

ASEAN international students may enter multiple vocational fields after graduation, such as commerce, tourism, catering, and logistics. A single fixed teaching content cannot cover their differentiated language needs. The construction of flexible teaching units is based on a two-layer structure consisting of a "core fixed unit" and "domain-specific elective units". The core fixed unit covers cross-vocational general Chinese communication skills, including basic vocational politeness expressions, number and time expressions, spatial orientation and path descriptions, and simple problem reporting. These contents remain effective regardless of changes in the vocational field. The domain-specific elective units are designed for specialized language content in specific vocational fields, such as inquiry and bargaining sentences in the business field, attraction introduction discourse in the tourism field, and dish recommendation expressions in the catering field. Each elective unit possesses domain-specific recognition in terms of vocabulary, sentence patterns, and discourse types.

The realization of flexible teaching units depends on the standardization of interfaces between modules and the clarification of combination rules. The core unit and the elective units connect through functional labels. For example, the function of "requesting assistance" appears as the general sentence pattern "Could you please..." in the core unit, transforms into "Could you please confirm the quotation?" in the business elective unit, and transforms into "Could you please check the waybill number?" in the logistics elective unit. After learners select corresponding units based on their own career plans, the general language framework provided by the core unit can accelerate their mastery of the elective content. Regarding the allocation of teaching hours, the core unit accounts for approximately two-thirds of the teaching time, while the elective units are flexibly arranged according to students' course selection. This design enables the same comprehensive Chinese course to serve international students heading toward multiple vocational directions, achieving personalized content configuration while maintaining the integrity of the teaching system^[4].

3. Interactive-Oriented Vocational Chinese Teaching Strategies

3.1 Configuration of Comprehensive Chinese Classroom Activities Based on Vocational Procedures

The configuration of classroom activities takes the stages of vocational procedures as its basis, decomposing a complete vocational operation process into several consecutive communicative events, with each event corresponding to a type of comprehensive Chinese skill training activity. Taking the front desk reception process in a hotel as an example, the activity sequence starts with greetings and identity confirmation at the guest greeting stage, where this research configures role-simulation activities combining listening and speaking, requiring learners to repeat and verify the information after listening to the guests. The sequence then moves to information entry and document signing at the check-in registration stage, where it configures scenario-based form-filling activities focusing on reading and writing, involving the recognition of table columns and the understanding of handwritten signature instructions. The sequence ends with bill verification and farewell expressions at the checkout stage, where it configures comprehensive problem-solving activities simulating multi-turn dialogues and document confirmation. The time allocation of activities matches the discourse density at each stage of the vocational procedure, with stages of higher discourse density receiving more classroom activity time, thereby ensuring that opportunities for language production align with the importance of vocational tasks.

The configuration of activities requires setting different levels of interactive difficulty within the same vocational procedure to accommodate individual differences in learners' language proficiency. The beginner level adopts closed activities, such as instruction-execution pair practice, where learners

only need to complete the understanding and response to a single piece of information. The intermediate level introduces open activities, such as negotiation dialogues in fault situations, requiring learners to actively ask follow-up questions and provide supplementary explanations when information is incomplete. The advanced level designs multi-role collaborative activities, simulating information transmission and task handover between different posts, and examines learners' language regulation abilities in complex turn-taking networks. The same vocational procedure corresponds to three difficulty levels of activities, and teachers dynamically assign them based on learners' periodic assessment results, so that classroom interaction maintains the authenticity of vocational contexts while retaining the controllability of language training.

3.2 A Language Form Feedback Mechanism for Cross-Cultural Vocational Communication Awareness

Cross-cultural vocational communication awareness is manifested in whether learners can identify and adjust conflicts in vocational discourse styles caused by cultural differences. The language form feedback mechanism focuses on the vocational discourse produced by learners in classroom activities and provides correction and reinforcement at the formal level from the perspective of pragmatic appropriateness. Feedback is divided into two types: explicit and implicit. Explicit feedback directly points out the mismatch between the discourse form and the cultural norms of the vocational scene. For example, in the vocational fields of some ASEAN countries, requests to superiors tend to use indirect sentence patterns, whereas in Chinese vocational fields, direct sentence patterns with politeness markers are more acceptable in equivalent situations. Teachers present the differences through recasting or meta-linguistic explanation. Implicit feedback is realized through input enhancement: teachers repeat the learners' utterances but replace them with vocabulary or sentence patterns that are more consistent with Chinese vocational culture, allowing learners to perceive the differences through comparison^[5].

The design of this feedback mechanism transforms cultural dimensions into operational parameters of language forms, including address hierarchies, directive intensity, refusal strategies, and gratitude frequency. Each parameter sets up a continuum from the native vocational culture of ASEAN countries to the Chinese vocational culture. Learners' initial expression positions are located through classroom activity records, and teachers provide targeted language form feedback based on the direction and degree of deviation. For example, in a product recommendation activity, if a learner uses an overly strong directive such as "You should buy this," the teacher provides feedback by saying "You might consider this one; it suits your needs better," thereby adjusting the directive form into a suggestion form while retaining the recommendation intention. After multiple rounds of feedback and learner self-correction, the cross-cultural appropriateness of language forms becomes gradually internalized, forming an automated pragmatic selection mechanism in vocational communication.

3.3 Responses to Positive and Negative Transfer of Native Language Vocational Contexts for ASEAN Learners

The languages of ASEAN countries possess linguistic features in vocational contexts that are either similar to or different from those of Chinese, and these features manifest as transfer phenomena in comprehensive Chinese courses. Positive transfer occurs when language forms and function matching patterns are similar. For example, the honorific particles used for requests in the Thai vocational context are comparable to the Chinese character "qing" in terms of syntactic position and pragmatic function, so learners can quickly acquire the "qing + verb" structure. Negative transfer stems from fundamental differences in the organization of vocational discourse between the native language and Chinese. For instance, the verb-preposing and subject-omission structure in Vietnamese vocational directives conflicts with the complete structure of "nin + qing + verb" in Chinese, leading learners to produce sentences with reversed word order such as "qing que ren nin." Identifying the specific manifestations of various types of positive and negative transfer is the prerequisite for formulating response strategies^[6].

The response strategy adopts a dual-track path of reinforcing positive transfer and blocking negative transfer. For features of positive transfer, the instructional design intentionally guides learners to perceive the correspondences between their native language and Chinese, and facilitates the occurrence of positive transfer through paired example displays and comparative induction activities. For features of negative transfer, the strategy combines structural reorganization training with input flood enhancement. Structural reorganization training requires learners to gradually transform erroneous sentence patterns directly translated from their native language into correct Chinese sentence patterns,

breaking the syntactic inertia of the native language through the mechanical operations of segmentation and reorganization. Input flood enhancement intensively presents the target structures in listening materials, enabling learners to form new syntactic expectations through high-frequency input. Both types of strategies need to be accompanied by the awakening of learners' transfer awareness, so that learners can actively monitor transfer errors in their own output rather than relying entirely on external feedback. Through systematic transfer management, the native language vocational context transforms from a source of interference into a usable linguistic resource.

Conclusion

This research starts from the need levels, the coupling mechanism, and the selection principles to construct a theoretical framework of Chinese vocational integration courses for international students from ASEAN countries. At the level of modular design, this research proposes the knowledge organization sequence, the embedding methods of vocational corpora, and the flexible teaching units. Under the interactive orientation, this research develops the activity configuration based on vocational procedures, the cross-cultural feedback mechanism, and the transfer response strategies. The above method system breaks through the binary separation between general Chinese teaching and vocational language training, and provides a systematic path for the instructional design of comprehensive Chinese courses for ASEAN international students. Future research can further explore the application of digital teaching resources in vocational context simulation and the optimization of the dynamic adaptation mechanism of teaching content across multiple vocational fields.

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