

# Application of the Action-Case Teaching Method in College Chinese Course Instruction

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**Abstract:** The traditional teaching model of college Chinese courses fails to meet the teaching and learning demands of both instructors and students under new circumstances, making the exploration of more effective pedagogical approaches a key focus of teaching reform in college Chinese. The application of the Action-Case teaching method (ACTM) holds multifaceted significance for this reform. ACTM integrates real-world cases into the teaching process, emphasizing student participation in practical activities to enhance knowledge acquisition, competency development, and literacy cultivation. It is characterized by contextualization, interactivity, and heuristic inspiration. The design of ACTM should adhere to principles of typicality, contemporaneity, and engagement. Implementation requires a systematic approach, progressing through stages such as case introduction, problem posing, group discussion, instructor feedback, and knowledge consolidation. Empowering both teachers and students serves as a critical facilitation mechanism for effectively applying ACTM in college Chinese instruction. Future efforts should focus on collaborative development of teaching cases, feedback-driven optimization of instructional design, and transcending traditional spatial constraints in teaching environments to enhance the efficacy of educational reform.

**Keywords:** Action-Case teaching method; College Chinese course; Teaching reform

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## 1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and the information age, higher education has increasingly diversified and integrated requirements for talent cultivation. College Chinese courses, as an important part of the higher education system, carry the important mission of enhancing students' humanistic qualities<sup>[1]</sup>. Through the study of the college Chinese course, students can be exposed to a wealth of literary works and historical and cultural knowledge, thereby being influenced by the humanistic spirit imperceptibly and improving their aesthetic taste, moral concepts, and thinking ability.

However, the traditional teaching model of college Chinese often focuses on the imparting of knowledge,

with teachers giving lectures and students being in a passive receiving position. This teaching approach can easily lead to a dull classroom atmosphere, low student enthusiasm for learning, and difficulty in truly achieving the teaching goal of improving students' humanistic qualities <sup>[2]</sup>. With the continuous update of educational concepts and the increasing development of educational technology, seeking more effective teaching methods has become the key to the reform of college Chinese teaching.

Action-case teaching, as a student-centered approach, has gained increasing attention in the field of education in recent years. By introducing real cases, it enables students to think, analyze, and solve problems in specific situations, emphasizing students' active participation and practical operation. It is a teaching method that shifts from "knowledge-based" to "competency-focused" <sup>[3]</sup>. The application of the Action-Case teaching method in the college Chinese course has multiple positive implications. On the one hand, it can break the limitations of traditional teaching and stimulate students' interest and initiative in learning. Vivid and concrete cases can draw students' attention and make them more engaged in classroom learning, changing the previous perception that college Chinese courses are dull and boring. On the other hand, it helps to develop students' various abilities, such as critical thinking, teamwork, communication, and expression. In the process of analyzing and discussing the case, students need to think deeply about the problem, put forward their own opinions, and communicate and cooperate with group members to exercise and improve these abilities in practice. In addition, the Action-Case teaching method can be closely linked to real life, enabling students to better understand and apply the language knowledge they have learned, improving their ability to transfer knowledge and solve practical problems, and truly achieving the transformation of college Chinese teaching from knowledge imparting to ability cultivation and quality improvement. The application of the Action-Case teaching method has gradually become an important topic.

## **2. The content and characteristics of the Action-Case teaching method**

The Action-Case teaching method is a teaching approach that integrates actual cases into the teaching process, takes students' action participation as the core, and promotes students' knowledge acquisition, ability cultivation, and quality improvement <sup>[4]</sup>. It breaks away from the traditional teaching model of simple theoretical instruction, combining abstract knowledge with concrete practical situations, allowing students to deeply understand and apply knowledge in the process of solving practical problems. Specifically, the Action-Case teaching method involves teachers carefully selecting or writing representative cases based on teaching objectives and content, which are often derived from real-life literary creations, cultural phenomena, language application scenarios, etc. During the teaching process, the teacher guides students to take actions such as analyzing, discussing, role-playing, and field research on the cases, enabling students to acquire knowledge, exercise their abilities, and develop correct values and humanistic qualities through active participation <sup>[5]</sup>. The Action-Case teaching method has the following characteristics.

### **2.1. Contextuality**

It places students in a specific context, which can be a scene from a historical story, a world depicted in a literary work, or a scene of cultural exchange in real life. Take the teaching of the ancient literary work "The Feast at Hongmen" as an example. Teachers can display pictures of the scene of the feast at Hongmen through multimedia and play related film and television clips, making students feel as if they were in that tense and

scheming banquet. In this context, students can gain a deeper understanding of the character traits, the meaning behind the language, the historical and cultural context at that time, and the social hierarchy reflected by the etiquette of ancient banquets. This situational teaching can inspire students' emotional resonance, making it easier for them to engage in learning and enhance their understanding and memory of knowledge.

## **2.2. Interactivity**

In the teaching process, students are no longer passive listeners but active participants. There is frequent interaction among students and between students and teachers through case discussions, group cooperation, etc. When discussing the cases, students express their opinions freely, share their views and ideas, inspire each other, and explore solutions to the problems together. For example, when discussing the characters in contemporary literary works, students analyze the characters' personalities, behavioral motives, and social significance from different perspectives, broaden their thinking horizons, and improve their language expression and communication skills through communication. Teachers play the role of facilitator and organizer in this process, giving students guidance and feedback at the right time to promote in-depth interaction.

## **2.3. Enlightening**

Through the presentation and analysis of cases, guide students to think deeply, stimulate their curiosity and thirst for knowledge, and cultivate their critical thinking and innovative abilities. When students are faced with a complex case, they need to screen, analyze, and synthesize the various information within it, and use the knowledge they have learned to propose their own insights and solutions. When analyzing a controversial modern literary work, teachers encourage students to question and think about the theme, expression, value orientation, and other aspects of the work, not limited to traditional interpretation methods, and cultivate students' spirit of independent thinking and daring to innovate. This kind of inspiring teaching enables students to continuously improve their thinking ability during the learning process and lays a solid foundation for their future studies and life.

# **3. Design for the application of the Action-Case teaching method in college Chinese teaching**

## **3.1. Principles for selecting teaching cases**

When applying the Action-Case teaching method in college Chinese teaching, the selection of teaching cases is of vital importance as it directly affects the teaching effect and students' learning experience. When choosing teaching cases, the following principles should be followed.

### **3.1.1. Typicality**

Typical cases can focus on the core points and key issues of the teaching content, and are representative and exemplary<sup>[6]</sup>. For example, in the teaching of ancient literature, The Analects of Confucius, as a representative work of Confucian classics, contains classic sayings such as "Learning without thinking leads to confusion; thinking without learning leads to peril" and "Do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you", which contain profound learning methods and principles of conduct. Selecting relevant cases from The Analects, such as analyzing the dialogue between Confucius and his disciples on learning, morality, etc., can enable students to deeply understand the essence of Confucianism, grasp the wisdom and values contained in

ancient literary works, provide typical examples for students to learn ancient literature, and help students draw inferences by analogy. To better understand the content and value of other ancient literary works.

### **3.1.2. Contemporaneity**

With the development of the times and the continuous changes in social culture, college Chinese teaching needs to closely connect with the pulse of the times and introduce cases with the characteristics of the times<sup>[7]</sup>. Choosing literary works that reflect contemporary social hot issues and cultural phenomena as cases can make students feel the close connection between Chinese and real life and stimulate their interest in learning. When explaining modern literary works, novels, essays, or poems that reflect themes such as interpersonal communication in the Internet age and the impact of artificial intelligence on society can be selected. Some literary works that focus on the struggles of young people in big cities, depicting the pressures, dreams and pursuits they face, can resonate with students. By studying these cases, students can not only improve their language skills, but also enhance their understanding and thinking of contemporary society and develop humanistic qualities that adapt to the development of the times.

### **3.1.3. Interest**

Interest is the best teacher, and interesting cases can attract students' attention and increase their enthusiasm for learning. When choosing cases, some interesting literary works or cultural phenomena can be selected, such as humorous and witty novels, interesting folk tales, creative advertising copy, etc. Some modern novels with a humorous style tell stories from life in light-hearted and witty language, allowing students to experience the pleasure of the language while reading and analyzing. When explaining the use of language, some interesting advertising slogans, Internet buzzwords, and other cases can be introduced to analyze their language features and expression effects, so that students can learn Chinese knowledge in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere and increase their interest in learning.

## **3.2. The implementation process of the Action-Case teaching method**

In college Chinese teaching, the implementation of the Action-Case teaching method is a systematic and orderly process, covering multiple key links from case introduction to knowledge summary, each link is closely linked and jointly dedicated to improving students' Chinese literacy and comprehensive ability<sup>[8]</sup>.

### **3.2.1. Case introduction**

The key to this part is to select cases that are highly relevant to the teaching objectives and can stimulate students' interest. For example, when teaching the ancient literature unit, the teacher can choose the case of the "Feast at Hongmen" from "Records of the Grand Historian." By presenting pictures of the scene of the Hongmen Banquet through multimedia and playing related film and television clips, students can be vividly brought into the historical context full of political intrigue and tension. Such an introduction can quickly draw students' attention, stimulate their interest in subsequent analysis and discussion, and lay a good foundation for the entire teaching process.

### **3.2.2. Pose the question**

At this stage, the teacher should carefully design a series of thought-provoking and challenging questions based



on the case. These questions guide students to think deeply about the characters, plots, and cultural implications behind the cases, encourage students to actively apply the language and historical and cultural knowledge they have learned for analysis, and cultivate students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

### **3.2.3. Group discussion**

This section is also a core part of the Action-Case teaching method. The teacher divides the students into groups and asks them to discuss the questions raised. During the group discussion, students express their opinions and share their views and ideas. Through group discussions, students can inspire each other, broaden their thinking, learn to look at problems from different perspectives, and also develop teamwork and communication skills<sup>[9]</sup>. After the students have fully discussed, each group presents the results. Through the presentation, not only can the ideas of each group be fully exchanged and collided, but also the students' confidence and presentation skills can be cultivated, and the overall quality of the students can be improved.

### **3.2.4. Teacher's comments**

In this session, the teacher will give a comprehensive and objective evaluation of the discussion results and presentation of each group. Affirm students' strengths and innovations, such as in-depth analysis of problems, unique insights, etc. At the same time, point out the shortcomings and provide targeted guidance and suggestions. Teachers should promptly guide students to correct and supplement any thinking deviations or knowledge gaps in the discussion, help students deepen their understanding of the case, and improve their analytical skills and knowledge level.

### **3.2.5. Summary of knowledge**

In this section, the teacher should guide the students to review the process of the case analysis and summarize the language knowledge, cultural background, and thinking methods involved. Through the summary of knowledge, students will be able to systematize fragmented knowledge, deepen their understanding and memory of the knowledge, and also be able to apply what they have learned to other similar case analyses, achieving the transfer and expansion of knowledge<sup>[10]</sup>.

## **3.3. Promoting mechanism of the Action-Case teaching method**

The Action-Case teaching method can achieve good teaching results in college Chinese teaching, which is inseparable from its unique promotion mechanism, mainly reflected in two aspects: students' self-empowerment and teachers' empowerment of students.

On the one hand, students' self-empowerment through action is one of the important promoting mechanisms of the Action-Case teaching method. When students engage in actual case analyses and practical activities, their learning initiative and enthusiasm are fully mobilized. In the process of analyzing the case, students are required to independently collect information, organize information, put forward viewpoints, and validate their ideas through discussions and exchanges with group members. When studying a foreign literary work, students may need to consult relevant historical and cultural materials to understand the background of the work's creation and the author's life experiences in order to better understand the content of the work. In this process, students do not passively accept knowledge but actively explore and discover it, thereby achieving self-empowerment<sup>[11]</sup>. Through action, students can apply the language knowledge they have learned to real

situations and solve specific problems. This accumulation of practical experience makes students feel that their abilities have been enhanced, boosts their confidence and sense of achievement in learning, and thereby enhances their sense of self-efficacy. After completing a complex case analysis task, students will have a new understanding of their learning ability and problem-solving ability, and believe that they will be able to handle similar problems in the future. This positive self-awareness will further stimulate students' learning motivation and form a virtuous cycle.

On the other hand, teachers' empowerment of students also plays a crucial role. Teachers, as supervisors of students' practice, play an important role as facilitators and supporters in action-case teaching<sup>[12-13]</sup>. In the process of case analysis, teachers can help students identify the key points of the problem and guide them to use the correct analytical methods and ways of thinking. When students encounter difficulties or get stuck in thinking while analyzing the case, the teacher can help them expand their thinking and find a breakthrough to solve the problem by asking questions, inspiring them, etc. During the group discussion session, the teacher can pay attention to the discussion of each group, provide timely guidance and feedback, and promote the in-depth development of the group discussion. Teachers can also guide students to reflect on the process and results of case analysis, help them summarize experiences and lessons, and improve learning outcomes. Teachers will guide students to think about what methods are effective in case analysis, what is lacking, and how to improve. Through the guidance and supervision of teachers, students can continuously improve their ability to act, develop scientific professional thinking, and lay a solid foundation for future learning and development.

## **4. Implications of the Action-Case teaching method for college Chinese teaching**

### **4.1. Cooperative production of teaching cases**

Cooperative production of teaching cases is an important practice direction of the Action-Case teaching method in college Chinese teaching, emphasizing the joint participation of students and teachers in the creation and practice of cases. This model can give full play to the advantages of both sides and improve the teaching effect<sup>[14]</sup>. In the traditional teaching model, teaching cases are often unilaterally selected or written by teachers, and students are in a passive receiving position. In action-case teaching, both the student and the teacher are involved in the production of the case, which makes the case more relevant to the student's real life and interests. In a literary creation course, the teacher can guide students to combine their own life experiences to jointly create a novel case reflecting campus life. Students can share interesting stories, confusions, and challenges they encounter on campus, and then the teacher and students will organize and process these materials together to form a complete novel case.

### **4.2. Feedback optimization of instructional design**

The continuous revision and adjustment of teaching content based on students' feedback is a key link to ensure that the Action-Case teaching method continues to perform well in college Chinese teaching. Through various means such as questionnaires, classroom discussions, and after-class exchanges, students' opinions and suggestions on teaching cases and the teaching process are widely collected. In the questionnaire survey, questions were set about the difficulty, interest, and alignment with the teaching objectives of the cases to understand students' intuitive feelings about the cases. In class discussions, encourage students to speak up actively and share their confusions and gains from the case analysis process, as well as their views on the

teaching content and methods. In terms of adjusting teaching methods and strategies, flexibly change the teaching approach based on students' feedback.

### 4.3. Spatial breakthrough in the teaching context

Breaking away from the traditional indoor classroom environment and extending the teaching context beyond the classroom is another significant breakthrough of the Action-Case teaching method in college Chinese teaching<sup>[15]</sup>. This spatial expansion can provide students with a richer and more diverse learning experience, allowing them to feel the charm of Chinese in a broader world and improve their humanistic qualities. When teaching ancient literary works, teachers can organize students to visit local historical and cultural sites for field research. For the study of modern literary works, teachers can lead students to cultural places such as libraries and museums to carry out related learning activities. Organizing students to participate in social and cultural activities is also an effective way to expand the teaching context space. Teachers can encourage students to actively participate in events such as cultural festivals, art exhibitions, and literary lectures held in cities. By participating in these social and cultural activities, students can closely relate the language knowledge they have learned in class to real life, enhance their interest and motivation in language learning, and improve their humanistic qualities and sense of social responsibility.

### Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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