

吴伟克◎主编
Edited by Galal Walker

The Pedagogy of Performing Another Culture

体演文化教学法

Pathways to Advanced Skills, Vol.XII
通向高级技能之路，第十二卷

National East Asian Languages Resource Center
at The Ohio State University

湖北教育出版社

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Galal Walker

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Pathways to Advanced Skills series, Vol. XII

Series General Editor: Galal Walker

通向高级技能之路丛书，第十二卷

丛书主编：吴伟克

全美东亚语文资源中心

Hubei Education Press

湖北教育出版社


图书在版编目(CIP)数据

体演文化教学法:汉英对照 / 吴伟克 主编.—武汉:湖北教育出版社,2010.06

ISBN 978-7-5351-6208-3

I. ①体… II. ①吴… III. ①对外汉语教学—教学研究—汉、英 IV. ①H195

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2010)第 100416 号

策 划  长江出版集团湖北天一国际文化有限公司
Under One Sky Publishing Ltd. (U. K.)

责任编辑 李敏儒 姚梅

出版发行 湖北教育出版社(武汉市青年路 277 号 邮编:430070)

印 刷 湖北新华印务股份有限公司

开 本 700 毫米×1000 毫米 1/16 印 张 25.5 字 数 400 千

版 次 2010 年 6 月第 1 版 2010 年 6 月第 1 次印刷

定 价 42.00 元

版权所有,盗版必究(举报电话:027-87679308 87679267)

(图书出现印装问题,本社负责调换)

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This volume prepared and published by

National East Asian Languages Resource Center

The Ohio State University

100 Hagerty Hall 1775 College Road, Columbus, OH 43210

614-292-3838 · fax: 614-688-3355 <http://flpubs.osu.edu/>

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data:

The pedagogy of performing another culture / editor: Galal Walker ;
contributors: Galal Walker... [et al.].

p. cm. — (Pathways to advanced skills; V. 12)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-7540316358 (alk. paper)

1. Chinese language—Study and teaching. 2. Language and
languages—Study and teaching. 3. Language and culture—Study and
teaching. I. Walker, Galal, 1943– II. National East Asian Languages
Resource Center.

PL1129.E5P43 2010

495.1'07—dc22

2010008943

Manufactured in the United States of America

Printed and bound by Hubei Education Press

ISBN 978-7-5403-1635-8

A publication of The Ohio State University
National East Asian Languages Resource Center

Funded by
The U.S. Department of Education

Pathways to Advanced Skills series, Vol. XII
Series General Editor: Galal Walker

Distributed by The Ohio State University
Foreign Language Publications

Executive Editor: Dr. Galal Walker
Managing Editor: Dr. Minru Li
Distributions Manager: Karen Moore
Editorial Assistants: Zhou Hao, Zhou Liying
Cover design: Fan Haipeng

To the memory of Sheng Yan (1939-2003)

A dedicated teacher of Chinese
and my first guide to communicating in Chinese culture

谨以此书纪念盛炎教授（1939—2003）
第一个引导我在中国文化中交流的中文教师

Anticipated Questions

Hopeful Replies

Galal Walker

This book constitutes an opening to a conversation about teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language. From a wider perspective, it is an exploration of how we use culture and language to communicate, and how these two phenomena influence the way we teach our students. The following questions are obvious. Perhaps some day the responses will be too.

WHAT WE ARE DOING WITH THIS VOLUME?

The United States and China are journeying into the 21st Century together as the two most dynamic societies on the planet. That these two societies are going to be increasingly interwoven is a conclusion widely shared on both sides of the Pacific. People from every level and every corner of China and the United States will have close encounters with each other. While not every individual will exhibit cultural and linguistic expertise in these interactions, there will be a growing number of persons who will learn to express themselves effectively across the linguistic and cultural barriers that divide who Americans think they are from whom Chinese think they are. The reason for this book is to increase the number of brave souls who consent to dance along the edges of our identities. The hope is that we can do this by making the *pathways* to their abilities to communicate their expertise less haphazard, less hazardous to their egos, and less time consuming. Of course, the studies found in this book will have to be visited by many teachers and graduate students in China and the United States before their impact ultimately reaches those brave culture navigators. When learning Chinese as a foreign language is routinely considered to be a series of negotiations through social

environments appropriate to Chinese culture, that pathway can become a well-traveled road to countless individual successes.

WHO ARE WE?

The authors of these studies share the understanding that the roles and functions of Chinese language teachers are being transformed. More and more of the people responsible for Chinese language instruction see themselves as the program directors and team builders who create, nurture, and manage ever more complex social environments in which learners become increasingly engaged in acts of communicating mutually understood intentions. This transformation is being borne out in technological advances, recent research on learning and memory, the application of an ever more sophisticated understanding of culture, and an expanding cadre of experienced Americans functioning successfully in Chinese culture.

The progress in communication technology of recent decades permits learners of Chinese to repeatedly and routinely observe culturally authentic contexts, to quickly reference newly encountered language and culture phenomena, and to establish and maintain contact with Chinese speakers and students of Chinese language around the planet. Research in learning has helped us relate learning environments with the rates of progress by learners, and has given us better ideas about the patterns of successful learning careers. As we explore ways to base language instruction on analyses of Chinese culture, we find clearer and more significant contexts in which to present the language events we want our students to master. Finally, after we have observed an increasing number of learners of Chinese who have achieved impressive expertise in communicating in Chinese, we have an evolving inventory of attainable goals and the experiences that lead to those goals. If these advances were to be halted today, it would still take our pedagogy a long time to catch up to all the possibilities that technology has already delivered.

WHAT DO WE DO?

The term *Performed Culture* is used to describe the perspectives on learning Chinese as a foreign language found in these studies. This term expresses the idea that communication occurs in culture, that culture can be presented as performable elements, and that the knowledge of a language resides in the performance of the culture. The language exists in the doing of the language.

Foreign language study is a field that tends to be expressed as one methodology or another or associated with one charismatic figure or the other. While *Performed Culture* favors certain disciplined activities over others in the pursuit of gaining language skills, it does not require a fixed methodology nor does it need the inspiration of an exceptional personality. Rather it is the pursuit of specified goals and a conviction that knowledge and action combine to assure us whether or not a person “knows” Chinese, in other words that these goals have been met.

WHERE DOES PERFORMED CULTURE COME FROM?

Performed Culture has its origins in the millennia-old Confucian tradition. We have referenced the ways of transmitting this tradition carefully, and have assumed that the pedagogy itself is critically important to the long-term survival of the tradition.

I have been influenced by Wang Yangming’s epistemological injunction: 未有知而不行者。知而不行，只是未知。(There is no such thing as someone who knows something while not acting on that knowledge. If you know something but do not act on it, then you simply do not know it yet.) Accepting this refusal to separate knowledge from action clarifies the whole range of what it means to teach, learn, and access language skills. This Ming era insistence on practice in the pedagogy of the Confucian tradition reflects the *Lun Yu* (or *Analects*) from over a millennia earlier.

The *Lun Yu* has three explicit references to *practice*, 习 *xi* “to try out, to put in to practice,” beginning with its first line:

学而时习之。不亦乐乎。（To learn and at the right time to put into practice what you have learned, is this not pleasure?）Relating the appropriate action at the appropriate time to the individual's pleasure identifies a basic motivation for learning—the self-satisfaction that is earned by returning a backhand in a game of tennis or using the appropriate expression in the course of a conversation.

传不习乎。（Teachings not being put into practice.—when considering things that one is careful to avoid.）The Confucian insistence on practice being essential to knowledge is expressed elsewhere in the *Lun Yu* and strongly reinforced centuries later in the thought of Wang Yangming.

性相近，习相远。（By nature we are close to each other, by practice distant from one another.）Here we are instructed that cultural difference occurs when we express our intentions, but the intentions are largely shared across cultures. Humans can understand each other if we learn how put the desire to do so into practice.

WHY DO WE DO WHAT WE DO?

Let me (us) mention ten points that characterize those of us who are teaching and researching *Performed Culture*.

1. We view **culture** as the cognitive construction through which we humans make sense of our world. This view has many forefathers—the earliest being Lev Vygotsky and one of the most recent being Jerome Bruner. We assume that language is one of the devices through which we access the possible meanings of our respective cultures.
2. The effective use of cultural content in linguistic interactions--both spoken and written--roughly correspond to the level of

individual language abilities. **Achievement culture** is effectively used at the higher linguistic level; **Behavior culture** is indispensable from the lower levels of language ability. Thus, the presentation of the target culture starts with **behavior culture** and adds **information culture** and **achievement culture** as linguistic skills reach higher levels of efficient expression.

3. Communicating in a language requires the automatic employment of learned behaviors, or the use of pedagogically compiled memories. When we operate in foreign languages and cultures, our success depends on the accuracy of our learning in a limited range of cultural options. Foreign participants in a culture can become proficient in a large number of contexts provided by that culture, but cannot replicate the diverse and complex cultural resources of native members of that culture.
4. “Story” is the basic unit of memory of a C2. Stories comprise the demonstrable knowledge of C2: The more culturally appropriate stories in which an individual can participate, the more intelligent that individual will appear to be in that particular culture.
5. Stories are formed by personal experience in a culture and can be revealed either declaratively, by telling, or procedurally, by performing.
6. Chinese language teachers, materials developers, and program designers present learners with versions of Chinese culture that learners assume have been devised for their future needs. The more accurately these versions reflect the learners’ future needs, the better the instruction is.
7. The concept of Chinese culture that underlies Chinese language instruction has to yield identifiable “frames” for learner performance that are recognizable as useful samples of Chinese cultural behavior.
8. A “performance” includes five elements: (1) a specified time, (2) a specified place, (3) specified roles, (4) appropriate scripts, and (5) accepting and acceptable audiences. A learner who knows these things will understand that act of interpersonal communication.
9. Before the common availability of the tools to manipulate video, graphics, audio in addition to print, the presentation of such

performances was not possible. We are now in the process of understanding how to create programs, materials, and teacher-student interactions that take full advantage of these resources.

10. Chinese language pedagogy will be advanced by blending on-going research in language, culture, performance, information technology, the biological foundations of learning, and the creation and management of rich environments where meaningful communication can take place on multiple levels.

Performed Culture is an ambitious undertaking and goes against Horace's injunction that "life is too short to entertain long hopes." So we need more minds to contribute. In the meantime, we have developed what we hope to be interesting approaches that we will continue to share in future discussions.

“老”问题新思路

代序

简小滨 著

题目中的“老”字加了双引号，是因为虽然本书所讨论的现象似曾相识，针对这种现象却鲜有从这样的角度提出问题。行话说，问题没触及要害，所做的功夫大多是盲人摸象；换个角度提出关键问题，就会带来新的思维，解决问题的新的途径也就呼之欲出。

一个熟悉对外汉语学科研究现状的读者在翻阅这本书的时候，可能会觉得里面的论文有的时候似乎过于“务虚”，有的时候似乎又过于“务实”。之所以会有过于务虚的感觉，是因为这些论文尽管所论题目、层面、范围各个不同，都从思考这样一些根本性的问题出发：外语教学，包括对外汉语教学，到底是一个什么性质的过程？语言与文化到底是怎样一种关系？外语教学应该培训产出什么类型的人才？定位于怎样一个理论框架可以更准确地理解这个学科以及更有效地达到其既定目标？而之所以又会有过于务实的感觉，是这些论文都不满足于那些过于宽泛的人云亦云，比如“为了跨文化交流的需要”，比如“语言是文化的载体”，比如“培养双语人才”，比如“先进的教学方法”；他们都力图探索跨文化交流中一些关键而又被忽略了的范畴、层面，追问什么类型的双语人才社会最为需要而目前的教学体系又为什么培养不出来这种人才，从心理学、人类学、社会学、语言学以及文化研究等角度对汉语的教与学作多层次的和细致的分析。一句话，这里既有对外语教学包括

对外汉语教学的基本范式的反思与创新，又有在新的范式的框架里对具体教学问题的仔细检讨。

举一个例子。有一次我与一位刚从中国到美国来工作的汉语老师讨论她刚准备好的一份中级汉语期终考试考卷。我指着考卷上“造句”这一项问这位老师为什么这次考试要“造句”，她希望通过“造句”考出学生哪方面的知识或能力。这位老师有好一阵没有说话，也许是非常疑惑怎么会有人问如此低级甚至无理的问题。听到我再问了一遍之后，她很不解地说：“考试不都是这么考的吗？通过造句可以看看学生到底掌握了那些词没有啊。”收集在这本书里的论文如果要讨论这个问题，可能一方面会从讨论以英语为母语的人学习使用汉语是一个什么性质的过程出发来检讨“造句”作为一种测试方式是否准确地反映了这种性质，另一方面会通过详尽的分析来检查学生在“造句”时的表现与其在现实中准确有效地运用相关词语到底有没有或者有什么样的对应关系。

这几年我作了许多次围绕着对外汉语教学、外语教学、跨文化交流这些主题的讲座，每次开场伊始，我都喜欢用本书编者吴伟克博士最早用起的一个比喻来凸显我们到底是在面对着一个什么样的问题。如果我们把“跨文化交流”想象为一种体育活动的（比如篮球运动），那么我们每一个人与这种活动都会有深浅不一的介入程度。介入程度最浅的大概就是那些仅仅听说过世上有篮球运动这么回事的旁观者了；介入程度深一点的是花了钱花了时间去看球赛的观众；介入程度再深一点的是那些不仅投入了钱和时间还投入了感情的球迷们；比球迷们更深一步的，是那些对球赛作专业议论的评球家们（起码这是人们对他们的期待吧）；然后还有在球场上打球的球员们；指导球员比赛的教练们；维持比赛规则并判决输赢的裁判们；对球赛作深入研究的运动科学专家们；个人利益与球赛输赢紧密相关的球队股东们；等等。很能说明问题的是，每次讲座的听众（绝大部分是从事对外汉语教学工作的教师）尽管来自不同地区或

不同类型的大学，对这个比喻所引申出来的问题的反应几乎都是一样的。当我请大家根据自己的实际经验，谈谈我们的对外汉语教学这么些年来基本上培养出了什么样的人，最悲观的答复是“观众”；大量的答复是“球迷”；还有少量的答复是“评球家”（那些议论得并不怎么到位的“评球家”）。当我再问跨文化交流的现实最需要的是什么人，毫无例外地都回答“球员”。也就是说，我们目前已有的对外汉语教学的体系、模式、方法，源源不断地生产出来的并非是现实最需要的产品。收集在这本书里的论文，就是要检讨这个明显的不应容忍的差距是怎么形成的，我们又要在认识论和方法论上做什么样的改变才能把这个局面扭转过来。

当我们在阅读中遇到不那么熟悉的观念与表述时，常常会自然而然地将它们与自己已有的知识体系作比较，并且力图要把陌生的并入熟悉的之中。让我们有意识地提醒自己不要这么做；让我们先预设这些不那么熟悉的观念与表述有它们存在的理由，看看它们会不会促使我们对似曾相识的老问题加以新的思考。请允许我以本书的核心概念“performed culture”为例。请注意这里用的是“performed”，而不是“performing”或者“performance”。匆匆忙忙地把“performed”等同于“表演”这个熟知的表述，会让我们失去很多有意义的启发。为此，本书编者“冒险”创造了一个汉语词汇，用“体演”来表述这个概念：这里包含了体会、体验、表演、演出。我们不认为一个人在说外语的时候仅仅只是在替换使用另一套语言密码；我们认为一个说外语的人要成功进行跨语际跨文化的交流，他其实需要“表演”相应的外国文化，而且这种表演是建立在对这个文化的切身体验之上的。即便是这里的“culture”，也不宜把它简单理解为“文化”就了事。一般对外汉语教学中的“文化”实指文化研究中所谓的“成就文化”（achievement culture），比如在汉语教学当中穿插介绍一些论语老子唐诗宋词等等。本书多篇论文里的“文化”除此之外，更多的指向那些直接影响

着交流的方式、进程以及结果的“行为文化”(behavior culture), 比如在发展与修补关系的过程中有哪些合适的说法和做法, 比如请求帮助以及同意/拒绝帮助的信号是以怎样一种形态发出的, 比如消除误解有哪些有效的说法和做法, 又比如表达相反意见或者解决矛盾, 双方相互又会有什么样的期待与预设, 等等。因此, 本书中“体演文化”所包含的信息, 应该说大大超出了我们所熟知的表述体系中的“文化表演”。

是的, 这本论文集的学术表述有时显得颇为生疏甚至生硬, 那些中文译文读起来也不是那么顺眼顺耳, 这既是因为中英文不同语境下学术论文规范与表述习惯有很大的差距, 更是因为虽然这些论文所面对的是我们很熟悉的学科以及与之相关的很熟悉的一些现象, 但是它们提出的问题以及解决这些问题的思路却是崭新的。世界上越来越多的人渴望学习中文渴望与中国交流这样一个时代已经无可置疑地到来, 但这并不等于中文学得好能有效与中国人交流的外国人会自然而然地越来越多。作为从事对外汉语教学的专业人员, 如果我们的工作只产出观众与球迷, 那实在说不过去, 这种局面也不应该继续下去了; 如果我们有志于培养球员, 现在正是换个角度换种思路的最佳时机。

2009年4月28日于青岛

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