

Teaching Design of Secondary School Art Appreciation Based on the UbD Mode—Example from the Unit Course of Formal Beauty of Chinese Paintings

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Abstract: The article adopts the theory of UbD and the reverse design model, focuses on the teaching of independent activities, designs the unit course of Formal Beauty of Chinese Paintings in Renmei edition as a whole, and discusses the problems existing in the secondary school art appreciation class. The role of the teaching design with "understanding" as the first, big concepts and core tasks as the target areas in the secondary art appreciation class is explained, which not only helps to enhance students' interest in learning and cultivate the ability of inquiry, but also conveys the concept of a framework learning through the learning of the art discipline, and improves the teaching and learning under the premise of guaranteeing teaching effectiveness and interest.

Keywords: UbD theory, secondary art, core literacy, Chinese landscape painting, teaching methods

1. Introduction

With the deepening of the new round of curriculum reform, the cultivation of disciplinary core literacy, in-depth learning of disciplines, as well as the emphasis on the integration of related disciplines and cross-disciplinary teaching have become more and more the focus of general attention in the education sector. The core qualities of art are the concentrated manifestation of art curriculum, which mainly include aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice and cultural understanding. Among them, the art practice of "appreciating and commenting" in the aesthetic education curriculum is regarded as the basis for cultivating students' aesthetic perception and cultural understanding, and is the highest requirement for art education at the compulsory education level.

UBD is called "Understanding by Design", which is translated as "Understanding-Based Instructional Design". It refers to the organic integration of knowledge points through broad concepts and core tasks, taking learning objectives as the starting point and emphasising learning outcomes and assessment as the starting point. It refers to the organic integration of knowledge points through major concepts and core tasks, taking learning objectives as the starting point, emphasising learning outcomes and learning evaluation, and forming a kind of reverse pedagogical thinking in which "understanding comes before teaching".

2. Concepts on UbD

2.1 Connotation and characteristics of UbD theory

Grant Wiggins and Jay McTeague, two American scholars, first introduced the UbD model into the field of education in 1988 and drew the attention of the American Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). Through a series of teaching practice activities of the UbD model, they successfully transformed the UbD theory into a guide for teaching practice. The UbD model is based on the two major shortcomings of traditional educational practice - activity-focused teaching and indoctrination-focused teaching. The theory innovatively proposes the use of clear broad concepts and core tasks to address these issues.

The core word in the UbD theory is "understand", and in the Oxford Chinese Dictionary, the verb "understand" means "to comprehend the meaning and significance". The present participle form of "-ing" is used here, which is translated by Professor Yan Binghan as "pursuing", emphasising the

transferability of understanding and the durability of students' knowledge acquisition. The theory emphasises the transferability of understanding and the durability of students' knowledge, the ability to transfer learned knowledge and skills to new environments and challenges, rather than just recalling and reproducing them. At the same time, the theory cleverly combines the complementary concepts of "understanding" and "design", pointing out that "understanding" is at the centre of the assessment of teaching and learning. In a more colloquial way, the teacher is compared to a 'tour guide' and the students are 'tourists'. When introducing a specific destination, the tour guide should initially assess the tourists' understanding of the local culture. This approach enables the creation of a comprehensive program, enhancing the tourists' cultural experience in a limited timeframe. Following this, we propose "reverse instructional design", which is different from traditional teaching in which assessment (see Table 1) is the last step of teachers' teaching work, and is a way to change the traditional teaching practice in which teachers only think about their own "teaching" and ignore students' "learning". It is a shift from traditional teaching in which teachers only think about their own "teaching" and ignore their students' "learning" to thinking again about what students should do if they do not achieve their teaching goals, and thinking about teaching in terms of expected outcomes.

Table 1 Differences between traditional and "reverse" instructional design

Traditional Instructional Design	"Reverse" instructional design
teaching goal	Defining expected results
teaching activity	Determining appropriate assessment evidence
Evaluation of teaching and learning	Designing learning experiences and teaching

2.2. Relevance of UbD theory

Nowadays, China's basic education curriculum reform has entered a new chapter in its history, focusing on the development of core qualities, developing disciplinary concepts and promoting students' in-depth learning has become an issue of concern in the academic world. The core concepts of UbD theory, "Understanding as Teaching, Emphasis on Transfer, and Reverse Design", have provided new insights and research directions to the concerns of the academic community. In the Compulsory Education Curriculum Programme (2022 Edition), it is clearly stated that we should strengthen the connection between disciplines, grasp the breadth and depth of teaching and learning, and guide teachers to think and design the teaching, learning and assessment behaviours in an integrated way through setting academic quality standards, so as to form an interconnected teaching ecology. The UbD theory is to guide students to transfer the broad concepts of core tasks and related situations, and to implement the idea of "starting from the end" in the whole teaching and learning process, so as to better promote the overall development of students through the integration of "teaching, learning and assessment".

3. The Use of UbD Theory in an Up-to-date Secondary School Art Curriculum

In April 2022, the State officially promulgated the Art Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 Edition), comparing with the previous version of the Art Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2011 Edition), in which the word "art" in the nature of the original curriculum was replaced by "art", and such a change is based on the international trend of emphasising the integration of disciplines and cross-curricular teaching. This change was made based on the new international trend of emphasising subject integration and interdisciplinary teaching. It is pointed out that the nature of the curriculum is based on the common nature of art and oriented to the core qualities of art, so as to respect the laws and status quo of art education and achieve the mutual integration of art disciplines. It can be seen that by refining the big concepts and effectively serving the core qualities of the disciplines, it is an important way to help students establish interdisciplinary thinking and master interdisciplinary methods in curriculum learning. The UbD theory of "Understanding and Teaching", "Reverse Design" and "Unit Teaching" can provide theoretical support and practical ways for the optimal and innovative implementation of the aesthetic education curriculum.

3.1. Teaching for Understanding to promote core literacy practices

The core word "understanding" in the UbD theory emphasises the transferability of knowledge, the ability to transfer knowledge and skills to new situations and challenges, and to apply knowledge and skills creatively and flexibly. Core Arts Literacy requires students to be creative and expressive in

authentic environments based on a full understanding of the culture of beauty. Reverse pedagogical design can start from a deeper level of understanding and help students to further improve their core literacy.

3.2. Exploring the use of "reverse design" to lead the teaching of big concepts

In Instructional Design for Understanding, Wiggins points out that big concepts should not be understood in terms of being "big" in the sense of having a large amount of content, a large amount of information, or being a "foundational" concept. Rather, it is the "core"^[1] of the discipline. Broadly speaking, the art programme is a social science, and it is closely linked to history, psychology, sociology and philosophy, which requires that the teaching of art disciplines should not only talk about aesthetics to the neglect of others.^[2] Reverse teaching has a high degree of generality and practicality in its use, which is a new experience in exploring the teaching of big concepts under the new curriculum reform.

3.3. Promoting the integration of "teaching-learning-assessment" through "reverse design"

In the past, assessment of teaching and learning generally took the form of post-lesson assessment, which is to think about teaching and learning directly after designing the objectives, which not only reduces students' ability to reflect continuously but also does not help to improve teachers' creativity. Through reverse teaching, reasonable assessment tasks and assessment evidence can be extracted from the "anchor" units, so that teachers can obtain students' mastery of knowledge from each unit lesson and make teaching adjustments according to the actual situation, thus realising a more active and efficient teaching mode.^[3]

4. Teaching design of "Formal Beauty of Chinese Painting" based on UbD theory.

4.1. Defining expected results with an understanding of the broad concepts and core mandate

According to the UbD theory, in the process of constructing the unit design, the teaching objectives need to be designed around the major concepts and core tasks, reflecting the directionality, targeting and hierarchical nature of the teaching objectives. The unit course "Formal Beauty of Chinese Painting", as the "Appreciation and Commentary" of the four major art practice courses, is linked to "Chinese Landscape Painting" and "Three Chinese Artists" in terms of the horizontal course structure. "Chinese Landscape Painting" and "Three Chinese Artists" are both topics that focus on traditional Chinese painting. The concept of "Formal Beauty of Chinese Painting" is based on the background of man and nature, classical Chinese philosophy and a long and deep cultural history. The core task of this unit is to enable students to understand the formal beauty of Chinese painting, cultivate their humanistic spirit and deepen their understanding of Chinese culture.

4.2. Broad Concepts and Core Tasks in the Module Curriculum on Formal Beauty in Chinese Painting

1) Underlying Concepts: The relationship between man and nature, rooted in classical Chinese philosophy, is supported by a profound cultural and historical background.

2) Central Objectives: By engaging with this module, learners are expected to develop a more nuanced appreciation for the formal beauty inherent in Chinese painting. The aim is to foster a humanistic spirit within the students, deepening their grasp of the subtle meanings, brushwork, colors, and forms that characterize Chinese paintings. This, in turn, should serve to enrich and augment their visual and aesthetic faculties.

3) The basic question in the unit teaching: As an artist, how do you convey the unique humanistic spirit and the spiritual concept of mood of Chinese painting to the audience?

4) The knowledge and skills that students should acquire in the unit: according to the UbD model, a clear guideline (see Table 2) is provided to determine the expected outcomes. Firstly, we need to clarify the objectives in terms of knowledge, understanding and skills, then we need to think about the basic questions and assess the expected outcomes to finally get the standard that students can achieve.

Table 2: Stage 1 - Defining the desired objectives

Stage 1 - Identification of expected results	
Identified goals G (Goal)	
<p>Know. Students will know that Chinese painting is fully integrated with painting, poetry, calligraphy and seal carving in terms of form and spirit, meaning and context, sensibility and rationality, and especially in terms of form.</p> <p>Understanding Students will understand that Chinese painting is a unique way of expressing the feelings of the literati and expressing their inner emotions, and will think about the relationship between human beings and nature from the perspective of classical Chinese philosophy.</p> <p>Skills Students will use the formal beauty of Chinese painting to fully analyse the formal beauty contained in a Chinese painting.</p>	
What are the fundamental questions we need to think about? Q (Question)	What is the expected understanding? U (Understanding)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the highest state of Chinese painting? 2. How does Chinese painting differ from Western painting in terms of expression? 3. How many aspects of formal beauty are Chineseised? 4. How is the beauty of brush and ink reflected in Chinese painting? 5. What is the real meaning of the word "Sui" in the Chinese painting's pursuit of "Furnishing Colours According to Classes"? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The highest level of Chinese painting is the "divine resemblance", which is both divine and vivid. 2. Western paintings use focal point perspective to pursue changes in light and colour, while Chinese paintings use scattered perspective and changes in the use of brushes and ink to achieve the beauty of the mood. 3. There are four aspects: the beauty of form and spirit, the beauty of ink and brushwork, the beauty of colour and the beauty of form. 4. The inking method is made to produce focus, thickness, heaviness, lightness and lightness by means of centre and side strokes. 5. The character "Sui" is not traditionally used in the sense of colouring objects according to their intrinsic nature, but rather combines the colours of the objective world with subjective aesthetic sensibilities to achieve a high degree of unity.
What important knowledge and skills will students gain as a result of the unit of study?	
Students will know K (Know)	Students are able to do S(Skills)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-depth appreciation of the Han Xizai Night Banquet, understand the background of the creation of the content of the composition and expression of ideas. 2. Through the analysis of "Dewy Breath", feel the richness of the variation of ink shades. 3. Learn about the two major styles of green and ink landscapes. 4. Feel the effect of "Yuan Si Jia" to achieve the integration of poetry, calligraphy and painting. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through group discussion and role-playing, analyse the author's depiction of 'shape'. 2. Develop ideas and insights into the different uses of brushwork in the analysis of the previous lesson, "The Mountains are Strange, but the Rain is Strange". 3. Give examples of representative works of green landscape and try to analyse the significance of the appearance of "plum, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum". 4. In the context of the landscapes you have painted, talk about the richer changes in the formal beauty of the images after the integration of poetry, calligraphy and painting.

5. Assessment of the Module Course on Formal Beauty of Chinese Painting Based on UbD Theory

5.1. Use of the six dimensions of understanding as a basis for assessment

Table 3: Stage 2 - Identifying Evidence for Assessment (Using the Six Facets of Understanding as a Basis for Assessment)

Combined with understanding the reverse design logic of the six sides (assessed in six dimensions developed to test students' understanding of classroom content)	
Stage 2	
Then you need students to have evidence that they can	It needs to be assessed like this
<p>Explanation: The concrete embodiment of the character's demeanour in the work, and the different variations of colours in the landscape painting. Literati birds and flowers form and poetry and calligraphy and painting as one form a cross-generational significance.</p> <p>Elucidation: How the beauty of forms is reflected in each other, and how to appreciate the "meaning" of the work.</p> <p>APPLICATION: Write a 200-word short review essay</p> <p>Insight: Thinking about what forms of innovation will be used for the future development of Chinese painting.</p> <p>Divine Entry: your understanding of the artist's creative mind.</p> <p>SELF-KNOWLEDGE: Talk about what else about the formal beauty of Chinese painting appeals to you more.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through the pre-class guide sheet as well as information finding, report the presentation in small groups. 2. Combined with the learning in Unit 1, talk about how artists reflect their inner world in the creation of works of characterisation. 3. To conduct an enquiry and discussion on the overall style, modelling expression, core spirit and aesthetic meaning of Chinese and Western paintings. 4. Reflection: Did your own work in the last lesson reflect the formal beauty of Chinese painting?

In order to measure learner understanding and mastery from multiple perspectives (see Table 3), and to allow teachers to track and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme and to constantly review the design and implementation of the programme, the quality of the programme can be improved.

5.2. Use the evaluation gauge under the six sides of comprehension

An evaluation scale, also known as an evaluation form, is a rating instrument that is a specific expectation of a task with a detailed and reasonable description of the portion completed from highest to lowest. A reasonable evaluation scale should be rated by validity and reliability. Firstly, validity is to evaluate whether the teaching content can be understood and absorbed by students, for example, in the unit course "Formal Beauty of Chinese Painting" the core is whether students are able to describe whether Chinese painting is a form of expression that distinguishes itself from other kinds of paintings and conveys humanistic feelings with the spiritual core of meaning. Secondly, in order to achieve reasonable validity, appropriate indicators and gauges should be used to ensure the consistency and fairness of the overall assessment.^[4] Meanwhile, the scale, as a scoring guide based on indicators, has a fixed composition of levels and a detailed description of each level. The basic question that the scale answers, "What indicators are used to judge and differentiate student performance?" "By what content and directions are students judged to be successful?" "How do you describe and differentiate between qualitative levels of learning, levels of proficiency, and levels of understanding?" For example, how are these questions answered in "Write a review of a Chinese painting"? The four indicators of historical background, picture composition, ink and colour, and expression of core emotions need to be added to the requirements of the assignment, so that students are clear about the learning requirements after a clear and appropriate description. Finally, continuous evaluation of learning should be carried out, which means collecting relevant "evidence" from different aspects, assessing the learning status at any time, and making timely and appropriate adjustments if students' passive participation is found.

6. Conclusion

The pursuit of understanding in instructional design has become an inevitable trend under the teaching reform, in which "unit teaching", "core tasks", "big concepts", etc. provide a scaffolding for further in-depth implementation of the theory. Under the UbD theory, the unit curriculum of secondary school art, with "understanding" throughout, is the result of a high degree of coordination between the teaching process and the teaching objectives, and effectively improves the core qualities on the basis of targeted and practical teaching and learning assessment, which is an effective strategy for promoting students' in-depth learning, and also an in-depth understanding of the New Curriculum Reform.

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