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## Principles in the Grammatical Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language

### Introduction

Following the continuous and stable economic growth, Chinese influence on the world's politics and economy becomes more significant. The number of people worldwide who want to study Chinese and learn about China constantly increases. It is undeniable that grammatical teaching holds a vital place in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. Just as an educational scholar, Wang said in the past that "when teaching Chinese as a foreign language, leaving out grammar is inconceivable"<sup>2</sup>. In recent years, such fields of study as a theoretical and practical approach to grammatical teaching made significant progress. Many treatises, teaching programmes, and materials have been published one after another, which is encouraging on a large scale.

Regarding the questions about principles in the grammatical teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, Zheng<sup>3</sup>, Lu<sup>4</sup>, and other scholars all made important analyses and assertions. As the research becomes more profound, especially all kinds of theoretical and practical methods more diversifying, the corresponding achievements gradually influence teaching Chinese as a foreign language. While looking at the positives, we also draw attention to another aspect, namely, impacting the most deeply rooted principles of teaching Chi-

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<sup>2</sup> Wang Huan, *Passives in English and Chinese*, "Chinese Language" 1983, Vol. 6, pp. 409–418.

<sup>3</sup> Zheng Yide, *Requirements and promotions for grammar research in TCFL*, "Chinese Teaching in the World" 1991, Vol. 4, pp. 217–222.

<sup>4</sup> Lu Jianming, *Grammar Teaching in TCFL*, "Language Teaching and Linguistic Studies" 2000, Vol. 3, pp. 1–8.

nese as a foreign language. During the teaching process, the issue that should be discussed is deciding which questions require a more thorough explanation.

### Grammatical Teaching Should Put Emphasis on Pedagogical Grammar, Not on Theoretical Grammar

Owing to the different objects and research goals, there exist different kinds of grammar. Pedagogical grammar is the one that should be taught to foreign students, whereas theoretical grammar should not be included in the course, for both differ significantly. Lü had a very insightful point: the research concerning language form can be divided into two categories, one focused on the theory, and the other focused on usage<sup>5</sup>. Conducting theoretical research, the language is seen as a regular system, and the goal is to show the general principles. Providing the grammar system and grammar rules with the theoretical summarization and explanation is usually called theoretical grammar. As for the research concentrated on the usage, however, based on the precise meaning, it strongly focuses on the conditions presenting the language form. Using a concrete description of grammar phenomena and regulations to instruct students to use the Chinese language correctly is called pedagogical grammar. It also goes by the name of “school grammar”. In other words, theoretical grammar research is about the position of the grammar form in the sentence structure: What kind of a grammar unit is it? Which component of a sentence or a short phrase is it? What are its relations with the components before or after it, etc. Pedagogical grammar studies the language form conditions: In what situations can it be or needs to be used? In what situations can it not be used? Does it have to be used together with any other components before or after it, etc. Wang points out that school grammar emphasizes practice, whereas scientific grammar emphasizes enhancing the theory<sup>6</sup>. These words very clearly explain the completely different goals and methods of the two kinds of research. Therefore, if one tries to directly use the theoretical approach’s teaching achievements, it will cause many problems. For example, in the classical work about the theoretical grammar, *Lectures on Grammar* by Zhu Dexi describes auxiliary verbs as: the auxiliary verb is a kind of predicative verb<sup>7</sup>, including such verbs as 能 (*neng*, can), 会 (*hui*, can), 可以 (*keyi*, can), 应该 (*yinggai*, should), 可能 (*keneng*, may), 得 (*dei*, must), 想 (*xiang*, want). They all

<sup>5</sup> Lü Shuxiang, *Chinese Language Research*, “Chinese Language” 1989, Vol. 5, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Wang Li, *Grammar System and Grammar Teaching*, Beijing 1957, p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> Zhu Dexi, *Lectures on Grammar*, Beijing 1984, p. 61.

share the following characteristics: they can only go with predicate object, not substantive object; can neither be reduplicated nor be followed by particles 了 (*le*), 着 (*zhe*), 过 (*guo*); they can be used in the ~不~ structure (~ *bu* ~) and can be used alone. He states that 能, 能够 (*nenggou*, can), 可以 and 会 demonstrate subjective ability or inability to do something as well as objective probability. He gives two examples to support his statement:

- 能挑二百斤的担子上山 (Be able to carry a load of two hundred pounds and climb the mountain, subjective ability).
- 看样子会下雨 (It seems it will rain, objective probability).
- Suppose someone, however, directly used this kind of explanation teaching Chinese. In that case, the students could make the following incorrect sentences because they do not contain anything that would violate the rules of usage stated by the book.
- 会挑二百斤的担子上山 (Can, developed a skill to carry a load of two hundred pounds and climb the mountain).
- 看样子能下雨 (It seems it is able to rain.).

To avoid similar errors, it is necessary to understand the semantic difference between “能” and “会” in the first place. “能” demonstrates that one is able and allowed to do something. It sometimes indicates possessing some kind of ability or qualifications, while “会” is used to denote mastery in a particular field as well as the possibility of something happening or appearing in the future. For example:

- 你能告诉我这个字的意思吗? (Can you tell me the meaning of this character? Shows being able and allowed).
- 我一分钟能写十个汉字。 (I can write ten characters per minute. Shows the ability).
- 我会写汉字了。 (I can write characters. Shows getting the grasp of a field).
- 他一定会去。 (He will go for sure. Shows that the act of him going will happen).

Apart from differentiating and analyzing the semantics, pedagogical grammar should also explain in greater detail the position of auxiliary verbs in a sentence from the usage perspective. For example, 我从飞机场可以一个人回家 (I can return home from the airport by myself.). In this sentence, the auxiliary verb “可以” should be put before “从飞机场”. In other words, grammatical teaching of Chinese as a foreign language must stress the pedagogical grammar characteristics. Explaining the grammar rules, one should point out the structure's characteristics and pay significant attention to proper clarification of semantic meaning and usage to help students avoid making mistakes.

## Grammatical teaching of Chinese as a foreign language goes from meaning to form, both equally important

*Linguistic Encyclopedia* records that “grammatical form” is a material symbol of grammatical meaning (morphemes, words, tones, accents, intonation, word order, reduplication)<sup>8</sup>. “Grammatical meaning” is a common meaning or linked meaning of a language unit or a combination of language units achieved using specific grammar approaches (morphological categories, structure patterns). The mentioned book especially points out: all the grammar units are a uniform body made of both meaning and form. Therefore, it is necessary to synthesize grammatical meaning to determine grammatical form when analyzing grammar. Lü remarks that teaching grammar is impossible to avoid grammar analysis, the process of which can be seen from the perspectives of both listener and speaker<sup>9</sup>. After encountering a continuous series of sounds, the listener understands the meaning of the speech. This process starts with form and ends with meaning. It is the opposite from the speaker’s point of view. At first, there is the meaning which is afterward spoken out with the help of a series of continuous sounds that become a speech. This process goes from meaning to form. Foreign students learning Chinese are similar to the speaker. They must take the meaning they have in their heads, choose proper grammar form and transform it into language code. It is a process that starts with the meaning and ends with the form. For example, when expressing “the time that an action, behavior or state lasts”, it is necessary in Chinese to pick a proper pattern of the complement of duration as the sentence has to contain the words that demonstrate the time period, e.g. 看了两小时书/等了他十分钟 (I read the book for two hours/ I waited ten minutes for him).

Analyzing the problem of the relation between meaning and form in the grammatical teaching and focusing on the two critical perspectives of both the theory of teaching a foreign language and the research regarding grammatical teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, we should also fully understand the characteristics of the adult second language learners. Feng claims that compared with learning one’s native language during childhood, the distinguishing feature for the adult second language learners is that they can already create the meaning, thus understanding the meaning by means of the sentence struc-

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<sup>8</sup> *Linguistic Encyclopedia*, eds. Qi Yucun, Dong Dawu, et al., Shanghai 1993, p. 484.

<sup>9</sup> Lü Shuxiang, *Problems in Analyzing Chinese Grammar*, Beijing 1979, pp. 7–8.

ture does not pose a problem for them<sup>10</sup>. The aspect they are not familiar with is how to convey the meaning using Chinese and how to use unique sentence structures of this language (e.g. sentences containing the character “把”, *ba*). The importance of the meaning clarification is also self-evident when it comes to the vocabulary that is present in the target language, but not in one’s native language (e.g. “一国两制”, one country, two systems, or “高大上”, classy and elegant). As for the Chinese language’s unique patterns (e.g. sentences made using “把”), they should be taught and practiced only after the students learn the meaning of the vocabulary corresponding to the relevant conditions for using these structures. Regarding the grammatical teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, if it was supposed to start from the form and syntax analysis, it would be inadequate and might lead to the creation of many ungrammatical sentences. Some people like to use sentence patterns to teach foreign students grammar. Nevertheless, in actuality every kind of sentence pattern is abstract and needs some conditional restrictions. Taking “把” sentences as an example, the structure “把 + noun + verb + 在 (*zai*, on, in) + location noun” only provides the possibility of using this pattern, but not every noun, verb or location noun can be put in there to make an acceptable sentence. If students were not provided with a meaning explanation, they could make wrong sentences similar to “把汉字学在课堂上” (write characters on the lesson). To make correct sentences, it is necessary to explain that, in this pattern, verbs must have appropriate meaning and nouns must stick to the location noun, which is indicated after the action has taken place, e.g. “把字写在黑板上/把书放在桌子上” (write characters on the blackboard/put books on the table). As for another example, following the “adverb of degree + qualitative adjective” pattern, it is possible to create correct sentences like “有点儿脏” (a bit dirty), but there is also a risk of making a mistake, e.g. “有点儿干净” (a bit clean). While introducing this structure, it is necessary to explain that the adverb of degree “有点儿” is usually used together with words that carry negative or neutral meaning as it demonstrates one’s dissatisfaction. There is no other way for students to understand how to use this sentence pattern. Consequently, we also have to put meaning and usage analysis into practice to avoid the creation of faulty sentences. For example, “我没有机会来浪费时间” (I have no opportunity to waste time.), a wrong sentence made by foreign students, seems to be correct from the form perspective, but the problem lies in the meaning. According to the research of Song, “没机会” (have no opportunity) and the verb following

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<sup>10</sup> Feng Liping, *Theory of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language from Cognitive Perspective*, Beijing 2013, pp. 173–175.

this phrase demonstrate something that the person represented by subject wants to do”<sup>11</sup>. The error in this sentence is caused by the fact that “浪费时间” (wasting time) absolutely is not something “我” (I) want to do.

Moreover, Chinese is a formless language, so both word order and vocabulary are used as important means of conveying the meaning. Specific grammar formations correspond to specific semantic functions. The placement of the components in the same syntactic structures is rather fixed in a sentence. Moving one of the components to a different position could cause a change of meaning of the whole sentence. For example, “上海我去过” and “我上海去过” (I have been to Shanghai.). The meaning of these two phrases is not identical. The former simply states the fact, the latter implies a comparison. Thus, it can be seen that word order reflects a specific syntactic form and logic, but its essence lies in the meaning. Difficulty factors that influence the grammatical acquisition of students stem from semantics. Therefore, we should be starting from the meaning, correctly instruct students about the depth of inherent relations between semantics and sentence structure.

To sum up, grammatical teaching of Chinese as a foreign language should adhere to the rule of teaching the meaning first and the form later. The correct way goes from meaning to form and from form to meaning used in the context, namely meaning → form → meaning pragmatic), which can help students develop all-round grammar abilities.

### Grammar Teaching Should Not Include Vocabulary

According to the traditional theories, language consists of three basic elements: pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Even though they were distinctly separated for better understanding and analyzing the language by philologists, all three of them are essentially very closely related. Nevertheless, the roles they play are different. Noting this problem from the perspective of learning a foreign language, there is a simple way to follow: first practice pronunciation, and for all that is left, one only needs a good dictionary and a good grammar book. The sole additional necessary aspect is a good language environment. Although the writer did not discover this point, it is a common idea shared by many. Learning a foreign language may not be that simple, but this concept explains the differences in using these three elements. Second language learners' time is often limited while they must study a lot of different

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<sup>11</sup> Song Yuzhu, *Notes About Grammar Teaching in TCFL*, “*Chinese Language Learning*” 1993, Vol. 4, pp. 37–38.

things. Teaching vocabulary is very important. The people responsible for organizing and carrying the education plan out must consider the highest possible level of optimization of education resources (including the content and time of teaching, etc.) to achieve the highest degree of education efficiency. It is commonly understood that apart from the kind of content words like “书” (*shu*, book), many expressions usually have some distinguishing traits when it comes to their meaning or usage. For instance, the commonly used verb “走” (*zou*, to walk) is very simple, but it also has some specific meaning and usage in Chinese, e.g. “久病的老人昨天走了” (An old sick person passed away yesterday.) where this particular meaning has a pragmatic function. Should it become a part of teaching grammar’s curriculum due to the peculiarity in terms of meaning and usage? The answer is negative. For one more example, the character “看” (*kan*, to look, to watch) carries many different meanings, and there are many possible ways to use it. “看” in “看书” (read a book) does not need explanation, whereas “看” as a part of “说说看” (try to explain) is included in the grammatical teaching content, for “看” here involves the use of grammar. The grammar form “VV看” conveys a kind of an abstract meaning “to try”. By getting the grasp of this pattern, the students gain one more way to demonstrate the meaning of “to try” (the other being such form as “VV”, “VV试试”, “试着VV” etc.). In a brief conclusion, limiting the scope of grammatical teaching should, in a sense, be the correct choice for the second language learners’ course.

Formulating grammar outlines has become more respected since the 1990s. Many effective programmes have been published at that time. They had a substantial positive impact on teaching Chinese as a foreign language. However, it is not clear what does grammatical teaching content consist of when creating the syllabus. As a result, the programmes focused on vocabulary also include grammar, and the grammar ones contain vocabulary. The former issue is not significant. For example, it is normal for the vocabulary list to include particle “着” (*zhe*, *zhao*, *zhuo*) as it is also a vocabulary unit after all. It is a bigger problem that grammar outlines include quite a lot of content connected to vocabulary. Such a state of the matter makes determining what should be taught as grammar problematic. There are two most influential grammar outlines.

*HSK Grading Standards and Grammar Outline* was published in June 1996 by Higher Education Press, edited by Liu Yinglin. Grammar outline consists of 1168 items in total, but much of its content is not related to grammar, e.g. 感兴趣 (be interested in), 实事求是 (seeking the truth), 打量 (to size up), 归 (to return), 配 (to join, mix), 难得 (rare), 马马虎虎 (so-so) etc. These examples prove that the definition of what this outline considers as grammar is broad.

Many items about grammars are more and more “vocalized”. What needs clarification is that word formation, each word class, phrase types, the question of multi-category words and separable words are all grammar issues that should be discussed. However, it does not mean that all examples related to the mentioned points should be included in the grammar outline as their sole purpose is to show the specific rule properly.

*Syllabus for Teaching Chinese Language to Foreign Students in Higher Education* was formulated by the Office of Chinese Language Council International and published by Beijing Language and Culture University Press in January 2002. The second section of this programme’s “Table of grammar items for second-year students” is titled “Connections and expansions of vocabulary”, among which, the editor lists:

Words from the same category:

- seasoning, e.g. 油 (*you*, oil), 盐 (*yan*, salt) 酱 (*jiang*, sauce), 醋 (*cu*, vinegar), 糖 (*tang*, sugar)
- colors, e.g. 红 (*hong*, red), 黄 (*huang*, yellow), 蓝 (*lan*, blue), 绿 (*lǜ*, green), 灰 (*hui*, gray), 黑 (*hei*, black), 紫 (*zi*, purple), 粉 (*fen*, pink)

Synonyms and close equivalent words,

- e.g. 妒忌—忌妒 (*duji — jidu*, jealous)
- 开展—展开 (*kaizhan — zhankai*, to carry out),
- 悲哀—悲痛 (*bei'ai — beitung*, sorrowful),
- 爱护—爱惜 (*aihu, aixi*, to cherish) etc.

Antonyms, e.g. 真实 (*zhenshi*, real) — 虚假 (*xujia*, false),

- 完整 (*wanzheng*, intact) — 残缺 (*canque*, shattered),
- 软 (*ruan*, soft) — 硬 (*ying*, hard),
- 开始 (*kaishi*, start) — 结束 (*jieshu*, end),
- 大方 (*dafang*, generous) — 小气 (*xiaoqi*, greedy) etc.

Perhaps the editor also did not consider this section to be part of the grammatical content as, quoting the footnote, “the goal of listing these items puts the emphasis on expanding associative connections, not on recognizing the differences”, but it still does not change its nongrammatical property. The editor might have considered “expanding the associative connections” as possessing the attribute of reasoning by analogy and being part of the grammar. However, this way of thinking is wrong. Teaching vocabulary includes using means of suffixes, semantic context etc., to help students establish connections between words and facilitate memorizing and mastering vocabulary. It is a natural usage of expanding associative connections. Grammatical teaching also must put the methods of reasoning by analogies and association into practice. For example, when the students first learn about sentence patterns



in which adjectives take the object's role, one of the essential grammar rules states that adjectives cannot become objects in independent sentences alone, without adding other components. The element that usually is the necessary addition is the adverb “很” (*hen*, very) or similar. During further studies, when students learn about sentences with a complement of degree (e.g. “他汉字写得很好”, He writes Chinese characters very well.), they find out that if the complement acts as an adjective, the rules are the same as in the case of sentences in which the adjective serves as an object. While teaching, it is clever to make an associative connection between those two kinds of sentence patterns, for it may increase the teaching process's efficiency. However, the differentiation and analysis of synonyms and antonyms is part of researching and teaching the vocabulary from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Apparently, the contents of the mentioned programmes have no connection to the basic tasks of grammatical teaching. They cannot serve as outlines for teaching grammar as they are too illogical in their approach to grammar.

### **Teaching Chinese Grammar, in Interlingual Comparison, Does Not Include Common Knowledge**

Teaching foreigners Chinese grammar cannot solely rely on teaching the Chinese language itself. The rules they have already become accustomed to by learning their native or any other foreign language are so deeply ingrained that they often compare Chinese grammar to them. Looking at the matter from the perspective of interlingual comparison could make the distinguishing traits of Chinese more evident. Facilitating foreign students' learning process can only be achieved by highlighting this language's peculiarities and thoroughly explaining them. What are the distinguishing traits of Chinese grammar? Zhu singles out two aspects of the problem: the first is that the vocabulary of the Chinese language has no simple corresponding connection to the syntactic components; the second is that the principles of making sentences in Chinese and the principles of establishing word groups are identical<sup>12</sup>. Of course, this statement is only generalized. Specific distinguishing traits of Chinese grammar are revealed by comparing it with other languages' grammar. The pattern in which the subject-predicate phrase serves as the predicate is present in Chinese and other languages of the Sino-Tibetan language family. Compared with the Indo-European languages, it can be considered one of the characteristic features of Chinese grammar. It is also one of the most common sentence

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<sup>12</sup> Zhu Dexi, *Questions and Answers in Grammar*, Beijing 1985, p. 4.

structures, e.g. “这部电影我看过 (I have watched this movie.)/他身体不错 (His state of health is not bad.)/一口水他都不喝 (He has not drunk a single drop of water.)”.

Chinese verbs and adjectives can directly act as subjects or objects in sentences without any changes made to their form. In English, however, every adjective must undergo nominalization to be put in place of the subject or object. It is another evident difference between Chinese and Indo-European languages, e.g. “散步有益健康” (Taking walks is beneficial to health.)/她爱美 (She loves beauty). Students mainly need clarification on this kind of sentences as well as the circumstances. Chinese nouns can modify nouns and, what is even more important, they can modify them freely. It is also one more difference between Indo-European languages and Chinese, e.g. “中国地图 (Map of China)/汉语老师 (Chinese language teacher)” etc. Lone nouns cannot serve as predicates in Indo-European languages, whereas, under specific circumstances, it is possible in Chinese, e.g. “我北京人 (I [am] Beijing resident)/明天中秋节 (Tomorrow [is] the Mid-Autumn Festival)”. We look at both the parts that are similar and the elements that are different. In the case of the latter ones, they usually have some specific conditions.

Compared to English in particular, the Chinese language also has one evident distinguishing trait. The formal subject exists in English, but it does not in Chinese. It demonstrates that the Chinese limits the elements, which does not increase the amount of conveyed information, namely, its redundancy is low. For example: It is raining (下雨了)/ It is ten in the evening (晚上十点了)/ He does his homework in the evening (他晚上做作业). Owing to the interference from the English grammar, students often decide to use a complete sentence with subject-predicate requirement what makes them likely to make this kind of faulty sentences: 他在晚上做他的作业 (He does his homework in the evening.)/ 他做他的作业在晚上 (He does his homework in the evening.).

Teaching Chinese grammar to foreign students, it is essential to refer to their native or intermediary language and formulate the peculiarities of the Chinese language. At the same time, it is important not to teach the content that can be considered common knowledge. Only in this way students cannot develop negative feelings based on thoroughly understanding. Some scholars point out that in order to stop students from making faulty sentences like “书害怕狼” (The book is afraid of the wolf.), one more limiting condition should be added to the “subject + verb + object” rule: the subject of “害怕” (*haipa*, to be afraid of) needs to be a “living entity”. If the students knew the meaning of “害怕”, could they say something like “书害怕狼” without adding any more limiting conditions? Probably not. We assume that second language learners

are usually adults who think regularly. They put good thought into it and possess cognitive and language abilities. The only thing they lack is the ability to use a foreign language to demonstrate their emotions and thoughts. Teaching common knowledge might negatively impact the enthusiasm of students who learn Chinese grammar, making them perceive Chinese grammar as something plain and boring.

Avoiding common knowledge usage can also be considered an education resource optimized to the utmost extent. Conscious and full utilization of students' cognitive abilities in grammatical teaching can be regarded as an educational resource as well. If, for example, thanks to the proper method of explaining “了” (*le*) during the lesson focused on rules concerning the tenses, students grasp the meaning this particle carries on the whole, there will be no need to mention it in class or the teaching resources that verbs which demonstrate the relation, e.g. “是” (*shi*, to be) or “属于” (*shuyu*, to belong to), cannot be combined with “了”, because it conveys the meaning of completeness. As far as the writer of this paper is concerned, students who come from the Indo-European language background might say such faulty sentences as “我决定了暑假去旅游 (I decided to go traveling in the summer.)” or “我发誓了我一定要学好汉语 (I swore I will learn Chinese well.)”. However, they are never prone to making such mistakes as “她是了老师” (She was a teacher.) or “这个人以前姓了王” (In the past, this person's surname was Wang.). It might be connected to the students' understanding of the semantic meaning of “了” and words similar to “是”. They naturally do not combine those two words. Even though such a conclusion is based solely on the writer's experience, as scientific experiments do not sufficiently support it, it explains these tendencies. Verb reduplication is another pattern. Chinese teaching materials and grammar textbooks sometimes include the following description: action verbs usually can be reduplicated, while non-action verbs cannot, e.g. it is wrong to say “是是” (be be) or “有有” (have have). According to the writer's experience, students never made similar mistakes. Such being the case, we should ponder over the actual significance of this kind of grammar description. In fact, it is only necessary to make students understand the grammatical meaning carried by the “VV” pattern by using a proper teaching approach. Even if the matter is still quite blurry, students will usually not make mistakes similar to “是是” or “有有”. The following faulty sentences illustrate the issues they usually come across:

- 我送送你一下儿 (I can accompany you for a while).
- 他知道那件事，可以给我们讲了讲 (He knows about this matter and can tell us).

To explain or prove some rules, theoretical grammar research can use examples that are not present in the actual language. For example, introducing the cognitive basis of possible patterns of Chinese verb-resultative construction (e.g. “说得清楚 (speak clearly)/ 说不清楚 (speak not clearly)”), it must be told that the subject is subjectively going to achieve a goal. Therefore, resultative complements can only have a positive meaning. In other words, using the given example, it is impossible to say “说得糊涂 (speak confusedly)/ 说不糊涂 (speak not confusedly)”. However, when explaining this particular kind of structure to foreign-language speakers, if the students understand “the likelihood of a particular situation emerging” and, with the help of some practical examples, their cognitive abilities are sufficient to notice that complements usually carry positive meaning. The teacher does not need to point out this condition. Many teaching materials and programmes treat “有” (you, to have) which indicates possession as a grammar point, but it is most likely inappropriate. It is noted that possessive “have” is part of the vocabulary when we study the English language. Its connection to grammar is that it transforms into “had” in the past tense and the form used as third-person singular is “has”, whereas “have” acting as an auxiliary verb is yet another grammar form. According to our limited understanding, all the nations’ languages should have the cognitive category of “possessing”. The only difference lies in the forms of language signs. Despite the fact we still cannot create a list of certain “common knowledge categories”, even limited to the depth of researching one field, in case of some phenomena (e.g. the mentioned ones), we can determine whether to consider it to be common knowledge or not.

## Conclusion

The issues connected to the grammatical teaching of the Chinese language are numerous, some of which are very broad, the others are more specific. Some of the problems discussed in the paper have yet to arouse the scholars’ attention until now. Moreover, the writer is fully convinced that these issues significantly influence both theoretical and practical teaching aspects. It is the reason why they are included in the study. The four principles mentioned before are put into effect practically, but the boundaries are not clearly set. The academia experts have different perceptions of starting points in different stages of teaching both grammar forms and meaning. The relation between grammar and vocabulary might not be easy to determine if some adverbs can be considered part of the grammar or vocab in the end. Defining the categories of common knowledge could be even more controversial. However,

these four principles have both theoretical and practical bases. Paying closer attention to these principles can be used in at least a few ways. Firstly, it can eliminate students' confusion about Chinese grammar and make them more confident in their mastery of the language. Secondly, it can optimize the teaching resources (content, time etc.), and make students learn the most needed and valuable grammar rules in the shortest time possible. Finally, it can avert the development of students' unwillingness caused by "infantilized" treatment during studying.

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## Principles in the Grammatical Teaching of Chinese as a Foreign Language

### Summary

As the pace of Chinese economy's development continues to increase, the "Chinese fever" has already become a common phenomenon within the global language communication system. Teaching Chinese as a foreign language (TCFL), regardless of the method of choice (audiolingual method, direct method, or communicative approach), is impossible without grammar. Regarding TCFL, the goal of teaching grammar is to make foreign students understand the distinguishing features of Chinese grammar and help them master its rules to correctly use the language, develop communicative competence, and efficiently increase proficiency in Chinese. This paper incorpo-

rates some living examples and, by discussing the grammatical teaching of Chinese as a foreign language, should answer some questions connected to its principles.

**Keywords:** teaching Chinese as a foreign language (TCFL), Chinese grammar teaching, teaching principles

## Принципы преподавания грамматики китайского языка как иностранного

### Резюме

Поскольку темп развития экономики Китая продолжает расти, «бум» на изучение китайского языка уже стал обычным явлением в глобальной системе языковой коммуникации. Преподавание китайского языка как иностранного, независимо от выбранного метода (аудиолингвистический метод, прямой метод или коммуникативный подход), невозможно без грамматики. Что касается преподавания китайского языка как иностранного, цель обучения грамматике – научить иностранных студентов понимать отличительные особенности китайской грамматики и помочь им усвоить ее правила, чтобы они могли правильно использовать язык, развить коммуникативную компетенцию и эффективно повысить уровень владения китайским языком. Эта статья включает несколько живых примеров и, рассказывая о преподавании грамматики китайского языка как иностранного, должна ответить на некоторые вопросы, связанные с его принципами.

**Ключевые слова:** преподавание китайского языка как иностранного, преподавание китайской грамматики, принципы преподавания