

Exploration of Integrating Chinese Cultural Content into English Homework Design from an Interdisciplinary Perspective

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Abstract: This study explores the integration of Chinese cultural content into English homework for senior high school students, set within the framework of China's revised 2020 High School English Curriculum Standards. It advocates an interdisciplinary approach, blending English with aspects of Chinese geography, classical literature, and poetry. Addressing challenges in conventional educational models, the paper proposes innovative homework designs to enhance linguistic skills and cultural literacy. These methods demonstrate how cross-disciplinary strategies can enrich English education, fostering comprehensive academic development.

Keywords: Senior High School English; Interdisciplinary Integration; Chinese Cultural Content; Homework Design.

1. Introduction

According to the "Senior High School English Curriculum Standards (2020 Revised Edition)", the senior high school English curriculum encompasses a comprehensive range of elements: thematic content, discourse styles, linguistic knowledge, cultural understanding, practical language skills, and learning strategies. These components form the focal points for English educators in planning and implementing lessons. As China's educational system continues to evolve, high school English teaching has shifted from solely relying on textbook knowledge memorization to encompassing a broader scope of comprehensive knowledge. Moreover, each subject is interconnected, aiming to enhance students' overall abilities in accordance with the new curriculum standards. Interdisciplinary homework design requires teachers to create innovative and practical forms of homework based on the new standards and the specific needs of students, forming a complete knowledge system.

Interdisciplinary integration in senior high school English education, a concept gaining increasing attention in recent years, involves blending knowledge from various disciplines into English teaching. This approach, pioneered by scholars like Song [1] and Gui [2], aims to create a cohesive learning experience by integrating English with other subjects, thereby enriching the educational experience and fostering comprehensive student development.

However, the implementation of interdisciplinary teaching in senior high English is not without challenges. Li [3] criticizes the prevailing single-subject mode of teaching for its monotony and limited scope in fostering comprehensive student development. Wang Jianghua and Zhang [4] highlight the challenges posed by the trends of "mechanization," "intellectualization," and "simplification" in education due to economic development, which can dilute the effectiveness of English education.

To overcome these challenges, scholars have proposed various strategies. Xu Lixin [5] suggests focusing on key or difficult points in a unit during interdisciplinary thematic

learning. Cai [6] advocates for the organic incorporation of multidisciplinary knowledge into senior high English teaching. Xi [7] emphasizes the importance of integrating moral and humanistic education into interdisciplinary reading teaching. Zhang and Guo [8] propose the integration of English with other subjects in homework design and educational activities. Han [9] and Wang [10] emphasize the need for interdisciplinary teaching to meet the comprehensive development needs of students and to enhance their societal adaptability and lifelong learning skills.

Recent studies have further explored the concept of interdisciplinary integration in senior high school English. Guo and Tuo [11] examined the impact of Unit Integral Teaching in the context of China's "double reduction" policy. Min [12] introduced an integrated unit design of English homework and evaluated its effectiveness. Wida Cahyaningrum et al. [13] provided an analysis of the English subject in the Curriculum 2013 for senior high school levels. Li [14] evaluated grammar settings in senior high school English textbooks.

To summarize, scholars have put forward a wealth of theoretical perspectives and practical strategies in the field of interdisciplinary teaching of middle school English. These perspectives not only provide guidance for educational practice, but also open up a broad direction for future research. The development of interdisciplinary teaching of senior high school English requires continued in-depth research and exploration to better meet students' learning needs and comprehensive literacy development. Thus, this paper aims to explore an effective homework design model for senior high school English, integrating it with the Chinese language discipline.

2. Initial Exploration of Integrating Chinese Cultural content in Interdisciplinary Homework Design for senior High School English

2.1. Integration of Chinese geography to enhance students' creativity

The fusion of English and Chinese geography at the senior high school level is strategically designed to use language as

a tool for real-world application and analysis. An example of this is the 'Unit 6: Geography' assignment from the third book of senior high English (Hebei Education Edition). Through this homework, students not only expand their geographical knowledge but also sharpen their linguistic proficiency and writing skills.

Table 1. Integrating Chinese Cultural Content in Interdisciplinary Homework Design: The Longest River in the World

Topic	Task	Content	Design Purpose
The Longest River in the World	Task 1: Collect Information about the Yangtze River	Look up information and collect relevant pictures and videos about the Yangtze River.	Students learn about Chinese river culture, explore natural features, and enhance their data collection skills by accessing information about the Yangtze River.
	Task 2: Characterize the Yangtze River	Summarize the characteristics of the Yangtze River to form a personal perspective in describing it.	In the process of describing the Yangtze River's characteristics, students can improve their writing and language skills, deepening their understanding of the river.
	Task 3: Write about the Yangtze River in your mind	Students write about their personal perception of the Yangtze River.	By expressing their inner image of the Yangtze River, students enhance their literary skills and English usage. After completing the writing, the teacher reviews the work, identifies and corrects problematic statements.
	Task 4: Finding rivers similar to the Yangtze	Students write about nature in their lives, their thoughts, and expand their understanding of the natural world through creative thinking.	Students present the rivers they have found. The teacher selects different students' works for peer evaluation, which develops their reading skills and fosters collaborative learning.
	Task 5: Share "Nature in My Life"	Students write about the nature in their lives, what they are thinking about, and think outside the box to further their understanding of the natural world.	Nature is an integral part of students' lives. Teachers guide students to observe the natural world around them, encouraging them to explore and describe the natural scenery from their personal experiences. This task aims to enhance students' creative thinking, vocabulary skills, cultural literacy, and overall quality.

2.2. Integration of classical Chinese poetry to enhance students' intercultural understanding

In English-Chinese translation, it is essential not only to understand the contrast in meanings but also to integrate the modes of thinking and cultural connotations of both languages. Through the practice of English-Chinese translation and the creation of poems, students can develop their language knowledge and skills. For example, in Unit 5:

Poems from second English book of the senior high English series (People Education Edition), we can incorporate the poem 'Spring Dawn', aiming to help students appreciate English poetry through the language learning approach and improve their cross-cultural understanding. Considerations for "Spring Dawn" poetry exploration include ensuring equal access to Chinese and English versions, providing background information for deeper understanding, focusing on more than literal translation, offering inspiration for poetry creation, and creating a supportive environment for sharing and discussion.

Table 2. Integrating Chinese Cultural Content in Interdisciplinary Homework Design: Spring Dawn

Topic	Task	Content	Design Purpose
the Poetry of "Spring Dawn"	Task 1: Choose a version of the poem "Spring Dawn".	Students choose both Chinese and English versions of the poem "Spring Dawn".	Increase students' interest in literature and develop the ability to select material.
	Task 2: Analyze the theme, emotion and cultural connotation of the poem	Students analyze the themes and emotions of both the English and Chinese versions of the poem "Spring Dawn" and compare their cultural connotations.	Help students understand the deeper meanings of poetry and compare cultural differences.
	Task 3: Translation and Appreciation of Poetry	Students translate parts of the poem and appreciate them, exploring cultural differences in translation.	Develop students' translation skills and improve their ability to appreciate poetry.
	Task 4: Create your own "Spring Dawn" poem.	Students write a poem on the theme of "Spring Dawn" in either Chinese or English.	Stimulate students' creativity and promote poetry creation and cross-cultural understanding.
	Task 5: Sharing and discussion	Students share their selected versions, translations, and compositions of poems for cross-cultural discussion and evaluation.	Foster collaborative and critical thinking to deepen students' understanding and appreciation of poetry.

2.3. Integration of classical Chinese literature to develop students' appreciation and critical skills

Appreciative assignments, effectively integrated into senior high school English teaching as part of the language curriculum, significantly enhance English instruction. By merging senior high school English with language knowledge, these assignments boost students' appreciation abilities, fueling their desire for knowledge and exploration.

For instance, in Unit 6: Exploring Literature, from the

second book of the senior high English series (Yilin Edition), students can be tasked with exploring the roles of classic characters in 'Dream of Red Mansions'. This method not only cultivates their appreciative and critical abilities but also enhances their English writing skills. An interdisciplinary approach leads to a fuller understanding of literary works and cultural nuances. For English teachers, it's crucial to provide cultural context, especially for students unfamiliar with 'Dream of Red Mansions', and to accommodate varying English proficiency levels. Guidance in cross-cultural comparisons, a supportive environment for discussions, and clear assessment criteria are essential.

Table 3. Integrating Chinese Cultural Content in Interdisciplinary Homework Design: An Exploration of the Characters of Dream of the Red Chamber

Topic	Task	Content	Design Purpose
Characters of Dream of the Red Chamber	Task 1: Choose the Characters of Dream of the Red Chamber	Students choose a character role from Dream of the Red Chamber.	Enhance students' interest in classical Chinese literature and develop the ability to select materials.
	Task 2: Analyzing Character Traits and Development	Students analyze and compare the personalities and backgrounds of their chosen characters with those in the story.	To help students gain a deeper understanding of characterization in literature and make cross-cultural comparisons.
	Task 3: Create a short English essay describing the character's characteristics and story	Students create a short essay in English describing the characteristics and important plot points of a chosen character.	Enhance students' English writing skills while deepening their understanding of literary characters.
	Task 4: Sharing and discussion	Students share their analysis and short essays in English for discussion and evaluation.	Foster collaborative and critical thinking and promote cross-cultural communication.

3. Conclusion

This study investigates the implementation of integrated homework strategies in senior high school English, aiming to enhance students' holistic development and invigorate their learning enthusiasm. It demonstrates how the integration of English with disciplines like Chinese literature and geography can enrich the educational experience. These approaches, conforming to current curriculum standards, foster interdisciplinary thinking. The expectation is that the adoption of such innovative methodologies will become increasingly prevalent, thereby substantially improving the quality and depth of student engagement in senior high English education.

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