

A Case Study of Excellent Local Traditional Culture Education for Children in Community Context

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Abstract

The topic of excellent local traditional culture education (ELTCE) has recently gained widespread attention. Guided by the research findings of Chinese excellent traditional culture education and adaptation theory, by analyzing the case of ELTCE in Huai'an city, this paper discusses the reasons, contents and approaches of ELTCE for children in community context. This study argues that this type of ELTCE has its historical background and practical significance, requires representative and appealing contents, and needs suitable instructional and promotional approaches. The paper can provide references for similar educational practices or studies in other cities.

Keywords

Excellent local traditional culture education (ELTCE), children, community context.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of Chinese excellent traditional culture education, ELTCE (excellent local traditional culture education) is facing new development opportunities. Accordingly, there are many relevant researches in academic fields. Most of the relevant studies focus on college students, including the exploration or practice for the integration of ELTCE into the ideological and political education in universities, the methods or approaches for cultivating college students' humanistic literacy and core values, etc. (Zou Xiaoping & Yu Xiuri, 2007; Peng Liwei & Gao Yanqing, 2017). However, in community context, only two of the relevant studies, which discuss the ELTCE from the perspectives of its viewpoints, suggestions, or strategies in Jining City or Ningbo City, can be found on the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) (Zhang Peiyun, 2015; Zhang Hongwei, 2018). In short, there is no research which concentrates on ELTCE for children in community contexts at present. Therefore, by analyzing the case of ELTCE for children in Huai'an City in community context, this paper discusses its reasons, contents and approaches, with the aim of providing reference for promoting cultural inheritance among children in other places.

2. Theory Background

2.1. Research on Chinese excellent traditional culture

There are numerous research achievements on the education of Chinese excellent traditional culture. Many of them concentrate on specific educational objects or educational contexts. On the one hand, from the dimension of educational objects, researchers mostly conduct research on students. They argue that Chinese excellent traditional culture needs to be incorporated into textbooks, classrooms, and campuses, and that flexible textbook contents and teaching methods need to be used to cultivate students' comprehensive cultural literacy (Lv Lijie & Ding Yiran, 2019; Pan Zhiping, 2019). On the other hand, from the dimension of educational contexts, researchers mostly carry out analysis in social context. They argue that it is necessary to adopt flexible and diverse methods, for instance, popular and interesting ones, to improve the

educational effect of Chinese excellent traditional culture (Yao Hongyue, 2016; Hua Yungang & Cui Tao, 2018). These research findings can provide theoretical perspectives or references for the research on ELTCE for children in community context.

2.2. Adaptation Theory

By borrowing the concept of adaptation in the theory of evolution and by integrating the characteristics of language research, Jef Verschueren, Secretary General of the International Pragmatics Association, creates Adaptation Theory (He Ziran, 2007). This theory attaches great importance to the role of context, and believes that context is the environment of language communication, which covers all factors that affect discourse processing, including linguistic context and communicative context. Communicative context can be further divided into four categories, physical world, social world, mental world, language users (Verschueren, 2000; He Ziran, 2007). In ELTCE for children in community context, we mainly need to adapt to children (language users), because of their characteristics.

3. Research Design

3.1. Research Questions

This study will answer the following three questions: (1). the reasons of ELTCE for children in community context, including its background and significance; (2). the contents of ELTCE for children in community context, including its educational contents and forms; (3). the approaches of ELTCE for children in community context, including its instructional and promotional approaches.

3.2. Research Phases

The research is conducted in three phases. During the first phase, we collected and analyzed literature materials, conducted necessary research, and developed goals and plans for children's ELTCE in Huai'an City. During the second phase, we collaborated with Huai'an Children's Library to carry out practical activities for children's ELTCE in Huai'an City, and compiled all the relevant materials. During the third phase, we analyzed those case materials for children's ELTCE in Huai'an City in community context, discussed its reasons, its contents, its approaches, and its value of promotion.

3.3. Data Collection

This study collected all the materials in the whole process of the children's ELTCE conducted by the author's team in Huai'an Children's Library. They include materials, such as presentation slides, audio/video recordings, images, texts, and materials in terms of interactions with children and their parents. Many of them are from the ten sessions of a series of ELTCE activities (i.e., "Love Huai'an"). From September 2023 to January 2024, these activities were held, with different kinds of themes, including Huai'an history, Huai'an customs, the Grand Canal I & II, Huai'an revolutionary culture, Huai'an figures I & II, Huai'an old streets, Huaiyang cuisine, and Journey to the West.

4. Discussion

4.1. The Reasons of ELTCE for Children in Community Context

There are both historical background and practical significance for the reasons of ELTCE for children in community context. For one thing, from a historical background perspective, in the new era, cultivating children's awareness and love for excellent local traditional culture and their hometown and country is a necessary requirement to enhance their cultural quality and

confidence. It is also essential for preserving excellent local traditional culture effectively, strengthening the foundation of Chinese excellent traditional culture, and forming common cultural consciousness and memory (Lv Lijie & Ding Yiran, 2019; Zhang Hongwei, 2018). For another thing, from a practical significance perspective, the current state of ELTCE in Huai'an city is not ideal. Local children have limited knowledge of Huai'an excellent local traditional culture, especially whose parents are not native citizens there. Besides, the ELTCE at school is hindered by factors like teaching content and faculty, which result in a lack of diversity. Additionally, community organizations and relevant departments have not fully participated in community-based ELTCE for children in Huai'an city.

4.2. The Contents of ELTCE for Children in Community Context

ELTCE for children in community context requires representative and appealing contents. On the one hand, representative contents are quite essential. Representative contents should be carefully selected from the local traditional culture and all undesirable elements should be removed. For example, the following representative excellent contents may be included, Huaiyang cuisine (such as Pingqiao tofu and Wenlou soup dumplings), local celebrities (such as Zhou Enlai and Wu Cheng'en), literary classics (such as *Journey to the West*), and canal culture (such as the Grand Canal and World Heritage sites). On the other hand, appealing contents are quite necessary. To enhance the appeal of excellent local traditional culture, the contents of ELTCE should be adapted to suit children's characteristics (Pan Zhiping, 2019; Verschueren, 2000). We need to choose the appealing excellent contents with words and pictures, audios and videos, relatable stories and daily life, e.g., the legendary story of Zhou Enlai in celebrity culture or the art of paper-cutting in folk culture.

4.3. The Approaches of ELTCE for Children in Community Context

The approaches of ELTCE for children in community context include both instructional and promotional ones. For one thing, instructional approaches are needed. In community context, the key to ELTCE for children lies in adapting to the specific characteristics of language users (i.e., children) (He Ziran, 2007; Hua Yungang & Cui Tao, 2018). It includes solving children's problems of weak reading comprehension and difficulty in maintaining concentration. Flexible teaching methods, such as using interesting, storytelling, simplified, and practical language forms, employing text, picture, visual and audio presentation elements, adopting hands-on and interactive activities, and taking oral praises and material rewards measures, should also be employed. For another thing, promotional approaches are needed. There are different kinds of excellent local traditional cultures in different places. The successful practices of ELTCE for children in community context in Huai'an city can also be developed in other cities. For instance, more target audiences (such as tourists from other regions) and more additional educational spaces (such as cultural centers or other community institutions) can be included. Additionally, social media platforms like We Chat and academic publications can also be utilized to enhance the impact of the ELTCE for children in community context.

5. Conclusion

This study analyzes the topic of ELTCE for children in community context and it has certain theoretical, practical, and promotional value. Firstly, theoretical value, unlike those researches on excellent traditional culture education at school, this paper systematically analyzes the reasons, contents, and approaches of ELTCE in community. Secondly, practical value, different from traditional culture practices for students, this paper focuses on analyzing ELTCE practices for children, a new object. Finally, promotional value, this paper can serve as a reference for ELTCE of other target objects in other community contexts or cities.

Meanwhile, there are also some deficiencies in the practice and study of ELTCE for children in community context. For example, professional teachers with profound knowledge of local culture are limited, resources that can meet children's expectations are insufficient, and financial support is limited. Besides, in view of the richness and diversities of excellent local traditional culture, the analysis of this paper may not be comprehensive. In the following research, the contents of ELTCE need further optimization, the presentation forms of ELTCE need further innovation, and the promotional values of ELTCE need further validation.

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