

"A Preliminary Study on the Integration of Humanistic Themes into Reading Instruction and Strategies for Alignment between Teaching and Testing in Senior High School Chinese Macro-Unit Teaching"

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Abstract

As educational reforms continue to deepen, the significance of the senior high school Chinese macro-unit teaching model in the field of education has become increasingly prominent. This study focuses on macro-unit teaching in senior high school Chinese, examining strategies for integrating humanistic themes into reading instruction and achieving effective alignment between teaching and testing. Research findings indicate that the effective integration of humanistic themes plays a vital role in cultivating students' core competencies. It not only enriches students' language construction, enhances logical thinking, and promotes cultural inheritance but also guides students in establishing correct values and improving their comprehensive learning abilities. In terms of reading instruction task design and implementation, factors such as students' central role, teaching content vehicles, learning activity formats, and competency attainment goals should be fully considered. By creating appropriate contexts, designing tasks based on language situations, and balancing content with linguistic principles, students' reading proficiency can be systematically improved. For teaching-testing alignment, strategies including integrating literary text reading around humanistic themes, designing question chains, and conducting writing exercises enable students to better adapt to the college entrance examination (Gaokao) and enhance their comprehensive Chinese language capabilities. However, current teaching practices exhibit deficiencies in theoretical depth, detailed practical case studies, teaching effectiveness evaluation, adaptability to student characteristics and resource availability, as well as attention to cutting-edge developments. Subsequent pedagogical improvements should involve deepening theoretical research, elaborating practical case examples, establishing scientific evaluation systems, enhancing strategy adaptability, and integrating advanced educational technologies. These measures aim to optimize the integration of humanistic themes in high school Chinese macro-unit instruction and strengthen the alignment between teaching and assessment, thereby laying a solid foundation for students' Chinese language acquisition and long-term development.

Keywords

High School Chinese; Macro-unit Instruction; Humanistic Themes; Reading Instruction; Teaching-Assessment Alignment.

1. Introduction

Professor Wen Rumin once pointed out: "The limited space of textbooks can only provide a small number of texts. However, developing students' literacy in Chinese language requires more than in-class reading; it also necessitates the integration of 'guided reading,' 'independent reading,' and 'extracurricular reading.'" The integration of these three types of reading forms a diversified reading model, which helps increase students' reading reserves and enables them

to engage in diversified and multi-angle thinking, forming their own unique understanding and achieving aesthetic appreciation and creation. Therefore, under the perspective of a large-unit framework, teachers can focus on the unit organization of the unified high school Chinese textbooks and combine texts of different genres within the same unit, the same genre across different units, or in-class and extracurricular texts to conduct diversified reading, thereby enriching students' reading reserves. Emotional experience, as an important component of core literacy, is not only a research hotspot in the current educational field but also an inevitable requirement for talent cultivation in society. In high school Chinese teaching, by implementing large-unit reading tasks through the cultivation of core competencies such as language construction and application, thinking development and enhancement, aesthetic appreciation and creation, and cultural inheritance and understanding, students' reading ability, thinking ability, and expressive ability can be systematically improved, ultimately achieving comprehensive development of core literacy in Chinese. When teachers design large-unit reading tasks, they need to focus on core literacy, closely follow the new curriculum standards, new textbooks, and new curriculum reforms. Under the context of the new college entrance examination, they should center on students, closely link with the content of the textbooks, and design teaching tasks based on students' actual learning conditions. Teachers also need to pay attention to students' individual development, formulate scientific and reasonable reading teaching strategies according to students' interests, learning abilities, and psychological needs, and thereby enhance students' core literacy in Chinese.

High school Chinese teaching is not only about knowledge transmission but also about nurturing students' humanistic spirit and enhancing their core competencies. Large-unit teaching breaks away from the limitations of traditional single-text instruction. Guided by themes, it integrates teaching resources to build a systematic instructional framework. The humanistic theme, as the essence of large-unit teaching, runs through every aspect of instruction. Through in-depth interpretation of literary texts, it guides students to enhance their Chinese language abilities in language practice, establish correct values, and effectively bridge teaching with exams. This approach improves students' test-taking skills and literary creativity.

2. The Importance of Integrating Humanistic Themes in Large - Unit Teaching of High School Chinese

The core competencies of Chinese language learning encompass four aspects: language construction and application, thinking development and improvement, aesthetic appreciation and creation, as well as cultural inheritance and understanding[1]. In large - unit teaching with the integration of humanistic themes, students are exposed to rich language materials through the study of literary texts, which in turn promotes language construction. Under the same humanistic theme, when students read literary texts of different genres, they enhance their thinking about society and life, effectively exercise their logical thinking, and promote the inheritance of cultural elements contained in the texts, thus strengthening their cultural confidence. For example, in the thematic unit of "Inheritance and Innovation of Traditional Culture", students read literary texts such as classical poems and essays. They understand the ancients' perseverance in cultural inheritance and development, their dedication to ideals and beliefs, and their contemplation of life and the universe. As a result, their awareness of cultural inheritance and innovation ability are improved.

In the new curriculum standards, literary texts serve as crucial carriers for Chinese language teaching. Humanistic themes connect multiple literary texts, enabling students to understand the diverse expressions of the same theme from different perspectives. For example, the humanistic theme of Unit 1 in the Compulsory Volume I of the unified - compiled textbooks is

"youth". In the teaching of this unit, youth is the main theme. The authors either express their concerns about the nation and their emotions in the face of the times or reflect on life and contemplate the future. High - school freshmen are at an age full of vigor and enthusiasm. Their contemplation of the value of their own youth is a characteristic of this age, which also reflects the core principle of cultivating virtues and educating people. In the thematic unit of "The Light of Chinese Civilization", by observing the present and learning from the past, students can deeply understand the wisdom of the predecessors and the profoundness of Chinese culture in the vast ocean of classic literary works, thereby strengthening their cultural confidence. Reading classic Confucian chapters such as The Analects, Mencius, and Xunzi, as well as classic Taoist works like Laozi and Zhuangzi, and wonderful excerpts from Zuo Zhuan and Records of the Grand Historian helps us understand some important concepts of Chinese culture, appreciate the humanistic spirit contained therein, deepen our understanding of traditional culture, and enhance our cultural confidence. In the unit of "Conscience and Compassion", reading literary works can cultivate our emotions of sympathizing with the misfortunes of others, despising the ugly, pursuing justice, and upholding conscience. These emotional experiences help us understand society and life more profoundly.

The setting of humanistic themes enriches students' spiritual world and is closely linked to their Chinese language literacy. Humanistic themes cover a wide range of content, including the value of youth, insights into life, the diverse aspects of society, and cultural inheritance. By studying relevant texts, students can be exposed to different ideas, emotions, and values, thereby enriching their spiritual world and enhancing their cultural taste and aesthetic appreciation. In the exploration of humanistic themes, students need to understand the language expressions in the texts and analyze the authors' thoughts and emotions. This helps to improve their core Chinese language competencies, such as language construction and application, thinking development and improvement, and aesthetic appreciation and creation. Meanwhile, the setting of humanistic themes is conducive to guiding students to establish correct values and improving their comprehensive learning abilities. High school is a crucial period for students to form their values. Humanistic themes contain rich life philosophies and moral concepts. For example, the praise of qualities like justice, kindness, bravery, responsibility, and dedication can guide students to establish correct values and outlooks on life, promoting their all - around development[2]. Learning centered around humanistic themes often requires students to engage in methods such as independent exploration and collaborative communication. Students need to consult materials, analyze texts, and write articles. This series of activities can enhance their self - learning ability and collaborative inquiry ability, laying a foundation for their lifelong learning.

3. The Design and Practice of Reading Instruction Tasks

In the curriculum structure section of the Chinese Curriculum Standards, the concept of "Chinese learning task clusters" is proposed. To implement the core competencies of Chinese language learning, the newly promulgated General Senior High School Chinese Curriculum Standard requires students to carry out Chinese learning activities such as "reading and appreciation, expression and communication, organization and exploration" within specific learning contexts, and accordingly establishes academic quality standards. These standards provide clear guidance for Chinese academic proficiency tests and college entrance examination proposition[3]. Therefore, when designing reading teaching tasks, the following aspects should be emphasized: 1. Students should be the main body of learning tasks. 2. The carrier of learning tasks is the content of Chinese teaching. 3. The way to complete learning tasks is through relevant Chinese learning activities. 4. The goal pursued by learning tasks is

the achievement of students' Chinese language abilities. Based on the above four aspects, when designing reading teaching tasks, teachers should first consider the main body and the carrier. The goal of high school Chinese reading teaching is to enable students to acquire Chinese reading skills. "Logically speaking, teaching activities aimed at developing abilities must emphasize the importance of students' active participation and their dominant position." Abilities are subjective elements within an individual and cannot be directly imparted. Therefore, for students to acquire such abilities, they must actively engage and think. For example, when a teacher is teaching novels with the humanistic theme of "struggling in adversity", the teacher combines the reading of David Copperfield and The Old Man and the Sea. The designed situational task is an activity to select "the strongest person", and students are required to write recommendation letters for David and Santiago. Under this task, three activities are designed: "Entering the Dilemma", "Recognizing People in the Dilemma", and "Getting Out of the Dilemma". Considering the tasks of literary reading and writing in the new curriculum, the teacher expands the classroom content to integrate reading and writing, which effectively demonstrates students' reading abilities. However, in teaching practice, factors such as class duration, students' internalization process of problems, and the reading ability limitations of freshman high - school students were overlooked. As a result, not all ability - oriented teaching goals were achieved.

The design of Chinese curriculum tasks aims to enable students to acquire Chinese language abilities, that is, the abilities to listen, speak, read, and write in the language[4]. This kind of language ability can only be demonstrated and enhanced in specific language contexts or situations. Therefore, Chinese language teaching needs to incorporate certain language contexts or situations and design learning tasks with gradients and levels. Through teaching activities that take "language context as a unit", teachers can arrange a reasonable teaching procedure, enabling students to face a complete language context in each language activity and gradually improve their Chinese language abilities through psychological interaction with the context. The contradiction between the integrity and hierarchy of Chinese language ability cultivation is effectively resolved in such a process from formation to development, and from enrichment to greater sophistication.

In actual teaching, some teachers, after finishing the teaching of Lu Xun's The New Year's Sacrifice, design an exploration activity titled "Who Killed Xianglin's Wife?". On the basis of summarization and analysis, the teacher then assigns a classroom learning task: How would you respond if you encounter verbal violence or even campus bullying in real life? These two tasks transition from theme exploration to hot - topic commentary, and from thinking guidance to critical thinking, reflecting the hierarchy of thinking development and improvement.

Mr. Lü Shuxiang, when summarizing Mr. Ye Shengtao's theory of Chinese language teaching, once said that one of the drawbacks in Chinese language teaching is that "in reading teaching, the content being read is inappropriately emphasized while the laws of the Chinese language itself are relegated to a secondary position." In fact, the task of reading teaching is to effectively combine the "content being read" and the "laws of the language itself." For example, in the reading teaching of the two poems, "Picking Plantains" and "The Rice - Planting Song," the design of learning tasks is not merely about "reciting the classics to depict labor scenes," "comparative reading to understand labor - related emotions," and "extending exploration to seek the meaning of labor." It also has the responsibility of providing language demonstrations in Chinese reading learning activities. It shows students how to describe labor scenes and express labor - related emotions, which are questions about "how to write" and "how to read" that are related to the laws of the Chinese language itself. The content being read is subordinate to the language teaching content and is implicitly integrated into language teaching. It teaches students how to be a good person and handle affairs imperceptibly. This learning task is in line with the humanistic theme of "The Glory of Labor" in the Compulsory Volume I. "The Rice -

Planting Song" uses the folk - song approach, selects daily labor scenes, and shows the hardships of rural life and the busyness of farming. It is full of life interest and brimming with the spirit of hard - work, diligence, and optimism.

4. The Practice of Integrating Humanistic Themes and Linking Teaching with Testing in High School Chinese Reading Instruction

Since the implementation of the General Senior High School Chinese Curriculum Standards in 2017, the connection between college entrance examination propositions and textbooks has gradually deepened. It has evolved from the explicit correlation of individual knowledge points in the early stage to the current systematic design of comprehensive teaching - examination integration[5]. For example, in the Modern Chinese Reading I section of the 2024 New Curriculum Standard Volume I, Mao Zedong's On Protracted War was selected. Its style of political essays continues the literary context of Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing (Excerpt) in Compulsory Volume I of the textbook, The Chinese People Have Stood Up in Selective Compulsory Volume I, and Rectify Our Study in Selective Compulsory Volume II. It accurately implements the curriculum standard requirements of the "Speculative Reading and Expression" learning task group. In addition, the practical text reading material in the 2024 National Volume A is excerpted from Zhou Qian's A Close Exploration of the Forbidden City Architecture. It corresponds to the "Practical Reading and Communication" task groups in Unit 2 of Compulsory Volume I, Unit 3 of Compulsory Volume II, and Unit 4 of Selective Compulsory Volume II of the textbook. In particular, it has a deep text connection with The Characteristics of Chinese Architecture in Compulsory Volume II. The implicit connection is demonstrated by the continuation of the multi - text reading design in the teaching materials in the test questions. For example, the use of composite texts (Page 94 of the Blue Book Analysis of College Entrance Examination Questions 2025). This proposition approach not only examines students' ability to transfer knowledge but also reflects the systematic arrangement of teaching materials.

As an important part of "consistency among teaching, learning and assessment", the connection between teaching and examination in senior high school Chinese should be based on the "China College Entrance Examination Evaluation System" and the "Chinese Curriculum Standards for General Senior High Schools (2017 Edition, Revised in 2020)", and conduct in-depth exploration by combining teaching materials and real college entrance examination questions. In recent years, the relevance between the national college entrance examination Chinese papers and teaching materials has been increasingly enhanced. The proposition scope not only covers senior high school teaching materials but also extends to junior high school and even primary school teaching materials, bringing new ideas and challenges to senior high school Chinese teaching. Taking the proposition of literary text reading as an example, in recent years, the proposition of literary text reading in the college entrance examination has shown a trend of proposition following the text. It has gradually shifted from focusing on the ability to understand and accept the text content to focusing on the ability to examine and interpret the information conveyed by the text. The questions mainly examine whether examinees can flexibly apply the necessary knowledge learned from reading novel texts in teaching materials, demonstrate their understanding and appreciation abilities, and complete the task of reading new novel texts on the test paper. These tasks include analyzing the effect of personalized expressions, appreciating the language style, summarizing narrative features, feeling and savoring the rich connotations and profound charm of key sentences, as well as exploring the deep implications of the works and the author's emotional attitudes. At the same time, in terms of material selection and proposition, the proposition group attaches great importance to the guiding role of core values. For example, the reading material "Growing a Field of Good Buckwheat" in the National Volume B in 2023, through the indomitable spirit of the Chinese

nation reflected in the work, guides examinees in the new era to inherit and carry forward the excellent national traditions. The reading material "To My Son" in the National New Curriculum Standard Volume I in 2023 aims to guide examinees to establish correct labor concepts and cultivate a love for the land and labor. These proposition practices fully reflect the positive role of the college entrance examination Chinese in value orientation.

The Chinese subject in the college entrance examination places great emphasis on assessing students' comprehensive Chinese language abilities and core competencies. Therefore, many questions are centered around humanistic themes[6]. Integrating humanistic themes into reading teaching can help students accumulate materials, exercise their thinking, and enhance their abilities in daily learning, thus enabling them to better meet the requirements of the college entrance examination. For example, the topics of college entrance examination composition often revolve around humanistic themes. The literary materials and writing experiences that students have accumulated during large-unit learning can assist them in creating high-quality compositions in the examination room.

4.1. Integrating the Reading of Literary Texts Centered around Humanistic Themes

Teachers design tasks in teaching activities centered around humanistic themes according to the curriculum standards and students' actual situations, such as "The Elegance of Youth" and "Insights into Life". Taking Unit 1 "The Song of Youth" in Compulsory Volume I of senior high school Chinese textbooks as an example, teachers can create Chinese project-based learning activities titled "The Elegance of Our Youth" and the activity of "Campus Readers" based on the school's situation and students' learning conditions. These activities include designing the "The Elegance of Youth" column, organizing discussions on the value of youth, reciting and appreciating poems and novels, creating new poems and novels, recruiting guests, and organizing performances. Through these activities, teachers guide students to engage in meaningful creative practices related to youth and understand the power of youth. In this process, students accumulate knowledge about poetic images and lyric techniques, as well as the narrative and lyric characteristics of "poeticized" novels. They also learn to appreciate poems and novels from aspects such as images, language, and emotions.

4.2. Designing Question Chains Based on Humanistic Themes to Achieve the Connection between Teaching and Testing

In the teaching process, based on the examination requirements for literary texts in the new curriculum standards, teachers design question chains with distinct levels and clear logic centered around humanistic themes. This approach guides students to conduct in-depth exploration of literary texts, familiarize themselves with the examination points of the college entrance examination, master the thinking methods for answering questions, and enhance their abilities to accurately understand the questions and answer them in a standardized manner. Taking the theme unit of "Suffering and Rebirth" as an example, teachers can integrate classic texts such as In Memory of Liu Hezhen, Coolies, and Lotus Pond. Through the group reading of these texts, a special exploration path of "Female Group Images in Suffering Narratives" is constructed. The design of the question chain starts with the survival dilemmas of female characters, exploring their choices and spiritual qualities when facing suffering: Liu Hezhen's calm smile, Lu Chaibang's inhumane experiences, and Shui Sheng's wife's patience and tenacity. These images collectively demonstrate the mission and responsibility of women in the torrent of the times. Through progressive questions, students are guided to analyze the techniques of character shaping, the dialectical relationship between the suffering situations and the characters' choices, and how the female group images reflect the trajectory of national awakening. This design not only helps students master the core examination points of literary appreciation but also achieves a deep integration of aesthetic experience and value recognition.

While students feel the selfless and fearless spirit of revolutionary martyrs, they also think about the contemporary significance of revolutionary culture and inherit and carry forward the great spirit of the Chinese revolution.

4.3. Conducting Writing Training Based on Humanistic Themes

In the design and implementation of classroom teaching, with the focus on students' output, teachers aim at cultivating students' higher-order thinking skills. They emphasize structuring the accumulated language materials and subject knowledge, encouraging students to consciously apply the language in language practice, express their aesthetic experiences, emotional attitudes, and values, create new language materials, enrich their linguistic experiences and expressions, and comprehensively improve their core competencies in the Chinese language subject[7]. Based on the concepts of the curriculum standards, senior high school Chinese textbooks emphasize the integration of curriculum objectives, subject literacy, curriculum resources, curriculum knowledge, and curriculum practice. They design unit learning (study) task groups, and the last task of each unit is usually a writing task. This task integrates the learning context, learning content, learning methods, and practical approaches, and serves as the "ultimate task" that dominates the learning of the entire unit.

When teaching, teachers can adopt the principle of "starting with the end in mind". That is, taking the ultimate writing task as the starting point of learning and the completion of the writing task as the goal, they can design progressive reading and writing activities. By promoting reading through writing, teachers can integrate reading and writing training and achieve an overall improvement in students' reading and writing literacy.

Combined with humanistic themes, teachers can design diverse writing tasks. For example, in the theme unit of "Memories of Hometown", students can be required to write an essay recalling their hometown or create a poem about their hometown. Through writing, students can apply the materials and language accumulated during the study of literary texts to practice, and at the same time, deepen their understanding of the humanistic theme.

During the writing guidance, teachers should guide students to explore the theme from different perspectives and use a variety of writing techniques to express their emotions, making writing a process of deep integration of language application and humanistic thinking.

5. Conclusions

In the large-unit teaching of senior high school Chinese, the integration of humanistic themes is a crucial path to improving the quality of Chinese teaching, developing students' core competencies, and achieving the connection between teaching and examination. Through strategies such as integrating literary texts, designing question chains, conducting writing training, and creating teaching scenarios, teachers can permeate humanistic themes throughout the entire teaching process, enabling students to draw spiritual nourishment from the nourishment of literature and develop their core competencies in Chinese. In teaching practice, teachers should continuously explore effective methods for integrating humanistic themes, closely combine teaching and examination needs, and lay a solid foundation for students' Chinese learning and future development.

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