

Integration of Labor Education into English Teaching Design in Senior High School: A Case Study of Study Tours

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Abstract: *Study tours are an essential component of comprehensive practical activities. This article combines labor education with senior high school English teaching, presenting study tour examples that integrate labor education into English instruction. Corresponding practical plans are also designed with the aim of providing references for the integration of study tours and labor education in senior high school English teaching.*

Keywords: *Senior high school English teaching; Study tours; Labor education; Study tour case design*

1. Introduction

In July 2020, the Ministry of Education officially released the “Guidelines for Labor Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Trial)”, which explicitly proposed the specific requirement of “organically integrating labor education into subject areas^[1].” This not only provides robust policy support for the in-depth integration of labor education with various disciplines but also offers clear directions and practical pathways for educators. The introduction of this policy has sparked widespread attention in the academic community regarding the integration of labor education with subject teaching, particularly the in-depth integration within the traditional classroom setting. However, some scholars have also emphasized the importance for teachers to maintain their focus on the primary classroom while also paying high attention to and effectively utilizing the extracurricular setting. One example of such utilization is the implementation of study tours, which refer to organized, purposeful, and structured off-campus visits and experiential learning activities that students collectively participate in (Chen & Xie, 2020)^[2].

Therefore, this paper proposes a curriculum design strategy for study tours in senior high school English teaching that incorporates labor education. Additionally, a case study is presented, illustrating the integration of labor education into senior high school English teaching through a study tour. The aim is to cultivate students’ English communicative abilities, and enhance their core competencies.

2. The Significance of Integrating Labor Education into Senior High School English Study Tours

There are two aspects in the significance of Integrating Labor Education into Senior High School English Study Tours.

2.1. Enhancing the Implementation of Core Competencies in English Discipline

Integrating labor education organically into senior high school English study tours provides an effective approach to enhance the implementation of core competencies in the English discipline. Traditional English teaching often focuses on the imparting of language knowledge and the mechanical training of test-taking skills, neglecting the cultivation of students’ language proficiency and thinking abilities. In the teaching activities of study tours, students are immersed in authentic language contexts where they need to use English to describe labor processes and communicate labor experiences. This not only enhances their language proficiency but also cultivates their teamwork and problem-solving skills. Moreover, integrating labor education into study tours allows students to deeply experience the challenges and values of labor, thereby stimulating their intrinsic motivation to learn English and further enhancing their core competencies in the English discipline.

2.2. Promoting Interdisciplinary Integration and Innovative Development

Integrating study tours and labor education with senior high school English teaching is also an important measure to promote interdisciplinary integration and innovative development. In traditional teaching models, different disciplines often operate independently, lacking connections and interactions among them. However, in the reality, problems and challenges are often complex and diverse, requiring the comprehensive application of knowledge and skills from multiple disciplines. Therefore, interdisciplinary integration has become an important trend in contemporary education. Study tours and labor education provide valuable opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary learning. During the study tour process, students not only need to apply English knowledge but also analyze and think through the lens of history, culture, science, and other disciplines. This interdisciplinary learning approach helps students form a more comprehensive and in-depth knowledge framework, enhancing their overall qualities and innovative abilities.

The integration of study tours and labor education elements into English teaching establishes close connections and cross-disciplinary integration between English and other subjects in senior high school. This integration not only enriches the content and forms of English teaching but also increases students' interest and engagement in learning, laying a solid foundation for cultivating future talents with interdisciplinary competencies. At the same time, this interdisciplinary integration teaching approach also promotes educational innovation and development, enhancing the overall quality of education.

3. Strategies for Integrating Labor Education into English Study Tour Curriculum Design in Senior High School

In senior high school English teaching activities, integrating labor education into study tours serves as a platform and innovation for school-based curriculum. In the implementation process, it is necessary for teachers to systematically plan the study tour curriculum, strengthen language practice, and establish the evaluation system.

3.1. Planning the Study Tour Curriculum Systematically, Emphasizing Student-centeredness

The current study tour curriculum suffers from vague positioning and arbitrary implementation (Gu, 2021)^[3]. Therefore, it is essential for schools and teachers to meticulously plan the study tour curriculum, moving away from superficial activities. The design of teaching objectives should aim at fostering both English language proficiency and instilling proper labor values. Moreover, the teaching content should be thoughtfully integrated, incorporating local characteristics and relevant high school English textbook content, thus ensuring that the curriculum design aligns with students' cognitive abilities and effectively sparks their interest in learning. Furthermore, customized study tasks and labor practice opportunities should be offered to cater to individual differences among students, ensuring that each student can experience personalized growth and progress during the study tour.

3.2. Strengthening Language Practice and Deepening Labor Experiences

Language serves as a vital tool for expressing thoughts and perspectives, and it is also a fundamental medium for labor education (Zhang, 2021)^[4]. In study tours, teachers should maximize the labor practice opportunities to enhance students' practical language abilities. This can be accomplished by enabling students to communicate and express themselves in English within authentic contexts. For instance, during farm labor activities, students can acquire relevant agricultural knowledge and describe the growth process of crops in English. When visiting natural or historical sites, students can be organized into small groups, with each group selecting a tour guide to present the stories and accomplishments of the site in English, thereby improving their English communication skills and deepening their labor experiences. Simultaneously, attention should be devoted to infusing labor education, guiding students to foster a correct perception of labor, develop positive work habits, and achieve the seamless integration of language learning and labor education.

3.3. Establishing a Diversified Evaluation System to Showcase the Effectiveness of Labor Education

Improving the evaluation system is an important approach to measure students' study tour achievements and the effectiveness of labor education. Teachers should establish a diversified evaluation system to assess students' attitudes towards labor, labor skills, and labor values (Liu & Li,

2024)^[5]. Firstly, teachers should ensure the comprehensiveness and multidimensionality of the evaluation content. In addition to carefully assessing students' mastery of labor skills, it is also necessary to comprehensively evaluate their attitudes, cooperation, and thinking qualities demonstrated during the labor process. Furthermore, attention should be given to the development of students' emotional experiences and value formation in labor education, in order to meticulously reflect the effectiveness of labor education. Secondly, teachers should focus on the diversity and innovation of evaluation methods. Various methods such as self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and teacher evaluation can be combined to form a diverse and comprehensive evaluation framework. Additionally, teachers can design targeted evaluation tasks and criteria based on specific labor projects to more accurately assess students' labor skills and achievements.

4. Integrating Labor Education into Senior High School English Study Tour Curriculum Design: A Case Study

The enhancement of language proficiency and the implementation of labor education both rely on the curriculum as a vehicle. Therefore, the key to integrating English study tours and labor education lies in the design of a relevant curriculum. This curriculum design encompasses the study tour destinations, setting teaching objectives of the study tour, and arranging study tour curriculum stages.

4.1. Study Tour Destination

As an example, the design of study activities focuses on Guanfeng Agricultural Tourism Town in Ganzhou City. Guanfeng Agricultural Tourism Town is well-known for its abundant labor education resources. It offers vast farms that provide students with platforms for culinary competitions and farming experiences. In the culinary competition, students can showcase their cooking talents and learn how to transform fresh ingredients into delicious dishes. Through the farming experience, they can personally cultivate the land, experience the joy of labor, and gain an understanding of the profound cultural heritage of farming.

Furthermore, the study base is equipped with an equestrian archery field and characteristic Mongolian yurts, allowing students to experience traditional equestrian culture and archery sports. They can learn equestrian skills, enjoy horseback riding, try archery, and appreciate the charm of ancient warriors. The Mongolian yurts in the base provide students with an opportunity to have close contact with Mongolian culture, experience their way of life, taste local cuisine, enjoy song and dance performances, and enhance their understanding and respect for diverse cultures.

Through this series of study tour activities, students not only have the opportunity to develop their skills through practical labor but also gain insights, broaden their horizons, and achieve the perfect integration of knowledge and practice.

4.2. Teaching Objectives of Study Tours

Incorporating elements of labor education into senior high school English study tour activities requires students to improve in four aspects: learning abilities, thinking qualities, cultural awareness, and language proficiency. Therefore, the following activity objectives are set for this study tour.

(1) Learning Abilities: Through practical experiences, enhance students' ability to apply learned knowledge to solve real-life problems. By completing labor tasks, cultivate students' labor skills and strengthen their awareness and ability to work in teams.

(2) Thinking Qualities: Utilize comparison, analysis, and induction methods to complete labor tasks, fostering students' critical thinking and questioning abilities, thereby improving their thinking qualities.

(3) Cultural Awareness: Through base tours, enable students to understand the culture and characteristics of different regions, enhancing their understanding and identification with Chinese culture.

(4) Language Proficiency: Develop students' language skills, enabling them to use English to describe the labor process, labor achievements, or share their labor experiences.

(5) Labor Education Objectives: Through participation in practical activities, students can acquire labor skills in food preparation, develop a concept of respecting the results of labor, and cultivate a spirit of hard work and perseverance.

4.3. The Arrangement of the Study Tour in Different Stages

The arrangement of study tour curriculum stages mainly consists of three stages: the stage before the study tour, the stage during the study tour, and the stage after the study tour.

4.3.1. The Stage Before the Study Tour

In this stage, teachers should skillfully introduce the topic of study tours and guide students to review and share their personal experiences and insights. During the introduction, teachers can ask questions such as “Have you participated in any study tours before? Which study tour left the deepest impression on you? Can you describe the process of those activities in English?” By successfully connecting the topic with labor practices and relating it to students’ daily lives, teachers can quickly capture students’ attention and stimulate their desire and enthusiasm for discussion. During the discussion, teachers should also pay extra attention to providing necessary English expression support for students, such as “digging the soil,” “planting the seeds,” “watering the plants,” “preparing the ingredients,” “stirring the pot,” “seasoning the dish,” and so on. These practical English expressions provide strong support for students to describe the process of activities in English and help them deeply experience the joy of labor practices in English learning.

4.3.2. The Stage During the Study Tour

Teachers should design the course content based on the study tour activities (see Table 1). For example, the study activities in Guanfeng Agricultural Tourism Town include base tours, culinary competitions, and farming experiences. During the base tour activity, teachers can organize student groups to work together and invite one student from each group to act as a tour guide, introducing some featured projects of the study base, such as “retracing the Long March” and “visiting the equestrian archery field and Mongolian yurts.” In the culinary competition segment, teachers can organize group competitions where students who can name vegetables in English have priority in choosing ingredients and cooking. After cooking, the groups can vote for the most delicious dish, and then students can share the process of making the dish. During the review of relevant English expressions, students can also use English to describe their own cooking process. Additionally, students can acquire labor skills in food preparation, respect the labor results of others. During the farming experience activity, teachers can invite one or two students to introduce the process of planting and harvesting vegetables, allowing students to develop a spirit of hard work and perseverance through the planting process. During this period, teachers do not need to rush to correct students’ spoken grammar errors but rather encourage them to speak more.

Table 1: The Specific Course Content of the Study Tour

Study Tour Activities	Specific Course Content	Demonstrations of Core Competencies
Base Tour	1. Retracing the Long March 2. Visiting the equestrian archery field and Mongolian yurts	1. Understanding the culture and characteristics of different regions. 2. Enhancing students’ understanding and identification with Chinese culture.
Culinary Competition	1. Learning food cooking skills 2. Reviewing English expressions related to cooking, such as “cook dishes” or “stir-fry dishes,” “make soup” or “cook soup”	1. Using English to describe one’s own cooking process and culinary achievements. 2. Being able to learn labor skills through observation or communication with classmates during task completion. 3. Embracing the concept of respecting the results of labor and acquiring labor skills in food preparation.
Farming Experience	1. Learning vegetable planting and harvesting processes 2. Learning specific vocabulary related to vegetable planting, such as Transplanting, Fertilization, Pest Control, Handpicking, Harvest Season	1. Applying methods such as comparison and analysis to flexibly apply acquired knowledge to solve practical problems, promoting interdisciplinary integration. 2. Describing vegetable planting and harvesting processes in English. 3. Cultivating a spirit of hard work and perseverance. 4. Establishing the labor values of respecting the working people.

4.3.3. The Stage after the Study Tour

The “English Curriculum Standards for Senior High School (2017 Edition, Revised in 2020)” clearly state that evaluation should focus on the formation and development of students’ core competencies^[6]. Therefore, the assessment of this study tour combines formative and summative assessments. Formative assessment aims to comprehensively, systematically, and scientifically evaluate each student’s learning outcomes, stimulate their intrinsic motivation for self-improvement, and promote the comprehensive development of their overall qualities. It evaluates students’ level of participation and performance in course activities, including active involvement in labor practices.

Summative assessment primarily evaluates students’ language proficiency, core competencies, and labor literacy. It can be conducted through written or oral evaluations. Regarding written summaries, teachers should encourage students to maintain study tour journals and use English to document their activities at the study base. The journal content should encompass various labor activities in which students participated, the difficulties and challenges encountered, and the achievements attained through labor. Additionally, students should engage in deep reflection on the labor process, analyze the significance and value of labor, and discuss the importance of teamwork.

For oral summaries and reports, teachers can guide students to record videos introducing their day at the study base or sharing their labor experiences. By showcasing their sense of accomplishment and joy in labor, students can vividly demonstrate their personal growth and charm in study tour activities.

After the submission of reports, teachers can evaluate students’ study tour experiences through various methods, including self-assessment and peer assessment, based on the evaluation criteria outlined in Table 2. They can also select outstanding works from the reports to showcase on the class bulletin board for publicity purposes.

Table 2: The Evaluation Form in the Study Tour Activities

Evaluation Dimensions	Evaluation Criteria	Self-assessment	Peer assessment	Teacher assessment
Thinking Qualities	Being able to apply acquired knowledge to solve practical problems in labor tasks through comparison and analysis.			
Language Proficiency	1. Having a basic grasp of new words or phrases learned during the study tour. 2. Being able to describe the labor process and share labor achievements in English.			
Learning Abilities	1. Being able to communicate and collaborate with classmates. 2. Improving the ability to apply acquired knowledge to completeing labor tasks independently.			
Cultural Awareness	1. Deepening understanding of local cultural characteristics. 2. Being able to appreciate and differentiate various regional cultures. 3. Understanding the process of crop cultivation and harvesting, demonstrate respect for the results of labor, and cultivate a spirit of hard work and perseverance.			

5. Conclusion

The integration of labor education and the senior high school English discipline should transcend the limitations of conventional classrooms and embrace the expansive realm of study tours. Serving as a bridge between labor education and English teaching, study tours offer a dynamic and practical platform for their seamless integration. Therefore, schools and educators should accord significant importance to the development of study tour curricula, conduct in-depth analysis of the educational value they embody, and endeavor to create more profound and instructive models for the harmonious

fusion of senior high school English teaching and labor education.

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