

Orientation and optimization: The Dilemma and Practical Path of the Overall Teaching of Chinese Units in Primary Schools

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Abstract: Under the guidance of core literacy in Chinese, unit based holistic teaching, as a major emerging form of primary school Chinese teaching, has gradually become the focus of current Chinese teaching practice and research. The overall teaching of the unit is based on real task situations, but in the implementation of primary school Chinese teaching, problems such as simplification, formality, and excessive extension have been exposed, which urgently need to be effectively resolved. The overall teaching of units is generated on top of traditional unit teaching, and should be reasonably connected to the foundation of unit teaching, constructing a more coherent learning process, in order to explore the optimization path to achieve the overall teaching goals of units.

1. Introduction

In order to promote the reform and development of Chinese education in China's compulsory education stage, the Ministry of Education issued the Chinese Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition)"(hereinafter called the New Chinese Curriculum Standards) in 2022, which provides detailed and clear standards for the content, requirements, and evaluation of primary school Chinese courses. The guiding ideology is "focusing on the development of core competencies among Chinese students, cultivating correct values, essential qualities, and key abilities for students to adapt to future development." [1] In the Chinese subject of compulsory education, core literacy is manifested in four aspects: cultural confidence, language use, thinking ability, and aesthetic creation. The New Chinese Curriculum Standards takes moral education as its value orientation, requiring primary school Chinese education to not only focus on the cultivation of language skills, but also on cultivating students' personality qualities, moral literacy, and social awareness. This requires primary school Chinese teachers to keep up with the times and adapt to new educational goals in their teaching. Correspondingly, Chinese teaching also needs to shift from a single language skill training to cultivating students' comprehensive literacy, in order to adapt to the complex social environment and rapidly changing knowledge needs.

2. Conceptual clarification: unit teaching and the overall unit teaching

In the past practice of Chinese teaching in primary schools, unit teaching has always been the mainstream of frontline

teaching, and many teachers are accustomed to completing a lesson according to the diagram. From the perspective of unit teaching, this is not only a fundamental skill for primary school Chinese teachers, but also an effective plan for achieving lesson objectives. Unit teaching is a series of teaching and learning activities that are carried out based on the learning objectives and content of the unit. [2] Primary school Chinese teachers guide students to systematically learn the framework by dividing the knowledge content into clear structures, and are able to provide targeted teaching design and evaluation for undergraduate students with clear teaching objectives and evaluation methods. The unit teaching with one lesson and one setting also has flexibility, making it convenient for teaching preparation and management. At the same time, the drawbacks of unit teaching are also obvious. Due to the emphasis on the teaching process of each unit, subject knowledge is relatively isolated and often too focused on a specific unit theme or knowledge point, making it difficult for students to form a holistic subject cognition; Teachers also tend to overlook the cultivation of students' comprehensive abilities, which affects their ability to solve problems in real life and makes it difficult to achieve the goal of cultivating core Chinese literacy.

The overall teaching of primary school Chinese units is a professional design based on the student's perspective, which involves the complete learning process of students around a certain unit. [3] By organizing relevant knowledge points into a whole, the connections between each knowledge point are more intuitively presented to students, promoting their deep understanding of knowledge, strengthening their ability to apply knowledge. The overall teaching mode of a unit is based on a complete unit for teaching, allowing students to have a more comprehensive understanding of a theme, greatly enhancing the coherence

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and completeness of learning. This is exactly the orientation that Chinese teaching should pursue.

Although unit teaching and the overall unit teaching are two different teaching modes, they share a common unit foundation. In fact, both primary school Chinese unit teaching and overall unit teaching are based on the theme unit text group as the learning subject. However, unit teaching refers to dividing subject content into several units for teaching according to a certain teaching plan and schedule. In unit teaching, teachers will design teaching and activities tailored to the content of each unit, so that students can learn under a relatively independent theme or topic. Moreover, unit teaching focuses more on teaching the specific knowledge points and skills of each unit, mainly adopting a separate teaching strategy, that is, each unit is taught independently, with a focus on learning within the unit.

Compared to China, the theory and practice of unit teaching in foreign countries have a long history, providing a strong theoretical foundation for the research on unit teaching and overall unit teaching in China. Unit teaching first emerged in the late 19th century during the New Education Movement, with the main teaching philosophy of integrating knowledge both inside and outside of class to form a complete framework, and then teaching it to students. American educational psychologist Morrison proposed the "Morrison unit teaching method" in his book *Teaching Practice in Middle School*, advocating that teachers divide textbooks, activities, etc. into complete units for teaching. The holistic language teaching advocated by American linguist Goodman was introduced to China, and his concept of focusing on the holistic nature of language and educational processes has been partially experimented and explored in China. [4]The 11 unit design steps proposed by Erikson and Lanning provided a theoretical basis for unit design under later concepts.[5]Scholar Liu Hui proposed the overall teaching of units under the "big concept", which introduces a concept with high abstraction and wide applicability in teaching, making it run through the entire learning process of the unit. [6]The big concept is the concrete connotation of literacy in teaching, the key to the formation of literacy, and also the concept under expert thinking. This theory elucidates the theoretical framework of the overall teaching of Chinese units. As early as the 1990s, statistics in the United States showed that teachers with longer teaching experience were more inclined towards a holistic teaching model for students. Students were able to apply the holistic thinking learned in the classroom to other fields, which would promote the development of their critical thinking and scientific thinking abilities.[7]The overall teaching of units focuses on the connections between each unit and the construction of the overall disciplinary framework, with a focus on comprehensive teaching strategies. From this, it can be seen that unit teaching emphasizes "division", while overall unit teaching emphasizes "integration". The two are not mutually exclusive, but can complement and combine each other. This provides a theoretical premise for primary school Chinese teachers to practice, which is to choose appropriate teaching modes based on the subject and the

needs of students, and to flexibly apply them according to actual situations.

3.Observing Reality : practical dilemma in the overall teaching of Chinese units in primary schools

Under the guidance of the the New Chinese Curriculum Standards, the overall teaching practice and experience of primary school Chinese units are becoming more and more diverse, and have been successfully verified under the embryonic theoretical system. The active attempts in the overall teaching of primary school Chinese units have been consistent from the educational institutions to the school, and have achieved some positive results. However, there are still some problems and challenges in the implementation, resulting in the dilemma of not being able to effectively promote unit based teaching in primary school Chinese classrooms.

3.1.The teaching process has shifted from simplification and complexity to formality

If Chinese teachers do not have a deep or accurate understanding of the overall teaching of the unit, and do not fully grasp the core ideas and methods of the teaching mode, they will be unable to extract and grasp the foundation of the overall teaching of the unit - the "big concept" from the text group. From the current arrangement of primary school Chinese textbooks, although each unit is connected according to a certain theme, the core extraction of themes and big concepts is not carried out simultaneously, and "a subject big concept system with structured characteristics and clear and accurate expression has not been formed"[8] Especially in the process of combining humanistic themes and language elements, Chinese teachers have many opportunities to exert their subjective creativity, which not only promotes diverse explorations of the overall teaching of the unit, but also leads to the emergence of some biases. Some Chinese teachers may view the overall teaching design of a unit as a collection of unit teaching designs, while ignoring the deep connections between knowledge and the understanding of students; mechanically combining the teaching elements in unit teaching, neglecting the exercise of corresponding Chinese elements in the teaching process, leads to the design of the overall teaching of the unit becoming complex and repetitive. The teaching process may become mechanical, rigid, lacking vitality and inspiration, greatly reducing teaching efficiency and resulting in a situation of twice the result with half the effort.

3.2.The teaching content is excessively extended, putting the cart before the horse

The design of overall unit teaching needs to integrate resources from the entire unit. Some Chinese teachers, when integrating teaching content, tend to have overly divergent thinking in the process of collective or individual

lesson preparation, which may lead to excessive extension and inability to grasp the key and difficult points of the Chinese curriculum. They focus on secondary or general knowledge points, ignoring the importance of core concepts and basic knowledge. Or in the implementation process of Chinese courses, in order to demonstrate the fun of the content and arouse students' interest, excessive game interaction or emotional experience tasks are set up, failing to allow students to consolidate their learned knowledge through effective classroom activities. In addition, interdisciplinary teaching of Chinese and other disciplines is also being vigorously promoted. When designing the overall teaching of primary school Chinese units, some Chinese teachers overly emphasize interdisciplinary teaching in order to highlight the comprehensiveness of the classroom. They integrate knowledge content from other subjects into the Chinese classroom and turn Chinese classes into moral and legal courses or comprehensive practical courses, which is also unacceptable. The Chinese curriculum itself has its unique teaching objectives and content. If it deviates too much from these core objectives, it may lead to unclear teaching focus and poor teaching effectiveness.

3.3. Teaching design is rigid and ignoring the construction of real Chinese situations

The overall teaching of primary school Chinese unit advocates guiding students to master Chinese elements through learning task groups in real Chinese contexts. Some Chinese teachers are too inflexible in their teaching design, rigidly "transporting" and "transplanting" similar or genre similar unit theme designs, without evaluating and screening from the specific differences in different unit themes. The overall teaching design of primary school Chinese units has standards and experience to test, but there are few templates that can be directly copied. Developing a unit based overall teaching curriculum that is suitable for students' development level not only requires professional support and guidance from the school, but also requires the persistent collective efforts of teachers themselves. Each unit theme may have a variety of language context settings, and the task context needs to be closely linked to the learning task group. In the practical process, some Chinese teachers, due to their busy work, may invest less energy or be powerless in the early stage of lesson preparation, and may only pursue completing tasks and choose to apply them mechanically, ignoring the importance of arousing students' interest and thinking in real Chinese contexts, This leads to a lack of emotional resonance and interactive effects in the teaching process.

3.4. Teaching evaluation is superficial and cannot be effectively applied to classroom diagnosis

From the evaluation rules of the overall teaching design cases or lesson competitions of primary school Chinese units, there are traceable standards for evaluating the overall teaching of primary school Chinese units. In terms of the use of teaching resources, the overall teaching of the unit emphasizes the comprehensive utilization of Chinese

teaching resources by teachers, such as multimedia textbooks, library resources, especially online resources, to enrich teaching content and provide learning support for students. The overall teaching of primary school Chinese units requires teachers to reasonably choose multiple evaluation methods in the classroom, including oral expression, written assignments, project works and so on, in order to comprehensively measure students' mastery of unit knowledge and skills. This evaluation method requires teachers to pay attention to the participation and completion of each student in class, and puts forward precise requirements for the effectiveness of group cooperation. This undoubtedly greatly increases the difficulty for Chinese teachers to grasp the classroom, which may lead to some teachers designing teaching evaluation stages for ease of operation, leaning towards simple tests and scores, and unable to comprehensively evaluate the actual abilities and understanding levels of students. Such evaluation methods cannot provide effective classroom diagnosis, and cannot timely detect students' problems and needs.

4. Optimization strategy: practical path for the overall teaching of primary school Chinese units under the guidance of core competencies

The New Chinese Curriculum Standards proposes that "the Chinese curriculum revolves around core competencies, reflects the nature of the curriculum, reflects the curriculum philosophy, and establishes curriculum goals", and explains the connotation of core competencies: core competencies are the correct values, essential qualities, and key abilities gradually formed by students through curriculum learning, and are the concentrated embodiment of the educational value of the curriculum. [9] Under the guidance of Chinese core literacy, the overall teaching of primary school Chinese units should focus on the existing problems and optimize the practical path, in order to promote the overall improvement of students' Chinese core literacy.

4.1. Deeply study the new curriculum standard for primary school Chinese and accurately grasp the overall teaching connotation of each unit

Thoroughly studying the new curriculum standards for primary school Chinese is a necessary step for every primary school Chinese teacher to improve teaching quality and effectively carry out overall unit teaching. Firstly, teachers need to have a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the new curriculum standard, including target requirements, core competencies, subject abilities, textbook requirements, etc. They should carefully analyze the teaching requirements of each grade and unit in the new curriculum standard, and understand the specific content and standards of each learning goal. For each unit theme, teachers should clearly grasp the knowledge, abilities, and thinking levels that students need to achieve, and based on this, develop teaching plans.

Through in-depth study of the new curriculum standards for primary school Chinese, teachers can better grasp the teaching content and requirements, improve the pertinence and effectiveness of teaching, and provide students with higher quality Chinese education; at the same time, it is also possible to continuously improve one's teaching level and professional competence. Chinese teachers in primary school also need to carefully read and study textbooks and tutoring materials to understand the teaching content and methods. The content of the textbook can be summarized and adjusted and expanded based on the actual situation and the actual level and needs of students. By analyzing and researching the Chinese test papers and evaluation standards of relevant grades. By understanding the question types, difficulty levels, and evaluation criteria of the test paper, teachers can better grasp the learning priorities of students and provide targeted teaching design and guidance.

4.2. Integrate the themes of textbook units, focus on humanistic topics and language elements

Wen Rumin, the chief editor of the unified edition of Chinese textbooks, emphasized the arrangement of primary school Chinese textbooks in a dual line approach of "humanistic topics" and "language elements". The two main themes overlap and overlap, requiring Chinese teaching to be from point to surface, from scattered to concentrated, and through integration and comparison within the unit, to achieve overall learning of the unit. Teachers must stand from the perspective of the unit, compare, integrate, and summarize the texts within the unit, gather them together, and guide students in systematically learning Chinese. The "Chinese elements" in the unified edition of textbooks are the core of students' Chinese literacy and the result of the reading and writing literacy that students should achieve after learning Chinese.[10] Primary school Chinese teachers, based on the integration of unit themes, first grasp the organic combination of humanistic topics and language elements, sort out students' reading and writing goals, and clarify the connection between sections in goal implementation. Teachers should closely grasp the elements of Chinese, link them with after-school exercises, and transform them into learning tasks of elements; Students follow an orderly and holistic chain of element acquisition, go through the process of learning, understanding, and applying elements, and achieve the transformation of knowledge into ability. [11] For example, when studying Unit 8 of Grade 6, teachers can extract the humanistic theme of approaching Lu Xun from the unit theme, while the language element is that students can use relevant materials to understand the content of the text; Write about someone through events and express your emotions. Teachers can set the theme of the unit as Salute to Mr. Lu Xun to expand and supplement the historical background and related literary works of Lu Xun's life for students. By linking the homework task Having You, It's really nice after class, not only can students understand and apply Chinese knowledge in a holistic context, but also enhance their understanding of humanistic values and cultivate language proficiency.

4.3. Construct realistic and meaningful contexts, design learning task groups

In the overall teaching of primary school Chinese units, teachers strive to create real and meaningful situations, allowing students to experience the application of Chinese in practice, and cultivating their practical abilities and comprehensive qualities. The formation of primary school students' language proficiency, the development of thinking and aesthetic qualities, the inheritance and understanding of culture, and the enhancement of innovation consciousness are all based on the construction and application of language. [12] Teachers provide students with practical opportunities for individual language experience when designing Chinese situations, unleashing their autonomy and personalization. Students can also better understand and master Chinese knowledge, and improve their overall quality. Teachers can design different language contexts based on students' interests and practical life experiences to stimulate their learning enthusiasm. For example, when studying Unit 3 of the first volume of fourth grade, teachers can design structured learning tasks around the theme of "learning to be a natural observer", guiding students to learn how to continuously and meticulously observe a plant and animal in nature, and create their own observation diary. The learning task activity can be designed as follows: Task 1 is to enter the plant exhibition hall, Task 2 is to enter the animal exhibition hall, Task 3 is to enter the mountain and water exhibition hall, Task 4 is to observe with the eyes, and Task 5 is to observe and write a diary. By completing the writing of observation diaries, students demonstrate their gains in observing nature and exploring the scientific world, and transfer their observed expressions to their own compositions.

4.4. Deepen the consistency of teaching evaluation and leverage the role of process evaluation

The New Chinese Curriculum Standards requires teachers to handle the relationship between teaching, learning, and evaluation. Teachers should learn to use textbooks to teach, and students should learn to learn actively. Teaching evaluation can guide teachers to improve teaching, lead students to grow, and achieve comprehensive development.[13] The implementation of the overall teaching of primary school Chinese units should pay attention to the consistency of teaching evaluation, ensuring the fairness and accuracy of evaluation standards. At the same time, emphasis should be placed on process evaluation, focusing on the learning process and thinking ability of students, and encouraging their creativity and exploratory spirit. Teachers can set up comprehensive and complex real-life problem scenarios and tasks, guide students in problem decomposition and transformation, learn core knowledge in the process of solving local problems, form basic abilities and thinking methods, and then solve comprehensive and complex problems. [14] For example, when studying the lesson The Sun, teachers can choose to display pictures of the shape of the sun and introduce mythological stories such as Kua Fu Chases the

Sun and Hou Yi Shoots the Sun. This will introduce the selection of nature guides during the school science popularization week, and ask students to be guides to popularize knowledge about the sun. Next, we will use simulation exercises, group competitions, and other methods to guide students to understand the basic explanation methods and let them experience the benefits of using explanation methods. We will also conduct peer evaluations through star rating evaluations. Finally, we can summarize the writing style of the article and let students practice writing with expanded materials. Through communication, students can once again experience the skills of writing explanatory articles.

5. Epilogue

The overall teaching of primary school Chinese units has become an important teaching model under the background of the new curriculum reform. It represents the future trend of integrating primary school Chinese education with other disciplines, and the tendency to focus on situational education and personalized learning is more in line with the future of Chinese education under the guidance of core literacy. The increasing development of overall teaching in primary school Chinese units depends on the provision of teacher professional competence and the continuous innovation of teaching methods. Teachers need to be fearless of difficulties, dare to challenge, keep up with the times, actively learn and explore the latest Chinese teaching concepts and methods. In teaching practice, teachers should unleash their creativity, make Chinese teaching more vivid and effective, and help each student cultivate core Chinese literacy.

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