

Teaching and learning Chinese that promote interaction among multiracial students

Abstract

Most students learning Chinese as a second language in Malaysian public universities are Malays, followed by Indians and other indigenous groups (Lau, Ng & Lee, 2011). It has been noted that the public university students of different ethnics rarely interact with each other. Hence, the purpose of this research is to investigate the teaching and learning methods that can be used to enable the students of different ethnic groups to interact with each other in the process of teaching and learning Chinese as a second language. Questionnaire were distributed to non-Chinese students studying Chinese as a second language in five Malaysian public universities to identify appropriate approaches that enabled them to interact with students of other ethnics. In addition, 10 Chinese lecturers and language instructors were interviewed to identify the effective ways of instruction and assessment that served to tie the relationship among the students of various ethnics who learn Chinese as a second language. Feedback from the respondents was analyzed quantitatively. It has been revealed that the course evaluation methods of requiring non Chinese students to record their conversations with Chinese students, the methods of oral tests, role-play activities, games, group assignment, mentor-mentee system as well as after-class activities are able to promote interaction among students of different ethnics.