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Second Language Acquisition: Analysis of Chinese Learning Challenges and Influence of Igbo Language on Igbo Learners of Chinese Language

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Abstract: With the great development of China's economy, and the globalization of China, more and more Nigerian students have begun to cultivate interest in learning Chinese language. Many seek to study Chinese in Nigeria or study aboard especially in China, with the goal of learning Chinese, cross - cultural understandings, achieve personal academic goals, or obtain personal independence. For Nigerian students of Igbo origin, there are lots of problems they tend to encounter in the process of learning Chinese language. Through critical analysis, this paper finds out the influence of Igbo language on Chinese language learners of Igbo origins, and some challenges encountered in learning Chinese language which includes; pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, Chinese character writing, and so on. According to the results of this survey, both positive interference and negative interference exist in the process of learning Chinese. Igbo language has both positive and negative effects on Chinese learners. This study also puts forward effective teaching and learning strategies for students and teachers, and theoretical suggestions for further enriching and improving Teaching Chinese Language in Nigeria. This study is quite significant as it will enrich the research on Chinese teaching, improve the Chinese level of students, provide beneficial help for the mutual translation of Chinese and Igbo, promote cultural exchanges between China and Igbo people of Nigeria, and facilitate economic and trade development.

Keywords: Chinese learning challenges, Igbo learners, language transfer, Chinese teaching recommendations.

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INTRODUCTION

The first Language that a human is exposed to and acquired after birth is L1 (Mother Language/ Mother tongue). The learning of other languages after the Acquisition of the mother tongue is called Second Language Acquisition, so the Second Language is more likely to be a foreign Language, also known as the target Language/ L2. Second language acquisition is more or less influenced by the first language, and it is generally believed that it goes through a process similar to that of first language acquisition. Therefore, this research will focus on the relationship between first language acquisition and second language acquisition in the study of Chinese language by learners whose mother tongue is Igbo language (one of the three major languages spoken in Nigeria). Part of this research is based on Chomsky's universal grammar-centered acquisition theory and model, which has had the greatest influence on the principles and theories of second language acquisition, and then specifically examine the theory of error analysis in second language acquisition theory. The research will also make reference to 鲁(1994; 1999), 尼桑(2013) & Okafor (2016) empirical studies, which investigate the sources of biases, errors and difficulties/ challenges in Chinese language acquisition mainly in the following five aspects:

- The influence of mother tongue on the target language. When unfamiliar with the rules of the target language, learners can only rely on

the mother tongue and knowledge. Therefore, learners with the same mother tongue background will often make mistakes of the same nature, which will cause difficulties for learners during the acquisition process.

- The influence of target language knowledge. In this respect, this refers to a situation where learners do not have sufficient knowledge of the target language due to the limited knowledge they have learned. Therefore, they use other method of analogy which do not apply to the linguistic phenomena of the target language, thus causing difficulties and errors in the process.
- The influence of learning strategies. This has to do with communication strategies and learning strategies that lead to errors in acquisition process. The main ones include language transfer, over generalization and over simplification.
- Negative transfer of cultural factors. Enjoying the influence of the learner's culture, or not having a true understanding of the culture of the target language, can also cause difficulties in learning the language form or language use.
- The influence of learning environment. Including the teacher not rigorous in explanation and guidance, incorrect demonstration, teaching materials of scientific nature, pertinence is not strong or improper arrangement, the deviation of classroom

training.

Theoretical Background: Second Language Acquisition Theory and Error Analysis Theory

The first important issue in second language acquisition is the transfer of the first language in second language acquisition. Contrastive analysis theory, which emerged after 1940s, is the mainstream of language acquisition research and is related to behaviourism and structuralism. In this regard, language learning is only a behavioural response to audio-visual stimuli, and it is effective to find differences and similarities between the two languages to solve problems because the first language transfers to the second language (Fries, 1945; Lado, 1957). However, later comparative analysis found that learners with different mother tongues would make the same mistakes. According to the subsequent theory of error analysis, second language learners have the same language acquisition system that produces errors, so the errors made by second language learners can be systematic. There is always a gap between the target language form used by the second language learners and the standard form of the target language they have learned, which is shown in phonology, vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics and so on. This gap is called "error". Therefore, it is helpful to analyze learners' errors to find out the causes, and research the guiding methods in correcting them (Corder, 1967; Dulay *et al.*, 1982). Corder (1967) divides the error made by learners into two types: mistakes and errors. A mistake is an accidental slip of the tongue or of the pen, such as saying "b" out of nervousness or negligence when you meant to say "a or p". This kind of mistake is irregular and often happens even to native speakers. Once the speaker is aware of it, he or she can correct it immediately, so that the same mistake may not happen again in the future. Errors analysis is a process to find out the rules of errors in second language learners, including the causes of errors and what errors will occur in different learning stages, etc. Corder was one of the earliest advocates of error analysis. He believes that error analysis has the following functions:

- Through error analysis, the teacher can understand the learner's mastery of the target language and the stage it has reached;
- Through error analysis, researchers can understand how learners acquire the target language, which is helpful to understand the learning strategies and steps taken by learners in the learning process;
- Through error analysis, learners can better test the assumptions they make about the rules of the language they are learning.

The psychological basis of error analysis is cognitive theory, and the linguistic basis is Chomsky's theory of universal grammar. In applied linguistics, its significance lies in making foreign language teaching

more effective and targeted. Generally speaking, learners who are not familiar with the rules of the target language can only rely on the mother language and knowledge, so learners with the same mother language background tend to make mistakes of the same nature. Igbo and Chinese are no exception.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research employed both qualitative and quantitative methods in the process of this research. These methods includes:

- **Questionnaire and interview:** Through questionnaire collection and interviews, the paper finds out the difficulties Chinese learners whose mother tongue is Igbo language, faces in the process of acquiring Chinese Language and then study the methods to improve them.
 - **Object of research:** The object of investigation are Students of Chinese Studies department, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, whose mother tongue is Igbo language. In this paper, a total of 50 students (15 freshmen, 12 sophomores, 11 juniors, and 12 seniors) from four classes were surveyed. 14% of them passed HSK(Chinese Language Proficiency Test)1, 8% of HSK 2, 24% of HSK3, 32% of HSK4, 20% of HSK 5 and 2% of HSK6.
 - **Survey design:** In order to effectively investigate the difficulties and errors, "Google Form" questionnaire design method was adopted. The questionnaire takes into account the Chinese language level of the respondents. Because there are elementary, intermediate and advanced Chinese learners, and in order to facilitate them to understand the questions and answer the questions more smoothly, the questionnaire was specially designed the bilingual form: Chinese and English. A total of 10 questions were designed.
- **Observational Method:** 2019- Present, The researcher is a lecturer in the Department of Chinese Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. During the process, the researcher gained rich teaching experience by observing the situation of Nigerian students learning Chinese, and understood some common difficulties they face at present, especially the language transfer of Igbo.
- **Analytic Method:** Through the analysis of the questionnaire and interview results, the research data and content was looked into to find out the problems, appropriate improvement methods and solutions.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

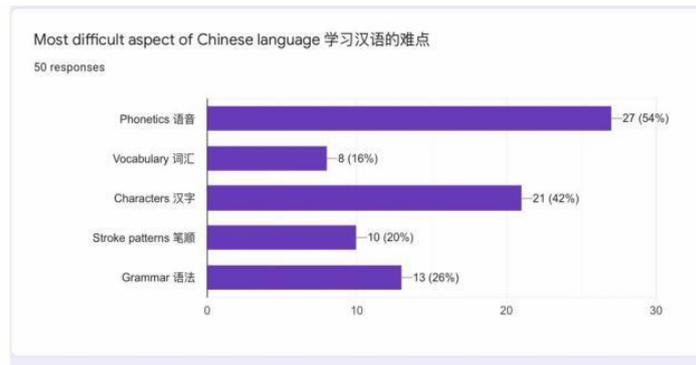


Figure 1.

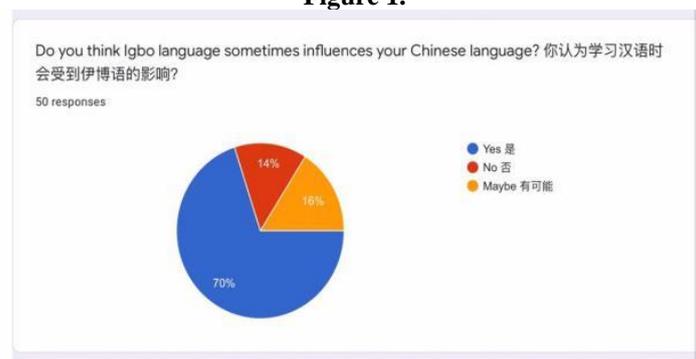


Figure 2.

According to the results of the following survey, language is the most difficult part.

Phonetic Challenges and the Influence of Igbo Language

Pronunciation is the material carrier of a language. The first criterion for judging if a language is learned well, is whether the pronunciation is correct or not, as well as the tone, the pitch, the accent, the stress and the intonation. Therefore, phonetic learning is the most important part of second language learning. In phonetic learning, one should understand the phonetic differences between the mother tongue and the target language, grasp the key points, and break through the difficulties, so as to get twice the result with half the effort and achieve good learning results. Chinese and

Igbo syllables mostly consist of three basic units: consonants, vowels and tone. In Chinese they are referred to as 声母 initials, 韵母final and 声调tone, while in Igbo it is *udaume* vowel, *mgbochiume* consonants and *udaolu* tone. Although Chinese and Igbo has similar syllabic unit composition, however each unit differs slightly which often results to negative influence of Igbo phonetics on Chinese phonetics during acquisition process. These difficulties fall into three categories; Initials, Finals and Tones. It can be seen from Fig.3 that among the three (initials, finals and tones) tone is the most difficult, with 78% of people thinking that tone is the most difficult, followed by consonants with 46% and final only 28%.

Tone

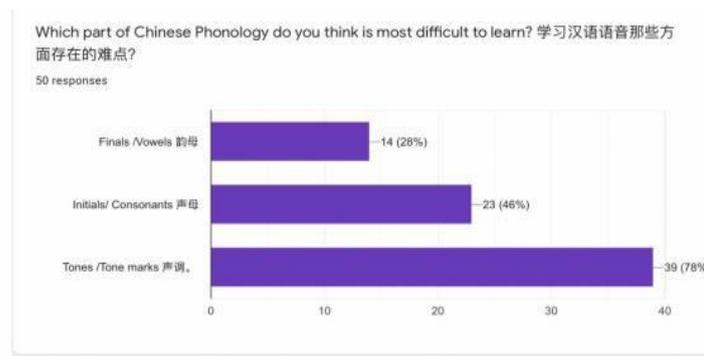


Figure 3.

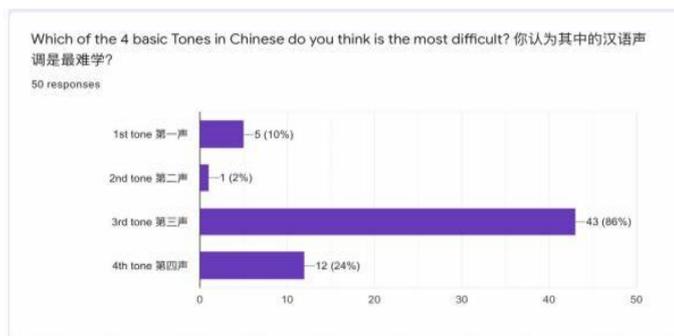


Figure 4.

According to the results of this survey, as pointed out above, it can be seen that initials, finals, and tones are the most difficult to master, among which the tones are the most difficult to master. As can be seen from Fig. 4, 86% of Chinese learners think tone is the most difficult. Tone refers to the changes in pitch that are attached to the structure of sound and rhyme and have a distinguishing function. The reason is that Igbo is the mother tongue of the respondents. Although Igbo and Chinese are tonal languages with similar tone functions and usage, however, the tone systems and rules of these two languages are different (Okafor, 2020). Igbo has three tones: high (/), low (\) and peaceful (-). Such as ákwá- cry, ákwà - clothes, àkwá - eggs, àkwà - bed. óké - male, ókè - boundary, òkè - share, òké- mouse, etc. There are four basic tones in Chinese: the first tone (flat tone/ high tone), the second tone (rising tone), the third tone (dip/ falling and rising), and the fourth tone (falling tone). Igbo language has tones but no Chinese third tone at all, so students whose first language is Igbo, often speak the third tone in Chinese as the second tone in Igbo language when learning Chinese. This is therefore one of the negative transfers of mother tongue. The Chinese third tone is the most difficult one to master by students, and the third tone sandhi is even more difficult.

Initials

According to the survey results in Fig 1, it can be known that the difficulties in pronunciation are as a language transfer of the native language of learners. Igbo students find it difficult to pronounce some initials. The reason is that their native language (Igbo) does not have some of the initials and finals of Chinese, so Igbo learners of Chinese language think that the difficulty in Chinese pronunciation is not only the tone but also the pronunciation of some initials and finals. “c, j, t, q, x, z, and zh, ch, sh” are all very unique Chinese sounds for Nigerian Igbo native learners of Chinese language. Igbo language do not have the Chinese “c, q, x, and zh”. below are the frequent negative transfer of Igbo language when it comes to articulation of “c, q, x, and zh”.

c: There is no “c” initials in Igbo, so students experiences difficulty when they come across it. To escape this situation, some learners most times

replaces it with closely related Igbo initials “t, z and ch”.

q: When they encounter “q” sound, they replace it with an already acquired Igbo initial “ch”.

x: x is often pronounced with the close Igbo initial s.

zh: Igbo native Chinese learners often pronounce the Chinese initial zh with the Igbo j.

This initial, although similar to “ch, j, t” in Igbo, is often confused with “q, zh, t, and s” in pronunciation.

Finals

According to the results of the survey and interview, 57% of Igbo natives find “ü” and “üe” difficult final to pronounce. That is to say, “ü” is the most difficult initial to pronounce for Igbo learners of Chinese language. Reason being that Igbo language don't have “ü” or any other vowel beginning with “ü” or contained “ü”; for example, “üe, üan, ün, nüe, lü, lüe”. For Igbo natives, when studying Chinese, they often pronounced “nü 女-girl” as “niu 牛- cow”; “lü- green 绿 as 路 road/path”, so for them, it is very difficult to master the pronunciation of this final “ü”. Secondly, the pronunciation of “e” poses a challenge for Igbo natives learning Chinese language, although Igbo language has same vowel letter, but the sound is totally different. In Chinese “e” is pronounced as in “uhhh”, while in Igbo it is pronounced as “ay”. The third challenge often encounter is nasal vowel “eng”, “iong”, “ang”, which 40 per cent of respondents found somewhat difficult. For instant, “mang 忙-busy” is often pronounced “man 满 full”; “xiong” is usually pronounce as “sion, shion”. However, with the improvement in Chinese proficiency, these difficulties in pronunciation will gradually be reduced.

Vocabulary Challenges and the Influence of Igbo Language

Generally speaking, vocabulary is the most basic element of language. Chinese vocabulary is the aggregate of words in Chinese, that is, the aggregate of all words, including the fixed phrases which are equivalent to words in nature and function, such as idioms. Chinese vocabulary includes monosyllabic morpheme and compounds, reduplication, loanwords,

disyllabic tendencies and four-character idioms. It is impossible to communicate without a vocabulary, so accumulating a vocabulary is a necessary condition for learning a language well. The biggest obstacle for Nigerian Chinese learners to improve their vocabulary is that they do not have the language environment to learn Chinese. There is no place to use the learned vocabulary except in the classroom, and Chinese newspapers and magazines are not easy to find. When surveyed, 35 percent of Chinese learners think that the best way to enlarge their vocabulary is to communicate

with others, and more than 75 percent of them use memorization to enlarge their vocabulary. However, in the current situation of Chinese teaching in Nigeria, Chinese learners do not have many opportunities to communicate with others in Chinese native speakers, and it is uncommon to use Chinese language in real life. According to the survey, Igbo learners of Chinese language have the following problems in terms of vocabulary, especially when it comes to measure words and idioms.

Quantifiers/ Measure Words

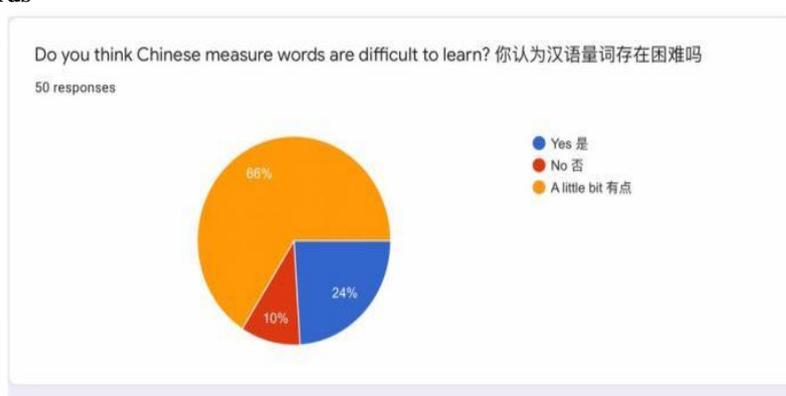


Fig. 5

A quantifier or measure word is a quantitative unit that expresses a thing, someone, an action or the duration of an action. It is a sticking word and must be preceded by a numeral or demonstrative pronoun. Due to the influence of native language, many learners do not understand the concept of quantifiers in Chinese language, so they often make mistakes/ errors when using quantifiers. Even learners with advanced Chinese can have problems using quantifiers, because there are so many quantifiers in Chinese, and each group of noun has its own exclusive quantifier. There are about 600 measure words in modern Chinese, some of the includes; 个 (gè) (the most commonly used measure word in Chinese), 位 (wèi) This is another commonly used quantifier to count people, 只 (zhī), 头 (tóu), 条 (tiáo), 双 (shuāng), 张 (zhāng), 本 (běn), etc. These measure words or quantifies are divided into different categories, for example, some authors divided it into seven categories (朱德熙. 1984), some into two categories (陈,等. 1988), some into eight categories (房玉清, 1992), and some into three categories (刘和谟, 1989). It can be seen from the results of the questionnaire that 66% think there is a little challenge in learning and usage of quantifiers in Chinese. Quantifiers are not unfamiliar to Igbos learning Chinese language, because there are also quantifiers in Igbo, such as: *otu ibe* akwukwo (a piece of paper), *igwe mmadu* (a group of people), *iko mmiri* (a glass of water), *onono mmanya* (a bottle of wine), *ite nkwu* (a can/keg of wine), *mkpirisi nku* (a piece of wood) etc. Although there are quantifiers in Igbo, however they are

few and not as rich as in Chinese. Therefore, learning and usage of measure word/ quantifies poses a big challenge for Igbo natives. It is challenging for Chinese learners to remember what quantifiers should be used with different kinds of nouns. So sometimes to avoid mistakes, they often use the quantifier “个”, such as, “一个书, 两个山, 三个水”, etc. The correct expression should be is “一本书, 两座山, 三瓶水”.

Idioms

Idioms play a key role in the use of Chinese vocabulary and is an indispensable part of it. Although learners encounter fewer idioms at the beginning of learning Chinese, however, it is very difficult to remember, understand them, as well as to understand its meaning and to use them correctly. The number of idioms grows the slowest when it comes to expanding your vocabulary. 65% of learners interviewed agreed that this aspect of vocabulary is quite challenging. According to the interview carried out, there are several reasons why Idioms are difficult for Igbo natives that are learning Chinese. Many times learners understand the meaning of an idiom and the origin of an idiom, but can't use it correctly. Although there are idioms in Ibo, however, there is no fixed number of words. Chinese idioms usually have four characters, but some have six or eight characters. When a Chinese learner encounters an idiom in a sentence, it is difficult to determine whether the idiom is composed of several characters and which characters in the sentence make up the idiom. In addition to Chinese idioms, there are colloquial sayings, proverbs, habitual sayings,

allegorical sayings. These types of vocabulary are difficult for Nigerian Chinese learners to distinguish. Learning Chinese idioms requires too much relevant knowledge, such as literature knowledge, historical knowledge, and cultural knowledge and so on.

Grammar challenges and the Influence of Igbo Language

Grammatical difficulties exist because of morphemes and sentence structure patterns. There are not many grammatical points in Chinese. Nevertheless, context is very important in practical communication, and we can infer accurate meaning according to context. The results of survey show that sentence pattern and word order are the most challenging for Igbo natives to master in Chinese grammar.

Sentence Structure

“ba” and “bei” sentence structures are common sentence structures in Chinese. Students in the elementary class all find it very difficult to put words into sentences using those structures. What's more, when Igbo natives first start learning the rules of “ba” and “bei” sentence structures, they are often confused about the rules of “ba” with “bei”. For example, “他把门打开He opened the door”. Many learners use the rule of “bei” in place of “ba”, so they will say “把他们门打开 open his door”. Because “Ba” is placed after the subject in the sentence, while “bei” is placed before the subject in the sentence. So these two sentence structures are often confused by Chinese learners. Most learners, due to the negative transfer of Igbo language, by using Igbo sentence pattern to express themselves, such as simply saying “他开门he opens door”- “O mepere uzo”.

Word Order

Due to lack of tenses in Chinese grammar, word order is very important feature of Chinese grammar and the key means of expressing grammatical meaning completely. What is noteworthy in word order is the position of sentence elements. The word order in Chinese is the same as in Igbo but sometimes it changes. The basic sentence pattern of Chinese grammar is “subject (S) + verb (V) + object (O)”, for example “他吃苹果 He eats apple”. However, the simple form of the Igbo sentence is "subject (S) + verb (V) + object (O)", such as: O bụ nwoke (he is a man), but it can also be said to be "object (O) + subject (S) + verb (V)", such as: nwoke ka o bụ (man he is). In the Igbo sentence, the subject is not the same as in Chinese, and the position of the verb and object is changed. Therefore Igbo natives often experience positive language transfer, while sometimes they make mistakes in Chinese word order when speaking Chinese.

Chinese Characters Challenges and Their Causes

Since Igbo language is alphabetical, Chinese language on the other hand makes use characters. Therefore there are many challenges that Igbo students encounter when they first learn Chinese characters. First

of all, the difference between Chinese characters. Secondly, the strokes are many, others includes; the shape of characters are difficult to distinguish, many homophones, the memory of Chinese characters is limited, and so on. However, the interview results show that more than 60 % of Chinese language learners think that the most difficult part of learning Chinese characters at the beginning is that the characters have nothing to do with pronunciation. Every character in modern Chinese has a fixed pronunciation. One have to remember the pronunciation of the word to read the Chinese character, and one can't read the Chinese character without remembering the pronunciation. According to the survey results, 40% of people think that the difficulty of learning Chinese at the beginning is the big difference between Chinese characters and alphabets, 6% think that the difficulty in mastering the strokes and the stroke orders, and 9% think that Chinese characters are to many to memories. The proportion of many homophones, similar characters but difficult to distinguish and one character with many sounds were 19%, 11% and 15% respectively.

Structure of Chinese Characters

There are eight kinds of structure of Chinese characters: one-character structure (也, 人, 十); Left center right structure (做, 树, 撇); Left and right structure (他, 对); Upper and lower structure (安, 要); Upper middle lower structure (喜); Semi-enclosed structure (区, 同); Fully enclosed structure (图, 国); triple structure (品, 众). The most common mistake most Igbo people make when writing Chinese characters includes;

- Fattening up the strokes thereby making the radicals appear as big as the main character. For instance, 她 is written as 女也, 和 written as 禾口, 明 is written with 日月.
- Mixing up characters with similar shapes and strokes as in 土 and 士; 衣 and 农; 见 and 贝; 已 and 己, 今 and 令, 帅 and 师, 坏 and 环.
- Mistaking one character for another. Example, 才 written as 彡; 人 written as 入 or 八.
- Structural misplacement where 相 written as 目木, 部 written as 陪.
- Mixing up characters with similar sound (在 and 再, 做 and 作; 个 and 各) etc.

In order to truly investigate the problem of Chinese character writing among Igbo natives, students were asked to write the above Chinese characters. According to the results of the survey, 60 percent of them are more prone to mixing up characters with similar shapes and strokes when writing Chinese characters.

Strokes and Stroke Order

Strokes and stroke order are an important part of the Chinese orthography. In modern Chinese, there are eight simple strokes:

- 一 (横héng)-"The horizontal stroke" is written from left to right.
- 丨 (竖shù) - "The vertical stroke" is written from top downward to bottom.
- 丿 (撇piě) -"The downward - left stroke" is written from top to bottom - left.
- 丶 (点diǎn)- "The dot" is written from top to bottom - right.
- ㇇ (捺nà) -"The downward - right stroke" is written from top to bottom - right.
- ㇀ (提tí) -"The upward stroke" is written from bottom - left to top - right
- ㇏ (折zhē)-"The turning stroke" is written from left to right and turns downward left.
- 丨 or ㇇ (钩gōu) "The hook" is the ending part that turns sharply, like a hook.

Chinese characters are composed of the above simple strokes. No matter how complex a Chinese character is, it is simple to write it step by step with strokes, but it is not so easy for Nigerian Igbo natives who are learning Chinese, who have never had an encounter with character writing, since Igbo language, more like English, is alphabetical. Usually, Igbo people sees strokes as drawings, instead of a writing system. To them, the differences between these strokes are not obvious. They don't know which strokes are used to make up a Chinese character. For example, 家, 像, 搬, 满, 半. Strokes are the foundation for learning the writing system of Chinese characters, uncomprehending them can also be an huge obstacle. Stroke order is the order in which the strokes of Chinese characters are written. Chinese characters written according to stroke order are usually beautiful, convenient and can improve the writing speed. These stroke order of Chinese characters are:

- From top to bottom (它, 三)
- From left to right (很, 明)
- Horizontal first and then vertical (十, 王)
- Outside first and then inside (问, 见)
- Middle first and then both sides (小, 少, 半)
- The downward - left stroke first and then downward - right stroke (人, 八, 入)
- Bottom enclosure comes last (国, 田, 回)
- Upper-right and inside dots come last (书, 宝, 玉)

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Most Igbo learners often find themselves in the predicament of lack of adequate motivation for Chinese language learning, which leads to encountering difficulties in the learning process. From the investigation carried out in the course of this research, the reasons gathered are as follows; most of the learners

learning motivation is unclear; some of the teacher's teaching methods are improper; The study method is not practical and so on. That is to say, improving learners' interest plays a pivotal role in Chinese teaching. Chinese teachers should use more attractive methods to teach and make the classroom atmosphere more active. These methodologies or strategies will be introduced from several aspects, such as paying attention to audio-visual method, communicative method, gesture method, comparative and Contrastive method, paying attention to multimedia teaching, using classroom task-based teaching method, etc. It is hoped to improve the Chinese proficiency and learning efficiency of Igbo natives learning Chinese in Nigeria.

Strategies for Phonetics, Vocabulary, Grammar and Characters Teaching and Learning

In Chinese teaching and learning, pinyin (initials and finals) and tone are the basic and the most important. The classroom method should put aside the traditional "substitute similar pronunciation approach", where by the students are taught to use similar initials or finals in Igbo language as a substitute for "assumed or presumed" difficult initials or finals in Chinese. Focus should be on Chinese phonetics not Igbo. Teachers should take the lead and teach correct pronunciation, and guide students to strengthen the memory of correct pronunciation in Chinese. For example, as discussed previously, there is no "c" sound in Igbo as evident in Chinese, therefore most students pronounce it as "t, z, or ch", influenced by Igbo language. In such circumstance, the teacher should not only lead the students to read aloud, but also explain professionally. The use of Chinese phonetic table is recommended, where learners should know the point and manner of articulation of each Chinese initials and finals. The teacher should as well use "gesture method/ demonstration method" to explain, by using two hands to imitate the position and change process of lips and teeth in pronunciation. These kind of gestures guide students to produce standard pronunciation, and strengthen memory.

On the part of the learners as regards to vocabulary, "communicative method" should be encouraged. Communication is very important in improving pronunciation. Although there are few Chinese natives around, however, when they meet a Chinese, they can use your learned vocabulary to communicate with them. Where there is no chance to communicate with Chinese people, learners can communicate with their classmates and speak Chinese to each other. Another good way to practice Chinese pronunciation is by saying tongue twisters and singing Chinese songs. In addition, students can also carry out oral competition, speech contest and other activities, the purpose of which is not to know their own competitive ability, but to enable them to improve their oral proficiency, enhance their cognitive level of learning, and improve their cognitive strategies in learning.

The explanation of Chinese grammar could be a difficult task. In teaching, it is helpful for teachers to use the “comparative method” in teaching word order, quantifiers and vocabularies. For example, when explaining the word order, it is necessary to introduce the basic word order of Igbo: “subject + predicate + object”. It is necessary to master the progressive method, which is from known to the unknown.

Pay Attention to Multimedia and Online Teaching and Learning

The concept of classroom “multimedia teaching” should be emphasized, as it improves classroom efficiency and teaching quality. Such as pinyin, tone, and other basic theory Chinese teaching. Multimedia teaching and learning helps in recycling network media rich resources, through the display of multimedia teaching equipment, thereby strengthening the sensory stimulation of students, improve the students' interest in learning, make students feel the real environment of Chinese teaching more intuitively, and the most closely related to the current social life. Students can use online resources to find new words and grammar knowledge that is difficult to understand at the moment in class, multimedia means makes the comprehension more quick and convenient. After class, students can also make use of the “message board” resources in online teaching to have after-class discussions with lecturers anytime and anywhere.

Use Classroom Task-Based Teaching Methods

In order to be flexible in class teaching, it is very important to grasp the rhythm. In order to achieve the ideal effect of strengthening teaching, teachers can also arrange easy and interesting tasks for students while learning, such as: classroom games, combined with guess the number, fill in the number, idioms, you do I guess and other games. Also through artistic expression, mathematical operations, music and other comprehensive stimulus means, in a proper competitive happy atmosphere, without deviating from the learning content. In addition, teachers can assign tasks related to the work, such as imitation, writing impressions or recalling memorable parts of the work. Task-based teaching method is a more “authentic” teaching method for Igbo natives who are learning Chinese.

Pay more attention to student’s weakness.

Every student has his own weakness. If the teacher knows the weakness of the students, it will help the teacher in designing and adopting a more viable teaching method for them. For example, if the students do not know how to pronounce some Chinese words correctly, the teacher can design a phonetic course separately and give students a systematic explanation. In addition, in the class, where majority of students understand, only a few students do not understand the situation, the teacher should make out time to tutor those students privately.

CONCLUSION

From eight aspects, namely; pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, Chinese characters, culture, teachers, teaching materials and management, this paper analyzes and studied the common challenges faced by Chinese learners in Nigerian Universities in learning Chinese, finds out the root causes of the problems, and puts forward corresponding recommendations. Most of the phonetic difficulties are caused by language transfer of Igbo language, which is the mother tongue of the students surveyed. In addition, Chinese learners have to deal with the more difficult Chinese phonetic system. The pronunciation of most Chinese words is different from that of Igbo language. These difficulties can be corrected through repeated practice when learning Chinese, but most times still takes a long time, patience and consistency. In terms of vocabulary, measure words and idioms are relatively difficult for Igbo natives, therefore teachers can use situational teaching methods to integrate the vocabulary involved into daily life. In terms of grammar, sentence pattern and word order are difficult to learn, however teachers should teach and explain to students the structure and characteristics of Chinese grammar rules and sentence patterns. In addition, teachers also need to carry on simple Chinese scene dialogue with students in class, and gradually students will naturally imbibe this sentence patterns.

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