

Basic Situation and Analysis of Chinese Language Promotion in Countries along “the Belt and Road”

Li Chunwei

College of International Education and Exchange, Tianjin Normal University, China

ABSTRACT. *Language interoperability is a very important link in the construction of the “Belt and Road”. The promotion of Chinese language to the countries along the “Belt and Road” can benefit cultural exchanges and enhance friendly communication. This paper selects seven representative countries along the “Belt and Road” to study the development and promotion modes of Chinese teaching in these seven countries, and to analyze and conclude effective ways to popularize Chinese language.*

KEYWORDS: *“Belt and Road”; the promotion of Chinese language; Promotion modes*

1. Introduction

In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping put forward a major initiative to build “the Belt and Road” during the visit to Central Asian and Southeast Asian. “The Belt and Road”, shorted for “the Silk Road Economic Belt” and “the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road”, is consist of 64 countries. The construction of “the Belt and Road” requires language interaction, since language is needed to negotiate and formulate regional cooperation plans and to match relevant laws and acts. The promotion of Chinese language has become an important platform for all countries and regions along the belt and road to understand China, and has become a bridge to enhance friendship between China and foreign countries.

2. Research Background

The research on the international promotion of second language education has appeared since the 21st century. The research object of the research is to study the promotion of second language education in different countries, regions and cultural backgrounds, drawing lessons from the promotion of a certain language teaching in a certain country. Based on the theoretical analysis of Chinese and foreign references, this paper analyses the characteristics of the relevant countries and regions divided by different geographical regions, combining with documents, and selects seven

representative countries, including Mongolia in East Asia, Thailand in ASEAN, Turkey in West Asia, India in South Asia, Kazakhstan in Central Asia, Russia in CIS, and Poland in Central and Eastern Europe.

3. Basic Situation of Chinese Promotion in Seven Countries

3.1 Chinese Promotion in Mongolia

In 1993, Mongolian National University established the Chinese Language Teaching and Research Office, which became the beginning of the vigorous development of Chinese language in Mongolia. After Millennium year, the Chinese government strongly supported the teaching of Chinese in Mongolia. The Hanban (Confucius Institute Headquarters) first established the Confucius Institute in Mongolian National University, and at the same time set up the Chinese Proficiency Examination (HSK) examination points. Later, two Confucius Institutes and five Confucius classrooms were established successively. The Chinese government scholarship provides many Mongolian students with the opportunity to study in China. At present, there are about 10,000 students studying Chinese in various schools in Mongolia. At the same time, there are more than 8,000 students studying in China, including those who have received scholarships and paid for themselves. Considering Mongolia's total population of 3 million, 20000 of Chinese learners is a relatively high proportion.

3.2 Chinese Promotion in Thailand

In recent years, Thailand has gradually become one of the most representative locations for popular Chinese language use. In 1992, the Thai government adjusted its Chinese education policy, extending Chinese education from the grade 1-4 to grade 1-6. At the same time, it allowed qualified secondary schools to set up Chinese as an optional foreign language course. It also approved the first overseas Chinese-based University in Thailand, Huachiew Chalermprakiet University, founded by overseas Chinese. Since then, the promotion of Chinese language teaching has become a national strategy, and the government strongly supports Chinese language teaching from a national policy perspective. The Ministry of Education of Thailand has formulated the Program for Promoting Chinese Language Teaching and Improving National Competitiveness, and has formulated Chinese Language Teaching Syllabus in Thai Public Primary and Secondary Schools. Chinese teaching has entered the mainstream primary and secondary schools, and the number of students taking Chinese as an optional course in universities has increased rapidly. In addition, 15 Confucius Institutes and 20 Confucius Classrooms have been established so far.

3.3 Chinese Promotion in Turkey

In 2005, the Ministry of Education of Turkey included Chinese as an optional foreign language course in vocational high schools. In 2007 and 2008, Chinese language course was offered in 10 pilot commercial tourism high schools. There are four Confucius Institutes and two Confucius Classrooms in Turkey. And various Chinese language training centers have also played an important role in the promotion of Turkish Chinese. The Voice of Turkey, a famous radio station, has one hour of Chinese broadcasting every day. It broadcasts news Abstracts of various newspapers and introduces the situation of Turkish tourism. In addition, exhibitions of Chinese culture, such as calligraphy lectures, Film Festivals, and concerts at the Chinese Cultural Center contribute to the promotion of Chinese as well.

3.4 Chinese Promotion in India

At present, there are two Confucius Institutes and two Confucius Classrooms in India. In addition, Chinese language training institutions are also in full swing. According to India's *Mumbai Mirror*, Chinese ranks among Mumbai's hottest second languages. The form of Chinese promotion in India has also diversified, including experiencing Chinese calligraphy culture, celebrating Chinese New Year celebrations, promoting Chinese food activities, carrying out "visual narration of China's folk art exhibition", organizing mutual learning and international exchanges of India and China.

3.5 Chinese Promotion in Kazakhstan

At present, there are five Confucius Institutes in Kazakhstan. These five Confucius Institutes have played an important role in the promotion of Chinese language in Kazakhstan, but they are still difficult to meet the needs of the local people for Chinese language education. By the end of 2016, the number of Kazakh students studying in China was nearly 11,000. In addition to Confucius Institutes, there are four cultural centers in Kazakhstan that teach Chinese to spread Chinese culture. And there are more and more non-governmental organizations promoting Chinese in Kazakhstan, such as the International Chinese Language Teachers Association (ICLTA). These non-governmental organizations are recognized by the local people and loved by Chinese learners in Kazakhstan.

3.6 Chinese Promotion in Russia

Russian Chinese teaching has a history of more than 150 years. It has incomparable advantages in Chinese theory, practice and teaching to other countries in the region. In 2016, Russia officially used Chinese as one of the subjects of the unified national examination. At present, China and Russia continue to expand the scale of reciprocal study abroad, and strive to make the total number of students

from both sides reach 100,000 by 2020. At present, there are 17 Confucius Institutes and 5 Confucius Classrooms in Russia. In addition, Russian-speaking Chinese Learning Websites in Russia also play an important role in promoting Chinese. The content of Chinese learning in the websites involves of Chinese culture, Chinese geography, Chinese history, etc. It is very convenient for learners to choose contents and courses they need independently.

3.7 Chinese Promotion in Poland

More Poles are learning Chinese. Chinese has become a popular second foreign language in Poland. Warsaw University started the Chinese language course in 1925. There are three levels of teaching: undergraduate, master and doctor degree. By the end of 2016, Poland had five Confucius Institutes and two Confucius Classrooms, and there were more than 30 private Chinese schools in the country. More and more Polish kindergartens offer Chinese courses, which are funded entirely by the local government. Besides all kinds of Chinese language teaching, the experiential activities and international seminars on Chinese culture are important ways of cultural promotion, which effectively benefits the promotion of Chinese.

4. Conclusion

Under the background of “the Belt and Road”, local people from various countries have strongly been stimulated by the enthusiasm to learn Chinese, and Chinese teaching in various countries has been developing rapidly. Confucius institutes and Confucius classrooms have played an important role in the promotion of Chinese language, and the teaching level of Chinese in some universities, colleges, medium and primary schools and other social language training institutions has also been greatly improved. At the same time, along with the development of “the Belt and Road”, the interest and enthusiasm of scholars in various countries are increasing day by day, as well as the frequent exchanges of students' activities in various countries, and the in-depth exchange and integration of cultural relations among countries. All these have created a sound environment for the promotion of Chinese in the countries and regions along the “Belt and Road”.

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