

REFLECTIONS ON THE PATHS OF OVERSEAS DISSEMINATION OF CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY*

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Abstract

As a core symbol of Chinese traditional culture, Chinese calligraphy plays an irreplaceable role in international Chinese language education, the “going global” of Chinese culture, and the shaping of the national cultural image. However, at the current stage, the overseas dissemination of calligraphy still faces multiple challenges, including limited temporal-spatial reach, insufficient interpretation of its cultural connotations, and weaknesses in teaching systems and teacher training, all of which constrain the enhancement of its international influence and cultural recognition. Building on a review of the current situation of the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy, this paper integrates research on cross-cultural calligraphy teaching, theories of cross-cultural communication, and the discourse on Chinese cultural confidence to construct an integrated analytical framework of “cultural confidence–cross-cultural communication–teaching practice.” It argues that strategies for the overseas dissemination of calligraphy should be advanced through coordinated, multi-dimensional pathways: first, taking the interpretation of cultural connotations as a premise, strengthening narrative connections between calligraphy and the

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spiritual core of Chinese culture; second, using cross-cultural teaching as a key vehicle, and innovating visual symbolism, graded technique instruction, and textbook and assessment design to lower cognitive barriers for learners from non-Chinese-character cultural spheres; and third, relying on international platforms and Confucius Institutes to expand media applications, artistic integration, and localized cooperation mechanisms so as to enhance both the visibility of calligraphy and its local acceptance. Finally, the paper suggests that future research should deepen mechanism-based evaluation, longitudinal tracking, and regional comparative studies, in order to provide more solid theoretical support and practical reference for enabling Chinese calligraphy to “go global” with higher quality.

Keywords: Chinese calligraphy, overseas dissemination, cross-cultural teaching, cultural confidence, Confucius Institutes

Introduction

Since the launch of the reform and opening-up policy, China’s comprehensive national strength and international standing have increased significantly, bringing unprecedented global attention to its outstanding traditional culture. Against this backdrop, Chinese calligraphy has been increasingly visible in overseas exhibitions, cultural exchanges, and teaching contexts. The inclusion of Chinese calligraphy in UNESCO’s “Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity” in 2009 marked its elevation from a national art form to an important component of world cultural heritage, and has created new opportunities for its dissemination abroad (Wang,2024). In this context, calligraphy has been incorporated into university curricula overseas, featured in cultural activities organized by Confucius Institutes, and presented at various cross-cultural arts festivals, becoming one of the key windows through which the international community comes to know China.

At the same time, domestic scholars have generally pointed out that, despite certain achievements, the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy still suffers from problems such as “high quantity but low quality,” an overemphasis on display rather than understanding, and a tendency to privilege artistic form over cultural connotation. On the one hand, in terms of time and space, dissemination has been highly concentrated within the Chinese-character cultural sphere, especially countries such as Japan and Korea (Figure 1), while awareness and participation in the Western world, particularly in non-Chinese-character cultural contexts, remain limited. On the other hand, constrained by language barriers, cultural background differences, and limited teaching resources, calligraphy is often reduced to a mere “handwriting skill” in international teaching practice, making it difficult to systematically present the historical memory, philosophical spirit, and aesthetic traditions that it embodies(Ren,2023).

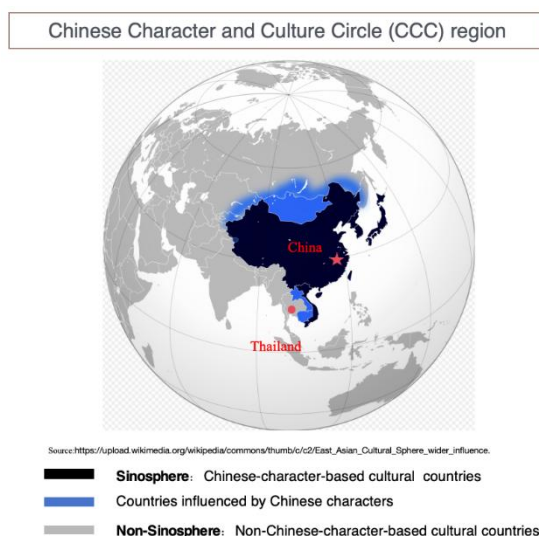


Figure 1 Map of the Chinese-character cultural sphere

From the perspective of cross-cultural communication, enabling Chinese culture to move from merely “going out” to genuinely “going in” requires not only macro-level support in terms of national discourse and cultural confidence, but also the development of sustainable dissemination strategies and teaching models for specific cultural carriers. As a symbolic system that combines both visual and literary dimensions, calligraphy holds considerable potential for cross-cultural communication, yet it also presents significant challenges of interpretation (Zhang & Li, 2024). Consequently, systematically sorting out the practical dilemmas and existing pathways of the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy, and proposing feasible, operational strategies, is of substantial theoretical and practical significance for advancing the global reach of Chinese culture and for strengthening the construction of Chinese cultural confidence.

Literature Review

1. Current situation and problems in the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy

Studies on the overall landscape of the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy mostly adopt a macro perspective, tracing its dissemination trajectories in regions such as East Asia, Europe, and North America. They generally point out that calligraphy has deep historical roots and a solid educational foundation in the Chinese-character cultural sphere, particularly in countries like Japan and Korea, whereas in Europe and North America it tends to develop as a niche but relatively sophisticated cultural practice. Empirical findings indicate that Japan, for example, has established a relatively complete shodō education system at the primary and secondary levels, where many calligraphy and seal-carving teachers possess solid training in Sinology, while in

countries such as France there is a certain number of calligraphy learners, but most remain at the level of interest and short-term experience(Xie,2024).

At the same time, a number of scholars have highlighted evident temporal and spatial limitations in the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy. First, both academia and the media devote considerable attention to the “historical glory” from the Tang–Song period onward, whereas systematic research on contemporary overseas dissemination remains comparatively weak. Second, the spatial layout of dissemination is overly concentrated in the Chinese-character cultural sphere, with insufficient strategic engagement with non-Chinese-character cultural contexts(Zhang,2024). These studies reveal the structural shortcomings underlying the current “going out” of calligraphy and provide the problem-oriented basis for the strategic discussion developed in this paper.

2. Dilemmas and strategies in cross-cultural teaching of calligraphy

In the field of cross-cultural teaching of calligraphy, researchers generally focus on bottlenecks related to teaching materials, teachers, pedagogical approaches, and learning outcomes. On the one hand, due to the lack of textbooks specifically designed for international students and learners from non-Chinese-character cultural backgrounds, many universities and Confucius Institutes still rely on traditional calligraphy textbooks originally compiled for Chinese students, which makes it difficult to accommodate differences in learners’Chinese proficiency and cultural background(Ren,2023). On the other hand, the overall number of qualified cross-cultural calligraphy teachers is limited and their composite competence is often insufficient; teachers who are proficient in both calligraphy and teaching Chinese as a foreign language or cross-cultural pedagogy remain relatively scarce.

Ren Yameng’s study on problems and strategies in cross-cultural calligraphy teaching points out two extreme tendencies in overseas instruction:

either reducing calligraphy to mere Chinese character handwriting skills, thereby losing its cultural and aesthetic connotations, or bypassing technical foundations and jumping directly to cultural philosophy, which makes it difficult for learners to build stable writing experience. She proposes starting from visual form, taking technique instruction as the main line, and gradually integrating character and culture, so that calligraphy teaching in cross-cultural contexts follows a progressive pathway from “technique” to “character” to “dao”(Ren,2023).In a similar vein, Wang Conghui, from a cross-cultural communication perspective, emphasizes that calligraphy, as a “silent language,” requires a balance between the beauty of lines and cultural implications in teaching, and advocates guiding learners’ aesthetic resonance through attention to both structural beauty and expressive meanings(Wang,2024).

Taken together, existing research not only reveals key problems in cross-cultural calligraphy teaching, but also offers several insightful strategies, such as emphasizing visual symbols, adopting demonstration-based teaching, and introducing comparative study of multiple script styles. Nonetheless, there is still a lack of a systematic strategic framework that coordinates the “pedagogical level” with the broader “overseas dissemination level.”

3. Confucius Institutes and the dissemination of calligraphy culture

As important platforms for international Chinese language education and the dissemination of Chinese culture, Confucius Institutes have played a crucial role in the overseas promotion of Chinese calligraphy. Studies show that Thailand, where Confucius Institutes are densely distributed and Chinese language education has developed rapidly (Table 1), has become a key site for observing the everyday dissemination of calligraphy culture abroad. From a cross-cultural communication perspective, Jie Xiaoru outlines the pathways through which Thai Confucius Institutes perform their cultural communication functions, including regular teaching and academic exchange, traditional festival celebrations and themed competitions, calligraphy and painting experience

activities, as well as social events and institutional cooperation. She argues that calligraphy experience courses constitute one of the most important windows through which the Thai public gains access to Chinese culture(Jie,2024).

Number	Name	Establishment Date	Location
1	Confucius Institute at KKU	Aug. 2006	Khon Kaen
2	Confucius Institute at KU	Oct. 2006	Bangkok
3	Confucius Institute MFU	Nov. 2006	Chiang Rai
4	Confucius Institute at CMU	Dec. 2006	Chiang Mai
5	Confucius Institute at BSRU	Dec. 2006	Bangkok
6	Confucius Institute at PSU Phuket	Dec. 2006	Phuket
7	Confucius Institute of Betong Municipality	Dec. 2006	Betong
8	Confucius Institute at RMU	Dec. 2006	Maharakham
9	Confucius Institute at SDRU Suphanburi	Dec. 2006	Suphanburi
10	Confucius Institute at PSU	Dec. 2006	Songkhla
11	Confucius Institute at CU	Mar. 2007	Bangkok
12	Confucius Institute at BUU	Mar. 2009	Chon Buri
13	Confucius Institute at DPU	June 2015	Bangkok
14	Confucius Institute at ABAU	Sept. 2015	Bangkok
15	Confucius Institute at HCU	Oct. 2016	Bangkok
16	Confucius Institute at PNRU	June 2017	Bangkok
17	Confucius Institute at MU	June 2023	Bangkok

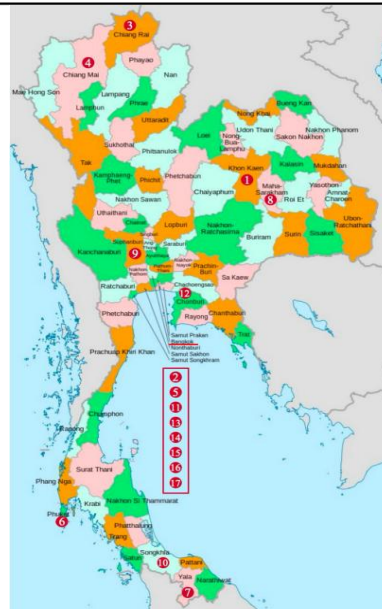


Table 1 Overview of Confucius Institutes in Thailand

However, existing studies also point out that although the cultural activities of Confucius Institutes are rich in form, they still tend to prioritize liveliness over substance in terms of content design and depth of guidance. Calligraphy-related activities are often limited to short-term experiences and mechanical copying, which makes it difficult for learners to develop lasting knowledge of calligraphy or a stable sense of cultural identification. Consequently, how to construct more systematic and pedagogy-oriented strategies for the dissemination of calligraphy within Confucius Institutes and similar platforms has become a common challenge for both research and practice.

Cross-cultural communication and the perspective of cultural confidence

From the macro-theoretical perspective of cross-cultural communication and cultural confidence, a number of studies emphasize that the “going global” of Chinese culture must be grounded in a high degree of cultural self-awareness and cultural confidence, and should demonstrate the unique value of Chinese culture through multi-channel and multi-level dissemination. Fu Jingjing, in her work on the construction of Chinese cultural confidence in the perspective of cross-cultural communication, argues that building cultural confidence is not only necessary for enhancing cultural cohesion domestically, but also a crucial pathway for gaining international discourse power and improving the national image externally(Fu,2018).

Applying this perspective to the dissemination of calligraphy reveals that calligraphy is not merely an object of aesthetic appreciation, but also an important carrier of cultural confidence(Fu,2018). If discussions of the overseas dissemination of calligraphy remain confined to issues of technique and media, while neglecting its strategic significance in cultural narration and national image building, it will be difficult to establish a stable and sustainable pattern of dissemination.

In sum, existing literature—ranging from the cultural connotations of calligraphy and the current state of its overseas dissemination to issues in cross-cultural teaching, the practices of Confucius Institutes, and theories of cultural confidence—provides a solid foundation for constructing strategies for the external dissemination of Chinese calligraphy. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of a comprehensive framework that effectively connects the macro level of cultural strategy, the meso level of dissemination platforms, and the micro level of teaching practice. This paper seeks to build on prior research to integrate and further develop such a framework.

Methodology

1. Literature analysis

This study systematically reviews discussions on the cultural attributes of calligraphy, overseas dissemination pathways, cross-cultural teaching strategies, the practical experience of Confucius Institutes, and the construction of cultural confidence, and distills common problems and key strategic points through comparison. The use of literature analysis helps to construct the theoretical framework and provides a basis for proposing integrated dissemination strategies in the subsequent sections.

2. Comparative study

On the basis of the literature, this paper compares the characteristics of calligraphy practices across different dissemination arenas, including the Chinese-character cultural sphere versus non-Chinese-character cultural contexts, traditional media versus new media, and classroom teaching versus cultural activities. By contrasting the strengths and weaknesses of different pathways and models, the study summarizes generally applicable strategic principles, such as “visual-first with gradual cultural deepening,” “multi-media integration,” and “localised cooperation.”

3. Interdisciplinary synthesis

Given that the overseas dissemination of calligraphy involves multiple disciplines—including art studies, education, communication studies, and cultural studies—this paper adopts an interdisciplinary approach that combines theories of cross-cultural communication, concepts of Chinese cultural confidence, and artistic theories specific to the discipline of calligraphy. On this basis, it constructs a three-tier analytical framework of “culture–communication–teaching” to bring together previously fragmented strategic suggestions and form a more coherent and comprehensive strategic system.

Results

1.Core dilemmas in the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy

1.1 Limitations of time–space and audience structure

A number of studies indicate that, in terms of temporality, the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy is often framed by narratives of “historical glory,” while discussions of contemporary dissemination practices and mechanism-building remain insufficient. Spatially, dissemination has been overly concentrated in East Asian countries such as Japan and Korea, whereas the foundation for dissemination in the Western world and in non–Chinese-character cultural contexts is comparatively weak. In addition, the structure of overseas calligraphy learners tends to be polarized: at one end are professional or highly committed enthusiasts, and at the other end are short-term experience seekers, with a relative lack of a stable intermediate group engaged in sustained learning.

1.2 Imbalance between cultural connotation and artistic form

Although calligraphy inherently combines both artistic and cultural dimensions, in actual overseas dissemination the artistic aspect is often overemphasized, while its cultural connotations and spiritual pursuits are downplayed. In Western contexts, calligraphy is frequently regarded as a form of

“pure visual abstract art,” and its literary and philosophical dimensions are not easily perceived by audiences. At the same time, under the influence of the domestic trend of “valuing technique over cultural literacy” in the calligraphy field, efforts to excavate and articulate the cultural depth of calligraphy have also been relatively inadequate.

Furthermore, some “non-character calligraphy” works intended for overseas audiences deliberately downplay the Chinese-character component and instead foreground lines, ink tones, and spatial composition. While this may temporarily lower the threshold of understanding and enhance visual impact, it carries the risk of “putting the cart before the horse,” gradually detaching calligraphy from Chinese characters themselves and from the broader tradition of Chinese thought.

1.3 Shortcomings in teaching materials, faculty, and pedagogical models

In terms of overseas calligraphy teaching, both the calligraphy courses for international students at Chinese universities and those offered by Confucius Institutes commonly face problems such as mismatched teaching materials, weak teaching teams, and monotonous pedagogical models. International students often use calligraphy textbooks originally compiled for Chinese learners, which makes it difficult to accommodate differences in Chinese language proficiency and cultural background. Learners from non-Chinese-character cultural contexts typically lack understanding of the principles of Chinese character formation and the historical evolution of script styles, leading to learning difficulties and a heightened sense of frustration.

With respect to faculty, there is a serious shortage of “hybrid” teachers who are proficient in calligraphy, in teaching Chinese as a foreign language, and in cross-cultural communication. Many overseas courses still rely on the traditional “copying plus correction” model, lacking systematic cultural guidance and diversified assessment mechanisms. Ren Yameng’s research further points

out that, without targeted adjustments to these issues, it will be difficult for cross-cultural calligraphy teaching to shift from “experiential interest” to “deep understanding.” To facilitate an overall grasp of the key pain points in the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy, this paper summarizes the relevant dilemmas into four dimensions (Figure 2).

Dimension	Connotation	Typical manifestations
Communication time and space	Insufficient contemporaneity and global reach	Limited research on contemporary practice; weak foundation in non-Chinese-character cultural spheres
Cultural interpretation	Imbalance between artistry and cultural connotation	Overemphasis on lines and form while neglecting historical, philosophical, and spiritual meanings
Teaching system	Mismatch in textbooks, teachers, and teaching models	Continued use of domestic textbooks; teachers lack cross-cultural competence; teaching models are monotonous
Audience positioning	Structural gaps in target groups	Lack of a stable middle group between deep learners and short-term experiencers

Figure 2 Four-dimensional framework of the core dilemmas in the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy.

2. Pathways and mechanisms for the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy

2.1 Multicultural integration and cross-art collaboration

Xie and Zhang, among others, propose that cross-border combinations of calligraphy with traditional arts such as embroidery, seal carving, and the guzheng can help form a pathway of “multicultural integrated dissemination.” For example, embroidering calligraphic works on handkerchiefs or fans, or engraving famous calligraphic texts onto musical instruments or everyday objects, can unify visual, tactile, and functional dimensions and thereby expand the channels

through which calligraphy enters everyday life. In addition, the integration of calligraphy with performing arts such as music, dance, and theatre for instance, stage presentations that combine live calligraphy writing with dance (Figure 3) demonstrates cross-art practices in which dynamic and static arts are interwoven, providing vivid examples for the cross-cultural expression of calligraphy.



Figure 3 Co-creation between calligraphy and dance

In cross-cultural contexts, such artistic integration not only enables audiences to approach calligraphy through familiar art forms, but also helps foreground the emotional expression and spiritual realm embodied in calligraphy, rather than reducing it to a mere “technique of writing.”

2.2 Empowerment through new media and digital technologies

A growing body of literature emphasizes that the new media environment has created unprecedented technical conditions and communicative space for the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy. Short-video platforms, online courses, cloud-based exhibitions, and VR displays help to overcome geographical constraints and allow a wider overseas audience to access calligraphy instruction and exhibitions. For example, producing creative short videos on calligraphy and

integrating calligraphic elements into fashion design, animation, and interactive games can generate “secondary dissemination” among younger generations, thereby enhancing the contemporaneity and attractiveness of calligraphy.

At the pedagogical level, digital slide presentations and animations can clearly demonstrate stroke order, structural variation, and overall composition, thus alleviating comprehension difficulties caused by language barriers. Developing calligraphy-themed micro-films and interactive mini-games can, in turn, naturally embed knowledge of calligraphy and its cultural implications into the processes of “watching films” and “playing games.” Under the new media environment, the carriers and forms of overseas calligraphy dissemination have become markedly diversified (Table 2), offering more flexible avenues of access for overseas audiences of different ages and backgrounds

Carrier type	Specific forms	Features
Short-video platforms	Teaching demos, creative videos, vlogs	Fast-paced, easy to spread, highly interactive
Online courses	MOOCs, live classes, recorded tutorials	Highly systematic, can be watched repeatedly
Virtual exhibitions	VR galleries, cloud exhibitions, online reviews	Break time–space limits, highly immersive
Interactive products	Calligraphy mini-games, apps, micro-films	Highly entertaining, attractive to young audiences

Table 2 Carriers and forms of overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy

2.3 Confucius Institutes and cultural activity platforms

As a “frontline base” for the overseas dissemination of calligraphy, Confucius Institutes not only undertake language teaching tasks, but also serve as important platforms for cultural transmission. In Thailand, for example, Confucius Institutes have integrated calligraphy into a wide range of activities, including regular classroom teaching, traditional festival celebrations, calligraphy-

and-painting workshops, and cultural festivals, where calligraphy appears alongside Chinese festivals, cuisine, music, and theatre, thereby creating a relatively rich cultural experience environment.

However, existing research also points out that the cultural activities of Confucius Institutes still need to avoid superficial dissemination characterized by “performance-isation” and “festival-isation” in terms of content design. Greater emphasis is needed on the systematic development of calligraphy curricula and the establishment of localized cooperation mechanisms for instance, by incorporating calligraphy into local school elective systems and strengthening joint exhibitions and workshops with local cultural institutions—in order to enhance the institutional status of calligraphy within overseas education systems.

3. Teaching and dissemination strategies for cross-cultural contexts

3.1 Using visual symbols as a bridge: From “being able to see” to “being able to write”

In non-Chinese-character cultural contexts, learners often initially perceive calligraphy as “images” rather than “writing,” which constitutes both a barrier to understanding and a strategic point of departure. Ren Yameng suggests that instruction should begin with visual form, using visual symbols such as lines, structure, and spatial composition in calligraphy as accessible entry points for learners from low-context cultures, and reducing cognitive load through intuitive demonstration and visual comparison.

Concrete strategies include:

- At the beginner stage, strengthening training in the perception of stroke thickness, curvature, and rhythm, so that learners can form an intuitive impression of brush movement and structure through “seeing” and “imitating.”
- Introducing highly pictographic scripts such as seal script (Figure 4) and clerical script (Figure 5), and comparing them with corresponding images or

physical objects, so that students can immediately associate the character with its meaning, thereby enhancing both memory and interest.



Figure 4 Seal-script 《Yishan Stele》

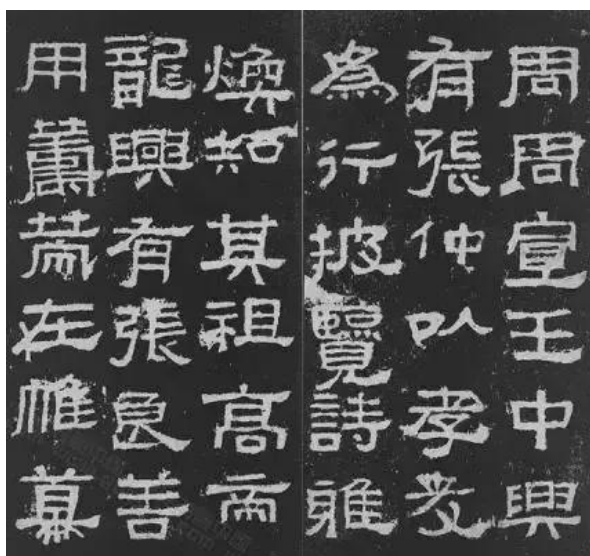


Figure 5 Clerical-script 《Zhang Qian Stele》

- By comparing the linear compositions found in Western painting and abstract art, instructors can guide learners to discover commonalities in Chinese and Western visual aesthetics, thereby reducing the sense of unfamiliarity.

3.2 Taking graded techniques as the main thread: Avoiding polarized tendencies

In response to the two extreme tendencies of either over-simplifying calligraphy into a mere handwriting course or discussing culture in abstraction while neglecting technique, the literature generally advocates constructing a gradual, graded sequence of technical instruction in cross-cultural teaching. This sequence should start from basic brush holding, brush control, and fundamental strokes, and then move progressively toward structure, overall composition, and stylistic variation, guiding learners to appreciate the aesthetics and cultural connotations of calligraphy through hands-on practice.

On the one hand, technical training helps learners establish “operable rules,” enhancing their sense of control and achievement in writing. On the other hand, during the process of technique instruction, explanations of character evolution, script styles, and related historical and cultural narratives should be integrated, so that “technique” becomes a pathway to “culture” rather than a form of mechanical training divorced from cultural meaning. To avoid the dual pitfalls of “just writing characters” and “talking about culture in the abstract,” cross-cultural teaching of calligraphy can follow the pathway outlined in Table 3, gradually incorporating structure, style, and cultural connotation into the graded sequence of technical instruction.

Teaching stage	Teaching focus	Example contents
Beginner	Visual perception and basic strokes	Holding the brush, brush control, basic strokes (horizontal, vertical, dots, etc.)
Intermediate	Structure and space	Radicals, character structure and layout, use of blank space and overall composition
Advanced	Style and cultural connotations	Calligraphers' styles, understanding poems and texts, philosophical and emotional expression

Table 3 Table of progression stages in cross-cultural calligraphy teaching

3.3 Localization and diversification of teaching materials and assessment

In terms of textbook design, researchers suggest combining the principles of Chinese character formation with the basic rules of brushwork in calligraphy to compile a series of graded teaching materials for international students and learners at Confucius Institutes that address both linguistic and artistic goals, instead of simply transplanting standard domestic textbooks. At the same time, representative classical steles and contemporary works can be selected in light of different regions' cultural backgrounds and aesthetic preferences, thereby building a “global repertoire of calligraphy works.”

With respect to assessment, a diversified aesthetic evaluation system should be established to weaken the single criterion of “resemblance,” and to encourage students to engage in personal expression and cross-cultural creativity on the basis of mastering fundamental rules. For example, learners may incorporate local scripts and graphic elements into calligraphy-style creations, thus stimulating their subjectivity and awareness of cultural dialogue within a “rules plus creativity” framework.

3.4 Strengthening the team of calligraphy teachers and cultural communicators

Many studies point out that the quality of the teaching force is one of the key factors constraining the effectiveness of overseas dissemination of calligraphy. It is therefore essential to cultivate “appropriate-type calligraphy teachers” who not only possess solid professional skills in calligraphy, but also have competence in cross-cultural communication and language teaching. This includes:

- Raising the entry threshold for teachers of overseas calligraphy, and strengthening their training in calligraphic techniques, Chinese philology, calligraphy history, and broader Chinese cultural literacy.

- Enhancing teachers’ capacity for cultural empathy and cultural affiliation, enabling them to select suitable cultural content and modes of expression from the perspective of learners’ cultural backgrounds.

- Making full use of domestic online resources and professional development channels to build a blended online–offline platform for teacher development, thereby promoting the exchange and sharing of teaching cases and curriculum designs between teachers at home and abroad.

3.5 An overall dissemination layout grounded in cultural confidence

At a more macro level, the overseas dissemination of calligraphy should not remain at the level of fragmented, project-based “activity accumulation,” but should instead be planned within the overall framework of building Chinese cultural confidence and the national external discourse system. This implies that:

- At the national level, platforms such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the development of Confucius Institutes, and overseas Chinese cultural centers should be leveraged to incorporate calligraphy into a systematic external cultural communication strategy, supported by relatively stable resource inputs and institutional guarantees.

- At the narrative level, stories about calligraphy, the images of calligraphers, and the patriotism and life philosophies embodied in classic works should be used to “tell Chinese stories through calligraphy,” thereby enhancing the cultural discourse power of calligraphy on the international stage.

- At the societal level, calligraphy should be promoted in synergy with other cultural resources such as traditional Chinese medicine, Chinese cuisine, and martial arts, so that through cultural trade and the integration of culture and tourism, calligraphy can genuinely enter the everyday life scenes of overseas publics.

Recommendation

In summary, the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy is supported by profound cultural resources and favorable historical opportunities, yet it still faces practical challenges such as spatio-temporal constraints, insufficient cultural interpretation, and underdeveloped teaching systems. Existing studies have proposed many insightful strategies from the perspectives of dissemination pathways, cross-cultural teaching, and Confucius Institute practice, but there remains a need for a comprehensive framework that simultaneously attends to macro-level cultural strategy, meso-level platform mechanisms, and micro-level teaching practice.

Building on prior research, this paper puts forward a strategic conception of the overseas dissemination of calligraphy supported by an integrated triad of “cultural confidence–cross-cultural communication–teaching practice.” On the one hand, by emphasizing the cultural connotations and spiritual values of calligraphy, it situates calligraphy within the broader vision of constructing Chinese cultural confidence and advancing national external communication. On the other hand, at the level of concrete pathways, it advocates promoting the shift from “visible” and “writable” calligraphy to calligraphy that is “understood”

and “trusted” through multicultural integration, empowerment by new media, effective use of Confucius Institute platforms, localized teaching, and diversified assessment.

Admittedly, this study has its limitations. First, it is mainly based on existing literature and lacks support from first-hand field data. Second, it has not yet conducted detailed comparative analysis of strategic differences across regions and audience groups. Future research could build on the present work by incorporating country-specific and Confucius Institute case studies, conducting longitudinal tracking and empirical evaluation, and further testing and refining strategies for the overseas dissemination of Chinese calligraphy, so as to provide more operational solutions for its deep dissemination and localized reception on a global scale.

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