

A Study on the Difficulties and Countermeasures of Bilingual Chinese Language Learning for Shui Elementary School Students

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the difficulties and reasons faced by Shui ethnic elementary school students in bilingual Chinese language learning. Using literature review and case analysis methods, the study analyzes the manifestations and influencing factors of learning difficulties and proposes corresponding solutions and countermeasures, such as proposing learning strategies, optimizing teaching modes, family support, and school management strategies, to provide better support and assistance for Shui ethnic elementary school students in Chinese language learning. The study of the difficulties and countermeasures in bilingual Chinese language learning for Shui ethnic primary school students can promote educational equity, strengthen multicultural education, promote the development of education in ethnic minority areas, and also help improve the quality of bilingual Chinese language learning for Shui ethnic primary school students, enhance teaching effectiveness, which has essential practical and educational significance.

Keywords: Shui ethnic elementary school students; Bilingual learning; Learning strategies

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1. Introduction

The Shui ethnic group is one of the few ethnic groups in China that have both ethnic languages and written languages, possessing a unique culture ^[1]. The primary school students of this ethnic minority group face some difficulties in bilingual learning of the Chinese language, which is an important topic worth studying ^[2]. Language is a bridge for cultural inheritance and communication, and bilingual language learning is of great significance for the language development and cultural inheritance of Shui ethnic elementary school students.

Firstly, Shui ethnic elementary school students may face challenges brought about by different language environments. Since Shui ethnic elementary school students live in a language environment dominated by the Shui language, they have relatively limited access to Chinese resources, which may lead to a lack of practical opportunities and language input in Chinese language learning. Secondly, Shui ethnic elementary school students may encounter obstacles in learning Chinese due to cultural differences. Shui culture and Han culture have different values, habits, and traditions, which may affect the attitude and understanding of Shui elementary school students towards Chinese

language learning. Finally, the influence of students' factors. For primary school students living in the aquatic cultural environment for a long time, their enthusiasm for bilingual learning may not be high. Due to the influence of their learning ability, attitude, etc., primary school students in aquatic areas face more difficulties in bilingual learning. In addition to the above three points, there are still other difficulties related to learning bilingualism among Shui ethnic elementary school students, which will be gradually explored in this study. Language is the primary tool for human communication and exchange. Since people can speak, they have been constantly trying to express themselves through language to achieve the goal of communication. The fundamental purpose of Chinese language teaching is to cultivate students' ability to understand and use the Chinese language^[3]. Therefore, based on the above simple analysis, this study will focus on exploring how to effectively help Shui ethnic elementary school students overcome the difficulties they may encounter in bilingual Chinese learning, which is of great significance. By conducting in-depth research on the difficulties and countermeasures of bilingual language learning among Shui ethnic elementary school students, it can provide useful reference and guidance for improving their language learning, and promote the development of their language ability and cultural inheritance.

2. Research methods

- (1) Conduct a questionnaire survey to understand the actual situation of Shui ethnic elementary school students in bilingual Chinese learning. By observing their learning status, habits, and difficulties, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the problem and provide reliable data support for subsequent research.
- (2) Conduct interviews and focus group discussions, engage in in-depth communication with Shui ethnic elementary school students, parents, teachers, and education experts, and listen to their opinions and suggestions on difficulties in bilingual language learning. Through interviews and discussions, we can obtain information from different perspectives, identify the root cause of problems, and explore solutions.
- (3) Collect relevant literature materials, including academic papers, educational research reports, etc., and conduct a literature review and comparative analysis on the difficulties and countermeasures of Chinese bilingual learning for Shui ethnic primary school students. By drawing on and summarizing previous research findings, theoretical basis and practical guidance can be provided for this study.
- (4) Statistical analysis methods are used to organize and analyze research data. Through data statistics and charts, the characteristics and patterns of difficulties in bilingual Chinese learning among Shui ethnic elementary school students are revealed, providing a scientific basis for proposing effective strategies.

3. Analysis of difficulties in bilingual learning of Chinese language for Shui elementary school students

3.1. Language differences

Although there is a phenomenon in every ethnic group in China where some people use both languages (bilingualism), and almost all ethnic minorities have some people switch to the languages of other ethnic groups, the vast majority of ethnic minorities still use their language as their main communication tool^[4]. This is mainly because there are certain cultural differences between ethnic languages. There are differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar between the mother tongue of Shui ethnic students and Chinese. This difference will cause them many problems when learning Chinese. For example, the Shui language has many unique phonemes that do not exist in the Chinese Pinyin Scheme, which leads to their difficulty in mastering the pronunciation of certain Chinese characters. In addition, the grammar structure and vocabulary expression of the Shui language are also different from Chinese, which poses many challenges for students to learn and requires more time and energy to adapt and master the language.

3.2. Cultural background differences

As a relatively primitive and ancient ethnic group in the deep mountains of Guizhou, the Shui ethnic group has long lived a closed life of small-scale farming economy in history, lacking communication and connection with the outside world^[5]. This is the cultural growth background of the Shui people, where the family background of these students is different from the cultural context used in Chinese language teaching. This cultural background difference can directly affect students' learning and understanding of Chinese language knowledge. For example, some concepts, customs, and traditions of Shui culture may be different which can also cause students to have deviations when understanding Chinese texts or certain articles. Teachers need appropriate guidance and explanation to meet this challenge.

3.3. Improper teaching methods

Under the perspective of fully implementing the new curriculum standards, education and teaching should be more inclined towards the development of students' quality and abilities, based on individual differences of students, and choosing diverse teaching methods is particularly important^[6]. The teaching methods will directly affect the Chinese language learning of students with aquatic upbringing. Shui ethnic students tend to prefer practical activities to enhance their learning abilities since traditional teaching methods are ineffective for them. Hence, teachers first need to change their teaching methods and then design teaching activities based on the characteristics of students to enhance their learning ability.

3.4. Learning environment

The language learning environment refers to the sum of external factors that affect language learning and is extremely important for the language learning of Shui ethnic students^[7]. The learning environment at home and school has a significant impact on the language learning of these students. The lack of a supportive learning atmosphere and the limited use of the Chinese language in families can make it difficult for students to understand the use of Chinese characters. Secondly, the school's facilities and equipment are incomplete and cannot meet the needs of students with aquatic backgrounds. Other factors such as insufficient teaching staff can lead to the decline of students' learning enthusiasm. Therefore, parents must unite with the school to create a good learning environment for students and jointly promote their learning efficiency and enthusiasm.

3.5. Student factors

The independent learning ability of students can simultaneously promote the development of their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities, thus the most important factor in the Chinese language learning of Shui ethnic students is themselves^[8]. Various personal factors such as students' learning ability, learning methods, and learning attitudes can have an impact on their learning. For example, if students lack self-confidence or learning motivation, it may affect their learning enthusiasm and efficiency. Therefore, teachers and parents must always pay attention to the individual differences of students. Teachers should customize learning activities according to the actual situation and most importantly, promote students' self-efficacy to help them overcome learning difficulties and improve the effectiveness of Chinese language learning.

4. Discussion on strategies for bilingual learning of Chinese language for Shui elementary school students

4.1. Strengthen the construction of the bilingual teacher team: Enhance the bilingual teaching ability and level of teachers

Wang Jiayi and others studied the problem of the shortage of preschool bilingual teachers in Xizang and believed that the lack of teachers and the low level of teachers are the important reasons for the uneven quality of preschool

bilingual education in the region ^[9]. This study believes its findings are highly significant for promoting bilingual learning among primary school students of the Shui ethnic group. One way is by creating a team of teachers with good bilingual skills and professional teaching qualities. You can choose local teachers with a certain foundation in language related to aquatic environments to participate in training and preparation in the early stage. Firstly, it is necessary to provide certain training for bilingual teachers in the early stage. Teachers need to master the connection between the Shui language and Chinese and explore the commonalities between the two in depth. Only by having a foundation in bilingual teaching can they better impart knowledge and carry out targeted teaching. Secondly, it is necessary to assess the educational and psychological knowledge of teachers, which is the foundation of all teaching. Only with excellent educational and teaching knowledge can bilingual teaching be completed and its unique value be truly realized. Finally, regular assessments and evaluations of teachers are conducted, summarizing and reflecting on individual issues, extracting experiences, gradually identifying the mysteries of bilingual teaching, and continuously optimizing teaching methods, which helps to explore the deeper potential of bilingual teaching.

4.2. Optimize bilingual teaching resources: Develop bilingual textbooks and teaching aids suitable for Shui ethnic elementary school students

From the perspective of traditional culture, interdisciplinary learning of Chinese language should be linked by cultural activities, break through disciplinary barriers, and involve students' existing knowledge and skills in art, ideological and political education, science, and other aspects of life in the learning process, ultimately forming a comprehensive nourishment for Chinese language learning ^[10]. We can learn and draw on the experience of other bilingual tutorials, combined with the characteristics of the Shui language, to develop bilingual textbooks and related teaching aids with unique Shui characteristics. For example, combining books of aquatic backgrounds with Chinese characters and using phonetic symbols to help students better memorize new words can not only inherit the excellent culture of their nation but also facilitate their understanding and memory. On one hand, an excellent bilingual textbook can help teachers better connect two languages, making it easier for students to comprehend. The textbook writing stage is a crucial period for integrating both languages, pivotal for bilingual teaching. On the other hand, teaching aids can play a role in expanding and extending, by adding relevant allusions or legendary stories to help students understand the profound connotations. In addition, more detailed explanations can also be added, which is conducive to students' independent learning and use.

4.3. Innovative bilingual teaching methods: Introducing diversified teaching methods and strategies

When new media becomes a part of people's daily lives, it has already influenced their cognitive and emotional patterns. At the same time, it will also have an impact on education and teaching ^[11]. At present, there are traditional teaching methods such as alternate use of two languages, language role-playing, bilingual reading and writing. On this basis, the Internet can be used to optimize teaching and artificial intelligence can be introduced to enhance the fun of bilingual teaching. In her article "Optimizing Teaching Methods to Improve Teaching Effectiveness", Ma Ying proposed that "only when teaching content can stimulate students' interest in learning and ignite their enthusiasm for learning, can the teacher's teaching design and application of teaching methods be considered successful" ^[12]. Introducing more diverse teaching methods and strategies in bilingual teaching can enrich teaching content to a certain extent, stimulate students' interest in learning, and promote the continuous progress of their bilingual learning.

4.4. Create a good bilingual learning environment: Strengthen home-school cooperation and create more opportunities for bilingual practice

Collaborative education between schools and families requires cooperation and participation, hence good

communication between both parties is the key to ensuring the effectiveness of collaborative education between schools and families ^[13]. Collaborating between families and schools can create a favorable and suitable bilingual learning environment, helping primary school students improve their bilingual abilities. By actively communicating with family and forming a model of home-school cooperation, bilingual teaching is promoted. Combining bilingual learning with practice and incorporating language characteristics of daily life can truly achieve active learning and utilization. This creates a good language environment for students and facilitates bilingual learning for Shui ethnic students.

5. Research significance

Bilingual teaching in ethnic schools is a teaching behavior aimed at ethnic minorities to learn a foreign language ^[14]. We thoroughly investigate the difficulties faced by Shui ethnic elementary school students in bilingual Chinese learning to explore their root causes and propose corresponding solutions. We aim to deeply understand the essence of the problem by analyzing the specific manifestations of these challenges. Secondly, we will explore the reasons for these difficulties, including factors such as cultural background and learning environment, and find the key to solving the problem. At the same time, we will explore strategies for learning, teaching models, family support, and school management, aiming to provide more effective learning support for Shui ethnic elementary school students to help them overcome difficulties, and improve the effectiveness of bilingual Chinese learning. Through this study, we hope to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for improving the bilingual learning situation of Shui ethnic primary school students in the Chinese language, provide a reference basis for educational practice and policy formulation, promote the improvement of educational equity and quality, and promote the development of education in ethnic minority areas.

6. Conclusion and outlook

With the continuous progress of China's education industry, especially the increasing emphasis on minority education, we are also paying more attention to the phenomenon of bilingual learning in the Chinese language subject of Shui ethnic primary school students. As is well known, ethnic languages and scripts play a special role in regulating ethnic relations, promoting ethnic exchanges, strengthening ethnic unity, and maintaining social stability in ethnic regions ^[15]. Continuously strengthening bilingual teaching can promote the prosperity and progress of ethnic culture. Based on this theory, this study explores the bilingual learning difficulties of Shui ethnic primary school students in the Chinese language subject through the analysis of relevant data in survey questionnaires, targeted interviews, specialized group discussions, and collection of online and offline literature materials. The difficulties mainly include four aspects: significant language differences, cultural backgrounds, inappropriate teaching methods, and poor learning environment. Based on the analysis of the above four aspects, this study proposes four targeted measures: strengthening the construction of bilingual teacher teams, optimizing relevant bilingual teaching resources, innovating bilingual teaching methods, and creating a good bilingual learning environment. Overall, we need to conduct a comprehensive exploration from multiple aspects and use the correct methods to promote Shui ethnic elementary school students to gradually overcome the difficulties they face in bilingual learning of the Chinese language and make academic progress.

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Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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