

Title: What textual elements can help B2 adult learners enhance communicative Mandarin competence at a Taiwan Language Institute?

Abstract

Although text is a crucial input in second language acquisition, few studies have systematically investigated its relationship with learning efficiency. This mixed-methods study aimed to identify the specific textual elements that enhance communicative Mandarin competence among intermediate-to-advanced learners in a multicultural context. Participants were divided into an experimental group (10 participants) and a control group (8 participants) for a three-week intervention. The quantitative component utilized three distinct questionnaires to collect baseline motivation data, learning strategies, and primary learning outcomes, while the qualitative component integrated the analysis of learners' oral work recordings and teachers' field notes. The findings showed that seven elements enhance communicative competence, with five indispensable elements required for text choice: topics, learner-text engagement, authenticity, useful vocabulary and formulaic language, and texts as a medium to evoke response. Secondary elements included aesthetic sentences/textual melody and the engagement of the senses/motor system. The data suggests that strategic text selection significantly enhances communicative competence. Future research is warranted to verify the impact of the sense and motor system component and textual genre, which were challenging to test successfully during the short research window.