

Policy and Practice: The Journey of Chinese Language Education in the UAE

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Official Chinese education in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) began in the early 21st century. To improve the management level and maintain relations with the Chinese in Dubai, the Dubai Police School began offering a Chinese course in 2003. As of 2006, Al Mushrif Chinese School became the first public school in the Middle East to officially use the Chinese language to teach (renamed in 2015 to Hamdan bin Zayed School). In 2019, the UAE Ministry of Education announced the incorporation of Chinese into the national basic education system. It would promote Chinese language teaching in 200 public schools before 2030. There are currently 158 public schools offering the Chinese language in the UAE's "Hundred Schools Project", with 54,000 students learning Chinese and 172 Chinese teachers by 2022. In just 20 years, as the first Arabic-speaking country to include the Chinese language in the country's national education system, the UAE has developed Chinese language teaching from a partial Chinese vocational education to one of the most significant subjects in the country's national education system. This is due to the increasingly close political and economic relations between China and the UAE and the continuous implementation and deepening of Chinese language education policies. This situation is both an opportunity and a challenge. The purpose of this paper is to briefly introduce the current situation, background, and characteristics of Chinese language teaching in the UAE. Firstly, through a comparative study, it introduces and compares the development of Chinese language teaching in the UAE with that in Thailand and the United States, analyses what characteristics and areas for improvement there are in Chinese language teaching in the UAE at present, and makes recommendations. Secondly, it will attempt to analyze the current situation of Chinese language teaching in the UAE by examining the available public news about Chinese language teaching in the UAE and the recruitment notices for Chinese language teachers in the UAE over the years, based on which a preliminary analysis of the challenges in implementing the Chinese language education policy in the UAE will be made. It will also forecast the trends of Chinese language teaching in the UAE in the coming years. It is hoped that this article can provide some references for Chinese language teachers in the UAE, policymakers of Chinese education in the UAE in the future, and even Chinese education policymakers in Arabic-speaking countries.

Keywords: Chinese language policy, UAE, Chinese language teaching

Introduction

Chinese Language Policy in UAE: Background

Chinese is the first language of about 1.3 billion people around the world, accounting for 16% of the global population (Ethnologue, 2016, p. 1). In a language ranking report, Chinese was ranked only after English as one

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of the most useful languages for business, followed by French, Arabic, and Spanish (John, 2011, p. 1).

With the deepening development of globalisation, the demand for Chinese language learning continues to be strong in all countries. Chinese language teaching is carried out in more than 180 countries and regions around the world, 81 countries have incorporated Chinese language into their national education systems, more than 80,000 schools and training institutes of various types offer Chinese language courses, and more than 30 million people are learning Chinese (Xinhua News Agency, 2022).

Chinese-United Arab Emirates (UAE) relations were upgraded in 2018 to a comprehensive strategic partnership, a very high level of diplomatic relations for China (Fulton, 2019). As a result, the UAE is the first Arab country in the Gulf region to establish a strategic partnership with China (Fulton, 2017). Among Arab countries, the UAE is China's second-largest trading partner and its largest export market (Chinese Foreign Ministry, n.d.).

Official Chinese education in the UAE began in the early 21st century. The Dubai Police Academy opened a Chinese language course in May 2003 to improve the management level and the relationship with the Chinese (Zhao, 2007).

In September 2006, Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters and the Abu Dhabi Education Bureau jointly established the Al Mushrif Chinese School (renamed in 2015 to "Hamdan bin Zayed School"). The school was the only public primary school in the Middle East that officially taught the Chinese language at that time. The school uses Arabic, English, and Chinese for teaching. This is regarded as the beginning of Chinese teaching in the basic education stage in the UAE. In 2017, the school has 673 students, including 18 Chinese students. There are 117 faculty members, including 15 Chinese teachers (Liang, Lu, & Zhang, 2022).

To discuss how the Chinese language curriculum will be implemented in UAE schools, Dr. Harmad Al Yahyaei and Matar Alhameli, the Under-Secretaries of the Ministry of Education, traveled to Beijing to the Confucius Institute Headquarters, Hanban. Professor Zhiping Zhu and Dr. Xiaoming Lan of the Confucius Institute delivered a report to the Ministry of Education in July 2017. This study demonstrated development in the application of the Chinese language curriculum. The first 20 Chinese language instructors were hired and placed in 11 public schools two months later, after a rigorous recruitment and training procedure. Students in Grade 10 were to be taught Chinese by them (WAM, 2019).

The Confucius Institute is a nonprofit organization whose goals include encouraging the study of Chinese culture and language throughout the world, improving understanding of the Chinese language, and fostering cooperation and exchanges in the fields of education and culture between China and other nations. 33 instructors and Chinese teaching advisors had been sent by the Confucius Institute Headquarters to 15 elementary and secondary schools in the UAE by the end of 2018 (Wam, 2019). The Confucius Institute at the University of Dubai (CIDU) was established in 2011 jointly by the University of Dubai (UD) in the UAE and Ningxia University (NU) in China. It was the first Confucius Institute established in the UAE and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (UD, 2021). Confucius Institute at Zayed University (CIZU) was established in 2012 as a partnership between Beijing Foreign Studies University and Zayed University (BFSU, 2022). According to "Global Confucius According to the Institute's Development Database statistics", in October 2019, the CIDU and the CIZU recruited 1,826 and 7,636 students respectively (UD, 2021).

The Chinese School Dubai, the first institution using the Chinese national curriculum to provide full-time K-12 instruction outside of China, opened its doors in 2020. It has added 2,000 places to the private education sector, mainly to serve the Chinese minority in the United Arab Emirates (Khaleej Times, 2020).

The Rationale for the Study

With the in-depth development of China-UAE relations, Chinese education in the UAE and the UAE's Chinese language policy has become the focus of academic attention. Despite this, there is very limited research in the existing literature concerning Chinese education in the UAE.

The representative results are: Zhao (2007) conducted a survey and analysis of the Chinese teaching environment in this study. Hui (2020) examined the avenues of international Chinese communication by analyzing the phenomenon of the upsurge in Chinese learning in the United Arab Emirates. Zhu, Lan, and Chen (2021) analyzed the development status of Chinese teaching in primary and secondary schools in the UAE and the localization of Chinese teaching. Liang et al. (2022) comprehensively reviewed the background, history, and current situation of the development of Chinese education in the UAE and put forward countermeasures and suggestions on this basis. The goal is to provide more information and reference for policymakers and related researchers, Chinese language teachers in the UAE, students studying Chinese in the UAE, and their parents.

Research Questions

The research questions were as follows:

Research Question 1: What are the current issues and challenges in the implementation of the UAE's Chinese language policy, including the recruitment and training of Chinese language teachers in the UAE, as well as teaching materials and resources, the challenges facing Chinese teachers, and problems that need to be solved?

Research Question 2: Given the problems and challenges faced, by comparing Chinese language policies and implementation in other countries, and combining the actual Chinese situation in the UAE, relevant suggestions are given.

Literature Review

Chinese Language Policy in UAE: Implementation

In 2017, the Ministry of Education of the UAE stated that it would promote Chinese language teaching in a total of 200 public schools before 2030. This program is also known as the "Hundred Schools Project" or "The Two Hundred Schools Project" (Kang, 2021). In July 2019, China and the UAE signed the "Memorandum of Understanding Between the Chinese Confucius Institute Headquarters and the UAE Ministry of Education on Incorporating Chinese Language Teaching Into the UAE's Primary and Secondary Education System" (MOU) (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the UAE, 2022), marking the UAE becoming the first Arabic-speaking country to incorporate Chinese into its national education system. According to the MOU, both sides will closely work together in the field of Chinese language education, selecting Chinese-language teachers, assigning Chinese-language experts, compiling textbooks, and establishing Chinese learning centers at public schools in the UAE (Global Times, 2019).

The UAE Ministry of Education announced in 2019 that the "Chinese Language Programme: Current Status and Future Plan" would be implemented in the 2019-2020 school year, which includes the "National Chinese Language Curriculum Framework", which focuses on student learning outcomes. It also includes the "National Chinese Curriculum Syllabus", which focuses on the details and scope of the content.

The government is also creating educational materials. The 18-part book *Across the Silk Route* for the 2019-2020 school year spans six levels, according to the report. Three books make up each level. To aid UAE students

in understanding Chinese culture and society, additional books are also being created in collaboration with China's Nishan Press. These books will focus on nine different subjects: art and design, mathematics, geography, science, music and drama, history, literature, sports, and society.

As part of the UAE's national education system, 60 public schools introduced Chinese language programs across the nation in 2019 alone, ranging from kindergarten to high school. Chinese classes were introduced at 118 public schools in the UAE for the 2020-2021 academic year, with 210 Chinese instructors and 31,629 Chinese students (Kang, 2021). There were 142 public schools offering Chinese language instruction in the United Arab Emirates as of April 2022, with 73 located in Dubai and the northern areas and 69 in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, and Al Dhafra (Sebugwaawo, 2022). By 2022 September, there would be 158 public schools offering the Chinese language in the UAE's "Hundred Schools Project", with 54,000 students learning Chinese and 172 Chinese teachers (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the UAE, 2022).

Chinese language teaching has broad prospects for development in the basic education system of the UAE. The two nations are actively promoting Chinese education in primary and secondary schools in the UAE. Chinese education in public schools is heading towards standardization.

Chinese Language Policy in UAE: Opportunities and Challenges

Before 2017, Hamdan bin Zayed School was the only public school in the UAE that provided Chinese courses. In the 2017-2018 school year, the number of public schools offering Chinese courses increased to 11; the 2018-2019 school year has grown to 15; the 2019-2020 school year has increased to 60; 2020-2021 has increased to 118; as of 2022, a total of 158 public schools in the UAE have offered Chinese language courses, nearly 20% of the nation's public schools (Liang et al., 2022).

In just three years since the UAE's "Hundred Schools Project" in 2019, there has been tremendous growth in terms of the number of schools and the number of students in school, and this was during times of the global epidemic. As the first Arab country to incorporate Chinese language teaching into the national basic education system, the UAE's Chinese language policy and promotion of Chinese language teaching will become the model template and reference for other Arab countries to formulate Chinese language policies and promote Chinese language teaching.

However, during the implementation of this Chinese language policy, some challenges have also been exposed. For example, the recruitment of Chinese teachers and the localization of teachers; the localization of Chinese textbooks and teaching resources; the management of Chinese classrooms; the localization of Chinese teaching models, etc.

Methodology

This paper will use a comparative analysis to compare the status of the implementation of Chinese language policies in the UAE. It will also outline the process and status of the implementation of Chinese language policies in the United States and Thailand. Because of the comparison, the paper attempts to summarize the problems and areas for improvement in the UAE's Chinese language policy. It will provide more references for future policymakers.

Secondly, it will also analyze the current situation of Chinese language teaching in the UAE and the problems that arise from a micro perspective, considering the recruitment announcements for Chinese language teachers and Chinese language experts in the UAE over the years, as well as relevant news and papers.

Results and Discussion

A Comparative Analysis of the Implementation of the Chinese Language Policy in the UAE and Other Countries

USA. Chinese language teaching in the United States is divided into three stages by relevant scholars. Zhou (2011, as cited in Tsu, 1970) lists three historically descriptive stages of Chinese learning in the U.S. The first stage is the “initial stage”, which began in 1870 to the 1930s, mainly characterized by academics. Chinese language teaching was concentrated in elite learning institutions, such as Yale and Harvard, whose main purpose was the mission of Christianity in China.

The second stage was from the 1930s to the 1960s. The main purpose of the Chinese language policy in the United States during this period was to enable the military to learn the language more quickly. The main language policies during this period were the Defense Act of 1957 and the Fulbright Hayes Act of 1961. Both acts provided funding for textbooks, college fellowships, and study-abroad programs. As a result, the number of students studying Chinese rose from 1,844 in 1960 to 6,208 in 1970 (Ruan et al., 2015).

In the third stage, in the 1970s, China and the United States established diplomatic relations. Since then, the exchanges between the two countries in politics, economy, culture, and diplomacy have continued to expand. In 2006, the Defense Language and National Security Education Office published a landmark document, the “National Security Language Plan”, which lists Chinese as one of eight “critical languages”, second only to Arabic (Defense Language and National Security Education Office, 2006).

With the support of the government agency National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), in April 1994, the College Board added Chinese courses to the SATII (Scholastic Assessment Test) test and launched the SATII Chinese test for the first time. SATII is established for American high school students and serves as an essential basis for American university admissions. This policy links Chinese high school Chinese education in the United States with college Chinese education (Xu, 2013). Additionally, in 1994, the United States Congress passed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which clearly included foreign languages in the core curriculum, to be prepared for the high-efficiency workforce that is required. Under the provisions of this act, the United States developed national foreign language curriculum standards, and in 1996, “Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century” was introduced, and the Chinese Teachers Association of America (CLTA) and Chinese Teachers Association of Elementary and Secondary Schools of America (CLASS) also contributed to the compilation (ACTFL, 2022).

In December 2003, the College Board announced the establishment of the Advanced Placement (AP) Chinese Program. After three years of preparation, in September 2006, some high schools in the United States began to offer “AP Chinese Language and Culture”, and the AP Chinese test officially started in 2007. This further improves the status of Chinese in American foreign languages. It also directly promotes the development of Chinese education in American primary and secondary schools and marks that Chinese education has officially entered mainstream education in the United States (Chen, 2007). From 2007 to 2015, the number of schools offering AP Chinese Language and Culture increased from 433 to 1,640, an increase of about four times (Xiao, 2015).

In Chinese teaching in the United States, cultivating students’ cross-cultural communicative competence is the goal, which is reflected in paying attention to students’ Chinese communicative competence; “21st

Century Foreign Language Learning Standards” believes that communication is the core of language learning, advocating tasks type teaching, emphasizing that the whole teaching is carried out in communication, and teaching should be carried out around specific communication and language projects; focusing on culture, requiring students to understand the relationship between the cultural customs and cultural concepts of the target language, as well as the relationship between cultural products of the target language and cultural concepts (ACTFL, 2022).

There are several Chinese teaching projects currently being promoted by the US government, including the Chinese Flagship Program, the “Star Talk Program”, and the “100,000 Strong in the Americas” initiative announced by the Obama administration. As of 2019, more than 2.8 million people in the United States are learning Chinese (Xinhua, 2024). Xu (2013) pointed out that the Chinese language policy of the USA has obvious political elements since it tries to prioritize foreign language education from the vantage point of national security. This move has a strong practical purpose, mainly to better meet the needs of national security, which deviates from foreign language education to promote cultural exchanges and strengthen inter-country cooperation.

After summarizing the spread of Chinese language education in the United States, Xiao (2015) believed that Chinese language teaching is still a “minor language” in the United States. Chinese education is unevenly distributed geographically. It is mainly concentrated in large cities with a large amount of Chinese on the east and west coasts of the United States. Guo et al. (2022) summed up the following challenges that Chinese teaching in primary and secondary schools in the United States is currently facing the following challenges: There are various forms of curriculum, some schools set Chinese as a compulsory course, some set it as an after-school interest class, and some set it as an AP course; most of the textbooks are self-compiled, most Chinese teachers choose their own textbooks; the level of teachers is uneven, and most teachers lack the teacher qualification certificates recognized by the United States, which leads to some teachers collaborating with local teachers, and the autonomy of teachers is weak; a large number of students who have studied Chinese for many years transfer to other languages.

Thailand. Chinese language teaching has a long history in Thailand. To conduct comparative research, this paper focused on the moment when Thailand officially implemented the Chinese language policy after years of tortuous development.

In 1998, the Higher Education Commission of the Ministry of Education of Thailand announced Chinese as one of the foreign language options for the national college entrance examination; in the National Basic Curriculum Syllabus promulgated in 2002, Chinese was officially identified as the second foreign language (the first foreign language is English); The Ministry of Foreign Affairs stipulates that Chinese is included in the curriculum system as an elective course; in 2005, Chinese became a compulsory course in Thai middle schools; in 2010, the Thai Higher Education Commission announced the establishment of Chinese language teaching majors in universities (Chen, 2019). The introduction of this series of Chinese language policies has greatly promoted Chinese teaching in primary, and secondary schools and in mainstream society in Thailand. By the end of 2010, 1,020 public primary and secondary schools were offering Chinese courses in Thailand. Currently, more than 3,000 schools in Thailand offer Chinese courses, and the number of people learning Chinese has reached more than 800,000. China and Thailand have also jointly established 12 Confucius Institutes and 11 Confucius Classrooms (Yang, 2014).

Zhang (2019) also analyzed some of the problems faced during the implementation of the Chinese language policy in Thailand. First, the lack of a unified Chinese teaching syllabus. The Ministry of Education has not yet issued a complete set of Chinese teaching syllabuses. Therefore, schools of all levels and types have no unified requirements for learning time, selection of textbooks, and assessment standards for Chinese teaching. Research by Li (2021) shows that as students' progress or transfer, the setting of Chinese courses cannot maintain coherence, resulting in disorder or even interruption of students' learning.

On the issue of teachers, Lü (2019) pointed out that Chinese language teaching in Thailand is faced with the problems of complex composition of Chinese teachers (unstable teaching staff, high replacement rate of Chinese teachers in schools), insufficient number of teachers and uneven teachers' level. In terms of teaching materials, there are more than 30 Chinese textbooks available for Thai people to learn. This is because the Thai Ministry of Education does not have a unified evaluation standard for Chinese teaching. The applicability of teaching materials and the lack of a normative and systematic use of Chinese teaching materials are other problems.

Lü (2019) also pointed out that the current Chinese policy in Thailand is not well-developed and its implementation is too slow. This is mainly reflected in the fact that there are many programmatic documents in China's language policy. However, there is a lack of policies for specific areas, such as policies for curriculum syllabus, policies for teaching materials, and policies for Chinese teachers.

Some researchers have also given their suggestions: The first is to promote the formulation of a unified national teaching syllabus, at least in the atmosphere of primary and secondary schools. Regarding teachers, they suggested that China help Thailand to localize Chinese teachers (Zheng et al., 2014).

Sun (2016) suggested that Thailand should increase its policy-driven efforts. Various factors have reduced the effectiveness of Chinese policy. The relevant departments have noticed the problem. The Ministry of Education has made plans to set up a Chinese language center in each of the 72 prefectures across the country. This will coordinate Chinese language teaching in that province. Second, the government should not blindly pursue the number of schools offering Chinese courses. Instead, it should strictly control the conditions for schools to offer Chinese courses, and regularly test the effects of Chinese language policies.

Moreover, the government should pay attention to the sustainability of China's language policy, which includes a consistent Chinese syllabus from kindergarten to university. In addition, the government should also adopt strategies for testing teaching quality and Chinese standards, to clarify the development goals and directions of Chinese language courses.

Conclusion. By comparing the implementation of Chinese language policy in Thailand and the UAE, the following conclusions can be drawn: A number of significant factors enable Chinese teaching in the UAE to be far-sighted: The introduction of a Chinese syllabus is very far-sighted, which guides the teaching at all stages; the introduction of Chinese education has been strongly promoted since its beginning, ensuring its officialness and rigor; the selection of Chinese language teachers is carried out by the Center for Language Education and Cooperation, which ensures the quality of the teachers; the composition of teaching materials is carried out by an expert group hired from China by the UAE Ministry of Education.

By comparing the implementation of the Chinese language policy in America, we can draw conclusions: The Chinese language policy of the United States has obvious political attributes. The US government positions Chinese as a "key language" and introduces it into the mainstream national education system. Like the UAE's

Chinese language policy, but the starting point is very different. The formulation of the UAE's Chinese language policy is based on friendly relations and strategic partnerships with China. In contrast, the US language policy is based on the principle of supremacy of interests and national security to maintain the global competitiveness of the United States.

This can also be seen in the field of Chinese language teaching in the two countries. Adult Chinese teaching and Chinese teaching in higher education in the United States developed earlier. However, Chinese teaching in primary and secondary schools in the United States developed relatively slowly. On the contrary, the UAE's Chinese language policy has been implemented in primary and secondary schools from the beginning and has been strongly promoted by the government. This is conducive to the formation of a complete Chinese teaching system.

There are also some challenges to the current Chinese language policy in the UAE. This is firstly reflected in the fact that the formulation of the Chinese teaching syllabus is aimed at the K-12 stage. In the field of higher education, Chinese courses have always been offered to college students in the UAE as elective courses and interest courses. To ensure the sustainability of Chinese teaching in the UAE, the popularization of compulsory Chinese courses in higher education and the setting of Chinese-related majors have become extremely significant.

At present, recruitment of Chinese language teachers in the UAE mainly relies on the help of Chinese institutions. Training Chinese language teachers for UAE students, the UAE education system, and the establishment of local Chinese expert teams are also issues that need to be considered.

Analysis of the Current Situation of Chinese Language Teaching in the UAE

This section will attempt to analyze the current situation of Chinese language teaching in the UAE based on available public press reports and information on official websites as well as relevant papers, analyze possible potential problems and difficulties, and make relevant recommendations.

The first is from the perspective of the teachers. The first is the quality of the teachers and the quality of the Chinese language teacher advisors. Recruitment for Chinese language teachers in the United Arab Emirates has been conducted through online advertisements posted by public schools. As of April 2023, a total of five recruitment notices were found, covering the years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, and 2023. The recruitment requirements and the number of positions available varied from year to year, indicating the importance of studying these changes. It is worth noting that there was no recruitment notice in 2021, possibly due to the impact of COVID-19. The inclusion of the Chinese language in the UAE's national education system was officially announced in 2019. However, based on the 2018 recruitment notice, it can be inferred that the UAE Ministry of Education had already commissioned Chinese educational institutions to recruit Chinese language teachers prior to the official program announcement. However, no official formal recruitment process had been established at that time. From 2019 onwards, recruitment notices were handled by the Confucius Institute Headquarters (later renamed the China National Centre for Language and Cultural Exchange), which contracted Wuzhou Hanfeng Education Technology (Beijing) Co., Ltd. to handle the specific recruitment issues in China.

The quality of Chinese language teachers in the UAE will be analyzed with reference to the following figure:

	Chinese Language Teacher Recruitment in the UAE 历年阿联酋汉语教师招聘启事					Recruitment of Chinese Language Consultant Experts in UAE 阿联酋汉语顾问招聘启事
Year 年份	2018	2019	2020	2022	2023	2021
招聘要求 Recruitment requirements	英语流利，可以处理日常工作信息（使用英语参加会议、写作教案、进行课堂授课）； Fluency in English to handle day-to-day work information (using English to attend meetings, write lesson plans, conduct classroom lectures);	愿意遵守当地法律法规，尊重当地文化传统。热爱汉语教学事业，诚信友善，具有较强的汉语教学、跨文化沟通能力和优良的团队合作精神，身心健康。 Willing to abide by local laws and regulations and respect local culture and traditions. Passionate about Chinese teaching, honest and friendly, with strong Chinese teaching, cross-cultural communication skills and excellent teamwork spirit, and physically and mentally healthy.	愿意遵守当地法律法规，尊重当地文化传统。热爱汉语教学事业，诚信友善，具有较强的汉语教学、跨文化沟通能力和优良的团队合作精神，身心健康。 Willing to abide by local laws and regulations and respect local culture and traditions. Passionate about Chinese teaching, honest and friendly, with strong Chinese teaching, cross-cultural communication skills and excellent teamwork spirit, and physically and mentally healthy.	愿意遵守当地法律法规，尊重当地文化传统。热爱中文教学事业，诚信友善，具有较强的中文教学、跨文化沟通能力和优良的团队合作精神，身心健康。 Willing to abide by local laws and regulations and respect local culture and traditions. Passionate about Chinese teaching, honest and friendly, with strong Chinese teaching, cross-cultural communication skills and excellent teamwork spirit, and physically and mentally healthy.	愿意遵守当地法律法规，尊重当地文化传统。热爱汉语教学事业，诚信友善，具有较强的汉语教学、跨文化沟通能力和优良的团队合作精神，身心健康。 Willing to abide by local laws and regulations and respect local culture and traditions. Passionate about Chinese teaching, honest and friendly, with strong Chinese teaching, cross-cultural communication skills and excellent teamwork spirit, and physically and mentally healthy.	1、具有良好的职业道德，有团队合作精神，组织纪律性强。身心健康。2、大学硕士（含）以上学历，副教授（含）及以上职称。原则上，年龄不超过60周岁（含）。3、具有较好的国际中文教育专业能力，教学经验丰富，熟悉英美中小学教育体制，能指导阿联酋中小学汉语课堂教学，并承担中文师资培训工作。4、具有较好的跨文化交际能力、文化适应力和心理承受能力。能够熟练地用英语与阿方进行工作层面的沟通，撰写英文报告。5、具有较好的组织领导力和沟通力，能够组织相关项目和活动按计划开展。6、有海外相关工作经历者，特别是具有阿拉伯地区国际中文教育经历者优先。 1. Good work ethics, team spirit, and strong organizational discipline. Physically and mentally healthy. 2. Master's degree (inclusive) or above from university, with the title of associate professor (inclusive) or above. In principle, the age should not exceed 60 years old (inclusive). 3. Have good professional competence in international Chinese language education, with rich teaching experience, familiar with the education system of primary and secondary schools in the UK and the US, able to guide
	具有本科及以上学历，对外汉语专业及外语类专业者优先； A Bachelor's degree or above, preferably in Chinese as a Foreign Language and foreign languages;	具有相关专业大学学士及以上学历，如汉语国际教育、中文、外语、教育等。 A university degree or above in a relevant field, e.g. Chinese International Education, Chinese Language, Foreign Languages, Education, etc.	具有相关专业大学学士及以上学历，如汉语国际教育、中文、外语、教育等。有相关领域硕士学位者优先。 A university degree or above in a relevant field, e.g. Chinese International Education, Chinese Language, Foreign Languages, Education, etc. A master's degree in a related field is preferred.	具有本科（含）以上学历，具有汉语国际教育、教育学、语言教育等相关专业背景。 A Bachelor's degree (or above) with a background in Chinese international education, pedagogy, language education, and other related disciplines.	具有本科以上相关专业毕业。（对外汉语、教育学、语言教育等）。 A Bachelor's degree or higher in a relevant field. (Chinese as a Foreign Language, Pedagogy, Language Education, etc.).	
	具有1年以上教师工作经验，有国际学校或海外工作经验者优先；	具有至少一年以上的海外中小学汉语教学经验。	具有至少一年以上的海外正规学校汉语教学经验。有赴海外孔子学院志愿者工作经历者优先。	本科学历须具有三年（含）以上的国外K-12（学前教育至高中教育阶段）中文教学经验；硕士学历须具有两年（含）以上的国外K-12中文教学经验。	海外K12阶段正规学校任教的中文教学经验。（本科三年（含）以上教学经验，硕士两年（含）以上教学学经验）。	

	At least 1 year working experience as a teacher, preferably in an international school or overseas;	Have at least one year of experience in teaching Chinese in primary and secondary schools overseas.	At least one year of experience in teaching Chinese in a formal school overseas. Experience of working as a volunteer in Confucius Institutes overseas is preferred.	A Bachelor's degree with at least three years' experience in teaching Chinese as a foreign language in K-12 (pre-school to senior secondary education); a Master's degree with at least two years' experience in teaching Chinese as a foreign language in K-12.	Overseas experience in teaching Chinese in formal schools at K12 level. (Three years (or more) teaching experience at undergraduate level and two years (or more) teaching experience at master level).	the teaching of Chinese in primary and secondary schools in the UAE, and undertake Chinese teacher training. 4. Have good intercultural communication skills, cultural adaptability and psychological tolerance. Be able to communicate proficiently in English with the Arab side at the working level and write reports in English. 5. With
	普通话标准，经测试达到二级甲等及以上。 Putonghua standard, tested to Grade 2A and above.	普通话达到二级甲等及以上水平，能熟练使用英语，听说读写流利。同时掌握阿拉伯语者优先。 Fluent in Putonghua at Level 2A and above, fluent in English, reading, writing and listening. Knowledge of Arabic is an advantage.	普通话达到二级甲等及以上水平，能熟练使用英语，听说读写流利。同时掌握阿拉伯语者优先。 Fluent in Putonghua at Level 2A and above, fluent in English, reading, writing, and listening. Knowledge of Arabic is an advantage.	普通话达到二级甲等及以上水平，能熟练使用英语，听说读写流利。同时掌握阿拉伯语者优先。 Fluent in Putonghua at Level 2A and above, fluent in English, reading, writing and listening. Knowledge of Arabic is an advantage.	普通话达到二级甲等及以上水平，能熟练使用英语，听说读写流利。同时掌握阿拉伯语者优先。 Fluent in Putonghua at Level 2A and above, fluent in English, reading, writing and listening. Knowledge of Arabic is an advantage.	good organizational leadership and communication skills, able to organize relevant projects and activities to be carried out as planned. 6. Experience in overseas related work, especially experience in international Chinese language education in the Arab region is preferred.
	普通话标准，经测试达到二级甲等及以上。 Putonghua standard, tested to Grade 2A and above.	普通话达到二级甲等及以上水平，能熟练使用英语，听说读写流利。同时掌握阿拉伯语者优先。 Fluent in Putonghua at Level 2A and above, fluent in English, reading, writing and listening. Knowledge of Arabic is an advantage.	普通话达到二级甲等及以上水平，能熟练使用英语，听说读写流利。同时掌握阿拉伯语者优先。 Fluent in Putonghua at Level 2A and above, fluent in English, reading, writing and listening. Knowledge of Arabic is an advantage.	普通话达到二级甲等及以上水平，能熟练使用英语，听说读写流利。同时掌握阿拉伯语者优先。 Fluent in Putonghua at Level 2A and above, fluent in English, reading, writing and listening. Knowledge of Arabic is an advantage.	普通话达到二级甲等及以上水平，能熟练使用英语，听说读写流利。同时掌握阿拉伯语者优先。 Fluent in Putonghua at Level 2A and above, fluent in English, reading, writing and listening. Knowledge of Arabic is an advantage.	
Number of recruits 招聘人数	50	200	127	30	40	2-3
Citation 来源	(2018). 阿联酋教育部招聘50名汉语教师! [online]. [Accessed on 17 May 2023]. Available at: https://www.sohu.com/a/283790900_779075	(2019). 阿拉伯联合酋长国教育部2019年度中小学汉语教师招聘简章 [online]. [Accessed on 17 May 2023]. Available at: http://www.hanban.org/news/article/2019-03/13/content_7916052.htm	(2020). 阿拉伯联合酋长国教育部2020年度中小学汉语教师招聘简章 [online]. [Accessed on 17 May 2023]. Available at: http://www.gfhycn.com/jyx/208.html	(2022). 阿联酋教育部“百校项目”招募中小学中文教师 [online]. [Accessed on 17 May 2023]. Available at: https://www.wuzhouhanyu.com/article/366	(2022). 阿拉伯联合酋长国教育部2023年中小学汉语教师招聘简章 [online]. [Accessed on 17 May 2023]. Available at: https://www.wuzhouhanyu.com/article/429	(2021). 华东师范大学公开招聘赴阿联酋教育部担任汉语顾问专家人选的通知 [online]. [Accessed on 17 May 2023]. Available at: https://www.ecnu.edu.cn/info/1183/57281.htm

Figure 1. Recruitment of Chinese language teachers and Chinese language consultants in the UAE over the years.

Firstly, based on the number of recruitments, it can be observed that the number of Chinese language teachers recruited in 2019 and 2020 was 200 and 127 respectively. This indicates the rapid development of Chinese language education and the formation of a substantial community of Chinese language teachers in the UAE after the implementation of the Hundred Schools Project. However, the recruitment notices for 2022 and 2023 show a decrease in the number of positions, suggesting a possible shift towards supplementary recruitment in case of teacher attrition. According to Ambassador Zhang Yimin of the Chinese Embassy in the UAE (2023), Chinese language education in the UAE currently covers 158 public schools, with a target of 200 public schools. In addition, according to the Chinese Embassy in the UAE (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the UAE, 2022), there were a total of 172 Chinese language teachers in the UAE by 2022, providing Chinese language education to over 54,000 UAE students. Based on recruitment announcements in previous years, the number of Chinese teachers in the UAE is expected to be capped at around 200. At present, the project is still in an expansion phase, but it may stabilize once the target of 200 schools is reached.

Regarding the educational qualifications required for Chinese language teachers, the first four recruitment notices specified a minimum requirement of a Bachelor's degree or higher. However, in the 2023 recruitment notice, the requirement was changed to a minimum of a Master's degree. This suggests a continuing increase in the minimum educational qualification for Chinese language teachers recruited in the UAE after 2023. Similarly, the work experience requirements for Chinese language teachers, as stated in the recruitment notices, also show an increasing trend. The recruitment notices for 2018, 2019, and 2020 required at least one year of teaching experience in an overseas primary or secondary school. The work experience requirements were raised each year, starting with one year of teaching experience or preference for experience in Chinese international schools or overseas experience in 2018, explicitly mentioning overseas primary or secondary school experience in 2019, and further specifying the need for experience in overseas formal primary or secondary schools in 2020. Notably, the 2019 recruitment notice was the first to prioritize candidates with volunteer experience in overseas Confucius Institutes. The 2022 recruitment notice introduced a distinction in work experience requirements based on candidates' educational qualifications. Bachelor's degree holders were required to have at least three years of overseas K-12 teaching experience, while Master's degree holders were required to have at least two years of overseas K-12 teaching experience.

Historical recruitment advertisements for Chinese language teachers in the UAE show that there has been an increase in the minimum educational qualifications, moving from "Bachelor's degree or higher" to "Master's degree or higher". The work experience requirements for Chinese language teachers have also moved from a minimum of one year of overseas experience in primary or secondary schools to "at least three years of overseas experience for Bachelor's degree holders" and "at least two years of overseas experience for graduate degree holders". This reflects an improvement in the learning and qualifications of Chinese language teachers in the UAE and effectively supports the development of Chinese language education.

In addition, according to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Ministries of Education of China and the UAE on the introduction of the Chinese language in primary and secondary education in the UAE, the UAE Ministry of Education will also recruit experts from China to serve as Chinese language consultants in the UAE. These consultants will be responsible for tasks, such as formulating Chinese language curricula, designing courses, and conducting teacher training, assessing teaching practices, developing teaching materials, and conducting Chinese language proficiency examinations for the UAE Ministry of Education. Recruitment

advertisements for Chinese language consultants in the UAE can currently be found on the official website of East China Normal University (2021). Chinese language consultants are required to be familiar with the educational systems of the United Kingdom, the United States and China's primary and secondary schools. This reflects that the development of Chinese language education in the UAE will draw insights from the primary and secondary education systems of the UK and the US. Preference will be given to candidates with international experience in Chinese language teaching in the Arab region. It can be observed that the Chinese language consultants in the UAE are professionals with extensive experience. From the perspective of Chinese language teachers and consultants involved in Chinese language education in the UAE, a professional and highly qualified personnel system has been established, which has greatly contributed to the development of Chinese language education in the UAE.

Secondly, the distribution of schools that teach Chinese in the UAE. According to Khaleej Times (2020), the number of public schools teaching the Chinese language in the UAE has increased to 142 schools, distributed over 73 in Dubai and the northern regions, and 69 in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, and Al Dhafra. Abu Dhabi had the first public school in the country to offer Chinese language classes in 2003. The development of Chinese language teaching far predates the other emirates, and Abu Dhabi also has nearly half of the schools in the UAE that currently teach Chinese as a foreign language. It can be inferred that Abu Dhabi attaches more importance to the development of Chinese language teaching than any other emirates.

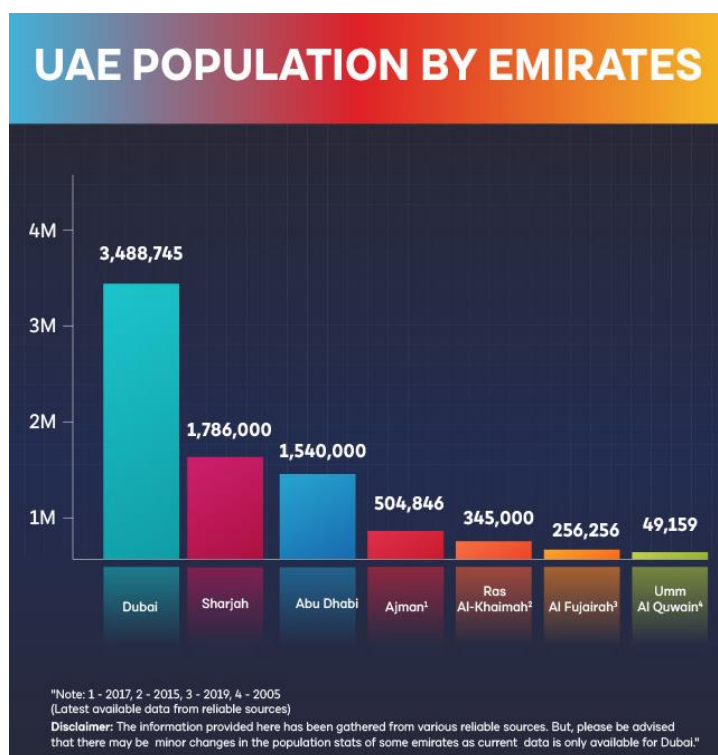


Figure 2. UAE population by emirates (GMI Blogger, 2022)

(Retrieved from <https://www.globalmediainsight.com/blog/uae-population-statistics/#nation>).

It can be observed that the population of Abu Dhabi constitutes approximately 27% of the total population of the United Arab Emirates. However, the number of schools offering Chinese language education in Abu Dhabi accounts for nearly half (48.6%). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is an imbalance in the development of

Chinese language education among the various Emirates of the UAE. This is primarily due to factors, such as the early initiation of Chinese language education in Abu Dhabi, and its status as the capital city, among others.

It can be assumed that the future development of Chinese language teaching in the UAE will focus on balancing the resources of Chinese language teaching in the emirates, i.e., more Chinese schools and more Chinese teachers in the northern emirates such as Dubai, and the future development of Chinese language teaching in the UAE will be more balanced among the emirates. The recruitment advertisements for Chinese language teachers and consultants in the UAE indicate that a professional and highly qualified talent pool is being built for Chinese language education in the UAE. This will contribute to the sustainable development of Chinese language education in the UAE. However, it is important to note that the community of Chinese language teachers in the UAE is an emerging group that has been forming rapidly since 2019. Therefore, the prioritization of localized teacher training programs for this group is of critical importance.

Given the distribution of schools offering Chinese language education in the UAE, we recommend that future policymakers ensure a balanced development of Chinese language education across the emirates. This can be achieved by making appropriate arrangements for establishing schools to teach Chinese.

Conclusion

From a macro perspective, the Chinese language policy of the UAE is based on the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and the UAE. This ensures that the Chinese language policy of the UAE has been valued by the two countries and is part of the diplomatic achievements of the two countries. The Ministry of Education of UAE has hired an expert group from China to formulate the syllabus for K-12 Chinese language teaching in the United Arab Emirates and designed supporting teaching materials, which ensures the professionalism of Chinese language teaching. The UAE Ministry of Education entrusts “Wuzhou Hanfeng” under the Center for Language Education and Cooperation to assist in the recruitment and training of Chinese language teachers, which ensures the professionalism of the teachers.

The development of Chinese teaching in higher education in the UAE is relatively slow compared to the development of Chinese teaching in basic education. From the perspective of policymakers, the Chinese language can be considered as one of the entrance examination subjects in domestic universities. This will link up the years of Chinese learning of Cycle 3 students, to establish a complete Chinese language teaching system. Secondly, according to the actual situation, compulsory Chinese courses or university majors related to the Chinese language can be offered in universities that meet the requirements.

At the micro level, we can see that there are increasing requirements for the qualifications and work experience of Chinese language teachers in the UAE, and in the face of the rapid increase in the number of teachers in recent years, localized training for Chinese language teachers is also very important; secondly, the distribution of schools teaching Chinese in the UAE is uneven, with the northern emirates, such as Dubai needing more attention, and at the same time, the balanced development of Chinese language teaching among the emirates is also conducive to the sustainable development of Chinese language teaching in the UAE.

The Chinese language teaching expert group of the Ministry of Education of the UAE should also continuously improve the content of teaching materials and supporting teaching resources. This will enable the localization of teaching materials through the development of Chinese language teaching in the United Arab Emirates. In terms of teacher training, the relevant person in charge can consider planning training content on teaching design and classroom management for UAE students. This will highlight the localization of training content.

This paper provides some inspiration for the future development of Chinese language policy in the UAE. First, policymakers can consider including Chinese as one of the university entrance examinations and setting up compulsory Chinese courses in universities in the UAE. University majors related to the Chinese language can also be set up at qualified universities that cooperate with Chinese universities. In this way, Chinese education will be improved in the UAE in the areas of higher education, resulting in a sustainable Chinese education system from kindergarten to university. They also need to consider the regional balance of Chinese teaching and provide more teachers and teaching resources to the northern Emirates to achieve a balanced development of Chinese language teaching across the country.

The UAE as the first Arab country to include Chinese in its national education system has also experienced a global epidemic in the past three years; however, the Chinese language has made remarkable progress there as well. The UAE's Chinese language policy and implementation will surely become a model for other Arab countries to refer to. It is hoped that this paper can provide a reference for future language policymakers and practitioners of Chinese language teaching. In addition, it can provide a reference for students and parents who want to learn Chinese.

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