

# ***Reconstructing Chinese Reading Teaching Philosophy in Compulsory Education from the Perspective of Core Competencies***

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**Abstract:** The new curriculum reform mandates the cultivation of core competencies in compulsory education, fostering students' all-round development in morality, intellect, physique, aesthetics, and labor. Therefore, while clarifying the concept of core competencies and analyzing the characteristics of Chinese language courses, it is essential to integrate the cultivation of core competencies into Chinese reading teaching, refreshing educational concepts, and further deepening and reshaping Chinese reading instruction with students as the center under the perspective of core competencies.

## **1. Integration of Chinese Language Courses and Core Competencies**

### **The Concept and Significance of Core Competencies**

According to the "Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening Curriculum Reform and Implementing the Fundamental Task of Cultivating Morality and Talents" issued by the Ministry of Education of China, core competencies refer to the essential qualities and key abilities that students must possess to adapt to lifelong development and social development needs. Among them, "qualities" (necessary qualities) form the cornerstone of individual personality and morality, serving as the internal support for pursuing a happy life; "abilities" (key abilities) are the foundation for realizing personal value and social contribution, the crucial path to a successful life.

In Chinese reading courses, the cultivation of core competencies extends beyond the utilization of language and characters, encompassing multiple dimensions such as students' thinking development, cultural heritage, aesthetic appreciation, and innovation capabilities. Thus, integrating the concept of core competencies into Chinese reading teaching and instruction can not only enhance students' language literacy but also promote their overall development, laying a solid foundation for lifelong learning and social adaptation.

## 2. Current Status and Challenges of Chinese Reading Teaching and Learning in Compulsory Education

### 2.1. Accessible Resources but Limited Interest

The information age offers abundant reading resources, yet students' interest in reading remains weak. Entertaining information captivates attention, while traditional reading instruction methods are monotonous and fail to stimulate students' curiosity. Students prefer extracurricular readings like martial arts and science fiction, while fast-food online literature further dilutes their interest in classic works.

### 2.2. Lack of Critical Thinking and Questioning Skills

The core issue lies in the absence of active thinking and questioning spirits among students. Specific manifestations include: (1) Passive reception: Students are accustomed to accepting ready-made answers, lacking the willingness to actively explore the unknown. (2) Silent classrooms: Few questions are raised in class, as students fear making mistakes or being perceived as ignorant. (3) Lack of critical thinking: Difficulty in independently analyzing and evaluating information, coupled with a deficiency in discerning truth from falsehood and engaging in deep thinking.

## 3. Reconstructing the Reading Teaching Philosophy: Focusing on Students' Development as the Core

### 3.1. Establishing the Concept of "Life-Centered Class"

Professor Ye Lan's advocacy of "life-oriented teaching" profoundly states that classroom teaching is a shared life experience for teachers and students, profoundly influencing both parties' life values.[1] Under this concept, the "life-centered class" emphasizes:

**(1) Co-existence and Growth:** The classroom is not merely a space for knowledge transmission but also a stage for the realization of teachers' and students' life values. Both parties engage in interaction and communication, jointly promoting intellectual enhancement and spiritual growth.

**(2) Respect and Activation:** In the "life-centered class," students are regarded as the mainstay of teaching, with their individuality, interests, and potential fully respected and activated. Teachers become facilitators, assisting students in exploring the unknown and achieving self-transcendence.

**(3) Emotional Experience:** The teaching process incorporates rich emotional experiences, enabling students to acquire knowledge in a pleasant atmosphere and fostering positive learning attitudes and values.

Thus, elevating teaching to the level of life and transforming the classroom into a venue where teachers and students jointly pursue life meaning and realize self-worth is the core idea and pursuit of the "life-centered classroom." Guided by this concept, students will actively engage in learning, fostering a benign interaction with teachers and jointly promoting knowledge internalization and the cultivation of core competencies.

### 3.2. Advocating the Reading Instruction View of a "Complete Learning Process"

Drawing upon the profound wisdom embodied in Confucianism's "xue wen si bian xing" (learning, inquiry, reflection, discernment, and practice), we propose implementing the concept of a "complete learning process" in reading instruction. This process underscores the tight integration

and mutual reinforcement of five key stages: erudition, inquiry, deliberation, discernment, and application, aimed at constructing a comprehensive, profound, and fruitful learning pathway.

**(1)Erudition:** Teachers should encourage students to diversify their reading materials, transcending textbooks to embrace extracurricular books, online resources, and more, thereby broadening their horizons and enriching their knowledge base.

**(2)Inquiry:** Educators should cultivate in students a mindset of daring to question and bravely posing inquiries during reading. They should guide students to delve deeply into textual content, authorial viewpoints, writing techniques, and so on, inspiring them to raise valuable questions.

**(3)Deliberation:** Teachers must emphasize the significance of thoughtful consideration. When confronted with questions, students should apply critical thinking, engaging in multi-faceted and multi-layered analysis and reasoning to strive for comprehensive and profound conclusions.

**(4)Discernment:** During thinking and discussion, students must possess clear discernment, enabling them to accurately distinguish between the authenticity and merits of information, ultimately forming their own independent perspectives.

**(5)Application:** The ultimate goal of learning is to apply knowledge in practice. Encouraging students to translate their reading gains into practical actions is the key, whether through writing exercises, oral expression, or problem-solving in daily life, all of which reflect the applied value of their reading achievements.

In reading courses, teachers should proactively guide students through these five stages, enabling them to genuinely "immerse themselves" in the text through deep communication, experiencing its emotions and wisdom, and uncovering its profound meanings and delights. Furthermore, through this holistic learning process, students' reading ability, thinking skills, expressive power, and practical competence will be comprehensively enhanced, laying a solid foundation for their lifelong learning and development.[2]

### 3.3. Problem-Oriented Learning and Critical Thinking: The Core Driving Force of Reading Instruction

The wisdom of American educators enlightens us that questions are the soul of teaching, especially in reading instruction. They serve not only as triggers for thinking but also as crucial tools for nurturing students' critical thinking skills. The problem-based learning approach, through the design of high-quality questions, guides students to actively explore and delve deeply into texts, thereby facilitating deep reading.

The embodiment of critical thinking in reading centers on the following key points:

**(1)Fact-Based Reasoning:** Encouraging students to reason based on facts and evidence fosters a rigorous academic attitude, akin to the evidence consciousness cultivated in historical studies.

**(2)Independent Thinking:** Emphasizing the autonomous construction of knowledge, students are urged not to blindly follow or rely on others but to gain profound insights through personal efforts.

**(3)Unrelenting Inquiry:** Cultivating a spirit of inquiry entails maintaining a prudent attitude towards any viewpoint, questioning others while also reflecting on oneself, while avoiding unfounded skepticism.

**(4)Multi-Perspective Thinking:** With an open mind, students embrace diverse viewpoints, recognizing the complexity of issues and promoting diversity and inclusivity in their thinking.

**(5)Rational Judgment:** Based on thorough contemplation, students make well-grounded decisions, transforming critical thinking into problem-solving abilities.

To break the shackles of traditional reading instruction, teachers should actively adopt multimedia technologies to broaden students' horizons while posing thought-provoking questions to

stimulate their curiosity and thirst for knowledge, thereby nurturing their problem awareness and critical thinking habits. In such an instructional environment, students transform from passive recipients to active explorers, significantly enhancing their reading and thinking abilities[3].

## 4. Reconstructing Chinese Reading Courses in Compulsory Education

### 4.1. Key Points of Reading Instruction Guided by Core Competencies

Under the new curriculum reform, Chinese reading teaching must deeply integrate the concept of core competencies. While unit objectives provide clear teaching directions, teachers should proactively excavate core competency elements within texts, such as cultural confidence, language proficiency, thinking skills, and aesthetic creation. For instance, teaching ancient poetry should transcend literal explanations, guiding students to appreciate poetic imagery through intuition, imagery, and logical thinking. Though not explicitly stated in teaching objectives, these aspects are crucial for fostering students' comprehensive literacy.

### 4.2. Strategies for Close Reading of Texts from a Core Competency Perspective

Close reading serves as the cornerstone of reading instruction, emphasizing a comprehensive grasp of textual content, ideas, structure, and underlying meanings. Taking "The Sight of Father's Back" as an example, teachers should guide students to comprehend not only the overarching theme of fatherly love but also delve into details like the father's movements while buying oranges, appreciating the profound emotions and difficulties embedded therein. Through such close reading, students not only enhance their language proficiency but also strengthen their aesthetic perception and emotional resonance, thereby fostering their thinking skills.

### 4.3. Practical Paths for Experiential Reading Instruction

Addressing students' limited life experiences, experiential reading instruction is paramount. Teachers can implement it through the following methods:

**(1)Scenario Creation:** Teachers can utilize multimedia tools to create scenarios that are congruent with texts, such as playing related videos or music, in order to evoke emotional resonance among students and thereby enhance their aesthetic creativity.[4]

**(2)Practical Experiences:** Teachers should actively encourage students to engage in activities such as role-playing and integrate reading with writing practices. For instance, while studying "Borrowing Arrows with Straw Boats," teachers can organize structured role-playing activities to facilitate a deeper understanding of the characters' personalities and the plot's development, thereby simultaneously enhancing their language proficiency and critical thinking skills. Furthermore, teachers should guide students to compose book reviews or continue the stories, transforming their reading experiences into personal reflections and original creations.[5]

**(3)Group Collaboration and Inquiry:** Educators should encourage students to embark on collaborative textual exploration and staging of literary dramas, such as "Yu Gong Who Removed the Mountains." In this group endeavor, students will jointly discuss, gather resources, and delve into the backgrounds, a process that not only refines their teamwork capabilities but also stimulates their independent thinking and fosters self-directed inquiry skills.[6]

## 5. Conclusion

Teachers should actively experiment with and implement diversified teaching approaches in

Chinese reading classes to enhance the effectiveness of classroom instruction. On the one hand, teachers must adhere to the curriculum standards and implement a student-centered teaching philosophy, setting diversified, systematic, specific, and measurable reading learning objectives, and designing diversified teaching content that aligns with the teaching theme and the physical and mental characteristics of students.[7] On the other hand, teachers can utilize a variety of teaching methods and strategies based on the four aspects of core competencies, actively conduct diversified evaluations to help students achieve a sense of accomplishment in their learning, and ultimately achieve the goal of enhancing students' core competencies in Chinese reading courses.

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