Chinese Language Moral Reading Classes in a Shanghai Secondary School

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to investigate the moral level of K-7 students after attending the Chinese Language moral reading class in a secondary school in Shanghai. Kohlberg's Theory on Moral Development (1973) was applied in the study. According to the theory, moral development can be divided into six stages. A class comprising 33 students of low academic achievement based on their class teachers' assessment was selected. Firstly, 33 students completed the Adolescent Moral Judgement Test (AMJT) questionnaire to assess their moral reasoning. After one months of moral reading class, the students took the assessment again. The results showed the number of the students at the low level of moral development decreased from 12 students to 7 students, whereas the number of the students at the medium and high moral development level increased from 12 students to 15 and 9 to 11 students respectively after the moral reading lesson. The entire stages also revealed the increase of means score and standard deviation from pre-test to post-test of Moral Proficiency Test for Experimental Group Students This demonstrated the positive impact of moral reading on the improvement of moral development of K-7 students in the surveyed secondary school. Therefore, in the Chinese language classroom, the teachers should be proactive and systematic in teaching moral reading. In conclusion, schools need to work together and share norms with parents and community in students' moral education.

Keywords: Chinese language, moral reading, Kohlberg's Theory, moral development, China

Introduction

In the last 30 years, the launch of the "revolution and opening" policy brought forth overwhelming economic development in China, which has greatly improved the people's quality of life. GDP of China has caught up with Japan and is now the second largest economic unit in the world, accounting for 16 percent of global GDP in 2015 (Li & Creehan, 2016).

However, the moral value among the people is decreasing and has reached a serious level. There was an open discussion in the public media on the reasons of the China people being immoral and cruel to their own people (Liu, 2012; Dong, 2013; Cheng, 2015), for instance whether the passers-by should help a slipped elder or ignore in case the elder will sue the person in court who has helped her. On the other hand, China has been famous for its fake products which are made as copy of famous brands, software, etc.; they can even make fake eggs. "Doing everything for money" has become the values of the modern society in China.

Moral Teaching in Chinese Language

As education is the strongest force capable of changing an individual's thinking, behaviour and belief, it is essential that education system in China, both academically and morally is strengthened for bringing about improvement in their moral, social and ethical values.

As a Chinese language teacher in a public school running under the government, it is necessary to find a practical method to be incorporated into classroom teaching practices, highlighting the need for moral values in one's life. This ethical enlightenment will not only be applicable to a single class or a single school, but will be for the benefit of entire society of 1.3 million people which is one-fifth of the whole population of the world. Hence, the researcher should investigate practical class methods to enhance the students' moral development level in Chinese context. (Li et.al, 2004, Liu, 2010).

Chinese language as a mother tongue has been recommended to be the medium of teaching: Chinese language in a class is adopted with most of the new words, grammar, and understanding in particular texts, when setting the objective of the class. The Chinese language teacher should set the key questions to maintain the reading proceed smoothly.

The latest Chinese teaching rules regarding the new curriculum objectives are as follows: with the guideline of the Communist party's educational policy, the educator should carry excellent Chinese traditional culture, and should also cultivate and practice the Communist party's core values in the whole Chinese language teaching curriculum. There have been detailed requirements to be a moral student: patriotic, dedicated, sincere and friendly with the ultimate objective being to build a prosperous, strong, democratic, civilized and harmonious China (Peoples' Republic China Ministry of Education (PRCMOE), 2013).

These standards emphasize the importance of morals and imparting character education through Chinese language and tranditional culture teaching. With this recommendation, Chinese language education was introduced into the school curriculum in 1960 with the main objective of building individuals with ideals, moral, culture, and discipline (Qi, 1995). In 1988, moral education was introduced in the secondary schools with the implementation of the new integrated curriculum in the secondary school.

Problems of Moral Teaching in Chinese Language

According to the Ministry of Education, the primary goal of current moral education in China is to cultivate the students to citizens ardently loving their motherland, to be of social ethics, have civilized behavior and observe the laws. The aim is to lead the students to set up correct opinion about the world, life and evaluation, to lift their socialistic consciousness' of a solid foundation to become a rising generation with lofty ideas, moral integrity, knowledge & culture, and observe discipline (PRCMOE, 2001).

However, Li, B. (1993) argued that the current moral curriculum is grounded in an uneasy fusion of Confucianism and Communism that relies upon instilling propaganda and memorizing ideological slogans. Character traits such as "honesty, loyalty, filial piety, modesty, and frugality are lauded while moral virtues are taught through the celebration of archetypal citizen and participation in compulsory social practices" (Luo, 1991). Moral educators are puzzled by the dilemma between the more challenging teaching environment and the out-of-date traditional teaching methods. Thus, students have become confused by the disconnection between the moral education curriculum and what they actually confront in the daily conflict.

On the other hand, the second problem is lack of autonomy among the teachers. In China, teachers only have the liberty to teach the official position decided by the Party leaders, but, in such cases, the policy of moral education is beyond reality (Hu, 2010). The students in this education system feel confused in the moral reasoning and moral judgment. Furthermore, when the students grow into adults to be citizens in the society, the whole society will fall in confusion about the "rightness" and "wrongness", which may bring out selfishness in an individual, thereby ignoring the rule of the regulation of the development of the country.

Another problem encountered by China is the large population enrolled in the urban areas under the migration trends (Kam, 2008). The census of 1990 calculated the residence period to be above one year for those non-registered migrants who had lived in the urban area. In the census of 2000, this residence period was shortened to above six months. Therefore, rural immigrants who stayed at the urban area for above six months but less than one year were considered as urban residents in the 2000 census. Therefore, the urban population in year 2005 was at 43% (560 millions) of the population, increased to 50% (675 millions) in year 2010 and is estimated to achieve 65% (950 millions) in year 2020 (Kam, 2008).

The increase was huge and therefore brought lack of public service recourse problem to the urban local government. Despite having contributed to the industrial sector due to temporary residence in the urban city, the family can only provide substandard living to the child with no provision for education. The expensive fees in cities are prohibitive for poor migrant parents, which impedes many migrant children to get enrolled in public schools (Liang & Yiu, 2007). Due to immigration from different parts of China, the immigrant students face the social problems in their interaction with classmates including bullying and other harassment issues. Moreover, as the parents are also from rural parts of China, some of them have low-education and belong to low-income society, thereby lacking the essential basic education.

In the educational setting, teachers are from urban areas and share the identity of urban culture; the teachers always adopt the traditional approach to teach which does not satisfy the education needs of students from different rural parts of China (Guanxian, 2012). On the other hand, the high society offers access to offensive, unrefined and nonsensical media and internet content, which has a negative impact on the adolescent's growing environment.

As a classroom teacher, it is normal for teachers to deal with a broad, yet normal, range of self-regulation competencies. Children come to school with varied backgrounds of opportunities for constructive activity. In particular, they come with varied experiences of coercion and cooperation in relation to adults and peers. Coercive teachers and parents can create a difficult child by frustrating the child's need to be active (De Vries et.al, 2006). Sometimes, a high-energy child is considered difficult in a traditional coercive classroom; a child viewed as difficult in a traditional coercive classroom is not viewed as difficult in a constructivist classroom where children are encouraged to be active. All of these problems made the teaching of moral values difficult to be implemented smoothly and being practiced by the students in daily life that create moral issues when they grow up.

Research Objective and Questions

According to the previous studies, moral stories were read in the business ethnic and librarian field (Luthy, 2009). Limited research has been reported specifically on moral reading on a student's moral level in Chinese context. Therefore, this study's objective is to investigate the effects of moral reading component in Chinese language on student's level of moral development. The researchers attempt to answer two research questions as follows:
1. What are the stages of moral development among k-7 students in a secondary school in Shanghai before the moral reading lesson being carried out?
2. What are the stages of moral development among k-7 students in a secondary school in Shanghai after the moral reading lesson being carried out?

Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development (1973)

The Theory of Moral Development holds that moral reasoning, the basis for ethical behavior, has six identifiable developmental stages, each more adequate at

responding to moral dilemmas than its predecessor (Kohlberg, 1973). Kohlberg followed the development of moral judgment far beyond the ages studied earlier by Piaget (1932), who also claimed that logic and morality develop through constructive stages. Expanding on Piaget's work, Kohlberg (1973) determined that the process of moral development was principally concerned with justice, and that it continued throughout the individual's lifetime, a notion that spawned dialogue on the philosophical implications of such research (Kohlberg, 1981; 1983).

For his studies, Kohlberg (1983) relied on stories such as the Heinz dilemma, and was interested in how individuals would justify their actions if placed in similar moral dilemmas. He then analyzed the form of moral reasoning displayed, rather than its conclusion, and classified it as belonging to one of six distinct stages.

The six stages of moral development are grouped into three levels: pre-conventional morality, conventional morality, and post-conventional morality. He introduced three levels and two phases per level about moral development as shown in Table 1.

Table 1:
Kohlberg' Theory about Moral Development

Level	Stage	Description
Level 1 Pre-conventional	One	Obedience and punishment orientation (How can I avoid punishment?)
	Two	Self-interest orientation
Level 2 Conventional	Three	Individualism, Instrumental purpose and exchange (What's in it for me?)
	Four	Authority and social-order maintaining orientation (Law and order morality)
Level 3 Post-conventional	Five	Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights
	Six	Universal Ethnical Principles Conscience

Source: Kohlberg (1984)

These stages of moral reasoning describe the different concepts and perception of oneself and society, which need an interaction of the individual with the environment (Kohlberg, 1984). In Stage one (obedience and punishment driven), individuals focus on the direct consequences of their actions on themselves. For example, an action is perceived as morally wrong because the perpetrator is punished. Stage two (self-interest driven) expresses the "what's in it for me" position, in which right behaviour is defined

by whatever the individual believes to be in their best interest but understood in a narrow way which does not consider one's reputation or relationships to groups of people.

In Stage three (good intentions as determined by social consensus), the self enters society by conforming to social standards. Individuals are receptive to approval or disapproval from others as it reflects society's views. They try to be a "good boy" or "good girl" to live up to these expectations. In Stage four (authority and social order obedience driven), it is important to obey laws, dictums, and social conventions because of their importance in maintaining a functioning society. Moral reasoning in stage four is thus beyond the need for individual approval exhibited in stage three.

In Stage five (social contract driven), the world is viewed as holding different opinions, rights, and values. Such perspectives should be mutually respected as unique to each person or community. Laws are regarded as social contracts rather than rigid edicts. In Stage six (universal ethical principles driven), moral reasoning is based on abstract reasoning using universal ethical principles. Laws are valid only insofar as they are grounded in justice, and a commitment to justice carries with it an obligation to disobey unjust laws.

All the students who read the moral stories and try to sort out the problems will undergo the moral stages as stated above and they will mark their answer in the questionnaire so that the researchers can trace at which moral stage they are after the moral reading classes. Therefore, the Theory of Moral Development developed by Kohlberg (1984) is found suitable to be applied in the study due to its' relevance and established.

China National Institute for Educational Research though the team of Zhang et.al (2007) has conducted the study of individualism and collectivism education in nationwide. They described the basic principles behind the new education curriculum, which consist of the concept of thinking method, humanistic, practical and overall dimensions. Zhang et.al (2007) explained the significance influence of new curriculum on the students' result. From the aspect of Chinese literacy teaching, the curriculum of government also emphasizes the moral and ethical components in the reading. The educational policy maker also strengthens the importance of the emotion of writers to influence the student's understanding when the teacher does the analysis of the text.

Design of the Study

The study adopted a quasi-experimental design enrolling 33 students of K-7 grade. The pre-test established a baseline for the treatment group prior to the intervention to treatment. A post-test, then measured the efficacy of the treatment.

1. Respondents of the Study

Concerned about male students having more problems in moral behaviour, Kracher and Marble's studies (2008) showed that gender is an important variable, which signifies that gender is related to moral reasoning, with female reasoning being at higher

levels than male. So, the variable gender may affect the outcome of the study. It was therefore decided to choose the sample as all male students. The participants in this study were 33 male students in the K-7 year of secondary school. They ranged in age from 12 to 14 years. All the participants were in same age level to be able to control the age variable.

The school selected for this study was a rural school where the students have studied behaviour problem in classroom teaching. The school had been selected because it is located in the rural area of Pudong District and the population can represent the behaviour problem of students.

Due to the respondents were from secondary school grade K-7, each participant has taken the Moral Proficiency Tests. The entire graduate students from primary school took the Moral Proficiency Test under the requirement of Bureau of Education. Moral Proficiency Test was the criteria to measure the student's moral behavior which has been developed by Education Bureau of Pudong District, Shanghai.

From the above Moral Proficiency Test, it was found that 33 students fell in the low grade group. Therefore, the researchers chose the low moral achievement group. Sample selected from one class is called "Potential Students Class". The class was established for the students who exhibited violence and problem behavior in schools and communities.

2. Instrument of the Study

AMJT (Adolescent Moral Judgment Ability Test) was used as the instrument of the study. The AMJT included four moral dilemma stories which were about sports, medical, family, and law. The four stories represented the conflict in the daily news event and have the sense of up-to-date information and practicality. In the AMJT instrument, each story consists of 6 moral dilemma questions. They represent 6 stages of 3 levels of Kohlberg's Theory (1973).

Regarding the method of calculating the score of moral development, the study follows the Gibbs et. al (1992) SRM-SF Global Scale (1992) to measure the mean score.

Table 2:
Gibbs et al.'s (1992) SRM-SF Global Scale for Level of Development in Moral Reasoning

Stage	Arithmetic Mean
1	1.00-1.25
Transition 1 (2)	1.26-1.49
Transition 2 (1)	1.50-1.74
2	1.75-2.25
Transition2 (3)	2.26-2.49

Transition3 (2)	2.50-2.74
3	2.75-3.25
Transition 3 (4)	3.26-3.49
Transition 4 (3)	3.50-3.74
4	3.75-4.00

Recourse: Gibbs et al.'s SRM-SF Global Scale (1992)

For example, using Table 2 as a point of reference, a respondent who scored an arithmetic mean of 3.15 was placed at Stage 3. Pre-test of the AMJT questionnaire was given before the moral reading class to determine the level of development in moral reasoning among the respondents. Then the moral reading treatment will be given to the students for one month duration. At the end of the treatment, post-test of the AMJT questionnaire will be conducted to the students to find out the level of development in moral reasoning, in order to investigate is there any improving of the moral development of the students.

The pilot study was carried out among 30 students in a secondary school at Shanghai, which estimated the reliability of such tests revealing a reliability coefficient of .78. According to George and Mallery (2010), if r values greater than 0.7, the results should be reliable. In this research, the r value =.78, results indicated that the instrument is reliable and can be used for the study.

Chinese Language Moral Stories Reading

In the moral reading class of Chinese language, the teacher will teach four moral stories to the experiment students in a month time; one story was taught in a 45 minutes period in a week. By teaching the moral stories, the teacher inculcated the moral values among the students and related it to the daily life of them. In addition, the teacher also discussed the practical moral value if the same situation faced by the students so that they may make the right decision. The Chinese language moral reading classes will help the students to differentiate the positive moral value from the immoral value so that it will create the students' social behavior. By practicing the good moral value to face the daily problems, this help the students to pursue positive personality indirectly that will be beneficial to individual and the community in schools. Nevertheless the inculcation process to improve the students' moral development through the moral stories reading classes is a long process. This is due to the complex moral development that involves six stages of three levels according to Kohlberg's Theory (1973) (Synopsis of the moral stories are attached at Appendix).

Moral Reading Model Lessen Plan (TPRC)

The Moral Reading Model Lessen Plan (TPRC) was drafted by the researchers based on the study done by Zhang et.al (2007) to carry out the activities after the moral lesson in Chinese language. TPRC required students to be partnerships of small-group teams (generally about not more than three students in one group). Each team prepared

text, pencils and paper. When the teacher directed the groups to work together, to *think* about, and to write down everything that they knew about the general topic within which the lesson topic fits. For instance, in a lesson to teach the rules and regulations for playing field hockey, students might be asked at this point to think about and list everything they know about field hockey; or if the text was about stringed musical instruments, students would list everything they know about the musical instrument. Student was given about 6-8 minutes for working while the language teacher observed and listened from a distance and assisted any teams that appeared to be having trouble. After waiting the students' 6-8 minutes listing behaviours, it is best to allow time for those additional ideas to surface; by about 8 minutes, teams were ready to move on.

The teacher then announced the specific reading subject will ask students to forecast what they would find during the reading: For example, "Today we are going to read and learn the rules and regulations for playing field hockey. Put a book mark where you think something might be in your reading. Add any new opinions that may occur about you." The Students perused their lists within 2-3 minutes, then to check and add ideas. Then to start the reading, the teacher instructed, "When you read, write an asterisk for any item on the list appearing in the text."

Then the students read their assignments independently; however, even though students were reading individually, the classroom is by no meant silent. Teacher heard a low buzz of conversation as students read—partners and teams discussed with each other and commented about opinions found in the text. Also, students read to each other to support and comment about information found in the text. Students read to each other to support a point they made, exclaimed over words or ideas in the text, or simply responded to text. The teacher observed, "Turning in" to different groups' discussions to monitor how well the students were doing; when the reading and filling the checklist was finished, the teacher instructed a discussion which students compared what they learned during this reading with what they had knew in the past. TPRC instructions used for a moral reading as below:

"You and your partner will need this TPRC Worksheet (hand out) and a pencil. Working together, you are to think about and list in the "Think" column everything you know about Chinese bridge.

Today we're going to read about the *Chinese bridge*. Come back to your list again and make a mark in the "Predict" column by anything on your list that you predict might be in this read text. Insert new opinions. 2 minutes later: Teacher can hand out anything on your list that appears in the article.

Immediately after the reading: What are some things you already knew before you began reading? What are some things you learned as you read? What are some **c**onnections you can make between what you knew and what you learned?"

Findings

Research question 1: What are the stages of moral development among k-7 students in a secondary school in Shanghai before the moral reading lesson being carried out?

Table 3
Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation of Pre-test Scores of Moral Proficiency Test for Experimental Group Students

Kohlberg' Stages	Description	Frequency	Percentage	M	SD
Stage 1	Obedience	11	33.33	20.85	13.56
Stage 2	Instrumental egoism and simple exchange	1	3.03	28.62	17.63
Stage 3	Interpersonal concordance	9	27.27	36.73	20.66
Stage 4	Law and duty to the social order	3	9.09	47.85	24.78
Stage 5	Non-arbitrary social cooperation	7	21.21	56.72	28.87
Stage 6	Universal Ethnical Principles Conscience	2	6.06	83.28	30.34

According to the Gibbs' scale, in experimental group, 11 students（33.33%）were scored at stage 1, only one student (3.03%) scored in stage 2, and 9 students (27.27%) were assigned to stage 3. Meanwhile, 3 students (9.09%) were tested in stage 4 and only 2 (6.06%) students were in stage 6. However, worth noting is that 7 students (21.21%) were categorized into stage 5. Most of the students (21 students; 63.6%) were categorized in the low moral development level at stage 1 to 3 based on the Gibbs' SRM-SF Global Scale. Total of 12 students (36.4%) were scored in the high level of moral development at the stage 4 to 6.

On the other hand, the mean score (M) and standard deviation (SD) of the students according to the Gibb's stages increased from stage 1 (M 20.85, SD 13.56), stage 2 (M 28.62, SD 17.63), stage 3 (M 36.73, SD 20.66), stage 4 (M 47.85, SD 24.78), to stage 5 (M 56.72, SD 28.87), and finally gained the highest at stage 6 (M 83.28, SD 30.34).

Research question 2. What are the stages of moral development among k-7 students in a secondary school in Shanghai after the moral reading lesson being carried out?

Table 4:

Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation of Post-test Scores of Moral Proficiency Test for Experimental Group Students

Kohlberg's Stages	Description	Frequency	Percentage	M	SD
Stage 1	Obedience	4	12.1	24.58	16.35
Stage 2	Instrumental egoism and simple exchange	3	9.1	36.82	18.63
Stage 3	Interpersonal concordance	6	18.2	47.36	20.76
Stage 4	Law and duty to the social order	9	27.3	57.58	22.87
Stage 5	Non-arbitrary social cooperation	8	24.2	67.27	27.98
Stage 6	Universal Ethnical Principles Conscience	3	9.1	87.82	33.43

Table 4 showed the frequency and percentage, means and standard deviations of post-test scores of moral proficiency test for experiment group students. After following the moral reading lesson, the frequency and percentage of the students who obtained the high moral development level increased. The total number of students who gained the low moral development level from stage 1 to 6 was 13 students (39.4%), meanwhile 20 students (61.6%) scored at the high moral development level from stage 4 to 6.

On the other hand, the mean score and standard deviation (SD) of the students according to the Gibb's stages increased from stage 1 (M 24.58, SD 16.35), stage 2 (M 36.82, SD 18.63), stage 3 (M 48.36, SD 20.76), stage 4 (M 57.58, SD 22.87), to stage 5 (M 67.27, SD 27.98), and finally gained the highest at stage 6 (M 87.82, SD 33.43).

Discussion

The findings showed the level of the moral development level of the K-7 students in a Shanghai secondary school increased after following the moral reading lesson in Chinese language class for one month. The total of 12 students (36.4%) was at the level 1 of moral development (Pre-conventional), 12 students (36.4%) scored at the level 2 of moral development (Conventional), meanwhile total of 9 students (27.3%) gain the level 3 of moral development (Post-Conventional) in the pre-test. On the other hand,

the total of 7 students (21.2%) was at the level 1 of moral development (Pre-conventional), 15 students (45.4%) scored at the level 2 of moral development (Conventional), and total of 11 students (33.3%) gain the level 3 of moral development (Post-Conventional) in the post-test in the study. In other words, the number of the students at the low level of moral development decreased from 12 students to 7 students, whereas the number of the students at the medium and high moral development level increased from 12 students to 15 and 9 to 11 students respectively after the moral reading lesson.

In terms of the score, the entire stages of level revealed the increase of means score and standard deviation from pre-test to post-test of Moral Proficiency Test for Experimental Group Students after following the moral reading lesson in Chinese language classes. This showed that student understood and appreciated the moral values they learnt in the classes and transformed them when they answered the test.

In the pre-test, 12 students who stayed at pre-conventional were solely concerned with the self in an egocentric manner have not yet adopted or internalized society's conventions regarding what is right or wrong but instead focuses largely on external consequences that certain actions may bring (Kohlberg, 1973, 1981). After followed the moral reading classes, 5 students have upgraded to convention level. At this level an individual obeys rules and follows society's norms even when there are no consequences for obedience or disobedience. Adherence to rules and conventions is somewhat rigid, however, and a rule's appropriateness or fairness is seldom questioned (Kohlberg, 1981, 1983).

Out of 12 students in conventional level in pre-test, 2 students learnt the moral values and have reached post-conventional level after the moral reading classes. These students achieved this reasoning level have grown realization that the individual's own perspective may take precedence over society's view; individuals may disobey rules inconsistent with their own principles. They view rules as useful but changeable mechanisms—ideally rules can maintain the general social order and protect human rights. Rules are not absolute dictates that must be obeyed without question (Kohlberg, 1983, 1984).

The findings gave evidence that moral reading lesson had an effect on the student's moral development in the experiment group. It can be concluded that moral reading lessons were effective in helping not only the students in the level of pre-conventional and conventional, but also at the post-conventional level to improve their moral development. This can be proved by the higher mean scores at every stage at the post-test compared to pre-test among the same group of students.

This supports previous studies, particularly Charmaz (2011) who also indicated that moral reading courses will be beneficial to the students' social behaviour. This was due to the attitude of the students who became morally good after they experienced the 3 levels and 6 stages of moral development according to Kohlberg's' theory (1973, 1981, 1984). Their moral development levels improved in average and showed not only in test, but also in their behaviour in the schools.

Wilson (1994) stated that moral stories play important roles in human life because every culture has them. It was discovered that all the students showed an improvement in their moral development after their moral reading lessons in this study. It was evident that all the respondents benefitted from their moral reading experience. The moral reading class had effects on the enhancement numbers especially at the level 4 and level 5 of moral development.

On the other hand, moral text proceeding which has been done by Narvaez (2008) showed that it was the best moral reasoning of lower stage that should be recalled by graduates. This study proved that many students with low development level has moved to high level after being taught the moral value by using the moral texts. This implied that the moral reading lesson showed the impact on the respondent students as well.

In this research in rural area of Shanghai, it is clear that secondary school students do respond to values in moral stories; indeed, the respondent students proclaimed delight in the opportunity to read, write and discuss the beliefs which impact their daily behaviour in moral reading classes especially of text books from the government curriculum.

In this study, through the treatment of moral reading lesson, apparently the students of the research team paid more attention to the moral reading materials with the questions. The question strategy forced the students encode information more than only read it. This finding was similar to the study done by Joseph et.al (2015). They conducted 35 experimental research studies that involved teaching self-questioning to K–12 students with and without disabilities. Findings revealed that a variety of strategies are used to teach self-questioning to students. These self-questioning strategies are effective for improving reading comprehension performance across a range of diverse learners and across various educational settings.

The results of the study supported statement of Dulkheim (2012) and Peters (2015) who concluded that when teachers need a practical approach to values and virtue education, or to fulfil the educational responsibility of educating the children become good citizens. The story-based approach is effective and is one of the most valuable resources teachers have at their disposal in quality children's literature.

During the school time, the selected text from the Ministry of Education is not enough for the children's quality reading, especially on moral value (Hu, 2010). Therefore, by using the selected books and providing a safe environment for related value discussions, the teacher can provide opportunities for students to develop a set of core values to build a virtuous student. These core values will help children learn how to make decisions about their behaviour in dilemma decision making.

Conclusion

The study demonstrated the positive effects of moral reading on the improvement of moral development of K-7 students in a rural area of Shanghai. The positive impact of moral reading on the enhancement of moral development justifies the use of moral reading and processing on the low moral development. The findings of this study proved the previous studies that the students in low development can be taught with the moral reading proceeding as a strategy to bring about improvements in the behaviour changing. Therefore, the Ministry of Education should implement the moral reading classes in Chinese language in China. The Chinese language teachers are encouraged to teach the relevant moral stories in the class to develop a set of core values to build a virtuous generation of the country, whereas the schools need to work together and share norms with parents and community in students' moral education.

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Appendix

Synopses of the Moral Stories

Story 1

There is a football player in one province. He played football very well since he was a child. A coach discovered him by chance and then the coach trained him personally. In the following several years, he played football better and better. Afterwards, considering for the young player's future, the coach sent the football player to a famous football club. The young football player did not disappoint his old coach and soon he became the No. one football star in his club. He is very grateful for his old coach's training and he swears that he will repay his old coach if he had a chance.

Later, the old coach is appointed as chief coach of another football team. Very coincidentally, the last match of the season is between the football player's team and the old coach's team. If the young football player wins the match, his team will be the champion. But just before the match starts, the football player gets messages that his old coach is confronting a serious confidence crisis. If the old coach lost this match, he will be fired. And the football player also knows that his old coach's wife has been in sick these years. If the old coach is dismissed, he will not afford such expensive medical bills. This young football player gets mixed feelings. Because he does not know whether he should repay the old coach by losing the game intentionally or compete fairly for his team's reputation. After a tough consideration, the young football player decides to repay his old coach by losing the game on purpose.

Story 2

A woman is dying due to suffering an uncommon disease. Though the hospital tries hundreds of remedies, the woman still cannot get better. Finally, after consultation, doctors conclude that only the drug with secret ingredients confected by an herbalist doctor can save the woman's life. But the drug is unbelievably expensive, up to 100 000 dollars. So the woman's husband starts to borrow money around.

Unfortunately, he is still short of 50 000 dollars after trying all what he can do. The husband has no choice but only to beg the herbalist doctor to give him a discount or to let him buy the drug on credit. However, the herbalist doctor refuses the husband's request. The doctor tells the husband that he depends on this drug to earn money to support his family. Thus, the husband decides to steal the drug to save his wife. In the night, the husband breaks into the herbalist doctor's drug store, and then steals the drug away.

Story 3

A doctor has a private clinic. But the business condition of the clinic is not good. Now the condition is even worse, the doctor is almost bankrupted. In order to change this situation, the doctor asked his teacher, an old Chinese medicine expert with high

reputation, to see patients in his clinic. Coincidentally, a rich man in the doctor's town has an acute disease. He goes to the clinic to see the old expert after he heard the news of the old experts' arrival. After diagnosing carefully, the old expert tells his student that the rich patient will be cured soon if he increases the dose. But his student suggests decreasing the dose. Because his clinic's business condition is not good recently, he almost cannot support his family now. If decreasing the dose, the rich patient will spend more to cure. Then, the doctor can earn more money to maintain daily cost of his family. The old expert is in a dilemma. But he satisfies his student's requirement after a hard thinking.

Story 4

A twelve-year old boy has always been dreaming of going to the zoo to see animal shows. His father promises that he will let him go to see the show if the boy saves enough money for the show. By saving money from living expenses and selling scraps, the boy finally collects 3oo dollars which is sufficient for the animal show. But in the weekends just before the boy sets out, his father changed idea. His father asked the boy to give him the money because his father will use this money as his tuition fees of next semester. The boy is disappointed. The boy does not want to miss the forthcoming animal show; on the other hand, the boy is afraid his father gets angry because he and his father have been depending on each other for survival these years. The boy thinks over and over again, he refuses his father's requirement.