A Research on Cross-Cultural Adaptation of Japanese Chinese Language Learners in Late Qing Dynasty and Early Republic of China

Yan WEI¹,a

¹School of Literature and Journalism, Central South University for Nationalities, Wuhan, Hubei, China
a vivian658@163.com

Keywords: The Late Qing and Early Republic, Japanese Chinese Language Learners in China, Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Abstract. The late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China was a period of frequent cross-cultural communication among Japanese Chinese language learners who came to China. Through relevant literature research, it was found that the cross-cultural adaptation ability of Chinese and Chinese language learners who came to China in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China was generally higher. This paper aims to study the adaptation strategies of Chinese language learners in Late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China from the perspective of cross-cultural communication, and find out the influencing factors, so as to provide experience and help for current cross-cultural communication.

1. Introduction

Cultural adaptation refers to the changes in cultural patterns caused by the continuous contact between the cultures of two different groups [1]. John Bailey put forward the cultural adaptation theory, which involves more prominent issues in cross-cultural communication, namely, the group, process and result, attitude and orientation of cultural adaptation. Most of the Sino-Japanese studies in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China focused on political and military perspectives, and seldom focused on the perspective of cross-cultural communication between different groups in the Sino-Japanese context. Some scholars pointed out: "No matter how strong a person's personality and ability are to cultural adaptability, as long as he comes from a different cultural background, it is almost impossible to absolutely avoid cultural conflict in the process of cross-cultural communication" [2]. Faced with different cultural environments, Japanese learners of Chinese in China still have high cultural adaptability. The reasons are worth exploring.

2. The Background of Sino-Japanese Cross-Cultural Communication in the Late Qing Dynasty and the Early Republic of China

Since ancient times, Japan has had great enthusiasm for learning Chinese culture. Historically, many envoys have been sent to China to learn Chinese language, etiquette, and systems. Facing different backgrounds in different periods, Japanese envoys to China adopted different adaptation strategies. Japanese learners of Chinese in China can adapt to the environment of China during the period of violent transition, and blend in language and culture. There are many things to learn from and to reflect on.

2.1. Cross-Cultural Communication between China and Japan in the Late Qing Dynasty and the Early Republic of China

At the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, there were frequent exchanges between countries, and foreign powers continued to gather in China. From another perspective, it can be said that it is a large-scale intercultural phenomenon. After the United States opened the door to Japan, Japan deeply realized its own shortcomings. It believed that the Confucianism that it had always studied was backward, and that Western civilization needed to be
learned. The Japanese Civilization Restoration to study Western learning has become a passion of the Japanese. Implementing the “Enriching the Country and Strengthening the Soldiers”.

The "Ming Kaihua" policy stepped up its expansion into China and sent a lot of Japanese people to China. After experiencing a series of setbacks, the people of the country began to realize that the Japan cannot be underestimated now and began to "learn from Japan." This is a reversal of the cultural exchanges between China and Japan. After the citizens have experienced a series of setbacks in cross-cultural exchanges in their own countries, the "hatred of Japan" has spread throughout the country. Some people of insight, including Liang Qichao and Zhang Zhidong, all hope The scholar-officials who were able to deal with Japan at any cost were also suspicious of the Japanese. But on the other hand, Japanese people in Japan who advocated the "Japan-Shinky alliance theory" came to China one after another. The expression of "kind" prevailed among the upper class between China and Japan[3]. Many Chinese people have admiration for the Japanese because of Japan’s learning from the West. The most typical and representative example is Ito Hirobumi. Ito Hirobumi (1841-1909) was born in Choshu, Japan, and served as prime minister in Japan but came to China. During this period, he was warmly welcomed by China. It is conceivable that many Japanese people who come to China face friendly attitudes in Chinese target language countries, and their cross-cultural adaptation may exceed the general purpose of entering the country.

2.2. The Particularity of Chinese Language Learners Who Came to China in the Late Qing Dynasty and the Early Republic of China

As Benedict said, Japan’s nationality is quite contradictory, aggressive and gentle by nature, self-respecting, humble and polite, conservative and willing to accept new things [4]. This series of character traits of Japanese have an important and substantial influence on the process of intercultural communication. After the Meiji Restoration, Japan possessed a high degree of self-confidence in its own culture and believed that it could lead a series of Asian countries to progress. Although the Chinese language learners dispatched by Japan to China have different roles and strong intentions, they do not rule out their love and interest in Chinese culture at the same time. The learners who came to China included those who came to Huawei to teach. Some of them were Japanese teachers hired by the Chinese government, such as Toyohachi Fujita and Hattori Unoyoshi, etc; some were Japanese figures sent to China by the Japanese government for certain purposes, such as Ying Kawashige Hiroshi, Hirobe Sei, Nakata Keiyoshi, Mihibumi, etc. There are officials and gentry who came to China such as Maemitsu Yanagihara, Datezongjo, Tsuda Shindo, etc. And other people who came to China for business or other occupations. A common feature of these Japanese figures in China is that they have a high level of cultural knowledge and a deep understanding and research of Chinese cultural thoughts.

Their close exchanges with Chinese people are one of the important reasons why these Japanese learners of Chinese in China can successfully acquire Chinese and use Chinese to communicate.

3. Factors Influencing the Cross-Cultural Adaptation of Japanese Learners of Chinese in China

3.1. Psychological Factors

From the perspective of Japanese education policy, during the Meiji Restoration period, the education reform was implemented and foreign language teaching was attached great importance. In 1886, it was stipulated that ordinary middle schools should learn two foreign languages. The introduction of culture into the country replaced traditional feudal Confucianism. After Japan's overall acceptance from the Meiji Restoration, a tendency to "assimilate" with Western culture and a tendency to "separate" from Chinese culture. Re-established my cultural identity and identity in the Chinese cultural environment. Judging by the two dimensions of John Bailey's cultural adaptation, the tendency to maintain traditional culture and identity, and the tendency to communicate with other groups, it seems that Japanese learners of Chinese in China have not been
greatly affected. The reason should also be included in the cultural blood relationship between China and Japan in cultural consciousness.

Although ancient Japan has learned its culture from China many times, there was a concern deep in the hearts of Japanese people-"I don't want to be culturally under China." The national psychology of "Eastern Corner, Reaping the Sangyu"[5]. The intentions of the Chinese language learners who came to China were not correct, but the period of their stay in China can be regarded as a period of normal exchanges between Chinese language learners in China and Japan in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China. Most of the Chinese language learners in China studied in China by the Japanese. However, the tasks of teaching still exist. For example, the 13 Japanese students who came to China in 1896 were all taught by the principal of the Japanese Higher Normal School Jigoro Kano. This is very much like the responsibility of most Chinese language learners in China today. The difference has an important influence on the destination and the cross-cultural adaptation of the country.

3.2. The Influence of Knowledge Level

From the perspective of Japanese textbooks, in the Chinese textbooks compiled by these Japanese, such as "Guidelines for Mandarin Chinese" and "Chinese Language Steps", cultural factors are not only related to behavioral systems, but also ideological concepts. While reflecting the teaching of linguistics, the textbooks incorporate the customs and social norms of the old Beijing in China at that time. In addition, there are also many designs in the book about the culture in the mind. For example, what color clothes do you like to wear in color single sentences and prose? What color clothes men and women are accustomed to, and the deep cultural connotations represented by colors are covered in the textbooks. Integrating these cultural concepts into teaching materials is of great significance and value for Japanese learners to adapt to the Chinese society in the 19th century more quickly. Learn cultural knowledge in Chinese learning and pay attention to culture in Chinese teaching. The textbook emphasizes the practicality of the language, and selects the commonly used "Chinese" in Beijing and Shanghai dialects as the learning materials. The famous Japanese sinologist Hirohiro Hakuku believed that the concept of "Chinese" refers to spoken language, excluding classical Chinese[6]. This kind of colloquial teaching material is closer to the reality of life. This kind of learning material that is close to life not only allows Japanese learners of Chinese to learn authentic Chinese as a second language, but also allows them to learn Chinese culture and social customs at that time. Quickly adapting to the Chinese environment also has positive significance. Even if they do not speak the Chinese language, many Japanese people can communicate with Chinese people by letter. This kind of written conversation has enhanced the communication between Japanese learners of Chinese in China and the Chinese, and has played a role in promoting their Chinese learning. A role not to be ignored.

At the same time, many Chinese language learners in China will teach Japanese in the Tongwenkan established by China and Japan while learning their own Chinese, but this is called teaching. At the beginning of the 20th century, the East Literature Society, founded by the Japanese teacher Shimakiji, hired young Japanese who were studying Chinese in China as teachers. In this way, they can not only complete their own Chinese learning tasks, but also teach Japanese to gain experience in interacting with Chinese people.

3.3. Awareness of Chinese Culture

From the perspective of Sino-Japanese cultural relations, Chinese culture and Japanese culture have a deep connection. Since the Sui and Tang Dynasties, Japan has continuously sent envoys to China and brought back many Chinese cultural classics. Chinese culture will inevitably be different when it enters foreign cultures. The assimilation of the nation leads to a culture different from the original nation. But there is a common cultural blood in these two cultures, so this common cultural blood in the cultural consciousness of the Japanese provides an important help to the cultural adaptation of Japanese teachers of Chinese in China. At the same time, the early exchange experience between China and Japan also provided reference for later Chinese teaching in China, and created conditions for quick adaptation and effective exchange and communication in the radically changing Chinese
environment in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China. This kind of cultural transfer transferred the Japanese language and social communication rules to the exchange in China, and recently formed a second language cultural knowledge structure [7], which integrates the learner's Japanese culture and identification with Chinese culture. This kind of foreign cultural knowledge structure similar to the interlanguage in language acquisition has been continuously revised and perfected in the adaptation and adaptation of Chinese language learners in China to the Chinese cultural environment. Especially for Chinese and Japanese cultures that share the same origin, it is easier to form a cultural identity based on bilingualism than it is for people from other countries to come to China. For example, Ricci, the early missionary who came to China, was not as easy and smooth as the Japanese who came to China in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China. He encountered many difficulties and was a waste of water when learning Chinese characters. Therefore, for Japanese learners of Chinese in China, this cultural knowledge structure and second language acquisition are interactive, and it subtly affects learners’ motivation, emotional factors and the final degree of second language acquisition. From the beginning, the instrumental motivation occupies a large proportion, and then the fusion motivation gradually surpass it.

4. Evaluation of Cross-Cultural Adaptation of Japanese Learners of Chinese in China in the Late Qing Dynasty and the Early Republic of China

4.1. The Side that Conforms to the Principles of Intercultural Communication

Feeling and understanding the operating methods and cultural systems of different cultures, and rebuilding one's own identity in the foreign culture is one of the conditions for successful cross-cultural communication among Chinese language learners in China. Although the purpose of Japanese learners studying in China at the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China was to assist the Japanese government’s expansion strategy in China, objectively speaking, being able to adapt well to the target language culture environment and acquiring the target language culture is a cross-cultural second language teaching and one aspect worth learning from in learning.

Mr. Zhao Deyu said that the attitude of a nation to foreign culture is directly related to the communication method adopted by foreign cultural communicators to a certain extent [8]. The support from both the home country and the destination country, especially the welcome situation among the Chinese group, is an important guarantee for Japanese learners of Chinese in China. Sufficient support reduces their economic and spiritual burdens, thereby reducing Culture shock in these areas.

4.2. The Side that Violates the Principles of Intercultural Communication

Although Japanese people who came to China at the end of Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China had high cross-cultural adaptability, they also inevitably had strong ethnocentrism. They believe that Japan is "the country where the earth was first born" is the foundation of all nations. The leaders of the Meiji era mostly inherited this idea, and this idea is also deeply rooted in the thinking of Chinese language learners who come to China. Thinking came to China to learn Chinese, so that Japanese learners of Chinese in China could not really learn the excellent traditional Chinese culture, deeply understand the ideological concepts of modern Chinese people, and existed in the cross-cultural between the two cultures in the near and permanent. The state of adaptation is a hindrance to the in-depth study of Chinese culture and the purpose of adapting to the country.

Furthermore, in the process of cultural adaptation of Japanese learners of Chinese in China, erroneous egocentric thoughts inevitably appeared, which seriously affected and hindered normal and equal exchanges between China and Japan. After the People’s Reformation, Japan emerged a view of “leave Asia and enter Europe”. This idea of blindly abandoning its own culture and chasing Western culture will have a greater impact on Japanese people’s cross-cultural exchanges with Chinese people. This heterocentrism makes Japanese learners of Chinese in China a psychology of
measuring the culture of the target language country by the cultural standards of the more
developed countries temporarily, and then cultural biases appear. In this regard, cultural relativism
should be adopted to avoid the tendency of ethnocentrism in the process of intercultural
communication among groups of different cultural backgrounds.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the cultural adaptability of Japanese learners of Chinese in China is generally high. The
psychological and social support has enabled many learners to acquire excellent "Chinese language"
skills quickly. They have experienced continuous experience. A systematic adaptation strategy has
established afterwards. Japanese learners of Chinese in China learn Chinese in the Chinese cultural
environment, using the "integrated" cultural adaptation strategy. While adapting to the Chinese
cultural environment, they are constantly surpassing their cultural awareness to complete the
practical tasks in cross-cultural communication specific activities.

Through the above analysis and research, we can absorb experience and summarize lessons to
help us understand the past and present of cross-cultural communication between different groups
of Chinese and Japanese backgrounds. Finally, we should apply these effective acculturation
strategies to modern cross-cultural communication to avoid unnecessary cultural conflicts and
promote the mutual exchange of exaggerated cultures.

References


Japan in the Late Qing Dynasty and the Early Republic of China”[M]. Chengdu: Sichuan People's


[7] Li Siqing, “Identity in Intercultural Communication and Communication(2): Application and
Practice of Principles”[M]. Dai Xiaodong, Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press,
2012: 290.

[8] Zhao Deyu. “The spread of western learning to the east and the correspondence between China