

**BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
TEACHING AND CULTURE TEACHING IN CHINA  
FROM 1949 UP TO PRESENT TIME**

In the new century, more and more people have acknowledged the importance of learning a foreign language, but the situation is not encouraging: most of them are good at writing and reading, but when they encounter the native speakers, they are dumbfounded. Therefore, the goal of college language teaching should be to enhance students' cross-cultural understanding and cross-cultural communication.

Foreign language teaching in China before the 1920s remained largely social-oriented or pragmatic-oriented, owing to the requirements of the society, emphasizing the role of language in communication (mainly in written form). Foreign language teaching between the 1920s and 1940s remained largely artistic-literary-oriented, owing largely to both domestic political situation and Western academic influence.

People's Republic of China was founded on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1949. The Russian language teaching was emphasized and made the first foreign language at the universities and even in secondary schools because of the general policy of learning from Russia in the process of our own country building.

During this time, the teaching of English and other foreign language was very much ignored. Because China then had no diplomatic relationship with the West and the contacts with other Asian, African and Latin American countries remained on a very small scale. So, the Russian Conscious Comparative Method was introduced and widely followed in especially the Russian language teaching. Cultural teaching, as it happened before, has never failed to be part of the university syllabus.

The method, according to Zhang Jianzhong [1, p. 70 – 89], and Li Tingxiang [2, p. 317 – 318], had the following tenets: (1) grammar and sentence structure analysis is the primary focus; (2) the use of the native language, which is regarded as a very important means of foreign language teaching, is emphasized, (3) translation from the target language and vice versa is considered an important means of a foreign language teaching; (4) the training of students' ability to read is also one of the primary concerns of the teaching technique. In fact, the Conscious Comparative Method is the Grammar-translation Method under a different name. Thus, it is clearly a theoretical step backwards in teaching of foreign languages in China.

By the end of 1957, the provision of the Russian language teaching was reduced, what relatively enlarged the English language teaching practice both in secondary schools and at the universities.

In 1958, the Revolution in Education took place. Foreign language teaching was accused of the tendency of being detached from politics and realities. Foreign languages teaching was declared to serve the politics and the people.

As a result, articles of a political theme reflecting the realities of Chinese contemporary society dominated in new textbooks. «Language teaching theory was ignored and the teaching of the language was mostly placed outside its social and cultural context» [3]. Thus, the authentic language use was distorted.

In 1960, the government summed up the experience and lessons gained from the Revolution in Education and made some effort to returning things to normal again.

English course-book written by Xu Guozhang was published for the university language major students and was used well into the next two decades. However, these guidelines that stress the teaching of home culture and foreign culture were not put into practice because the country was on the point of experiencing a disaster, the Cultural Revolution.

In 1966, the «Culture Revolution» took place, which was launched by Mao Zedong and started in the field of education. The aim was to discard the «four olds» (old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits). There was chaos everywhere in schools and in society. During this time, foreign languages teaching suffered greatly. Such remarks as that foreign language teaching was useless could be frequently heard. Therefore, plenty of Western classical literary works were sealed up. The importation of these kinds of books was totally banned [4].

In October 1976, the Cultural Revolution finally came to an end. In 1977, the university matriculation examination system, abolished during the Cultural Revolution, was restored. In December 1978, the Third Plenary Session of the 11<sup>th</sup> Central Committee was held in Beijing, at which it was announced that the country was to be open to the West. New syllabuses, new textbooks and new foreign language teaching policy have been introduced at universities. Foreign language teaching, after about thirty years of following the ups and downs of the country's political and economic situation since 1949, seems to be developing on its right track.

## Литература

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