

Analysis of Classical Chinese Poetry Selection and Compilation in Intermediate and Advanced Comprehensive Textbooks for International Chinese Education: A Case Study of *Road to Success*, *Developing Chinese*, and *Boya Chinese*

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Abstract—As an integral part of literary works, classical Chinese poetry has consistently been a key source for text selections and compilation in international Chinese education (ICE) textbooks. This study focuses on intermediate and advanced comprehensive textbooks, selecting three representative and authoritative series: *Road to Success*, *Developing Chinese*, and *Boya Chinese*. Using statistical methods, this study examines the quantity, distribution, genres, themes, and instructional levels of classical Chinese poetry across the three textbooks. A total of 54 classical Chinese poems are included in three textbooks, with *Road to Success* demonstrating a clear advantage of the amount and diversity in genres and themes. The distribution of classical Chinese poetry within three textbooks is relatively scattered, reflecting a non-deliberate selection and dispersed arrangement. The quantity of classical Chinese poetry selections varies between intermediate and advanced levels, indicating a staged instructional design. The incomplete inclusion of classical Chinese poetry, along with the characteristics of the exercises and annotations, is also analyzed in this study. Additionally, the study explores the dual challenges of language instruction and cultural perception connected in the teaching of classical Chinese poetry. Based on these findings, the study outlines a theoretical framework of classical Chinese poetry teaching strategies in ICE and provides recommendations for refining the selection and compilation of classical Chinese poetry in ICE comprehensive textbooks. By focusing on classical Chinese poetry, this research provides further insights for educational research and practice on the integration of language and culture in ICE.

Index Terms—international Chinese education (ICE), literature in language education, classical Chinese poetry, traditional Chinese culture teaching, Chinese textbooks analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

With economic globalization and cultural diversification advancing, language education's role in international exchanges and cross-cultural communication is growing. China's development and global cultural integration have spiked interest in learning Chinese. International Chinese education (ICE) is now marked by a growing number of students abroad, varied learning levels and goals, a younger demographic, and more countries including Chinese in their education systems (Li, 2020). The academic community now recognizes the importance of integrating language and cultural teaching in ICE, necessitating cultural content in Chinese instruction (Liu et al., 2019). Language reflects cultural characteristics, and Chinese is no different. Classical Chinese literature, especially poetry, is a key aspect of Chinese culture. *The Teaching Syllabus of Chinese for Foreign Students of Chinese Major in Higher Educational Institutions* includes Chinese cultural knowledge as a key component, with literature emphasized in long-term and short-term programs (National Leading Group for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, 2002a-c). Classical poetry not only represents a literary genre but also embodies traditional Chinese culture. Teaching classical poetry offers learners a vivid understanding of Chinese culture. Incorporating cultural elements into poetry teaching helps students learn both language and culture.

The teaching of Chinese literature in ICE relies heavily on textbooks. Existing researches have mostly focused on literature and cultural textbooks, revealing a significant gap in the effectiveness of current specialized cultural textbooks compared to comprehensive ones. Over 30 literary textbooks exist for international students, but none are specifically effective and widely applicable. University literature courses often lack purpose and planning, with arbitrary offerings

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and unsuitable textbooks. Many courses depend on self-prepared materials or borrowed textbooks, with insufficient attention to literature compared to language skills courses.

This study, therefore, examines comprehensive intermediate and advanced ICE textbooks, focusing on three authoritative series: *Road to Success*, *Developing Chinese*, and *Boya Chinese*. It analyzes the number, distribution, genres, themes, and instructional levels of classical poetry in these textbooks, compares and evaluates the poetry selections, and explores practical challenges of teaching poetry in ICE. Based on statistic and analysis, this study provides recommendations for improving classical poetry in ICE textbooks and learning strategies, aiming to better integrate language and culture.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Principles of Textbook Compilation

There is a general consensus among scholars on universal principles for compiling second language textbooks. Liu (2000) summarized these as relevance, practicality, scientific accuracy, interest, and systematization. However, there is no consensus on specific principles for compiling classical Chinese poetry textbooks. Yu (2019) argues that the compilation of textbooks should primarily adhere to the principle of applicability, taking into account the cultural vocabulary difficulty acceptable to learners. The second principle of scientific accuracy should clarify language and cultural teaching objectives, ensuring that the selection and structure of texts follow certain norms and systems. The last principle of combining interest with appreciation should also be considered. The author believes that classical poetry textbooks should follow general principles while also considering the structural features and developmental logic of classical poetry. It should align with the cognitive patterns and learning needs of students who lack knowledge about Chinese culture.

B. Textbook Content Development

In terms of how to gauge the difficulty level of classical poetry textbook content, Wu (2004) has addressed related issues. He notes that various types of language materials can become overly difficult or skewed in terms of language, content, and cultural background. As language proficiency increases, such overly difficult parts tend to become more common. Therefore, textbooks and teaching should focus on selecting concise yet excellent works to emphasize strengths and avoid weaknesses, thus achieving teaching goals. Different scholars have varied opinions on the selection of classical poetry texts. Shen (2017) proposed two types of textbooks: language-oriented and poetry-oriented. The poetry-oriented textbook focuses on widely circulated, ethnically distinctive, and frequently used poems, advocating for diverse themes, a combination of full poems and excerpts, and a blend of knowledge and interest in the compilation process. Wu (2018) discussed several aspects to consider in textbook selection: inspirational works, poems depicting landscapes and seasons, works related to festival culture, and poems that evoke emotional resonance. Zhao (2020) suggested prioritizing poetry themes that are close to modern life to facilitate classroom engagement and enhance student participation.

C. Specific Textbook Evaluations

Specific evaluations and introductions of textbooks are primarily found in master's theses. Zhong (2014) reviewed *Recite classical poems and learn Chinese* from the perspectives of textbook system, layout, and readability. He found that the textbook is knowledge-rich, systematic, and engaging but noted that improvements are needed in content selection, language expression norms, and the accuracy of poetry interpretation. Yan (2017) suggested that schools should consider establishing separate classical poetry classes to help teachers and students appreciate the importance of learning classical poetry. This research, which focused on the teaching of classical poetry at the intermediate level for ICE, detailed the objectives, content, methods, and selection standards, and attempted to compile a textbook. Gan (2018) surveyed the acquisition of poetry among intermediate and advanced international students, analyzed the state of poetry textbooks for international students, and designed a curriculum outline using Silk Road poetry as an example. The textbook, tailored to the learning characteristics, cultural background, and Chinese proficiency of the student participants, was organized into four chapters based on topics and themes, featuring poetry from the Tang Dynasty Silk Road in Gansu Province, emphasizing regional characteristics and practicality.

III. METHODS

A. Research Subjects: Criteria for Selecting Textbooks

This study focuses on three authoritative ICE textbooks—*Road to Success*, *Developing Chinese*, and *Boya Chinese*—selected for their popularity and impact in the field. These textbooks are widely used in universities and Chinese language teaching institutions worldwide, authored by experts, and published by reputable organizations (Zhang, 2023). The analysis targets intermediate and advanced levels, as these textbooks feature more classical Chinese poetry, which is suitable for learners with higher language proficiency (Li, 2016).

B. Study Approach and Study Sample

Using statistical methods, this study examines the quantity, distribution, genres, themes, and instructional levels of classical poetry across the three textbooks. *Road to Success*: A national-level ICE textbook series used by over 100 universities, including Peking University and Nanjing University. Designed for non-native Chinese learners, it consists of 20 volumes across various levels: beginner (12 volumes), intermediate (4 volumes), and advanced (4 volumes). *Developing Chinese*: A comprehensive set of 28 volumes, divided into elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels, with five components: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehensive. The elementary level has 8 volumes, while the intermediate and advanced levels combined include 20 volumes. *Boya Chinese*: Comprising 9 volumes, this series is suitable for undergraduate and long- and short-term learners. It is divided into elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, and advanced levels, focusing on progressively building language skills from foundational to advanced discourse. The detailed information about the three textbooks series analyzed in this study can be found in Table 1.

TABLE 1
BASIC INFORMATION OF THE THREE TEXTBOOKS WITHIN INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED LEVEL

No.	Textbook	Level	Volumes
1	<i>Boya Chinese</i> (博雅汉语)	Intermediate level (2 volumes)	Intermediate I (中级冲刺 1) (Li & Zhao, 2013), Intermediate II (中级冲刺 2) (Li & Zhang, 2015);
		Advanced level (3 volumes)	Advanced I (高级飞翔 1) (Li et al., 2013), Advanced II (高级飞翔 2) (Li et al., 2016), Advanced III (高级飞翔 3) (Li et al., 2020).
2	<i>Road to success</i> (成功之路)	Intermediate level (4 volumes)	Lower Intermediate 1 (提高篇 1) (Huang, 2008), Lower Intermediate 2 (提高篇 2) (Qiu & Sui, 2008); Intermediate 1 (跨越篇 1) (Wang, 2008), Intermediate 2 (跨越篇 2) (Zhang, 2008).
		Advanced level (4 volumes)	Lower Advanced 1 (冲刺篇 1) (Qiu & Yu, 2008), Lower Advanced 2 (冲刺篇 2) (Qiu & Wang, 2008); Advanced 1 (成功篇 1) (Qiu & Zhao, 2008), Advanced 2 (成功篇 2) (Qiu & Li, 2008).
3	<i>Developing Chinese</i> (发展汉语)	Intermediate level (10 volumes)	Intermediate Comprehensive Course 1 (中级综合 1) (Xu et al., 2011), Intermediate Comprehensive Course 2 (中级综合 2) (Wu, 2012); Intermediate Listening Course 1 (中级听力 1) (Fu, 2011), Intermediate Listening Course 2 (中级听力 2) (Fu, 2012); Intermediate Speaking Course 1 (中级口语 1) (Lu, 2011), Intermediate Speaking Course 2 (中级口语 2) (Cai, 2011); Intermediate Reading Course 1 (中级阅读 1) (Xu, 2011), Intermediate Reading Course 2 (中级阅读 2) (Xu, 2012); Intermediate Writing Course 1 (中级写作 1) (Cai, 2012a), Intermediate Writing Course 2 (中级写作 2) (Cai, 2012b);
		Advanced level (10 volumes)	Advanced Comprehensive Course 1 (高级综合 1) (Cen, 2011), Advanced Comprehensive Course 2 (高级综合 2) (Gao & You, 2012); Advanced Listening Course 1 (高级听力 1) (Yao, 2011), Advanced Listening Course 2 (高级听力 2) (Tian, 2011); Advanced Speaking Course 1 (高级口语 1) (Wang, 2011), Advanced Speaking Course 2 (高级口语 2) (Li & Wang, 2011); Advanced Reading Course 1 (高级阅读 1) (Luo, 2011), Advanced Reading Course 2 (高级阅读 2) (Cai & Xue, 2011); Advanced Writing Course 1 (高级写作 1) (Cen, 2012a), Advanced Writing Course 2 (高级写作 2) (Cen, 2012b).

IV. FINDINGS

A. Distribution and Presentation of Classical Chinese Poetry in Three Textbooks

Based on the statistics (Table 2), a total of 54 classical Chinese poems are included across the three textbook series. In terms of distribution, 43 poems are cited in 23 lessons, while 11 poems are used in 5 exercises. Regarding the completeness of the selected poems, 48 poems are partially quoted or excerpted as single lines, and only 6 poems are included in their entirety in the textbooks. As for the distribution across the textbooks, *Road to Success* includes the most poems, with 41, followed by *Developing Chinese* with 7, and *Boya Chinese* with 6.

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION AND PRESENTATION OF CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY IN THREE TEXTBOOKS

No.	Textbook	Poems Number	Distribution		Presentation	
			Numbers: Poems/Lessons	Numbers: Poems/Exercises	In Lines	In Entirety
1	Road to Success	41	31/12	10/4	38	3
2	Developing Chinese	7	6/5	1/1	6	1
3	BoYa Chinese	6	6/6	0	4	2
Sum		54	43/23	11/5	48	6

B. Proportion of Classical Chinese Poetry in Textbooks by Teaching Level

As shown in Table 3, the three sets of textbooks together feature a total of 54 classical Chinese poems. Of these, intermediate level volumes include 15 poems, which accounts for 27.78% of the total, while advanced level volumes contain 39 poems, representing 72.22%. Among intermediate level textbooks, *Road to Success* includes the most poems, with 8, making up 14.81% of the total. *Developing Chinese* series features 4 poems, or 7.41%. *BoYa Chinese* has only 3 poems, which is 5.56% of the total. For advanced level textbooks, *Road to Success* includes the highest number of poems, totaling 33, or 61.10% of the total. *Developing Chinese* series and *BoYa Chinese* series each includes 3 poems, accounting for 5.56% each.

TABLE 3
PROPORTION OF CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY IN TEXTBOOKS BY TEACHING LEVEL

Level	Total Poems	Proportion	Textbook Series	Number of Poems	Proportion of Total Poems
Intermediate	15	27.78%	Road to Success	8	14.81%
			Developing Chinese	4	7.41%
			BoYa Chinese	3	5.56%
Advanced	39	72.22%	Road to Success	33	61.10%
			Developing Chinese	3	5.56%
			BoYa Chinese	3	5.56%

C. Distribution of Classical Chinese Poetry by Authors and Dynasties

As shown in Table 4, among the 54 classical Chinese poems included in the three textbook series, poems from the Tang dynasty are the most frequently represented, with 31 poems, making up 57.41% of the total. Poems from the Song dynasty come next, with 13 poems, accounting for 24.08%. The third most represented are classical poems from the Ming Dynasty, with 3 poems accounting for 5.56%. Poems from other periods are included more sporadically, with two poems each from the Pre-Qin period, Northern and Southern Dynasties, and Yuan Dynasty, each making up 3.70%. The Qing Dynasty has only one poem, representing 1.85%.

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF POETRY BY DYNASTIES IN TEXTBOOKS

Distribution	Dynasties						
	Tang	Song	Ming	Northern and Southern	Yuan	Pre-Qin	Qing
Quantity	31	13	3	2	2	2	1
Proportion	57.41%	24.08%	5.56%	3.70%	3.70%	3.70%	1.85%

Regarding authors (Table 5), the focus is primarily on renowned figures. Bai Juyi (白居易), known for his straightforward style and social themes, is the most frequently included poet, with 8 poems, representing 14.81% of the total. Li Bai (李白), renowned for his romantic and imaginative works, follows with 5 poems, making up 9.26%. Su Shi (苏轼) and Li Shen (李绅) are tied for third place, each with three works, together constituting 11.11% of the total. Authors with two works cited include Du Fu (杜甫), Ouyang Xiu (欧阳修), Wang Wei (王维) and so on. The textbooks also feature other well-known poets, such as Xin Qiji (辛弃疾), Li Shangyin (李商隐).

TABLE 5
DISTRIBUTION OF POETRY BY AUTHORS IN TEXTBOOKS

Distribution	Authors				
	Bai Juyi (白居易)	Li Bai (李白)	Su Shi (苏轼)/Li Shen (李绅)	Du Fu (杜甫)/Ouyang Xiu (欧阳修)/Wang Wei (王维)/Lu You (陆游)/Yang Weizhen (杨维桢)/Liu Zongyuan (柳宗元)/Yuan Zhen (元稹)	Others (e.g., Xin Qiji (辛弃疾), Li Shangyin (李商隐), Li He (李贺) etc.)
Quantity	8	5	6 (3 per author)	14 (2 per author)	21 (1 per author)
Proportion	14.81%	9.26%	11.11%	25.93%	38.89%

Based on the above statistics, it is evident that although the three textbooks consider poems from various historical periods in China, they predominantly focus on poetry from the Tang and Song dynasties (with a total of 44 poems from these two periods, accounting for 81.49%). Additionally, the selection of poems tends to favor famous poets, with the works of only Bai Juyi (白居易), Li Bai (李白), and Su Shi (苏轼)/Li Shen (李绅) being together included 19 times, accounting for 35.18%.

D. Distribution of Classical Chinese Poetry by Genres

Table 6 shows the distribution of classical Chinese poetry genres in intermediate and advanced textbooks. The most prevalent genres are seven-character verse (七言诗) and five-character verse (五言诗), with 28 and 18 poems respectively, comprising 51.85% and 33.33% of the total. Although only three lyrics are included, they are the third-largest genre, accounting for 5.56%. Other genres represented in smaller numbers include *Chuci* (楚辞, known for its lyrical and

mystical style from the Warring States period), *Shijing* (诗经, one of the oldest Chinese poetry collections from the Zhou dynasty), and *Han Yuefu* (乐府诗, poetry from the Han dynasty often set to music and reflecting everyday life and emotions).

TABLE 6
DISTRIBUTION OF CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY GENRES IN TEXTBOOKS

Distribution	Genres			
	Poetry (Seven-Character to a line) 七言诗	Poetry (Five-Character to a line) 五言诗	Lyrics 词	Others (楚辞: Chu Ci, 诗经: Shi Jing, etc.)
Quantity	28	18	3	5
Proportion	51.85%	33.33%	5.56%	9.26%

E. Distribution of Classical Chinese Poetry by Themes

The poetry excerpts included in the comprehensive textbooks, while supporting the themes and writing objectives of the texts, do not offer the thematic diversity found in specialized poetry textbooks. Nonetheless, the classical Chinese poetry in these textbooks still presents a rich thematic tapestry, with a significant focus on nature, seasonal changes, philosophy, reflection, and wisdom. Drawing from the thematic classifications common in classical Chinese poetry and those used in the Chinese Ministry of Education's primary school language textbooks, the thematic distribution in the three textbook series is as follows (Table 7). The theme of Nature and Seasonal Changes accounts for the largest share at 29.63%, underscoring the deep connection between classical Chinese poetry and the natural world. Philosophy, Reflection, and Wisdom follow with 24.07%, highlighting the poetry's intellectual depth, exploring existential questions, introspection, and the pursuit of wisdom. Historical and Political Commentary constitutes 22.22%, illustrating poetry's role in engaging with and reflecting on historical and political issues. The theme of Impermanence, Transience, and Solitude represents 12.96%, emphasizing life's fleeting nature and the solitude of the human experience. Finally, Love, Friendship, and Romance make up 11.12%, showing the more personal and emotional aspects of classical poetry. Overall, these themes reflect a comprehensive engagement with various aspects of life, nature, and thought, illustrating the multifaceted nature of classical Chinese poetry in the textbooks.

TABLE 7
DISTRIBUTION OF CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY BY THEMES IN TEXTBOOKS

Distribution	Themes				
	Nature and Seasonal Changes	Philosophy, Reflection, and Wisdom	Historical and Political Commentary	Impermanence, Transience, and Solitude	Friendship, and Romance
Quantity	16	13	12	7	6
Proportion	29.63%	24.07%	22.22%	12.96%	11.12%

F. Characteristics of Classical Chinese Poetry Selection and Compilation in ICE Comprehensive Textbooks

(a). Unintentional Inclusion and Dispersed Arrangement of Classical Chinese Poetry

The distribution of classical poetry in the three sets of textbooks appears to be somewhat haphazard. In these textbooks, classical poetry is scattered throughout various texts and is only included in non-poetic genres such as argumentative essays and prose. There are no dedicated sections or focused units specifically for classical poetry. On the other hand, the selection of classical poetry mostly comes from specific texts, which primarily focus on introducing traditional Chinese culture. For example, in the *Road to Success* Lower Advanced 1, the text "Literati and Tea" includes 4 poems, while in Advanced 2 "Dreams of West Lake" features 8 poems. This scattered approach indicates that the inclusion of classical poetry is not a deliberate effort but rather a natural integration into the texts. The reason for this approach is that these three textbooks are not specialized in literature or culture but are primarily used in language classes to improve learners' Chinese proficiency. Intermediate and advanced learners need to engage with more authentic Chinese literary and cultural materials. Although some texts include classical poetry, the content and format of the presented poems remain limited. This dispersed arrangement, while not specifically designed for poetry, incorporates certain cultural content in intermediate and advanced textbooks. This method maintains the systematic nature of the series while ensuring each book's flexibility and practicality (Li, 2007).

(b). The Hierarchical Presentation of Classical Chinese Poetry and the Staged Arrangement of Textbooks

Although the selection of classical Chinese poetry in comprehensive textbooks may appear incidental, statistical results clearly indicate a significant difference in the number of poems included in intermediate versus advanced textbooks (Table 3). Advanced textbooks contain 2.6 times more classical Chinese poems than intermediate textbooks. This disparity is largely attributed to the inclusion practices of the *Road to Success* series. However, a broader examination of the inclusion of classical Chinese poetry across all three series at the elementary level reveals a clear pattern: higher-level textbooks feature more classical Chinese poetry, while elementary-level textbooks rarely include such content. This staged approach to including classical Chinese poetry is not unique to these comprehensive textbooks. Li (2016) found that advanced

textbooks included more Chinese literary works (widely recognized and acclaimed classic works by renowned authors) than intermediate ones, encompassing classical, modern, and contemporary literature. Similarly, the statistical analysis of idiom usage in intermediate and advanced textbooks and the statistical analysis of proverbs quoted in corresponding textbooks (Lin, 2023; Zhang, 2023) also reflect that the number included in advanced textbooks is greater than in intermediate textbooks. Thus, a plausible trend is that the number of literary and cultural elements included in comprehensive textbooks is proportional to the level of difficulty of the textbooks. This situation may arise because, due to the incidental nature of classical poetry presentation (the inclusion of classical poetry mainly serves the writing purposes of the textbook authors), the texts in intermediate and advanced textbooks tend to be longer and include more topics introducing China, thereby incorporating more classical poems. This also reflects the hierarchical and scientific nature of textbook compilation, where content organization should align with learners' learning patterns and language development rules, and the sequencing should follow a gradual cognitive progression (Liu, 2000).

(c). *Incomplete Inclusion of Classical Chinese Poetry and the Compilation in Exercises and Annotations*

The statistics also show that out of the 54 classical poems in the three sets of textbooks, only 6 are presented in their entirety, while the remaining 48 are quoted partially in lines. For instance, in the Advanced III of *BoYa Chinese* series, the text "Chinese Urban Struggles" quotes just two lines of a four-line poem to illustrate the uniqueness of different Chinese cities. It is worth noting that the textbooks provide brief annotations and explanations for the quoted poetry. *Road to Success* uses footnotes, *Developing Chinese* includes explanations in the vocabulary section, and *BoYa Chinese* uses endnotes. These annotations offer necessary context, helping students understand the poetry and fostering interest in literature and culture. However, not all poems are annotated, and the available annotations generally cover only the basic meaning and source of the poems. Since the primary focus is on language instruction, detailed cultural and literary content is limited. Additionally, some poems are incorporated into exercises to practice rhetorical techniques, integrating poetry into language skills training. For example, the Lower Advanced 2 of *Road to Success* includes rhetorical exercises based on classical poetry to enhance students' understanding of Chinese parallelism. In fact, the quality of a textbook is judged not only by the selection of material and the overall structure but also by the design of exercises (Nie, 2017). Integrating language skill exercises with classical Chinese poetry not only aligns with the teaching characteristics of these poems but also helps broaden students' literary and cultural horizons. However, given the diverse range of class types, the ideal approach is to incorporate a variety of exercise formats into each lesson as much as possible (Li, 2003). This requires textbook authors to design different exercises to meet the specific teaching objectives of the courses.

V. DISCUSSION

A. *Dual Challenges of Classical Chinese Poetry Selection and Compilation in ICE Textbooks*

(a). *Challenge 1: Teaching and Learning Chinese Language in Classical Poetry*

Classical Chinese poetry presents significant linguistic challenges due to its use of archaic, seldom-used, or meaning-altered words, which create barriers to understanding (Mu, 2000). For instance, the text "Snowy Days" in *Road to Success* Lower Intermediate 2 quotes Bai Juyi's poem *An Invitation* (问刘十九) (Xu, 1994, p. 123), with the lines "绿蚁新醅酒 (In bottles green the new brew gleams), 红泥小火炉 (In red-clay stove the fire looks fine), 晚来天欲雪 (At evening snow will fall, it seems), 能饮一杯无 (Will you come for a cup of wine)?" The term "绿蚁" (literal meaning: green ants) refers to the green foam formed by wine dregs floating on newly brewed, unfiltered rice wine. The word "醅" means brewing (commonly expressed as "酿" nowadays). These words, rarely used in modern Chinese, pose comprehension challenges and reflect the poet's emotions over centuries. As these ancient terms become obsolete or replaced, their translatability diminishes, complicating the conveyance of the original meaning (Li & Li, 2023). This underscores the need for clear explanations in textbooks to make these archaic expressions accessible to learners.

(b). *Challenge 2: Cross-Culturally Perceiving Classical Chinese Poetry*

Cultural differences also present significant obstacles in learning classical Chinese poetry. Chinese poetry traditionally conveys subjective emotions through objective imagery, such as the "moon" symbolizing homesickness or the "willow tree" representing farewell. This cultural imagery, deeply embedded in Chinese poetic traditions, can be challenging for foreign learners to understand and appreciate (Yan, 2003). The concise language and unique form of classical Chinese poetry, with its specific rhythmic patterns and culture-loaded words, may lead to misunderstandings among international students (Mu, 2000; Xu & Li, 2003; Li & Li, 2023). Thus, in textbook compilation, more emphasis should be placed on cultural context and effective explanations to bridge these cultural gaps.

B. *Proposal A: The Theoretical Framework of Classical Chinese Poetry Teaching Strategies in ICE*

Incorporating classical Chinese poetry into ICE presents a unique challenge and opportunity for educators. The richness of Chinese poetry offers profound cultural and linguistic content that can significantly enhance learners' language skills and cultural competence. This section integrates key educational theories—Multicultural Education Theory, Cultural Schema Theory, Input Hypothesis, and Interaction Hypothesis—into a conceptual framework that supports the teaching

of classical Chinese poetry in ICE. The aim is to provide a theoretical basis for teaching strategies that effectively promote both language acquisition and cultural understanding.

(a). *Multicultural Education Theory*

Multicultural Education Theory emphasizes the inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives within educational curricula. This theory is particularly relevant to ICE, where the goal is not only to teach the Chinese language but also to impart a deep understanding of Chinese culture. According to Banks (1993), multicultural education aims to foster inclusivity in education by acknowledging and appreciating cultural diversity. Classical Chinese poetry, with its rich historical and cultural connotations, provides an ideal medium for achieving this goal. By incorporating classical poetry into ICE curricula, educators can expose students to the cultural and historical contexts that have shaped Chinese society. This exposure helps students develop a multicultural perspective, enabling them to appreciate the diversity within Chinese culture and its global significance. Teaching classical Chinese poetry through the lens of Multicultural Education Theory fosters an inclusive environment that encourages learners to respect and value cultural differences.

(b). *Cultural Schema Theory*

Cultural Schema Theory, as articulated by Anderson and Pearson (1984), posits that learners interpret new information through the framework of their existing cultural knowledge and experiences. This theory is particularly applicable to the teaching of classical Chinese poetry in ICE, where students come from diverse cultural backgrounds. These backgrounds influence how they perceive and understand the cultural elements embedded in Chinese poetry. Educators can use Cultural Schema Theory to help students connect the imagery, themes, and symbols found in classical Chinese poetry to their own cultural experiences. For example, the plum blossom is a recurrent symbol in Chinese poetry, often representing perseverance and hope amidst adversity. By encouraging students to draw parallels between this symbol and similar motifs in their own cultures, educators can deepen their understanding and appreciation of Chinese cultural concepts. This approach not only enhances comprehension but also promotes cross-cultural awareness.

(c). *Input Hypothesis*

Krashen's (1981) Input Hypothesis asserts that language acquisition occurs most effectively when learners are exposed to language input that is slightly beyond their current level of proficiency, known as "i+1". Classical Chinese poetry, with its intricate language and rich cultural content, provides an excellent source of "i+1" input for intermediate and advanced Chinese learners. In the context of ICE, educators can select poems that are linguistically challenging but still comprehensible, providing students with opportunities to encounter new vocabulary, grammatical structures, and cultural references. This carefully chosen input can facilitate language acquisition by keeping students engaged and motivated, as they grapple with understanding complex poetic forms and their meanings. Moreover, the poetic language, with its condensed expressions and layered meanings, offers a unique opportunity for learners to enhance their language skills in a context that is deeply embedded in culture.

(d). *Interaction Hypothesis*

Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis emphasizes the importance of interaction in language acquisition. According to this theory, meaningful communication and interaction provide learners with opportunities to practice and refine their language skills. This hypothesis is highly relevant to the teaching of classical Chinese poetry, where group discussions, peer feedback, and collaborative interpretations play a crucial role in the learning process. In the ICE classroom, interaction can be facilitated through various activities, such as group analysis of poems, debates on their cultural significance, and collaborative translation exercises. These activities not only help students improve their language proficiency but also encourage them to engage with the cultural content on a deeper level. Interaction allows learners to negotiate meaning, clarify misunderstandings, and receive feedback, all of which are essential for both language development and cultural competence.

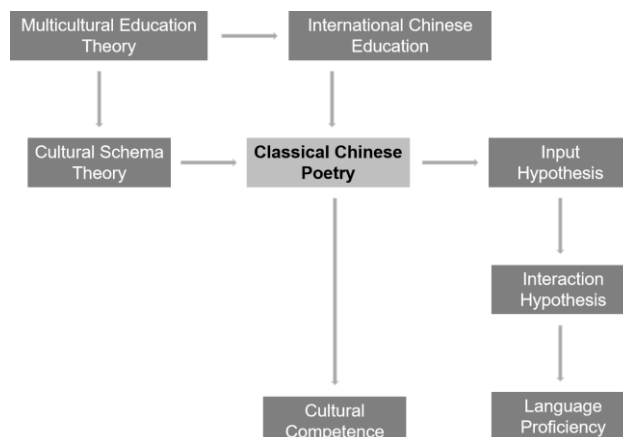


Figure 1. The Theoretical Framework of Classical Chinese Poetry Teaching in ICE

Figure 1 illustrates how educational theories collectively support the teaching of classical Chinese poetry in International Chinese Education (ICE), fostering both second language acquisition and cultural competence. Multicultural Education Theory forms the foundation of this framework, emphasizing the inclusion of diverse cultural content like classical poetry to promote cultural understanding and inclusivity. This ensures cultural diversity is central to the curriculum. Cultural Schema Theory highlights how learners interpret new information through pre-existing cultural schemas. By relating Chinese poetic imagery and themes to learners' cultural backgrounds, educators enhance comprehension and facilitate cross-cultural comparisons. Input Hypothesis addresses the linguistic aspect of teaching, advocating for the presentation of slightly challenging (i+1) poetic content to provide meaningful input and support language acquisition. Interaction Hypothesis underscores the importance of meaningful interactions, such as group discussions and collaborative analyses of poems, to enhance both language skills and cultural understanding. The figure demonstrates how these theories synergize to achieve two primary outcomes: Cultural Competence and Language Proficiency. Multicultural Education and Cultural Schema theories enhance cultural understanding, while Input and Interaction Hypotheses strengthen language acquisition. Together, these elements create a holistic framework that bridges language and culture, offering students an enriched learning experience and a deeper appreciation of classical Chinese poetry. This integrative approach equips educators to design effective and culturally resonant teaching practices, fostering students' linguistic and cultural development in ICE.

C. Proposal B: The Integration of Language and Culture in ICE Textbooks Based on the ICE Curriculum

Language teaching and cultural education are closely interconnected. *The Chinese Proficiency Grading Standards for International Chinese Language Education* outlines a structure based on four core language elements—syllables, Chinese characters, vocabulary, and grammar—forming a “four-dimensional benchmark.” Evaluation involves three dimensions: “verbal communication abilities”, “topics and tasks” and “quantitative criteria,” with a focus on the five skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, thus accurately assessing Chinese learners' proficiency (Center for Language Education and Cooperation, 2021). This framework integrates language instruction with cultural understanding and uses quantitative measures for assessment. This concept is also reflected in domestic language textbook research. In China, domestic textbooks for primary and secondary education also emphasize a balance between language skills and cultural knowledge. The “two-component elements” principle creatively merges “humanistic themes” and “language elements” in curriculum design (Gu, 2019). Language elements, or the various basic components of language literacy accomplishment, include essential language knowledge, fundamental language skills, appropriate learning strategies, and good study habits. Humanistic themes focus on cultural heritage and emphasize the connection between language and daily life. The “two-component elements” structure is a significant breakthrough in the design of domestic textbooks, as it balances the humanistic aspects of the material with the principles of language instruction, promoting the simultaneous development of students' language skills and cognitive abilities.

Practicality includes both cultural and linguistic aspects. Linguistically, learners should gain exposure to historically preserved and still widely used classic verses and enhance their sense of language through the rhythmic aesthetics of reciting these poems (Sun, 2022). On the other hand, intermediate and advanced textbooks cannot provide specialized study like dedicated classical poetry textbooks. When a textbook cites classical poetry related to a specific theme, it is also possible to design relevant poetry for practice or supplementary reading that aligns with the theme of the text. For example, texts about friendship might include lines like “桃花潭水深千尺 (However deep the Lake of Peach Blossom may be), 不及汪伦送我情 (It's not so deep, O Wang Lun! as your love for me) (Xu, 1994, p. 74),” or texts about family could feature lines such as “独在异乡为异客 (Alone, a lonely stranger in a foreign land), 每逢佳节倍思亲 (I pine for kinsfolk doubly on a holiday) (Xu, 1994, p. 61).” These examples help learners master more Chinese vocabulary and use the language more effectively. In summary, focusing on providing more opportunities for learners to experience the linguistic charm of classical Chinese poetry can help them accumulate more vocabulary and expressions. This, in turn, allows them to understand the deeper cultural meanings of China through daily associations and use of the poetry.

From a cultural perspective, since intermediate and advanced textbooks cannot focus solely on classical poetry, it is important to convey cultural meanings efficiently to learners. Thus, when selecting classical Chinese poetry for inclusion, it is essential not only to choose the poems themselves but also to include relevant cultural knowledge. This cultural information must be given due importance, as it not only enhances learners' language communication skills but also deepens their understanding of the culture. When compiling cultural knowledge related to classical Chinese poetry, it is highly recommended to consider the following aspects: Firstly, annotations should be both effective and concise. Instead of overwhelming learners with extensive and detailed explanations, annotations should be clear and focused, highlighting key words and phrases that are crucial for understanding the poem. This approach ensures that the annotations are useful and aid learners in grasping the meaning of the poems more efficiently. Key areas to focus on include difficult words, historical allusions, and information about the author and title. Explaining challenging vocabulary is essential for vocabulary instruction and for overcoming cultural barriers. Background information about the author and the title enriches learners' literary knowledge and helps them connect more deeply with the emotions expressed in the poetry. Secondly, enhance the textbooks with engaging and appealing content for poetry appreciation. Such content should be vivid and interesting to capture the learners' attention and enthusiasm, making the language learning process more enjoyable and less tedious. It's also essential to teach students basic poetry analysis techniques to boost their ability to

appreciate classical Chinese poetry and extend their skills to reading and understanding other poetry outside the textbook. Textbook design should carefully include sections that help learners understand common poetic images, enabling them to grasp the emotional expressions and cultural nuances conveyed through common imagery in classical Chinese poetry.

VI. CONCLUSION

The globalization of Chinese language learning has introduced new demands for ICE, leading to its evolution into a diverse field with Chinese now included in many countries' national education systems (Li, 2020). Multicultural perspectives offer new approaches in ICE, making it essential for textbooks to evolve beyond homogenized resources (Sacks & Myers, 2014). ICE textbooks must address various learner needs, ensuring content is accessible and memorable. Both language skills and cross-cultural competence should be emphasized, integrating Chinese literature and culture. Classical Chinese poetry, a cornerstone of Chinese culture, holds significant educational value and should be a key component of ICE. Its rhythmic beauty, elegant vocabulary, and rhetorical charm make it vital for study and teaching, especially for intermediate and advanced learners.

This study focuses on intermediate and advanced comprehensive textbooks, selecting three representative and authoritative sets: Road to Success, Developing Chinese, and Boya Chinese. By employing statistical analysis, it investigates the selection and compilation of classical Chinese poetry in these textbooks. The horizontal comparison reveals that Road to Success holds a significant advantage in the number and diversity of classical Chinese poetry included. Across all three sets of textbooks, common trends in selecting and compiling classical Chinese poetry are evident: the distribution of poetry in the textbooks is relatively scattered, reflecting a non-deliberate selection and dispersed arrangement; the quantity of poetry included varies, indicating differences between intermediate and advanced levels and reflecting the stage-specific arrangement of the textbooks; the incomplete quotation of poetry and its presentation in exercise and annotation. The study explores the dual challenges of language teaching and cultural perception in the compilation and teaching of classical Chinese poetry. Based on statistical analysis and analytical results, the selection and compilation of classical Chinese poetry in ICE textbooks should aim to continually optimize the integration of language and culture in ICE textbooks.

In today's era, cultural exchanges are becoming increasingly frequent and profound, accentuating the cross-cultural characteristics of ICE. This should be reflected not only in teaching but also in textbooks. Textbooks can be seen as the forefront and breakthrough point of language teaching, theoretical research, and discipline development. Due to the close relationship between language and culture, the integration of language and culture in ICE textbooks plays a crucial role for both learners and teachers. The selection and compilation of ICE textbooks should be continuously revised, updated, and developed to meet the ever-growing needs of Chinese learners worldwide.

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