

Learning to speak Mandarin and understanding Chinese culture is different not difficult

Leonie McKeon

Abstract

Learning Mandarin is considered to be difficult, and acquiring a deep understanding of Chinese culture is thought to be near to impossible. I have redesigned the conventional way Mandarin is taught so that learners are able to speak Mandarin with confidence very quickly. This method of learning Mandarin helps participants understand Chinese cultural rules and therefore be able to behave appropriately in a business context with Chinese people. I have identified and applied some key points of Michel Foucault's works that have influenced the theoretical underpinning of my business Chinese Language and Cultural Advice (CLCA). Foucault's works on discourse and power and knowledge have enabled me to develop a teaching methodology to make Mandarin and Chinese culture easily learnable and therefore accessible.

Biography

Leonie McKeon lived in Taiwan where she studied Mandarin, taught English as a second language and edited a series of children's ESL books. She returned to Australia and studied anthropology, which included studies of Michel Foucault's works. In 1998 she won an entrepreneurial scholarship to commence her business Chinese Language and Cultural Advice (CLCA). leoniem@clca.com.au