

Research on the Spiritual Guidance Function and Practical Pathways of Chinese Language Teaching in the Context of Cultivating Virtue and Nurturing Talent

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Abstract: This paper explores the unique and significant role of the Chinese language curriculum in providing spiritual guidance. Adopting the perspective of "cultivating virtue and nurturing talent," it identifies the current practical challenges in achieving spiritual guidance through Chinese language teaching. The study analyzes and constructs four systematic and actionable teaching pathways aimed at maximizing the spiritual guidance function of Chinese language instruction. Ultimately, it seeks to unify the disciplinary's instrumental and humanistic dimensions, offering theoretical support and practical guidance for cultivating students' core competencies and well-rounded personalities.

Keywords: Moral Education; Chinese Language Instruction; Spiritual Guidance

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Chinese language education integrates language, writing, literature, and culture. Its capacity to cultivate students' spiritual development stems from the unique spiritual value inherent in language, writing, literature, and culture.

As a core subject within the educational system, the Chinese language curriculum holds undeniable significance. It serves not only as a vital discipline for cultivating students' comprehensive competencies but also as an applied tool for transmitting language. The "spiritual guidance" of Chinese language education involves actively guiding and shaping students' values, outlook on life, worldview, and aesthetic sensibilities through its content, teaching processes, and learning environment. The relationship between "cultivating virtue and nurturing talent" and "spiritual guidance": Cultivating virtue and nurturing talent is the goal, while spiritual guidance is the core process and means to achieve this goal.

1 Unique Functions and Content Dimensions of Spiritual Guidance in Chinese Language Education

Currently, the humanistic characteristics of the Chinese language curriculum are becoming increasingly prominent. In teaching this subject, emphasis must be placed on its spiritual guidance function. From the perspective of students' emotional identification: students can develop a sense of belonging and pride in their national culture, historical traditions, and territorial integrity, forming the emotional foundation of patriotic sentiment. From the perspective of responsibility and commitment: students learn to shoulder responsibilities such as supporting and nurturing their families; and actively fulfill civic duties, contributing to national development and social progress in various future roles. From the perspective of value pursuit: aligning personal ideals with national objectives, taking the prosperity of the nation and the rejuvenation of the nation as one's own responsibility, and even being willing to sacrifice personal interests during critical times represents the highest manifestation of patriotic sentiment.

1.1 The Uniqueness of Spiritual Guidance in Chinese Language Courses

There are numerous classic literary works in Chinese language courses. The characters, plots, and emotions within these works enable students to naturally receive humanistic education and influence while understanding the content. In Chinese writing assignments, students elaborate on their viewpoints through words and demonstrate their personal values via oral communication, transforming their spiritual cognition into language application and thus achieving the unity of knowledge and practice. Furthermore, teachers conduct progressive infiltration, ranging from textbook teaching to real-life

scenarios and then to comprehensive evaluation. This allows students to gradually develop a sense of professional identity, a sense of responsibility for work, and a rigorous professional attitude while acquiring knowledge, thereby inspiring students to pursue excellence, strive for perfection, and cultivate the spirit of courage to innovate.

1.2 The Multi-dimensional Content System of Spiritual Guidance

The multi-dimensional content system for realizing spiritual guidance in Chinese language courses takes language and characters as the carrier and is constructed from four dimensions: personality cultivation, life awareness, aesthetic taste, and scientific rationality. Its core is to integrate values, cultural literacy, and humanistic spirit into texts and practice, ultimately achieving all-round education.

1. **Personality Cultivation Dimension:** In the teaching of Chinese language courses, emphasis should be placed on cultivating basic personality traits such as integrity, kindness, and perseverance. By guiding students to read relevant extracurricular texts, they can develop their own personality and thus form a sound personality.

2. **Life Awareness Dimension:** In Chinese language teaching, it is necessary to always keep in mind guiding students to understand the physiological characteristics and growth laws of their own lives in class. Students should be taught to understand the meaning of life, encourage them to do more meaningful things in their limited lives, and help them truly realize their personal life values.

3. **Aesthetic Sensibility Dimension:** The language arts curriculum enhances students' ability to perceive both the external forms of beauty (color, line, sound, rhythm, etc.) and its inner essence (emotion, thought, cultural connotations), forming the foundation of aesthetic sensibility. For instance, students learn to appreciate the shifting hues of a sunset or discern the emotional fluctuations within a piece of music. Ultimately, language arts education transforms aesthetic cognition 4.1%(609) — 4 — into tangible actions, deepening aesthetic experiences through creating beauty or integrating it into one's lifestyle.

4. **Scientific Rationality Dimension:** Chinese language instruction also cultivates scientific thinking, enabling students to transcend traditional constraints, respect developmental patterns, and prioritize factual evidence in judgment. Students learn to question boldly, seek supporting evidence, acknowledge cognitive limitations, and revise perspectives accordingly.

2 Practical Challenges and Causal Analysis in Current Chinese Language Instruction

2.1 Practical Challenges

1. **Utilitarian Tendencies:** Teaching for exam success prioritizes techniques over substance, resulting in the “dissection” of texts.

Under the pressure of exam-oriented education, available teaching resources in language arts have become entrenched in the rote learning and training of vocabulary analysis, reading comprehension techniques, and essay templates. This makes it difficult for the spiritual guidance in language arts education to directly translate into scores, leading to its gradual neglect and marginalization by the public. It has even devolved into a formalistic exercise of “labeling.”

2. **Label-Based Interpretation:** Ideological education is awkwardly grafted onto texts, detached from their substance and reduced to hollow preaching.

Certain aspects of spiritual guidance in language teaching—such as the ideological depth of classic texts and traditional values—clash with today's rapidly evolving society. Students' current life experiences, cognitive levels, and emotional needs are vastly different. Without effective adaptation by teachers, students may “understand but not identify with” or “know but not practice” these concepts, failing to achieve emotional resonance.

3. **Teacher Competency Gaps:** Insufficient interpretive skills prevent teachers from mining the rich spiritual deposits within texts.

Meeting spiritual guidance requirements demands not only exceptionally solid professional expertise but also profound humanistic literacy, keen student observation skills, and instructional design capabilities that connect textual ideas to real life. Currently, some teachers struggle to effectively extract the spiritual value from language arts texts due to inadequate subject knowledge reserves or reliance on traditional, monotonous teaching methods.

2.2 Analysis of Causes

1. Inherent Requirements of the Chinese Language Discipline

Chinese serves not only as a “language and writing tool” but also as a vital vehicle for conveying ideas, emotions, and cultural knowledge. Learning resources for the Chinese curriculum must be enriched to enhance its depth in accordance with students' educational needs. Literary works in textbooks embody the authors' inner thoughts. In practical teaching, an exclusive focus on vocabulary and characters risks neglecting spiritual guidance.

2. The Practical Needs of Student Development

Children and adolescents are in a critical period for shaping their values, developing emotional cognition, and building cognitive abilities. They require spiritual nourishment through language arts education. On one hand, they need literary texts to understand complex societies; on the other, they must enrich their inner worlds through emotional resonance, learning empathy and reflection to avoid spiritual confusion or value distortions caused by fragmented information.

3. Fundamental Goal Orientation

The current educational environment is grounded in “cultivating virtue through education.” Mastering and effectively teaching Chinese language serves as a vital means to achieve this educational objective. Through spiritual guidance, students can gradually develop into individuals with independent thought, moral integrity, and cultural literacy while learning language—a process that aligns with China's educational mission of “cultivating well-rounded individuals.”

3 Practical Pathways for Effective Spiritual Guidance in Chinese Language Instruction

3.1 Deep Textual Interpretation to Uncover Spiritual Elements

Taking Unit 7 of the Ministry-compiled Grade 4 Chinese Language Textbook (Volume 1) as an example, themed “Patriotic Sentiments,” the unit features four texts: “Three Ancient Poems,” “Reading for the Rise of China,” “Mei Lanfang Growing His Beard,” and “Yan'an, I Seek You.” Each of these texts portrays the diverse spirit of people during national crises across different historical periods. Teachers should thoroughly research the stories behind the texts during lesson preparation, engage in repeated textual analysis, and delve deeply into the texts to uncover the underlying spiritual elements beyond the surface.

3.2 Creating Teaching Contexts to Spark Emotional Resonance

“Study for the Rise of China” is a classic text. During instruction, its historical context may seem distant from students' lived experiences and worldview, leading to questions like: “What is moral cultivation?” or “What does ‘bring honor to one's family’ mean?” Teachers can address some of these questions by creating contextual scenarios that connect to students' contemporary realities, guiding them into that historical era to ignite patriotic fervor. Through compelling instructional language and multimedia resources, teachers can immerse students via diverse reading formats. Dramatic role-playing further enables learning through play, where children enjoy while acquiring knowledge. When creating personal experiential scenarios, teachers should prioritize expanding students' learning spaces for “imagination” and “dialogue.” These serve as essential learning scaffolds for students to enter the scenario and reflect the teacher's “originality” in scenario design.

3.3 Designing a Core Question Chain to Drive Value-Based Reflection

When teaching the lesson “Mei Lanfang Grows a Beard,” begin by discussing students' prior knowledge of Mei Lanfang to establish a foundational understanding. Then, pose a series of questions to guide silent reading, prompting students to identify the methods Mei Lanfang used to refuse performances and the hardships and dangers he faced. Use open-ended questions to facilitate classroom discussion.

3.4 Optimize Teaching Evaluation to Prioritize Growth Experiences

Move beyond “grade-centric evaluation” by balancing knowledge acquisition with skill development and emotional attitudes. For instance, alongside language test scores, assess classroom participation, group collaboration, innovative thinking, and stress resilience. Reject the notion that “one exam determines one's future,” instead documenting students' developmental progress with timely feedback. Teachers should dynamically track student progress through classroom

observations, differentiated assignments, formative assessments, growth portfolios, peer evaluations, and self-assessments—rather than solely focusing on final outcomes. Prioritize “encouraging praise” over negative criticism and punitive approaches. In every language arts lesson, ensure every student feels valued and recognized, gradually building learning confidence and intrinsic motivation to grow into well-rounded individuals for the new era.

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