

# Research on Cultural Teaching Theory and Classroom Interaction of Foreign Students Based on “5C” Standard

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**Abstract:** The Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (referred to as the “5C” standard) in the United States, with its emphasis on communication and comprehensive development of language skills in foreign language learning, has received increasing attention from the area of teaching Chinese as a foreign language around the world in recent years. This article roundly describes the “5C” (Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities), and attempts to integrate the “5C” standard with classroom questioning to propose a set of strategies to enhance effective classroom interaction.

**Keywords:** “5C” standard; Teaching Chinese as a foreign language; Questioning; Classroom interaction

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## Introduction

The education industry has transitioned from “knowledge education” to “cultural education” for international students learning in China<sup>[1]</sup>. This transformation is not only beneficial for international students studying in China to comprehensively learn Chinese culture, but also for the improvement of their personal cultural literacy. However, teachers should not only teach students knowledge, but also use culture to educate them.

This issue has aroused widespread interest among scholars, who have proposed different solutions. Among them, the proposal and application of the “5C” standard has attracted particular attention (Warren, 2007<sup>[2]</sup>; Johnson, 2011<sup>[3]</sup>; Ferro, 2014<sup>[4]</sup>). Questioning is a crucial aspect of teacher-student interaction in teaching, and this is also true in the teaching of international students. Scholars have also conducted in-depth research on the impact of questioning on cultural education for international students (Brooks, 1968<sup>[5]</sup>; Seelye, 1997<sup>[6]</sup>; Brown, 2001<sup>[7]</sup>; Moran, 2001<sup>[8]</sup>).

However, research on how to use questioning methods to promote cultural teaching is not abundant both domestically and internationally, especially in the field of cultural teaching in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. Therefore, based on the “5C” standard, this article comprehensively analyzes the application and strategies of questioning in cultural teaching, in order to make a certain contribution to the teaching of Chinese culture for international students learning in China.

## 1. The “5C” standard theory

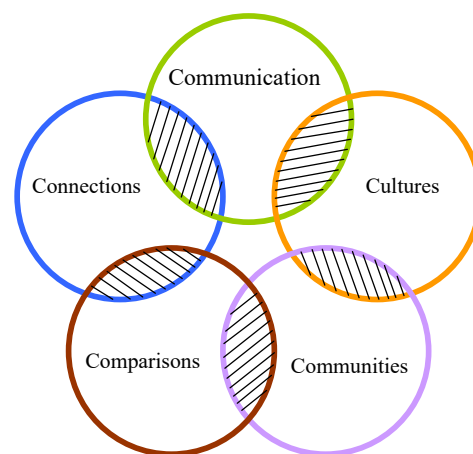
### 1.1 Concept and content of “5C” standard

In order to adapt to the new situation of world foreign language education, adapt to multicultural development and strengthen national defense security, the “5C” standard was obtained by USA in 1996, which was promulgated as the national foreign language curriculum standard. And, this standard was revised and renamed as Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in 1999<sup>[9]</sup>.

The content of “5C” standard includes five aspects, such as communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities. In fact, “5” in “5C” means that the “5C” standard covers five aspects, “C” means that the English description of the five aspects starts with “C”, which also reflects that the contents of the “5C” standard are interrelated and interspersed. What’s more, the “5C” standard attaches great importance to the use of language and hopes to transform forced use into conscious and active use. The purpose was to build the intrinsic relationship between language learning and personal development.

### 1.2 Connotation of “5C” standard

Existing studies have found that the “5C” standard emphasizes the communication centered learning model, that is, the language and culture of the target language. Meanwhile, pay attention to the continuous between disciplines, and pay attention to the comparison of language and culture between learners’ mother tongue and target language, so as to find the different causes of cognition-cultural differences, and then establish learners’ awareness of cross-cultural communication. Through the interaction of five aspects, language learners can accurately and appropriately use the target language for communication. The five “C” in the “5C” standard are interrelated, interactive and inseparable. The schematic diagram of intrinsic relationship of “5C” standard was shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Schematic diagram of intrinsic relationship of "5C" standard.

## 2. Application of questioning in classroom cultural teaching theory

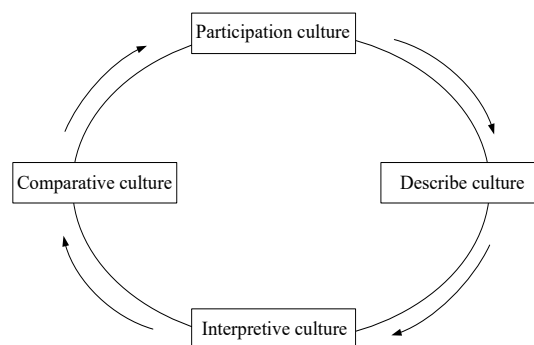
The contents of culture teaching points out that the method of questioning is determined by the contents of culture teaching. In the west, the second language teaching community divides culture into big culture (i.e. big C) and small culture (i.e. small c). Big culture (i.e. big C) refers to the sum of human civilization achievements and all contributions to civilization, including art, literature and history. Small culture (i.e. small c) refers to people’s lifestyle, behavior norms, customs and traditions.

### 2.1 The content of questioning in cultural teaching theory

Questioning is an interaction process and communication process, which is used to output information and feedback information, between teachers and students. In the cultural teaching, only by using questioning reasonably can achieve the goal of culture teaching.

The five types of questions are inductive questions, analytical questions, extensive questions, evaluation questions and practical questions, respectively.

Cultural products are generally intuitive and specific things, including books, music, dance, architecture, clothing, etc. Cultural customs are generally specific and conventional behavior habits, including customs, communication etiquette, etc. Cultural concept is an abstract and universal way of thinking and concept, which includes values, life attitudes, beliefs and thinking modes. The relationship among description culture, participation culture, interpretation culture and comparative culture is shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2** Schematic diagram of logical relevance of four cultures.

### 2.2 The strategies of questioning in cultural teaching theory

By comparing and understanding the differences between Chinese culture and its mother tongue culture, we can gain a deeper understanding of cultural connotations and improve students’ cross-cultural communication abilities. This is the new goal of cultural teaching. According to the goal of the community, students need to apply what they have learned to their daily lives, which requires teachers to adopt a strategy of “applying what they have learned” when asking questions, and try to provide students with real situations. The purpose of asking real questions is to encourage students to develop their ability to handle problems in Chinese in real life through reflection and understanding of cultural customs, behavioral habits, etc. in a real context.

## 3. Correlation analysis between “5C” standard and questioning

### 3.1 Communication-inductive property questions

Communication goals require students to properly conjecture semantics from linguistic context by using cognitive ability. This requires teachers to be inclined to ask inductive property questions, which can be divided into the induction of various materials and the induction of daily behavior. In the questions of inducing various materials, teachers can show pictures, videos, audio, texts, etc. according to these materials, the questions can be described-guided-induced. In the questions of inducing daily behaviors, teachers can set up real situations for students and ask students to express their behavior in the corresponding situations.

### 3.2 Cultures-analytical property questions

Cultures goals require students to understand the meaning behind cultural products and cultural conventions, which requires teachers to be inclined to ask analytical questions. Through the grasp of these four aspects, we can basically understand a certain cultural connotation. They can be the evaluation of some cultural phenomena, or ask students to talk about their confusion about some cultural differences. Their purpose is to help students form a positive attitude towards different cultures through these questions and the communication process between teachers and students.

### 3.3 Connections-universality questions

Connections goals require ask broad questions and connect other disciplines by teachers. Universality questions mean that the sources of questions should be extensive. Teachers should clarify the goal of culture teaching. For example, when learning Chinese music, it is intended to guide students to experience the special aesthetics of Chinese music through questions, rather than let students answer professional music theoretical knowledge through questions.

### 3.4 Comparisons-evaluative property questions

Comparisons goals require students to compare the similarities and differences between the two cultures, which requires teachers to be inclined to ask evaluative questions. The evaluative property questions in cultural knowledge class mentioned here is to evaluate the similarities and differences of culture after comparison. However, the evaluation here is not based on the mother tongue culture to evaluate There is no standard answer to such questions, but only through questions to provide students with a way to express their views.

### 3.5 Communities-practicality questions

Communities goals require students to apply their achievements to domestic and international communities, which requires teachers to be inclined to ask practicality questions. Due to the limitations of classroom teaching, practicality questions can only be realized by setting up real situations. Such questions can also be classified as practicality questions.

Therefore, Fig. 1 can be modified to obtain the theoretical model of culture teaching in Figure 3.

## 4. Conclusions

The “5C” standard specifies the principles and standards that should be achieved in the process of foreign language teaching, providing new ideas for our teaching Chinese as a foreign language. Against the backdrop of promoting Chinese language and enhancing cultural soft power, applying the teaching strategy of questioning to the teaching practice of cultural knowledge courses in China from the perspective of the “5C” standard can further enhance the frequency and quality of teacher-student interaction, thereby increasing the fun of classroom learning for international students in China and strengthening their understanding of Chinese culture.

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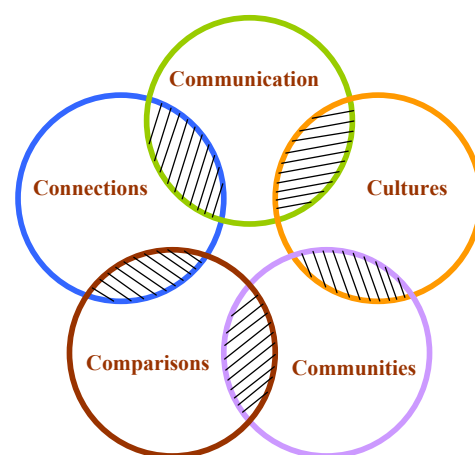


Figure 3 Schematic diagram of correlation between "5C" standard and questioning.