



# The Effectiveness Of Innovative Teaching Approaches On The Family Instructions Of Zhuzi Through Animation In Primary School: A Case Study Of Attitudes Of Cultural Educators And Cultural Experts In Fujian, China

Wang Lichao<sup>1</sup>, Mohd Asyiek Mat Desa<sup>2\*</sup>,

<sup>1</sup>School of The Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM, Penang, Malaysia

<sup>2\*</sup>School of The Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM, Penang, Malaysia

**Corresponding author:** Mohd Asyiek Mat Desa

\*School of The Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM, Penang, Malaysia, email: [asyiek@usm.my](mailto:asyiek@usm.my)

**Citation:** Wang Lichao, et al (2024), The Effectiveness Of Innovative Teaching Approaches On The Family Instructions Of Zhuzi Through Animation In Primary School: A Case Study Of Attitudes Of Cultural Educators And Cultural Experts In Fujian, China, *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(6), 1156-1166, Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i6.5460

## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the attitudes of cultural educators and experts in Fujian Province towards the use of animation as a tool for learning "The Family Instructions of Zhuzi". Through qualitative focus group discussions involving 10 participants, the study seeks to understand the potential and effectiveness of animation in enhancing primary school students' engagement and comprehension of the Family Instruction of Zhuzi as part of Chinese cultural education from the perspectives of the cultural educators and experts. The study's thematic analysis identifies three main emerging themes, including the possibilities/potentials of animation, cultural education, and cultural values. The findings offer insights for further research and development of educational animation material for integration into cultural education settings in Fujian Province. This study contributes to understanding the experts' considerations or concerns for a better design and application of animation for cultural education. It provides evidence to support further research on the effectiveness of applying animation as an innovative approach for knowledge acquisition and cultural dissemination.

**Keywords:** Cultural Education; The Family Instruction of Zhuzi; Animation, Fujian Province, China

## INTRODUCTION

This article discusses the attitudes of cultural educators and experts in Fujian Province towards using animation to teach The Family Instructions of Zhuzi in primary schools. By bridging the gap between traditional culture and modern teaching pedagogy, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of animation as an innovative teaching approach in promoting cultural education and preserving China's rich cultural heritage from the teachers' and cultural experts' perspectives. Based on the literature review, the following sections discuss the topics of cultural education in China, the existing teaching of The Family Instructions of Zhuzi in primary schools in Fujian, as well as case studies of cultural education through animation in China and other countries.

### 1.1 Cultural Education in China

The preservation and inheritance of China's traditional culture face significant challenges in the current era under cultural globalisation (Wu & Peng, 2023). Younger generations are becoming more interested in popular culture while neglecting their traditional culture (Chen, 2023). Most young people struggle to comprehend complex Chinese cultural education materials, including The Family Instructions of Zhuzi (Zhao & Jie, 2020).

According to Lin & Huang (2019) Chinese Zhuzi culture, which is rich in history, has recently captured strong research interest within both local and international academic realms. The rich cultural history embodied in Zhuzi's teachings holds immense value for Chinese society, as emphasized by Zhu and Zhang (2023) and Chen &

Ma(2023)正如 Dai (2024) 和 li (2018) 。 . However, the need to promote the inheritance of Zhuzi's traditional culture is increasingly urgent. Traditional culture resembles the spiritual treasure of the Chinese nation. It's a crucial source of national and cultural confidence, shaping individual identities, beliefs and values among Chinese society (Asparuhova & Patera, 2021). Zhuzi's philosophy, rooted in Neo-Confucianism, has profound implications for individual identities and societal values. zhu and Zhang (2023) highlight that the Zhuzi cultural education in Fujian province is more prevalent as compared to other regions in China. According to Li (2018), the formation of Neo-Confucianism and Zhuzi learning during the Song Dynasty is one of the most remarkable inherited cultural identities of Fujian.

Many valuable moral principles advocated by Zhuzi culture help to shape individual values among young generations, particularly primary school students, from a young age. It is important to study and pass on this cultural knowledge for a better understanding and appreciation of Chinese cultural history. While encountering the challenges in educating traditional culture in modern society with evolving changes, innovative teaching approaches are crucially in demand (Cao, 2019). Chen & Ma (2023) propose exploring ways to adapt the spirit of Zhuzi culture to modern society, allowing young people to relate to and benefit from it. This adaptation can generate positive impact on modern education.

Animation has emerged and receiving significant recognition as a promising educational tool in engaging and motivating learners. It simplifies complex concepts and make learning easier and more enjoyable for students at all ages (Nurlaila & Nursalim, 2022). Its potential to promote understanding and appreciation of traditional cultural texts, such as The Family Instructions of Zhuzi, is particularly relevant, especially in primary education settings. By leveraging animation as an innovative pedagogical approach, cultural educators have an opportunity to enhance students' cultural learning experiences and contribute to the preservation of Fujian's cultural heritage.

### **1.2 Teaching The Family Instruction of Zhuzi in Primary School in Fujian**

Despite some progress, teaching Zhuzi culture in Fujian's schools remains a formidable challenge. In primary schools, in particular, students are experiencing difficulty in learning and understanding Zhuzi cultural content, including The Family Instructions of Zhuzi, which contains only Chinese texts that are difficult to comprehend (Zhao, 2020). These challenges greatly affect the learning process and cause a lack of interest among students to continue learning (Chang, 2020). In 2016, He's survey found that 50.5% of college students are not aware of and have little interest in learning Zhuzi culture.

Traditionally, education has been the primary mean of passing down and disseminating Chinese cultural knowledge (Shi, 2022). However, The Family Instruction of Zhuzi has not been able to effectively engage young learners such as primary school students in China (Zhang & Jiang, 2019). Young students struggle to understand the insightful meaning of The Family Instruction of Zhuzi, merely through conventional classroom teaching approaches that rely only on lesson books or text materials (Zhao & Xie, 2020). Besides, insufficient or inconsistent teaching materials and limited class time or frequency at schools pose additional challenges to effective teaching. Additionally, teachers lack support due to inadequate relevant training and limited sources of references on Zhuzi culture. From the learner's end, it is crucial to cultivate students' appreciation and interest in learning local and traditional cultures over popular and foreign cultures. Therefore, there is an urgent need to improve the existing teaching strategies and approaches. It is necessary to strengthen students' sense of identity in Zhuzi culture and enhance their cultural self-confidence through effective education in schools as well as public awareness.

The current education of Zhuzi culture in Fujian's schools is criticized for its traditional single approach, which lacks interactive engagement (Zhao & Duan, 2021). To address this problem, animation techniques can be employed to enhance the passive teaching approaches by introducing multimedia interactive engagement. Animated visuals supported by engaging sound effects and attractive characters' gestures, can help stimulate students' interest and motivate them to learn. Besides, the overemphasis on examination results and quantitative assessment at schools tends to neglect non-cognitive skills, especially cultural literacy. Zhuzi culture covers a diverse range of topics including history, philosophy, and art, making it a valuable addition to different educational disciplines. Therefore, integrating Zhuzi culture into existing academic fields can facilitate comprehensive and in-depth cultural learning experiences across various subjects.

Addressing these challenges in teaching Zhuzi culture, including The Family Instruction of Zhuzi, at primary schools requires collective efforts from the parties involved. At schools, school management and teachers play a role in enhancing educational curriculum and teaching pedagogies in teaching cultural content. Relevant teacher training is crucial to ensure effective and practical adoption of new teaching methods.

### **1.3 Cultural Education through Animation**

In cultural education, the emergence of new media animation technology presents a promising avenue for safeguarding cultural heritage in an era of cultural globalization. With its dynamic, expressive capabilities, new media animation offers new and innovative approaches to promote the dissemination and preservation of cultural knowledge through engaging cultural education. Techniques such as animation simulation and interactive story-telling effectively transform mundane text and images into vivid scenes and narratives, capturing audiences and fostering easy comprehension and retention of information and knowledge conveyed

within the animation. For instance, short animations can effectively convey historical events, cultural traditions, and architectural contexts, offering an engaging platform for learning and enjoyment. The utilization of animation in cultural education extends beyond mere entertainment, providing a powerful tool for promoting cultural understanding and appreciation. Animated teaching materials present information visually and figuratively, enhancing students' visual judgment, aesthetic ability, and innovative thinking (Li & Liu, 2020).

By presenting China's Zhuzi cultural learning content through animation, abstract philosophical ideas and concepts can be conveyed to the learners more tangibly, facilitating a better understanding and fostering appreciation of this important cultural legacy (Guo, 2023; Ye, 2021). Through vibrant imagery as the creative symbolic representation of traditional cultural elements, supported by sound effects and engaging storytelling, animation highlights the essence of Zhuzi culture, sparking interest and enthusiasm among learners (Luo., 2022). Furthermore, animation boosts audience engagement and emotional connections with characters through creative expression and new media art techniques. It offers deeper insights into the meanings, principles and values of Zhuzi culture (Huang & Qi, 2022). Several factors underpin the suitability of animation as a potential tool for teaching The Family Instruction of Zhuzi. Its strong visual expression vividly portrays cultural characteristics, facilitating intuitive understanding and acceptance (Abdullah, 2020). Moreover, animation's creative expression transcends traditional teaching methods, enriching educational content and enhancing engagement (Luo., 2022). Its interactive nature fosters audience participation and immersion, enabling emotional resonance with cultural connotations and values. Animation also overcomes temporal and spatial limitations of learning onsite at schools or cultural learning centers, allowing virtual exploration of cultural education anytime, anywhere (Zhang & Jiang, 2021). Importantly, its creative and expressive appeal attracts the interest of younger generations, ensuring the continuity dissemination and inheritance of Zhuzi culture (Guo, 2023)

International case studies evidently acknowledge the efficacy of animation in cultural education. Through computer-generated animation, students were introduced to the creation of cultural heritage-themed applications using computer generation and animation techniques that are commonly found in digital entertainment and visual productions (Chen, 2024). In Poland, the concept of sociocultural animation has gained traction since the late 1980s and early 1990s under the influence of studies by Zebrowski (1987) and Kopczyńska (1993), which later introduced the French concept of animation (Kubinowski, 2016). This interest in sociocultural animation coincided with Poland's post-1989 transformation, leading to widespread adoption in formal and informal cultural institutions and academic settings (Kubinowski, 2015). In the Polish context, three main theoretical approaches to sociocultural animation have been discussed: cultural studies-based, anthropological, and pedagogical (Kubinowski & Lewartowicz, 2019). In Poland, the application of animation is aimed at revitalizing and encouraging individuals and communities to actively participate in cultural acquisition and creation based on their accepted values (Gajda, 2001).

Similarly, Italy has embraced animation as a means of engaging students creatively, complementing the teaching of traditional subjects. Animation emerged primarily in the 1960s and 1970s through the collaboration between schools and theatres in Italy. Educators and artists sought innovative ways to engage with students, creating a new language and alternative to educate and promote traditional culture (Jedlewska, 2001). The term "animation" was officially introduced in Italian school terminology in 1975, referring to additional activities designed to complement traditional subjects and led by animators with specialized psychological, pedagogical, and methodological expertise (Jedlewska, 2001).

In summary, integration of animation into cultural education in China may offer a dynamic and effective approach to promote understanding and appreciation of Zhuzi culture. Based on the underpinning theories of multimodal learning and semiotics that support the fundamental concept of animation design, this article advocates for the adoption of animation as an interactive tool to teach The Family Instruction of Zhuzi in Fujian's primary schools.

### 1.3.1 Multimodal Learning Theory

Multimodal learning theory serves as a foundational framework supporting the concept of adopting animation as a potential tool for engaging and interactive cultural education. A multimodal learning environment enhances the learning experience when instructional elements are presented through multiple sensory modes, such as visual, auditory, and written (Sankey et al., 2010). In essence, multimodal learning enables learners to acquire and process information through multiple perceptual modes (i.e. sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste), thereby facilitating a deeper understanding and retention of learning content as stored memory. Multimodal learning is important because of its ability to cater to different learners' needs and learning styles while fostering enhanced engagement and efficacy in learning. Research has shown that multimodal learning promotes deeper comprehension and application of knowledge, leading to improved academic performance and skill development (Mayer, 2005; Lina et al., 2019).&(Hsiao and Lo, 2016)

Moreover, such approaches enhance learner motivation and satisfaction, thereby enriching the overall learning experience (Moreno, 2006; Sankey et al., 2010).

This study endeavours to address the challenge of teaching ancient family instruction (i.e. The Family Instruction of Zhuzi) within Chinese traditional culture. Drawing upon multimodal learning theory, by

harnessing visual, auditory, and other sensory modalities, this study explores the effectiveness of adopting educational animation as a teaching approach to provide learners with a more immersive and enriching learning experience, thus facilitating a deeper understanding and remembrance of the cultural content. For example, multimedia animated stories incorporating images, audio, and dynamic elements will be designed to engage learners through multiple sensory interactions, thereby facilitating a better understanding of the underlying principles and values of *The Family Instruction of Zhuzi*. Additionally, animated learning methods will be explored to stimulate learner interest and motivation, thereby enhancing the overall learning process. By fostering deeper engagement and enriching the learning experience, this innovative approach not only enhances learning outcomes but also cultivates a genuine interest in traditional culture among learners. Through the integration of multimodal learning principles, traditional cultural education will embrace new opportunities for growth and enrichment, ultimately enriching the educational landscape for future generations.

Overall, multimodal learning has many advantages over single-modal learning. It integrates information from different modes (such as text, images, audio, etc.) so as to provide more comprehensive, rich and interactive informative features that enable easier comprehension. The information conveyed through different modes is complementary in presenting a more comprehensive and enriched representation of learning content towards enhancing a better learning engagement. For example, some studies have shown that multimodal learning combining image and text information can improve the accuracy and consistency of annotation (Korat, 2010; Sun et al., 2019).

In the field of contemporary education, actively exploring innovative teaching methods has become an important topic leading to academic development. Supported by the multimodal learning theory, this study looks into the integration of multimodalities, including text, images, audio and other forms of expression, in conveying the learning contents of *The Family Instruction of Zhuzi*.

### 1.3.2 Semiotic Theory

Another supporting theory, semiotics, explains how symbols convey meaning, especially in the context of animation design for cultural education. According to Noth (1990), as the analysis of signs and symbols and their meanings, the term “semiotics” rooted in ancient Greece, and propelled by Ferdinand de Saussure’s 19th-century study. Saussure, a Swiss linguist emphasized that language doesn’t just convey meaning but creates it, shaping experiences through vocabulary. made significant contributions to the field of semiotics, also known as semiology. His contributions to semiotics, also known as semiology, are crucial in literary theory, explaining the process of meaning-making in texts. According to Taylor (2021), language is a sign system where each text carries different meaning. Semiotics is the study of how people create and convey meaning through visual and verbal signs, and signals, helping us understand unconscious influences from our environment and society. It helps to understand how the environment and society affect us unconsciously. It ensures accurate interpretation of intended messages, resolving ambiguity and maintaining context consistency. Originally focused on individual words (linguistics), semiotics expanded to study human behaviour (anthropology and psychology), followed by an exploration of culture and society (sociology and philosophy), and it is now used to analyse the communication and behaviour of end-users (Signalsad, 2021).

Animation has strong symbolic significance. Its ability to combine ideographic and abstract elements serves as a powerful tool for cultural education and expression. By incorporating symbols as a means of communication into the design process of animated products, designers can effectively convey cultural values, thoughts, and emotions through an audiovisual presentation (Hall, 1997). Through careful selection of symbolic elements such as colours, patterns, character design, and sound effects, designers can highlight the core values and educational philosophy embedded within cultural texts such as *The Family Instructions of Zhuzi*.

In the context of Chinese animation, early Chinese animated films boldly incorporated traditional Chinese cultural symbols and narratives, including elements from ink painting, paper cutting, Chinese puppetry, Peking Opera and folk music. For example, traditional Chinese national symbols such as the figure of the traditional Chinese classical opera “Sun Wukong”; the traditional Chinese ink art figures “Shepherd Boy” and “Little Tadpole”; and a selection of sound productions with strong Chinese cultural characteristics are some common symbols representing Chinese cultural identities. By integrating these symbols into the narrative structure and visual presentation, Chinese animation contributes towards preserving the inheritance of Chinese cultural heritage.

When designing educational animations, semiotic theory can be applied to effectively convey cultural values and educational concepts. The use of symbolic forms, representations, and meanings can help engage learners, particularly young learners. For example, designers can use specific colours, patterns, character designs, and sound effects to represent virtues or highlight moral values that are emphasized in cultural educational content. To ensure the accurate transmission of information, designers must consider the cultural background and the comprehension ability of the targeted audience. By comprehensively applying semiotic theory, designers can integrate traditional values into animation and present audiences with an educational and artistic audiovisual experience that showcases the wisdom and cultural connotations of *The Family Instructions of Zhuzi*. Ultimately, the integration of semiotic theory into animation design for cultural education not only enhances the attractiveness and comprehensibility of educational content but also promotes the understanding and appreciation of traditional culture. Through in-depth analysis and strategic application of semiotics, animation



serves as a dynamic medium for engaging in an interactive cultural learning experience towards fostering the inheritance and innovation of traditional cultural education in modern contexts.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

Using qualitative research methods, this study aims to explore the attitudes of Zhuzi cultural experts and cultural educators in Fujian Province towards learning The Family Instruction of Zhuzi using animation. The research collects primary qualitative data from the key informants, involving teachers from three primary schools (i.e. Continuing Primary School, Wuyi College Affiliated Primary School, and Experimental Primary School) and Zhuzi cultural experts. Two focus group discussion (FGD) sessions were conducted to engage in in-depth communication with Zhuzi cultural educators and experts to gather their views and attitudes towards the effectiveness of animation as an innovative teaching approach in educating The Family Instruction of Zhuzi at primary schools. Participants include school teachers who have been actively involved in teaching students about The Family Instruction of Zhuzi at primary schools, as well as researchers and experts from the Zhuzi Cultural Research Center based in Fujian. Each focus group discussion was carried out using a list of guided open-ended questions. The data collected from focus group discussions were sorted for thematic analysis to explore the consensus, views, and attitudes of participants. The focus group discussions were conducted online to facilitate communication and interaction among participants, with each session lasting approximately 50 minutes. The insights generated from this research serve as valuable references and provide enlightenment for further research of designing educational animation for teaching Zhuzi cultural content.

### 2.1 Sample Selection & Preparation

In terms of sample selection criteria, the cultural experts are required to have relevant experience in the study of Zhuzi culture, or be research specialists based at the Zhuzi Cultural Research Center. Each focus group consists of 2 cultural experts, with a total of 4 cultural experts participating as key informants in 2 focus group discussion sessions. As for cultural educators, the participants should be teachers who have more than 3 years of experience in teaching The Family Instruction of Zhuzi at the selected three primary schools. Each focus group consists of 3 educators or teachers, with a total of 6 educators or teachers in 2 focus group discussion sessions. The three selected primary schools, namely Mount Wuyi Experimental Primary School, Primary School Affiliated to Wuyi University and Mount Wuyi Continuing Education Primary School are located within Fujian Province. These three schools have a large number of students with proper educational settings and a strong emphasis on the education of traditional culture among students, particularly the culture of Zhuzi. Table 1 outlines the profile of participating key informants.

**Table 1: Profile of Key Informants**

FGD	Key Informants	Age	Years of Experience in Zhuzi culture	Institutions
FGD1	Cultural Educator 1	36	6	Mount Wuyi Experimental Primary School
FGD1	Cultural Educator 2	39	10	Primary School Affiliated to Wuyi University
FGD1	Cultural Educator 3	35	8	Mount Wuyi Continuing Education Primary School
FGD1	Cultural Experts 1	33	11	Zhuzi Cultural Research Center
FGD1	Cultural Experts 2	30	6	Zhuzi Cultural Research Center
FGD2	Cultural Educator 1	32	5	Mount Wuyi Experimental Primary School
FGD2	Cultural Educator 2	33	5	Primary School Affiliated to Wuyi University
FGD2	Cultural Educator 3	35	7	Mount Wuyi Continuing Education Primary School
FGD2	Cultural Experts 1	38	12	Wuyi University
FGD2	Cultural Experts 2	40	13	Wuyi University

### 2.2 Data Collection & Data Analysis

This study adopts a qualitative approach by conducting focus group discussions to collect primary data. Key informants were prompted to discuss their perceptions and attitudes towards teaching The Family Instruction of Zhuzi using animation. Most researchers believe the appropriate focus group size is between 4-12 participants (Tong et al., 2012., Dilshad & Latif, 2013), (Krueger, 1994). Thus, the group size for this study is set at 5 participants for each FGD. In total, 10 key informants have provided their responses. To facilitate each FGD, a list of 9 open-ended guiding questions based on animation semiotics theory and multimodal learning

theory (see Table 2) was outlined. These questions prompt discussion over three dimensions: attitude (for educational animation), education (cultural education), and values (cultural values). Data and responses collected during discussions were sorted out for a thematic analysis.

Through the above data collection and analysis methods, the study gains an in-depth understanding of cultural experts' and cultural educators' attitudes and views towards teaching and learning The Family Instruction of Zhuzi through animation.

**Table 2: List of Nine (9) Open-ended Questions for Guiding Focus Group Discussions**

Questions for Guiding Focus Group Discussion		
1.	What is your attitude towards learning The Family Instruction of Zhuzi through animation?	Multimodal Learning Theory (Mayer, 2005)
2.	As an expert, how do you feel about the use of animation to disseminate and teach The Family Instruction of Zhuzi?	Multimodal Learning Theory (Mayer, 2005)
3.	What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of animation in cultural and educational practice?	Multimodal Learning Theory (Mayer, 2005)
4.	Do you think that combining animation with traditional culture will help the younger generation to better inherit and understand the values in The Family Instruction of Zhuzi?	Multimodal Learning Theory (Mayer, 2005)
5.	Based on the multimodal theory, do you think animation as a kind of multisensory learning can help improve students' understanding and memory retention of cultural information?	Multimodal Learning Theory (Mayer, 2005)
6.	Are there any situational elements in the animation that can help students better understand the values and ideas in The Family Instruction of Zhuzi?	Multimodal Learning Theory (Mayer, 2005)
7.	Do you think that by using both visual and auditory elements, the animation can more accurately convey the cultural connotation and meaning of The Family Instruction of Zhuzi?	Multimodal Learning Theory (Mayer, 2005) & Semiotic Theory (Noth, 1990)
8.	As a symbol system, can animation more effectively convey the cultural values and ideas in The Family Instruction of Zhuzi?	Multimodal Learning Theory (Mayer, 2005) & Semiotic Theory (Noth, 1990)
9.	Do you think these symbolic elements can help students better understand the complex concepts in The Family Instruction of Zhuzi?	Semiotic Theory (Noth, 1990)

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The thematic analysis of the feedback from all the 10 participating key informants (i.e. cultural educators and cultural experts) during two FGDs reveals findings under three emerging themes, including (1) Possibilities/Potential of Animation, (2) Cultural Education through Animation and (3) Promoting Inheritance of Cultural Values through Animation. Table 3 shows findings from the thematic analysis.

**Table 3: Findings from Thematic Analysis**

Themes	Subthemes	Feedback from Key Informants
Possibilities/Potential of Animation	Innovative & and effective learning	"Animated learning is an innovative and effective way of teaching today's primary school students"
	Capturing students' attention	"It can better capture students' attention" "The animation format is more relatable to young children's lives, as it effectively captures their attention through visual, audio and animated elements."
	Engage students' interest in learning	"Animation is a practical approach to engage student's interest in learning by making the complex subjects of knowledge more accessible and understandable"

	Offer entertaining learning experience	"Animation can present ancient knowledge more intuitively, allowing learners to learn while being entertained"
	Enable vivid content interpretation and dissemination for better acceptance	"Animation is a very effective medium as it makes abstract concepts of teaching subjects more concrete and vivid, enabling more vivid interpretation and dissemination of content that is easy for students to accept."
Cultural Education Through Animation	Ensure cultural authenticity & accuracy of animated cultural content	"It is difficult to ensure accuracy & authenticity of animated cultural content in presenting Zhuzi culture"
	Offer active and interesting cultural learning experience	"As a visual and attractive medium, animated cultural knowledge learning offers an appealing, attractive and interesting cultural learning experience"
	Prioritise teaching content over entertainment	"But needs to avoid commercialization by over-emphasising entertainment and neglecting the teaching of cultural content"
	Avoid misrepresentation & misinterpretation of cultural connotations	"Must pay attention to the correct interpretation of cultural connotations and mindfully avoid misrepresentation that might cause cultural misunderstandings"
	Modernisation and digitalisation of cultural education create relevant connections & promote the popularization and dissemination of cultural knowledge.	"Integrating modern technology with traditional cultural education creates relevant connections to enhance cultural understanding, foster cultural acceptance & appreciation." "Digital animation of Zhuzi cultural content widens its accessibility and promotes the popularization and dissemination of Zhuzi culture."
	Concerns when using animation for cultural education: high cost; skills requirement; educational values; over technology-dependence; cultural understanding	"Animation production requires specialized skills and high costs" "Loss of educational values due to over-emphasis on entertainment." "Over-reliance on technology at the expense of insightful content." "Over-simplified animation leads to students' misunderstanding of the culture."
	Multi-sensory learning engagement enhances cultural learning experience	"Multi-sensory learning actively engages students through vivid visuals, audio, and movements to promote better understanding and memorization of complex cultural information." "Multi-dimensional elements enrich animated content to provide a comprehensive and in-depth cultural learning experience"
Promoting Inheritance of Cultural Values through Animation	Ensure cultural authenticity & reflective adaptation	"Ensures originality of culture while adapting to the needs of modern education." "It should relevantly reflect or depict the authentic content of Zhuzi"
	Promote active engagement & enhance learning interest	"Audio-visual elements in animation bring The Family Instruction to life, conveying information in a comprehensive but less complex manner"
	Audio-visual integration for cultural message conveyance	"Audio-visual elements in animation bring The Family Instruction to life to convey information in a comprehensive but less complex manner"
	Multimodal learning for cultural understanding	"Multimodal animated cultural content makes it much easier to convey information in a comprehensive yet engaging manner, especially for young children" "Promote cultural understanding through multimodal interactive scenario design in animation"

The following sections explain the findings under each of the three themes.

### 3.1 Possibilities/Potential of Animation

During focus group discussions (FGDs) among cultural educators and experts, the potential and possibilities of animation as a groundbreaking tool for teaching and learning emerged as one of the emerging themes. Participants simultaneously acknowledged its innovativeness and attractiveness in engaging primary school students, recognizing animation's dynamic ability to captivate attention through the integration of visuals, sounds, and animated elements. By harnessing this combination of sensory stimuli, animation presented a multifaceted approach to learning, making complex subjects more accessible and understandable in an entertaining manner. Notably, respondents highlighted how animation transforms abstract concepts into concrete visualizations, enabling vivid interpretation and dissemination of learning content. This shift towards

a more tangible and engaging learning experience underscores animation's pivotal role in revolutionizing education, providing educators with a practical medium to enhance learning outcomes and enrich students' learning experiences.

These findings resonate with previous scholarly research, as evidenced by studies such as those conducted by Nurlaila and Nursalim (2022) and Guo (2023). Their work underscores the effectiveness of animation in captivating interest, engaging, and motivating young learners. Guo's quantitative research specifically identifies the rich symbolic elements within animation, including images, colours, and sounds, which facilitate easier comprehension of complex concepts across various learning subjects. Building upon this scholarly foundation, the FGD findings offer further insights into how animation serves as a transformative force in education, aligning with contemporary pedagogical needs and preferences for immersive and interactive learning experiences.

### **3.2 Cultural Education through Animation**

Although the cultural educators and cultural experts mostly agreed that animation is widely recognized as an innovative tool for delivering cultural content; many of them highlight their concerns, such as the need to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of cultural education. Cultural educators, in particular experts from the Zhuzi Cultural Research Center, insist that each animated segment accurately reflects the core values and characteristics of Zhuzi culture. Nevertheless, cultural educators have embraced the use of animation for cultural education. Animation effectively simplifies complex cultural content, making it more accessible and engaging for learners. Nevertheless, cultural educators have embraced the use of animation for cultural education. Animation effectively simplifies complex cultural content, making it more accessible and engaging for learners. This approach enhances information receptivity, stimulates cultural interest, and offers enjoyable cultural learning experiences. The educators highlight the crucial need to consider the educational content carefully to prevent it from being overshadowed by entertainment value during the design process. Each teaching point should be conveyed in a clear and educational manner to avoid misrepresenting and misunderstanding cultural connotations. Educators agreed that animation is a powerful tool for cultural education, as it combines visual arts, sound effects, and dynamic storytelling to create a multi-sensory learning experience that bridges traditional culture with modern educational technology. It can be easily disseminated through digital and online platforms, greatly expanding its audience reach. However, there are certain challenges that come with using animation for cultural education, including high costs, high technical requirements, over-reliance on technology, and the need to accurately communicate educational values as well as cultural messages.

These findings resonate with previous academic research and are consistent with the findings of Chang (2020), Zhang & Jiang (2019) and (Kim, 2022) that support the use of animated cultural materials to help students acquire cultural knowledge, enhance cultural understanding and develop self-awareness. On the other hand, Pira and Lisiecka's (2022) suggested to combine sociocultural animation with media education to prevent information from being inaccurately conveyed. This mirrors the cultural experts' emphasis on the accuracy and authenticity of cultural knowledge. Thus, the adoption of animation in teaching The Family Instruction of Zhuzi requires careful planning and reflection during the design and implementation stages. To a certain degree, the findings from FGDs provide insights that further demonstrate the usefulness and innovativeness of animation in education.

Combining the viewpoints and findings above leads to the conclusion that animation, as an innovative and creative educational tool, can effectively capture students' attention and facilitate their understanding and learning of complex cultural knowledge such as The Family Instruction of Zhuzi. Integrating cultural and symbolic elements in animation helps to spark students' interest in learning about traditional culture. In educational practice, ensuring the authenticity and accuracy of animation content is essential to fully harnessing the potential of animation in cultural heritage preservation and education.

### **3.3 Promoting Inheritance of Cultural Values through Animation**

In FGDs, the key informants explored the role of animation in promoting active participation and increasing interest in learning through audio-visual integration of cultural information (i.e. The Family Instruction of Zhuzi) delivery. Animation not only captures students' attention through engaging visual and auditory elements but also promotes a deeper understanding of cultural meanings and values through a multimodal learning engagement. By combining sound, images and dynamic storytelling, animation injects new vitality into traditional cultural education, allowing originally abstract cultural concepts and values to be concretely and visually expressed. This method not only enhances the accessibility and attractiveness of cultural content, but also enhances students' perception and identification of the deep meaning of culture through vivid scenes and character interactions. In FGD, educators and experts specifically mentioned that animation allows students to participate more actively in the learning process, which is particularly critical in improving educational effectiveness and stimulating students' interest in learning cultural knowledge.

In addition, participants highlighted the efficacy of animation in engaging learners and motivating them to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural concepts, particularly exemplified in "The Family Instruction of Zhuzi". Through audio-visual integration, animation captures students' attention and stimulates active participation, enhancing students' perception and identification of cultural meanings and values. The



combination of sound, images, and dynamic storytelling revives traditional cultural education, making abstract concepts tangible and visually compelling. This approach not only increases the accessibility and attractiveness of cultural content but also facilitates students' appreciation and retention of cultural knowledge, as supported by previous academic research (Nurlaila & Nursalim, 2022).

Moreover, the FGDs underscored animation's unique ability to convey complex cultural information through visual and auditory elements. Participants observed that animated scenario elements, including background settings, character interactions, and storylines, provide students with a specific context and atmosphere, aiding their understanding of cultural values and thoughts in "The Family Instruction of Zhuzi." Symbolic elements such as images, colours, and music were noted to be particularly helpful in elucidating abstract concepts and enhancing students' overall comprehension and engagement. These findings align with previous studies, emphasizing the importance of visual and image-oriented animation in enhancing students' aesthetic abilities, visual judgment skills, and innovative thinking (Ye, 2021; Chen, et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the discussions highlighted the transformative potential of animation in presenting traditional cultural heritage to contemporary audiences. By animating classics like "The Family Instruction of Zhuzi," ancient wisdom and values can be vividly showcased, fostering moral cultivation and humanistic literacy among students. The incorporation of modern and fun elements in animated presentations bridges the gap between tradition and contemporary life, making cultural education more relevant and impactful. This innovative approach not only stimulates students' interest in learning but also encourages critical reflection on the significance and value of traditional culture in today's society. Overall, the findings from the FGDs underscore the importance of animation as a powerful tool for promoting the inheritance of cultural values, offering valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to enrich cultural education initiatives in primary schools and beyond. Therefore, integrating animation with classics like "The Family Instructions of Zhuzi" in cultural education and teaching can not only stimulate students' interest and appreciation for traditional culture but also promote the improvement of their moral qualities and humanistic literacy. Through innovative teaching methods and content design, the inheritance of traditional culture and the transformation of contemporary values can be achieved, providing students with a more meaningful and profound cultural educational experience.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Using animation for the education of Chinese traditional cultural heritage represents an innovative approach that effectively captures the interest of the younger generation, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Chinese traditional culture. Cultural educators and experts perceive animation as a powerful tool for vividly presenting traditional cultural knowledge, such as The Family of Zhuzi, engagingly and interactively, facilitating students' comprehension and retention of cultural values through various means such as images, sound, and storylines. Moreover, the dissemination of Chinese traditional cultural awareness or knowledge through animation reaches a broader audience, contributing to the protection and inheritance of Chinese heritage and cultural values among Chinese communities and beyond. However, concerns arise regarding the accuracy and quality of cultural knowledge delivered through animation and the balance between tradition and modernity in educational settings. Ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of animation content while maintaining entertainment value requires careful consideration, along with balancing traditional aesthetics and values with contemporary audience preferences.

Overall, this study highlights the significant role of animation in cultural education and protection, offering valuable contributions to the promotion of traditional culture inheritance and development. The findings offer new perspectives and ideas for future research and practice in this field by providing empirical support for the application of animation in cultural education. Ultimately, the research underscores the importance of embracing innovative approaches, such as animation, to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of traditional cultural heritage among younger generations. Through focus group discussions (FGDs), this study delves into the attitudes of cultural educators and experts towards using animation for learning The Family Instruction of Zhuzi. FGDs were chosen to facilitate open expression, gather rich insights, and comprehensively understand participants' perceptions of animation in traditional cultural education. This method allowed for capturing real views and opinions. The findings affirmed scholars' views that engaging animation can enhance cultural understanding and stimulate interest in traditional culture, particularly Zhuzi culture. This study offers new insights into the relationship between cultural inheritance and innovation. The study concludes that animation contributes significantly to cultural education and protection, fostering the inheritance and development of traditional culture while providing youth with a deeper connection to their cultural heritage. These insights support the expanded adoption of animation in cultural education and inspire further exploration of cultural inheritance and innovation.

## REFERENCES

1. Abdullah, M. A., & Abdullah, N. (2020). An Initial Attempt: A Synthesis of Cultural Adaptation and Representation in Animation. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(12). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v10-i12/8354>
2. Asparuhova, E., & Patera, M. (2020). Cultural roots and nostalgia: Exploring cultural identity and sense of belonging through animation practice. *Animation Practice, Process & Production*, 9(1), 57–73. [https://doi.org/10.1386/ap3\\_000017\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/ap3_000017_1)
3. Cao, W. (2019). An Analysis of the Path of Inheriting and Promoting China's Excellent Traditional Culture in the Context of New Era. *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Culture, Education and Economic Development of Modern Society (ICCESE 2019)*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/iccse-19.2019.156>
4. Chang, M. T. (2020). The development difficulties and pathways of Zhu Xi's culture in the context of a century of change. *Journal of Changjiang Series*, 2020(05), 68-72, 117-119.
5. Chang, M. T. (2020). The development difficulties and pathways of Zhu Xi's culture in the context of a century of change. *Journal of Changjiang Series*, 2020(05), 68-72, 117-119.
6. Chen, W., & Ma, R. (2023). Cultivating college students' socialist core values in inheriting and carrying forward Zhuzi culture. *Journal of Wuyi University*, 42(11).
7. Chen, Y. (2024, April 12). Returning to the "complete film": A brief analysis of VR film aesthetics. 视听, 1.
8. Chen, Y. L. (2023). The communication code of consumer culture: A study on value production in "fast fashion" communication. *Dongyue Tribune*, 44(3). Jiangxi Normal University, School of Journalism and Communication.
9. Dai, T. X. (2024). The enlightenment of Zhu Xi's educational thought on the development of modern higher education. *Journal of Wuyi University*, 43(1).
10. Dilshad, R. M., & Latif, M. I. (2013). Focus Group Interview as a Tool for Qualitative Research: An Analysis. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS)*, 33(1).
11. Gajda, J. (2001). Dylematy animacji kulturalnej w dobie gwałtownych przemian społecznych i cywilizacyjnych. In J. Gajda, W. Żardecki (Eds.), *Dylematy animacji kulturalnej* (pp. 11–21). Wyd. UMCS.
12. Guo, Y. M. (2023). Constructing the pattern of Zhu Xi culture inheritance in modern context: Taking "Zhangzhou Zhu Xi Culture" as an example. *Teaching and Educating People: Principal's Reference*, (4), 34-36.
13. Guo, Y. M. (2023). Constructing the pattern of Zhu Xi culture inheritance in modern context: Taking "Zhangzhou Zhu Xi Culture" as an example. *Teaching and Educating People: Principal's Reference*, (4), 34-36.
14. Hall, S. (1997). The work of representations. In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (pp. 16-74). SAGE Publications Ltd.
15. Hsiao, P. J., and Lo, C. S. (2016). "Use of a digital game based Tang Poetry learning system to improve learning for children in nursery school," in 2016 International Conference on Advanced Materials for Science and Engineering (ICAMSE). Piscataway, NJ: IEEE. p. 75–78. doi: 10.1109/ICAMSE.2016.7840236
16. Huang, L. K., & Qi, S. H. (2022). Research on the design of tourism crafts from the perspective of Zhu Xi cultural heritage protection. *Journal of Wuyi University*, 41(11).
17. Jedlewska, B. (2001). *Animatory kultury wobec wyzwań edukacyjnych*. Wyd. UMCS.
18. Kim, H. (2022). A Cultural Education Class Study: Using Animation in Liberal Arts Classes: Focusing on Cultural Awareness Activities. *The Korean Society of Culture and Convergence*, 44(9), 885–896. <https://doi.org/10.33645/cnc.2022.9.44.9.885>
19. Kitzinger, J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: the importance of interaction between research participants. *Sociology of health & illness*, 16(1), 103-121
20. Koczyńska, M. (1993). *Animacja społeczno-kulturalna: podstawowe pojęcia i zagadnienia*. CAK
21. Korat, O. (2010). Reading electronic books as a support for vocabulary, story comprehension and word reading in kindergarten and first grade. *Comp. Educ.* 55, 24–31. doi: 10.1016/j.compedu.2009.11.014
22. Kubinowski, D. (2015). Istota animacji jako idei pedagogicznej. *Studia Kulturalno- -Oświatowe*, 1, 9–17
23. Kubinowski, D. (2016). Kultura animacji jako humanistyczna pedagogia. *Nauki o Wychowaniu. Studia Interdyscyplinarne*, 3, 98–108
24. Kubinowski, D. (2019). Concepts of animating activities developed and constructed on the ground of Polish pedagogy: Historical-comparative, political-institutional, and paradigmatic-applied "loops." *Polska Myśl Pedagogiczna*, \*5\*(5), 53–68. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=895720>
25. Li, J., & Liu, Y. C. (2020). Discussion on the teaching environment and development countermeasures of animation majors in universities in the new media era. *Cultural Art Innovation*, 3(5), 91-93. <https://doi.org/10.26549/whyscx.v3i5.5723>
26. Li, X. (2018). On the contemporary new values of Zhuzi culture. *Fujian Forum: Humanities and Social Sciences Edition*, 2018(12), 53-63.
27. Lin, D., & Huang, H. (2019). Current Situation of Local Culture Development and Optimizing Strategy in Wuyishan. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 356.

28. Lina, Z., Liang, H., and Ziyang, G. (2019). Construction of knowledge graph of chinese tang poetry and design of intelligent knowledge services. *Libr. Inf. Sci. Res.* 63, 24.
29. Luo, J. (2022). The Characteristics and Paths of the Dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Form of Animation in the New Media Environment. *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*, 2022. Retracted article. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/7857816>
30. Mayer, R. E. (2005). Cognitive theory of multimedia learning. *The Cambridge handbook of multimedia learning*, 31(1), 31-48.
31. Moreno, R. (2006). Learning from animated pedagogical agents: Lessons learned. In R. K. Atkinson, R. J. Renkl, & C. R. H. H. L. D. S. N. (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of multimedia learning* (pp. 87-102). Cambridge University Press.
32. Noth, W. (1990). *Handbook of Semiotics*. United States: Indiana University Press.
33. Nurlaila, & Nursalim, A. (2022). Roro Jonggrang: Animation Of Folklore For National Cultural Education Media. *Rekam*, 18(1), 37-50. <https://doi.org/10.24821/rekam.v18i1.6699>
34. Nurlaila, & Nursalim, A. (2022). Roro Jonggrang: Animation Of Folklore For National Cultural Education Media. *Rekam*, 18(1), 37-50. <https://doi.org/10.24821/rekam.v18i1.6699>
35. Nurlaila. (2022). Roro Jonggrang: Animation of Folklore for National Cultural Education Media. *Rekam: Jurnal Fotografi, Televisi, Animasi*, 18(1), 37-50.
36. Pira, F., & Lisiecka, A. (2022). Animacja społeczno-kulturalna i edukacja medialna w obliczu nadużyć informacji cyfrowych. *Lubelski Rocznik Pedagogiczny*, 41(3), 19-33. <https://doi.org/10.17951/lrp.2022.41.3.19-33>
37. Plass, J. L., Homer, B. D., & Kinzer, C. K. (2014). Foundations of game-based learning. *Educational Psychologist*, 49(3), 149-152.
38. Sankey, M. D., Birch, D., & Gardiner, M. W. (2010). The impact of multiple representations of content using multimedia on learning outcomes across learning styles and modal preferences. *International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology*, 6(2), 18-35
39. Shi, W. J. (2022). Literature as a vessel for doctrine: Strategies for integrating excellent traditional Chinese culture into teaching. *Reference for Middle School Political Teaching*, August 10, 2022.
40. Signalsalad. (2021). Our Thoughts What is Semiotics?. *Sign Salad*. [https:// signalsalad.com/our-thoughts/what-is-semiotics/](https://signalsalad.com/our-thoughts/what-is-semiotics/). Date of Access: 05 April 2021
41. Sun, H., Loh, J., and Charles Roberts, A. (2019). Motion and sound in animated storybooks for preschoolers' visual attention and Mandarin language learning: an eye-tracking study with bilingual children. *AERA Open*. 5, 2332858419848431. doi: 10.1177/2332858419848431
42. Taylor, D. (2021, 10, August). What is Semiotics? Definition & Examples. *Study. com*. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-semiotics-definition-examples.html>. Date of Access: 17 March 2021
43. Tong, A., Flemming, K., McInnes, E., Oliver, S., & Craig, J. (2012). Enhancing transparency in reporting the synthesis of qualitative research: ENTREQ. *BMC medical research methodology*, 12(1), 181
44. TÜMEN AKYILDIZ, S. (2021). An Overview of Qualitative Research and Focus Group Discussion. *International Journal of Academic Research in Education*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.17985/ijare.866762>
45. Wu, H. J., & Peng, H. Y. (2023). New strategies for the development of minority ethnic films in Yunnan. *\*National Art Research\**. Retrieved January 5, 2023, 17:41.
46. Ye, M. W. (2021). "Grand Confucian Zhu Xi": Exploring the function of cultural confidence building in documentaries. *Documentary Research*, (8), 87-88.
47. Ye, Z. (2021). "Zhuzi Culture Series Reader" receives praise from central media. *\*Zhuzi Culture\**, (1), 57.
48. ying, chen, & li, liu. (2020, April 15). c26636204.2020.04.15 | 社團法人中華創意創新發展協會 CCIDA. [Www.ccidanpo.org. http://www.ccidanpo.org/jbi/c26636204.2020.04.15](http://www.ccidanpo.org/jbi/c26636204.2020.04.15)
49. Żebrowski, J. (1987). Zawód i osobowość animatorów kultury w świetle nowych koncepcji wychowania zintegrowanego. *WOK*
50. Zhang, Y., & Jiang, H. (2019). The construction of Zhu Zi's cultural animation modeling based on semiotics. *\*Sculpture\**, (5), 76-78.
51. Zhang, Y., & Jiang, H. L. (2021). The production of Wuyi tea culture animation modeling from a semiotic perspective. *Sculpture*, December 15, 2021.
52. Zhao, P. (2020). Analysis on youth communication of animated short film Da Hua Xi You [Analysis on youth communication of the animated short film "Da Hua Xi You" in Chinese]. *\*Journal of Anhui University of Technology (Social Science Edition)\**, (9).
53. Zhao, P. X., & Xie, C. H. (2020). Analysis of youth communication in the animated short series "Grand Talk Xiyou." *Journal of Anhui University of Science and Technology (Social Science Edition)\**, 22(5).
54. Zhao, P., & Duan, Q. (2021). The communication strategy of Zhu Zi culture in the new media environment. *Journal of Wuyi University*, 40(4), 1-6
55. Zhao, P., & Xie, C. (2020). Analysis of Youth Communication of the Short Animated Film "Da Hua Xi You" *Journal of Anhui University of Science and Technology*. 22.
56. Zhu, D., & Zhang, L. (2023). Creative transformation and innovative development of Zhu Xi's family education and tradition thoughts. *Fujian Historical Review*, 2023(6), 54-60.