



# Elementary School Chinese Teaching: Policy-oriented, Realistic Learning Situation and Innovative Design ——Take the Teaching of Unit 4 in Vol. 2 of Grade 1 for Example

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**Abstract.** Since ancient times, "education" has always been a matter of great importance in the hearts of generations, as it relates to the development of children and the future of a country. Teaching Chinese language in the lower grades of primary school is significant as it serves as students' enlightenment education. Different educational policies in different eras influence teachers' teaching methods and students' growth. Different age groups of students may encounter different problems, so how to tailor teaching based on individual aptitude and set instructional according to their learning situations is also a current consideration. Furthermore, how to design instructional activities in the classroom that enhance students' thinking ability and creativity is also a focal point. This article takes the teaching of Unit Four in the second half of Grade One as an example, analyzing lower-grade primary school Chinese language teaching from policy guidance, current learning situations, and innovative classroom design.

**Keywords:** Primary school Chinese; Double Reduction; New curriculum amendment; Interdisciplinary integration; Innovative teaching.

## 1 Introduction

With the development of time and economy, countries around the world have placed great emphasis on developing education. In recent years, policies such as "double reduction", "new curriculum reform", and "integration of multiple disciplines" have emerged one after another, continuously promoting the development of education in a positive and fast manner. However, there are many problems in the reform such as inadequate understanding of policies, incorrect teaching, regional differences leading to inadequate implementation of policies, etc., resulting in educational differences among students and increasing students' learning burden. Based on this, through the interpretation of the policy and the analysis of students' learning situation, this paper puts forward a suitable teaching mode for the students in the lower section of primary school Chinese, taking the fourth unit of the second volume of the first grade as an example to demonstrate.

## **2 Interpretation of Educational Policies**

### **2.1 Double Reduction Policy**

In July 2021, China implemented the "double reduction" policy aimed at alleviating the heavy homework burden on students in compulsory education as well as the pressures associated with off-campus training[1]. This policy restricts the scale of off-campus training institutions and shortens the duration of extracurricular programs[2]. The intention behind the introduction and enforcement of this policy is to foster "real education" that enhances students' critical thinking abilities, encourages independent thought, and promotes healthy learning experiences by adhering to the principles of effective education and pedagogy. The ultimate goal of education is not to mere transmission of existing knowledge, but to induce individuals' creative potential and awaken their sense of purpose and values in life.

### **2.2 New Curriculum Reform**

With the ongoing advancements in education, and in response to the evolving demands of contemporary society as well as the intrinsic requirements of basic education in China, a new primary school Chinese language curriculum standard was issued in 2022, which is now the foundation of current teaching practices. In fact, prior to the implementation of this new curriculum standard, both teachers and students had already begun to appreciate the core qualities embedded within it during traditional Chinese teaching activities. The previous rote learning approach has been criticized repeatedly. In light of a new generation of developing children, educators must transition from "indoctrination" to "guidance," focusing on the process of knowledge acquisition while ensuring a curriculum structure that balances comprehensiveness and selectivity[3]. This is particularly crucial in primary education, where a holistic approach to the curriculum is essential.

### **2.3 Integration Across Disciplines**

Integration across disciplines refers breaking down barriers between different subjects within various educational processes while increasing students' experiential learning opportunities and practical abilities in order develop comprehensive talents[4]. Knowledge itself should be interconnected so that when studying one subject matter content from other subjects can be mentioned or explored as well. Such teaching methods can enable students to develop systematic thinking skills with comprehensive multidirectional development.

## **3 Analysis of the Actual Learning Situation**

Premier Zhou Enlai once said, "The intelligence of the youth determines the intelligence of the nation, and strength of the youth determines the strength of the nation."

Today's children are definitely the future pillars of our country, so it is worth considering what skills they should possess. Therefore, when considering the learning situation, we should focus on both commonalities and individuality, but ultimately, we need to be based on people and serve life. Therefore, when analyzing students' learning situations in primary school grades, we should pay attention to the following points:

### **3.1 Enhancing Intentional Attention from Students**

Intentional attention refers to purposeful attention that requires effort. It is also a situation that all students face in class. However, facing lower primary school students who have just entered Grade One from kindergarten, their attention span is difficult to maintain for a long time. How can we effectively share key knowledge with them within an optimal period of intentional attention[5]. This is a common challenge. Based on this consideration, in our classroom preparation for these children, we have prepared a flower symbolizing love. By achieving a teaching goal, children will get a petal. Through accumulated learning over four lessons, children can make their love flowers bloom with petals. Through such motivating classroom content that combines education with entertainment (edutainment), we aim to enhance students' ability to pay attention intentionally and increase their thinking skills.

### **3.2 Emphasizing Effective Handwriting Practice for Students**

For lower primary school students, handwriting instruction and practice are important aspects of their education journey as well. As they engage in handwriting activities while their little finger joints are still developing, we need to consider how to help them write less but write better—this is an issue that deserves our current consideration[6]. Regarding handwriting, each grade level has its own focus areas, and taking Unit Four in Grade One's second semester as an example, this unit emphasizes mastering dot writing (*dian*) and horizontal line writing (*changheng*). When practicing handwriting during these lessons, students need to pay attention to maintaining consistency and smoothness in their strokes, when practicing characters with multiple strokes, they should keep their writing compact without excessively elongating strokes. When encountering characters with different structures during handwriting practice, we guide children's focus on proportionality, and encourage them to write these key components properly via comparison—laying a solid foundation for character structure-related handwriting tasks at Grade Two. Similarly, in order to assist children truly excel at writing Chinese characters, we guide them observe the differences and similarities among character structures, and facilitate with discovery writing rules through comparisons. This way, they will be able to write accurately despite using fewer strokes.

### **3.3 Reading with Imagination**

Chinese language, as a cultural subject with profound heritage, places emphasis on "reading" in its teaching. It is essential to highlight the charm of reading during instruction[7]. However, the focus of each reading lesson may vary. Taking Unit Four as

an example. In Lesson Eight, titled "Night Thoughts" (Jing Ye Si), revolves around an ancient poem. While engaging with the text, it is crucial to articulate the words clearly and to pay attention to the pauses. In Lesson Nine, titled "the dim light of night" (Ye Se), each sentence structure in this children's poem is relatively complex. The sentences like "一怎么就怎么" (literally meaning "Once something happens, it happens") and double object sentences pose a challenge for fluent reading. Lesson Ten, "Dragon Boat Festival zongzi," emphasizes the importance of navigating lengthy sentences that are rich in clauses. This text consists of numerous long sentences requiring a careful approach. Readers must progress methodically. And we need to guide students transitioning from individual words to phrases, and ultimately to complete sentences, until they can accurately understand and master reading complex long sentences fluently. Lastly, Lesson Eleven, "Rainbow," builds upon the expectations established in Lesson 10 by introducing long rhetorical questions laden with multiple clauses. This requires a keen understanding of the tone and context, as readers must accumulate phrases structured as "X 来 X 去" throughout the reading process, allowing them to fully appreciate and experience the nuances of love expressed in the text.

#### 4 Innovative Classroom Design

In 2019, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the first document on deepening educational and teaching reforms, emphasizing the importance of moral education and optimizing our teaching methods[8]. It proposed the concept of project-based learning.

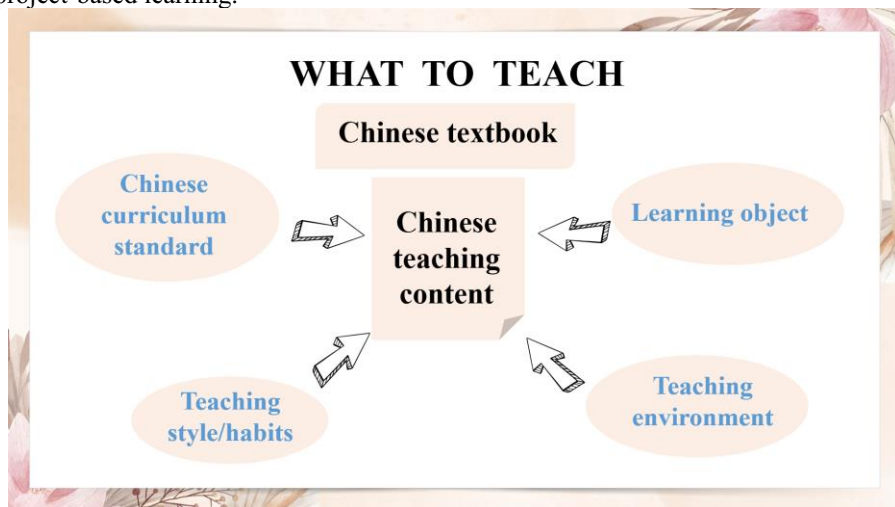


Fig. 1. The composition of core content of Chinese teaching.

The composition of core content of Chinese teaching as is shown in Fig. 1. In the teaching process, the content encompasses more than just the textbook itself. For instance, in Chinese language instruction, teaching materials constitute a significant

component of the curriculum, but they do not comprise the entirety of the teaching content. When selecting instructional materials, it is essential to consider the requirements outlined in the "Chinese Curriculum Standards," as well as to take into account the characteristics of the learners. Additionally, factors such as the teacher's teaching environment, style, and habits must also be considered. By integrating these elements, we can more accurately define the teaching objectives. In the process of implementing project-based learning[9], we highlight the comprehensive and practical functions of Chinese language, and with this in mind, we carefully study the textbook to discover opportunities for designing small projects in our teaching process to make learning enjoyable for our students. For example, in the context of the zongzi (sticky rice dumplings) for Dragon Boat Festival, educators can implement a task-driven role as a small Dragon Boat Festival ambassador to promote awareness of this traditional holiday. Children can engage in activities such as making zongzi, braiding ropes, and crafting sachets, allowing them to experience and appreciate the customs associated with the Dragon Boat Festival, as well as immerse themselves in Chinese traditional culture. Through these activities, children not only have fun but also enhance their familial connections by interacting with family members. The process of braiding ropes serves as a form of artistic integration. The color combinations reflect artistic concepts while guiding children to learn through their work and to work through their studies. By using the products of their labor, such as zongzi, decorative ropes, and sachets, to promote the Dragon Boat Festival to others, children also enhance their language skills through practical application[10]. Project-based learning encourages children to accumulate language during these activities while also fostering social interactions, thereby promoting the educational goals of the unit. Additionally, within the lesson on rainbows, educators can design micro-projects that involve children performing small acts of service for their parents and families. This not only aligns with the humanistic themes of the unit but also encourages children to engage with their families, thereby implementing labor education in a practical manner. Such classroom designs encourage children to translate the vocabulary learned from the text into meaningful actions, fostering a love for learning through hands-on experiences and achieving the dual objectives of language acquisition and functional language use. In primary school Chinese language instruction at lower grades levels, it is important to adhere to policies that align with student needs in order to develop effective instructional designs that truly impart knowledge unto students—fulfilling the goal "teaching someone to fish" by providing them with sustainable skills.

## 5 Conclusion

Elementary Chinese education in the lower grades plays a crucial role in shaping children's foundational learning experiences. Education policies enacted at various times significantly influence both teaching methodologies and student development. In recent years, a series of policy reforms has stimulated educational advancement. When analyzing the characteristics of students, it is essential to focus on enhancing their attention skills and writing proficiency. Incorporating project-based learning into

classroom designs allows younger students to engage with knowledge through enjoyable activities closely related to specific subjects, such as traditional cultural practices. In conclusion, effective teaching strategies can be accomplished by adhering to policy guidelines while also taking into account practical circumstances, thereby successfully imparting knowledge to young learners through innovative approaches that integrate language acquisition with broader educational goals.

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