

Research on Teacher Training Driven by The Standard

Wenqi Shang

Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University

Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand

E-mail: resure538@gmail.com

Received 15 September 2025; Revised 22 October 2025; Accepted 27 October 2025

Abstract

The revision of the International Chinese Teacher Professional Competency Standard has further elucidated the multifarious professional capabilities demanded of international Chinese teachers. It has also accentuated the core orientation and practical trajectory of the international Chinese education discipline's development. In the context of the ever-evolving teaching requirements and the rapid advancement of technology, contemporary international Chinese teachers are in urgent need of enhancing their multi-dimensional professional qualities to address the increasingly intricate educational and teaching challenges. This research has identified several practical obstacles in the current training process of international Chinese teachers. These include relatively weak professional capabilities, unresolved issues in the disciplinary foundation, and the lack of connection between teaching and research. Through a comparative analysis of different versions of the International Chinese Teacher Professional Competency Standard, the following findings can be summarized. Firstly, all versions emphasize the systematic cultivation of teachers' professional capabilities. Notably, the latest version of the standard has stipulated more comprehensive

and diverse ability requirements for teachers. Secondly, International Chinese Teachers should actively engage in professional development training and constantly keep abreast of the latest developments and trends in the discipline. Thirdly, it is imperative to promote the profound integration of teaching and research to facilitate teachers' professional growth and the concurrent enhancement of their self-worth in practice.

Keywords: International Chinese Teacher Professional Competency Standard, International Chinese Teachers, Professional ability training, Integration of teaching and research

Introduction

The International Professional Competence Standard for Chinese Teachers is the first group standard in the field of international Chinese education and was released by the World Chinese Language Teaching Association on August 26, 2022. (Ding, 2024) International Chinese teachers play an important role in both Chinese teaching and scientific research. They are a key part of teaching and the focus of scientific research. It can be said that the quality of international Chinese teacher training directly affects the development of international Chinese education. Therefore, the professional abilities that international Chinese teachers should possess should also keep pace with the times and deserve in-depth study. The formulation of relevant international standard for Chinese teachers has gone through a complex and long process, from the 2007 version of the International Standard for Chinese Teachers (hereinafter referred to as the 2007 Standard) to the 2012 version of the International Standard for Chinese Teachers (hereinafter referred to as the 2012 Standard), and then to the International Professional Competency

Standard for Chinese Teachers (hereinafter referred to as the Standard), which shows the importance that the academic community attaches to teacher research. By studying various versions of the Standard and combining with the current research status of international Chinese teachers, we discovered the dimensional changes in the professional abilities of international Chinese teachers under different eras, and also provided a powerful reference for scientific and systematic teacher training.

New Changes in Teacher Competency Orientation in the Standard

From 2007 to 2022, over 15 years, the three editions of the Standard have progressively updated and expanded the scope of teacher competencies. In summary, while the 2007 Standard served as the pioneering work, it laid a solid foundation for subsequent versions. The 2012 Standard were more comprehensive, but the discipline's development at the time was not rapid. Compared to the previous two editions, the Standard are not only more standardized but also provide a deeper description of the competency orientation for international Chinese language teachers. If the 2007 and 2012 Standard can be seen as action guides, then the Standard serve as an action blueprint. The deeper significance of an action blueprint compared to an action guide lies in its highest standard and highest level. That is, it defines what kind of international Chinese language teachers the field of international Chinese education needs and how to cultivate high-level international Chinese language teachers. Beyond teaching competencies, international Chinese language teachers also require more professional skills to find and realize their life ideals within international Chinese education.

1. The Standard Place Greater Emphasis on Teacher Professional Development

In the field of international Chinese education, educational practice is the soil for testing teaching theories. Theories from other fields, such as linguistics and pedagogy, must undergo “international Chinese education adaptation” before they can be applied. As the main actors in educational practice, international Chinese language teachers bear the mission of applying theories to practice and then identifying and solving problems. It can be said that the development of the international Chinese education field relies on the valuable experience gained from the educational practices of a broad range of international Chinese language teachers, which in turn leads to theoretical and conceptual progress.

How international Chinese language teachers can achieve personal and disciplinary development through educational practice was already reflected in the 2007 “Standard”: International Chinese language teachers should understand the meaning of professional development and be able to achieve self-directed professional development. The 2012 “Standard” further expanded this to “Teachers should possess self-development awareness and be able to set long-term and short-term professional development goals”. In the “Standard”, this is divided into two first-level indicators, “Professional Practice” and “Professional Development”, with a total of six second-level indicators, providing comprehensive guidance for the professional development direction of international Chinese language teachers and offering instructive significance for reasonable career planning.

For example, the Standard describe teacher professional development as follows:

1.1 Ability to participate in professional development-related activities such as training, lectures, and academic conferences to deepen understanding of international Chinese education and improve teaching capabilities.

1.2 Ability to master basic methods of educational research and possess fundamental action research skills to promote continuous professional development.

1.3 Ability to understand the content, needs, and direction of professional development for international Chinese language teachers.

1.4 Ability to understand the stages of an international Chinese language teacher's career and have a preliminary plan for professional development.

The formulation of the Standard requires collective effort and must be based on actual conditions. Currently, most international Chinese language teachers come from educational backgrounds such as Chinese language and literature or linguistics, and the integrated bachelor's-master's-doctoral degree system in international Chinese education has only recently been established. What is lacking is not researchers but researchers with a background in international Chinese education. If an international Chinese language teacher can follow the professional development guidelines in the Standard to seek both societal and self-cultivation, even without a background in international Chinese education, they can align their career aspirations and self-worth with international Chinese education during the cultivation process. The emphasis on teacher professional development has shown an upward trend across the three editions, and the Standard incorporate the strengths of all. Therefore, for international Chinese language teachers,

studying the Standard and finding a path to achieve their professional development and career planning is highly important.

2. The Standard Guide Research on Disciplinary Issues

In the Standard, the first-level indicator “professional knowledge” includes four second-level indicators: educational knowledge, Chinese and linguistics knowledge, knowledge of Chinese culture and China’s national conditions, and second language acquisition knowledge.

In the field of international Chinese education, language teaching comes first, and the teaching of cultural factors must serve language teaching (Liu, 2000, p. 19) Most current graduates of international Chinese education programs, who are likely to become future international Chinese teachers, adhere to the principle of “language first, culture supplement” regarding the relationship between language teaching and cultural teaching. In the Standard, Chinese culture and national conditions knowledge are listed together with Chinese and linguistics knowledge under the “professional knowledge” indicator. The implication is that the relationship between language teaching and cultural teaching should be rethought. In fact, cultural factor teaching and cultural teaching cannot be regarded as the same concept. The former refers to treating culture as one of many teaching factors, listed in the same dimension as phonetics, vocabulary, and grammar teaching. The latter refers to treating culture as a separate section, making choices in cultural content according to teaching needs and students’ interests, and is parallel to language teaching.

In previous classrooms, most approaches focused on integrating language instruction with cultural factors. However, for current disciplines, research is needed to explore the appropriate integration of language and

culture instruction. While both approaches are present in international Chinese classrooms, most international Chinese teachers may struggle to articulate the precise impact of cultural instruction on language proficiency. Therefore, international Chinese teachers need to reconsider the relationship between language and culture instruction, conduct purposeful design and exploration in their teaching, and develop a tailored model for integrating language and culture instruction based on the relevant guidelines and guidance in the “Chinese Culture and Knowledge of China’s National Conditions” and “Intercultural Communication” sections of The Standard.

The Standard Guide International Chinese Teachers to Combine Teaching with Research

Among teachers, teaching materials, and teaching methods, teachers are at the core (Cui, 2010, pp. 73-81). International Chinese teachers must learn and teach, and more importantly, they must be able to independently research problems encountered in teaching. Teaching theory is not always smooth sailing in teaching practice. Different teachers may adopt different approaches to problems, such as letting them go or delving into them. The former will probably find it difficult to make progress in their career development, while the latter may develop into research-oriented teachers as their research methods continue to mature with the continuous resolution of problems. Based on this, The Standard advocate accelerates the transformation from teaching-oriented teachers to research-oriented teachers, grasping the core position of teachers, and strengthening teachers’ scientific research awareness.

1. The importance of combining teaching and research for international Chinese teachers

In the field of international Chinese education, the foundation of discipline construction is the construction of the teaching staff. Among the current international Chinese teachers, some teachers only stay at the level of teaching in their careers. When they encounter problems that they cannot solve, they do not seek to fully understand them, or even passively slack off. Some teachers can study and research the problems and errors that arise while teaching and use this to promote teaching practice. Some of them can become excellent teachers and famous teachers. Some teachers can devote their great enthusiasm to teaching, not only to doing their best in teaching but also to using theories such as second language acquisition theory and linguistics theory to carry out Chinese ontology research for teaching (Li & Guan, 2019, pp. 19-27).

It's easy to see that if international Chinese teachers only lecture, their career prospects and the advancement of their discipline are far from sufficient. While teachers need to interact with students through the teaching materials in the classroom to ensure effective learning, this is merely the most basic aspect of their duties. If we crudely divide the responsibilities of international Chinese teachers into three areas: instruction, personal development, and academic advancement, this only fulfills one-third of their responsibilities. Without the awareness and ability to integrate teaching and research, teachers will struggle to fulfill their responsibilities to themselves and the discipline, and their teaching itself may also struggle to achieve significant progress.

2. The Standard guidance on integrating teaching and research among international Chinese teachers

Under the first-level indicators of “Professional Practice” and “Professional Development” in the Standard, there is a clear statement that international Chinese teachers should combine teaching and research.

First, the secondary indicator “Learning Assessment and Feedback” under Professional Practice requires teachers to select multiple assessment methods appropriate to the teaching objectives to evaluate learners’ Chinese language learning outcomes. They should diagnose learners’ needs from the assessment results and provide feedback and suggestions. In conventional classrooms, test papers are the most common assessment method. However, these tests do not cover, or rarely cover, oral communication, and are often subject to reliability and validity issues. The testing methods are often single-minded and lack objectivity. Some tests are even individually designed by teachers, significantly reducing their effectiveness in assessing students. International Chinese teachers should utilize the multiple assessment methods outlined in The Standard, incorporating the evolving discipline theory, the deepening of second language acquisition theory, and the deepening of research on the Chinese language itself, to provide a three-dimensional, rather than a flat, assessment of learners.

Secondly, the secondary indicators of professional development, “Teaching Reflection” and “Professional Development Planning”, require teachers to integrate reflection throughout the entire process of international Chinese education and professional development. Teachers should use a variety of reflection and self-evaluation methods, which should then be applied in practice. Teachers should also participate in academic activities

such as academic lectures and conferences to enrich themselves, master basic research methods in education and teaching, and promote the sustainable development of their profession. While there are methods for teaching, there is no fixed method for teaching. Experienced teachers are still classified as lecturers. The days of using one or a few teaching methods to teach well are over. While the discipline requires craftsmen, it also needs scholars. The importance of reflection in The Standard emphasizes that those who aspire to become excellent international Chinese teachers can, through continuous self-enrichment, absorbing cutting-edge theoretical developments, and researching teaching issues, rationally combine teaching and research, become research-oriented teachers and scholars in the field of international Chinese education.

The significance of the Standard for cultivating the professional competence of international Chinese teachers

Since the 2019 International Conference on Chinese Language Education, international Chinese language education has entered a new stage (Zhang, 2023, pp. 33-41). Research on existing problems in the field of international Chinese language education has become increasingly broad and in-depth. The new version of The Standard not only puts forward new requirements for the professional competence of international Chinese language teachers but also strengthens the Standard system in the field of international Chinese language education.

1. Indicators of Professional Competence of International Chinese Teachers

The Standard refine and sublimate the five modules of language knowledge and skills, culture and communication, second language acquisition and learning strategies, teaching methods, and comprehensive quality of teachers in the 2012 Standard into five first-level indicators: professional concepts, professional knowledge, professional skills, professional practice, and professional development (Ye, 2023, pp. 27-32). Compared with the 2012 Standard, the five first-level indicators condensed in The Standard are more normative, general, and comprehensive. From the perspective of the depth of professional ability and the length of career development, and from the perspective of the profession and the individual teacher, combined with the development and changes of the discipline, the abilities that international Chinese teachers should possess are clarified from multiple angles and in all aspects. The proposal of the above five indicators is not only based on the consideration of discipline needs but also fully considers the connection with the Standard of various countries (Feng et al., 2023, pp. 20-26), which also makes The Standard more international. The development of international Chinese education has been more important to “go global” and to establish a consensus and exemplary standard worldwide, which will help promote the better development of the internationalization process of international Chinese education.

2. Refining the concepts and abilities necessary for teaching practice

2.1 Professional Philosophy: The Spiritual Pillar and Professional Ethics

The “Professional Philosophy” indicator delineates the ethical foundation and core attitudes that international Chinese language teachers should uphold throughout their careers. It serves as the spiritual pillar of professional behavior and consists of three dimensions: educational mission, professional ethics & cross-cultural respect, and sustainable development awareness. In recent years, Confucius Institutes and other international Chinese language institutions have incorporated “Professional Philosophy” as a core component of pre-service training. For example, at the Confucius Institute of Mahasarakham University in Thailand, a module on professional ethics and cultural sensitivity emphasizes adapting teaching strategies according to learners’ L1 and cultural background, closely aligning with the Standard.

2.2 Professional Knowledge: Building a Cross-Disciplinary Theoretical System

The “Professional Knowledge” indicator emphasizes the core theoretical and disciplinary knowledge that international Chinese language teachers should master prior to assignment, including linguistic foundations, educational theory, cross-cultural communication, and second language acquisition (SLA) theory. Research shows that teachers well-versed in SLA theory are better equipped to address L1 transfer phenomena in the classroom (Feng, 2020). In addition, educational psychology provides a scientific basis for designing curriculum objectives and evaluating learning outcomes. The Standard stress the transferability of knowledge: teachers must not only understand theory but also apply it effectively in instructional contexts.

2.3 Professional Skills: Core Teaching Competencies

The “Professional Skills” indicator specifies operational competencies required in instructional practice, structured across international, Chinese language, and educational dimensions. For instance, in Northeast Thailand, teachers employ a three-stage “contrast—imitation—correction” approach to improve students’ tonal accuracy. Such strategic competencies exemplify the core professional skills advocated by the Standard.

2.4 Professional Practice: Systematic Implementation of Instruction

The “Professional Practice” indicator encompasses teacher behaviors throughout the instructional process, including curriculum design, classroom implementation, learner assessment, and reflective practice. It emphasizes rational use and differentiated allocation of instructional resources and employs a multi-dimensional assessment system. A 2023 survey by the China Foreign Language Education Research Center found that approximately 76% of teachers still primarily rely on written tests, with oral and cultural task assessments covering less than 40%. The Standard’ multi-dimensional assessment approach provides a more authentic reflection of learners’ abilities.

2.5 Professional Development: Integrating Teaching and Research

The “Professional Development” indicator emphasizes sustained professional growth, integrating reflective teaching with research activities to achieve a “teaching-as-research” model. Teachers should conduct action research, case studies, and surveys to refine instructional strategies, maintaining personal growth portfolios documenting reflections and research outcomes. According to Li (2019), only about 15% of international Chinese language teachers systematically conduct teaching research and produce research

outputs. The Standard provide theoretical guidance for transitioning from teaching-oriented to research-oriented roles.

3. Establishing a methodological system for the accreditation of international Chinese language teachers

The Standard defines “international Chinese teachers” in the third section, “Terms and Definitions”: all teachers worldwide who teach Chinese as a second language (World Association of Chinese Language Teaching, 2022). In other words, whether they are from China or from other countries, they are all international Chinese teachers in terms of professional characterization. This definition was not included in the 2012 Standard and is another manifestation of The Standard’s innovative nature. Appendix A of The Standard lists the Standard for the Grading and Recognition of Professional Competencies of International Chinese Teachers, which provides a more detailed and comprehensive recognition Standard for teachers at the three levels of competence: elementary, intermediate, and advanced.

In the existing international Chinese teacher certificate examination, the written test is entirely objective and is divided into three parts: basic knowledge, application ability, and comprehensive quality. There is no elementary, intermediate, or advanced level division, and there is only a passing score of 90 points. The current international Chinese teacher certificate system has three problems: no subdivision of certificate categories, a single certificate examination question type, and a lack of timeliness in certificate management (Zhao & Huang, 2019, pp. 131-133). In the Standard, the grading standard for international Chinese teachers are divided.

Appendix A of the Standard introduces a three-tier classification: junior teachers with basic instructional competence, intermediate teachers

in professional growth stages, and senior teachers capable of mentoring others and conducting research. This classification reflects teachers’ professional development pathways and provides a formal framework for training and assessment.

First, teachers are divided into three levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. The “Certification Standard” describes the positioning of beginner, intermediate, and advanced teachers as shown in the table below. These three-level classification Standard also clarify the basic path of teacher development.

Table 1
International Chinese Teacher Grading Competency Table

Teacher Level	Positioning Description
Junior Teacher	Mainly qualified international Chinese novice teachers
Intermediate Teacher	Mainly mature teachers with rich practical experience and in the stage of professional and career development
Senior Teacher	On the basis of the first two, research-oriented and expert teachers who have the experience and ability to guide other teachers

Secondly, teachers are evaluated across five modules: professional philosophy, professional knowledge, professional skills, professional practice, and professional development. This emphasizes the professional competences that teachers should possess while also providing corresponding evaluation criteria, truly integrating theory and practice.

Conclusion

The Professional Competence Standard for International Chinese Teachers reflect the trend of international Chinese education transitioning from experience-based to standardized and research-oriented development. Teachers should follow these Standard, base their practice on teaching experience, and enhance their research competencies to achieve both professional growth and disciplinary development. Future research directions include empirical studies, localization of the Standard, and the development of teacher support systems to promote sustainable teacher development and the long-term advancement of the discipline.

The Standard for the Professional Competence of International Chinese Teachers not only define the competency orientation of international Chinese teachers in the new era of international Chinese education but also encompass pressing research issues within the discipline. Their development and updating underwent a lengthy process, and it's no exaggeration to call them gems. Research on The Standard within the field is still relatively limited, and many of their implications have been poorly implemented. For international Chinese teachers and those in aspiring positions, careful study and reflection on The Standard are invaluable. This article has only scratched the surface of The Standard's emphasis on teacher care and disciplinary awareness. Much remains to be explored in these two areas. Deepening relevant research and proposing new approaches will be beneficial for international Chinese education. For international Chinese teachers, this will not only hone their research skills but also unlock cutting-

edge theories and deepen their passion, enthusiasm, and dedication to international Chinese education.

References

- China Foreign Language Education Research Center. (2023). *Survey report on the current status of international Chinese teacher assessment*. China Foreign Language Education Research Center.
- Cui, X. (2010). The core and foundation of the “three teachings” issue in Chinese international education. *World Chinese Teaching*, 24(1), 73–81.
- Ding, A. (2024). International Chinese teacher professional competence standard promotes teachers’ professional development: Value, path and strategy. *Journal of Guizhou Normal University (Social Science Edition)*, 2024(3), 63–73.
- Feng, L., Jiang, N., & Ye, Y. (2023). Characteristics and application analysis of the professional competence standard for international Chinese teachers. *International Chinese Education*, 8(1), 20–26.
- Feng, X. (2020). Application of second language acquisition theory in international Chinese classrooms. *Chinese Foreign Language*, 17(3), 23–36.
- Li, Q. (2019). Teaching research and professional development of international Chinese language teachers. *World Chinese Language Teaching*, 33(4), 56–72.
- Li, Q., & Guan, L. (2019). Teachers, craftsmen and scholars of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. *International Chinese Education*, 4(1), 19–27.

- Liu, X. (2000). *Introduction to teaching Chinese as a foreign language*. Beijing Language and Culture University Press.
- World Association of Chinese Language Teaching. (2022). *Professional competency standard for international Chinese teachers*. Peking University Press.
- Ye, J. (2023). Teacher standard help teachers' professional development: On the service function of the international Chinese teacher professional competency standard. *International Chinese Education*, 8(1), 27–32.
- Zhang, X. (2023). Some thoughts on the application and development of the professional competency standard for international Chinese teachers. *International Chinese Education*, 8(1), 33–41.
- Zhao, L., & Huang, G. (2019). Research on the certification system for international Chinese teachers: Issues and strategies. *Chinese Character Culture*, 2019(13), 131–133.



Name: Wenqi Shang

Highest Education: Bachelor of Arts (English)

Affiliation: Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University,
Thailand