

# On the Problems and Development Suggestions of Chinese Teaching in Thai Middle Schools

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**ABSTRACT.** *As a neighboring country of China, Thailand attaches great importance to Chinese language education. There are more and more Thai students studying in China, while in Thailand, Chinese teaching covers all stages from kindergarten to university. Although the number of Chinese learners in Thailand is increasing day by day, there are still many problems in Chinese teaching in Thailand. Thus, more people are needed to focus on research to solve the problem and promote the development of Chinese teaching in Thailand. This paper analyzes the existing problems of Chinese language teaching in Thai middle schools, and puts forward some development suggestions, so as to promote the development of Chinese international education.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Thai middle school, Chinese teaching, Problems, Suggestions*

## **1. Introduction**

The Chinese language education in Thailand has a long history. In recent years, due to the increasingly close communication between China and Thailand, the Chinese language education in Thailand is becoming important. However, there are also some problems that need to be solved urgently. Therefore, the author takes the internship experience in Srinagarindra the Princess Mother School in Sisaket of Thailand from June 2019 to March 2020 as an example. This paper makes a brief analysis and summary of the current situation of Chinese language teaching in Thai middle schools, summarizes the problems existing in Chinese teaching in Thai middle schools, and puts forward some suggestions, in order to promote the development of Chinese teaching in Thailand.

## **2. Overview of Srinagarindra the Princess Mother School in Sisaket, Thailand**

During my internship in Thailand, the author worked as a Chinese teacher at the Queen Mother Middle School of Sisaket. During this period, I learned deeply about the Chinese language teaching in this school, and through many interviews and exchanges with students, I learned about the students' real thoughts on learning

Chinese. Moreover, the author has had many exchanges with many Chinese teachers who came to Thailand for internships from China. The author also gave the author a more true understanding of the status quo of Chinese teaching in Thailand.<sup>[1]</sup>

Srinagarindra the Princess Mother School in Sisaket, Thailand, is located in the suburbs of Sisaket Province in the northeast of Thailand. The school is a public middle school with a junior high school and a high school. There are four classes for each grade; Class One and Class Two are liberal arts classes; class three are science classes, and class four are international classes. They mainly study English and Chinese. The number of students in each class varies, and the entire school has about two thousand students.

### **3. Problems in Chinese Teaching**

#### ***3.1 Insufficient Teaching Resources***

There are a total of six grades in middle school and high school, with 24 classes. On average, each class has only one Chinese class a week. Only students in international classes have two Chinese classes a week. There are only two Chinese teachers in the school, and there are no local teachers. There are obstacles in communication between teachers and students, which brings inconvenience to the teaching work and the development of Chinese activities. In addition, there are no teaching materials, no syllabus, and no comprehensive multimedia coverage. Teaching resources are seriously insufficient, which brings great inconvenience to teaching work. According to other Chinese teachers, this is the case in many schools. Students only have one Chinese class per week. The knowledge learned this week will be forgotten next week. Teachers need to do more work, which is not conducive to students' learning.<sup>[2]</sup>

#### ***3.2 Unreasonable Timing***

Students have to raise the flag after eating in the morning, and then the principal speaks. There are often student activities and awards. These activities take up a lot of time, and often the first class time will be postponed, causing the teaching work to not proceed as planned. In addition, since there is no break between classes, students will go to the toilet or go to other classrooms, which will delay the time of Chinese lessons and be late frequently, which will affect the teaching progress of teachers.

#### ***3.3 Students Are Not Motivated to Learn***

Although many students have learned Chinese before, because there are no textbooks and syllabuses, and the knowledge taught by volunteer Chinese teachers is not consistent every year, which leads to students' learning fatigue. The students themselves are not very motivated to learn. Most students feel that learning Chinese

is useless, and they don't use it in daily life, and people around them don't say it. Therefore, students are not very interested in learning Chinese, and Thai students love to play. The students don't like learning, and they're even more resistant to a language that they are unfamiliar with, so they are not very motivated. In addition, the school implicitly stipulates that students must pass the final subject score, or even higher, and the student's score should not be too low. This leads to the fact that students will never get a low score regardless of whether they study hard or their Chinese level. Chinese is of little significance to them.<sup>[3]</sup>

### ***3.4 Classroom Discipline is Difficult to Control***

This is also related to the characteristics of Thai people's character and education traditions. Because the character of Thai people is to love to play and advocate freedom. The tradition of Thai education also emphasizes student-centeredness and advocates happy learning. Freedom not only in Chinese class, but also in the class of native Thai teachers. Some people eat in class; some put on makeup; some play with mobile phones, and some talk. They think it's nothing. It's normal. Therefore, this is also a major difficulty in Chinese teaching.

## **4. Development Suggestions**

Although, it still reveals that Chinese education in Thailand is very popular, from kindergarten to university generally, Chinese courses are basically offered, but the above-mentioned problems are still exposed. The author puts forward the opinions and suggestions in order to promote the development of Chinese teaching in middle schools in Thailand.

### ***4.1 Suggestions for Insufficient Teaching Resources***

Thailand's education department and related parties should pay attention to the development of Chinese education, not just the number of Chinese learners and the popularity of Chinese, but also the development of Chinese courses and whether relevant teaching resources are sufficient. For example, teaching materials should be unified and relevant syllabus should be formulated; schools should pay attention to the training of teachers' professionalism and localization. Many schools do not have native Chinese teachers in Thailand, but only volunteer Chinese teachers who change every year. There are no teaching materials and the curriculum is not consistent. These issues should be taken seriously. As the country has invested a lot of manpower and material resources to promote Chinese international education, attention should be paid to whether the relevant supporting teaching resources are sufficient. In the absence of a syllabus or teaching materials, teachers should actively exert their subjective initiative. According to the learning characteristics of Thai middle school students, subject-based teaching can be carried out. Each lesson is a subject, such as color, family members, hobbies, etc. The teacher writes down the key points and the students write it in the notebook, which is helpful for later

review.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### ***4.2 Suggestions for Unreasonable Timing***

Teachers should be prepared in advance; teaching links should be more flexible, and deal with specific situations. For example, in the first Chinese class, you should clearly explain to students what penalties are for being late, such as reading texts or writing homework, etc., and formulate the rules for Chinese class from the beginning. For example, when students have to be late due to delays in certain activities, the teacher can let the students practice and review independently after finishing the key points concisely, and the teacher will check the completion of the homework in the next class.

#### ***4.3 Suggestions for Students Who Are Not Active in Learning***

In terms of teaching content, when preparing lessons, teachers should pay attention to selecting content that students are interested in as teaching materials. Interest is the best teacher, especially for middle school students. In normal class, communicate with students more, listen to their opinions, and see which aspects of China they are more interested in. While, by introducing traditional Chinese culture, students can learn more about China and prefer Chinese. Teachers can set up some interest classes to introduce Chinese culture, such as calligraphy, Chinese cuisine, Chinese painting, martial arts, etc.

In terms of teaching methods, to change the traditional Chinese teacher-oriented teaching method, it is necessary to focus on students by speaking more intensively, practicing more, using experience, listening and speaking, game methods, and situational teaching methods, in order to improve students' enthusiasm. In teaching evaluation, attention should be paid to the usual grades and the arrangement of usual homework. For example, students' listening, speaking, reading and writing are regarded as their usual grades, and those with high grades are rewarded, and those with low grades are given penalties such as homework. Thai students still like small gifts, so after the establishment of reward and punishment measures, the students' learning enthusiasm will be improved.

#### ***4.4 Suggestions for Difficult Control of Classroom Discipline***

In the first class, teachers should put forward their own Chinese classroom rules and tell Thai students that the Chinese classroom is like this. This is the requirement of Chinese classroom discipline. I hope that students will abide by it. Reward and punishment measures can be formulated. Teachers can adopt the mode of group cooperation and competition; each group has a group leader to manage the discipline of the group, and then the group competition; the group with the best discipline in the classroom is rewarded.

The Thai education tradition is that the classroom is relatively free, so classroom discipline has always been the focus and difficulty of Chinese lessons. Teachers need to spend some time to solve it, but don't spend a lot of time on managing classroom discipline and delay the teaching of the course.

## 5. Conclusion

Through the nearly one-year internship experience at the Srinagarindra the Princess Mother School in Sisaket, Thailand, the author found that there are insufficient teaching resources, unreasonable time arrangements, inactive student learning, and difficult control of classroom discipline in Chinese education in Thailand. I hope that my own opinions and suggestions can provide a reference for the future Chinese teaching work. I hope that more Chinese teachers and relevant education departments can pay attention to these issues and jointly promote the development of Chinese education in middle schools in Thailand.

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