

Research on the Educational Value of Text-Based Drama From the Perspective of the Core Literacy of Chinese Discipline

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The proposal of Chinese core literacy in the *General High School Chinese Curriculum Standards* (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision) clarifies the requirements for the cultivation of students' language ability. As a language practice activity, text-based drama undertakes the important mission of language application, aesthetic appreciation, thinking training, and even cultural inheritance. In this context, the author attempts to study the relevant theoretical knowledge of Chinese core literacy through literature research methods, classroom practice methods, and experience summary, and tries to explore the educational value of text-based drama in high school Chinese teaching practice from the perspective of core literacy. Based on the development of text-based drama in the High School affiliated to Guizhou Normal University and combined with specific situations, this paper puts forward suggestions for Chinese practical activities from the perspective of core literacy in view of the four dimensions of Chinese core literacy.

Keywords: disciplinary core literacy, text-based drama, thinking quality

The Chinese curriculum has always shouldered an important educational mission, and the pace of the gradual reform of the Chinese curriculum has never stopped. In the *General High School Chinese Curriculum Standards* (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision), the keyword “disciplinary core literacy” was clearly proposed. Regarding this term, *General High School Chinese Curriculum Standards* (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision) propose that the core literacy of the Chinese discipline is the language ability and quality that students accumulate and construct in active language practice activities and show in real language application situations; it is a comprehensive manifestation of language knowledge and language ability, thinking mode and thinking quality, emotions, attitudes, and values obtained by students in Chinese learning.¹

In the expression of Chinese core literacy, the importance of language practice activities is extremely prominent.

Text-based drama combines performance and language. It is an active language practice activity and one of the ways to achieve an efficient classroom teaching. It promotes students to fully understand literary works, not only in the construction and application of language, but also in aesthetic appreciation and creation, and also in cultural inheritance. In view of the characteristics of text-based drama, the author combines the adaptation and practice of text-based drama in high school Chinese teaching to explore the connection between the two under the requirements of the cultivation of disciplinary core literacy.

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¹ *Chinese Curriculum Standards for General High Schools* (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision).

Overview of Text-Based Drama

We know that drama and education have been related since ancient times. Both Chinese and western education in ancient times contained elements of drama education. However, the discussion of drama education theory and practice only emerged in the 1920s and 1930s. Until now, drama has gradually developed into a specialized education category, entered high school textbooks, and occupied a place in high school—three articles in the second unit of compulsory volume II of the unified edition (*Thunderstorm*, *The Injustice to Dou E*, *Hamlet*), and two elective articles (*A Doll's House*, *Teahouse*). It can be seen that drama education has become one of the important contents of high school teaching. Text-based drama is the practical operation of drama teaching. In the *Dictionary of New Words in Modern Chinese* edited by Kang Shiyong and Liu Hairun, text-based drama is defined as: “Drama sketches adapted and rehearsed according to the texts in Chinese textbooks of primary and secondary schools” (Kang & Liu, 2004). Text-based drama is a literary practice activity that vividly reproduces literary works on the stage based on Chinese teaching materials, and is one of the forms of many comprehensive Chinese practical activities. Huang Bin believes that “activity-based teaching is a teaching method that infiltrates ‘factors’ of activities in Chinese teaching and enhances the time link, and it is a teaching form that integrates Chinese perceptual learning and Chinese practical operation” (Huang, 2019, p. 19). The author believes that Chinese learning should be a unity of mutual complement and integration of Chinese teaching and practical activities, and text-based drama has just become a form that teachers and students love, which can make up for the deficiency of students’ understanding in teaching certain styles of writing and can fully exert students’ subjective initiative and improve core literacy.

Teaching Concept—Autonomous, Cooperative, and Inquiry-Based Learning

Text-based drama is a real presentation of the teaching concept of autonomous, cooperative, and inquiry-based learning, integrating adaptation, performance, directing, and stage management. This activity focuses on stimulating students’ creative potential, integrating their knowledge and ability, and is conducive to cultivating students’ text creation ability, organizational planning ability, comprehensive expression ability, and team spirit in practice, and is conducive to students’ forming an independent personality and unique working ability.

Disciplinary Concept—Grand Chinese Teaching View

Chinese education aims at people’s better physical and mental development, with classroom teaching as the starting point, respects students’ individuality, inspires students’ creativity, and thus extends to various fields of life and study. The author adapts the narrative part of a text chosen from students’ textbook into a drama to express the author’s deep thinking in the language of drama, which is textbook drama. It combines literary works with stage art, and presents vocal music, dance, performance, and other forms on the stage. It blurs the disciplinary boundaries, integrates Chinese teaching with art, realizes the concept of Whole Chinese Teaching, and benefits students a lot.

Characteristics of Text-Based Drama Under the Perspective of Core Literacy

Basic Characteristics of Text-Based Drama

High concentration of space and time. Unlike novels, text-based drama is not restricted by time and space. It requires that time, characters, plots, and scenes be highly concentrated on the stage, and often uses Mu to express each plot (“Mu” plays the same role in Chinese drama as chapters in a book). The script generally should not be too long, there should not be too many characters, and the scene should not be changed too frequently.

The contradiction reflecting real life should be sharp and prominent. There is no drama without sharp and prominent contradictions. In the limited time and space of text-based drama, the conflict among characters and between characters and the environment should be highlighted or even magnified, so that the drama is full of tension, more suitable for presentation on the stage, and can give the audience an intuitive audio-visual impact, and also allow the audience to imagine and think.

The script language should show the character's personality. Language is an important carrier supporting text-based drama. Whether it is the dialogue or monologue of characters, or stage instructions and subtext, they all serve to show the character's personality everywhere. For example, in the reproduction of the script of *Thunderstorm*, great importance is attached to students' speculation of subtext, so as to guide students to feel the transformation of the character's personality and understand the good and evil of the protagonist's "human nature", so as to achieve the accuracy of performance and improve the enjoyment of the performance site.

Characteristics of Text-Based Drama Under the Perspective of Core Literacy

In the activity of text-based drama, students not only conduct language learning and training, receive aesthetic perception, and inherit excellent Chinese and foreign cultures, but also can improve their thinking ability in the process of repeatedly polishing the script, thinking, and discussion, which are closely related to the cultivation of Chinese core literacy. From the perspective of core literacy, the simple characteristics of text-based drama can be refined into the practicality of the combination of theory and practice, the effectiveness of language training, and the internalization of aesthetic and cultural quality.

Practicality of the combination of theory and practice. The premise of text-based drama arrangement is that the teacher teaches the basic theory of text-based drama and imparts arrangement skills, and students conduct re-creation in modifying the script and specific practice. This process is the combination of theory and practice, and it is also the process of students' thinking improvement.

Effectiveness of language thinking. The most intuitive presentation of text-based drama practice is lines. Lines are the training of thinking through language. Language ability and thinking ability are bore together. Repeatedly reading lines and polishing them itself is the language learning process of alternate output and input.

Internalization of aesthetic and cultural quality. Chinese characters are the carriers of Chinese culture. The language of text-based drama is one of the forms of reproducing the art of Chinese characters. The language of text-based drama combines time, region, and other dimensions to show unique storylines and aesthetic realms. This process itself is the result of the internalization of aesthetics and culture.

Dilemmas of Text-Based Drama

Text-based drama performances have lasted for 20 years in the High School affiliated to Guizhou Normal University and have become the grandest event in the most important cultural art festival. It has become more and more mature with the progress of society. However, it also faces difficulties.

Marginalization of Teaching

Text-based drama takes a relatively long time. From script creation to rehearsal, it can take several months, so it is difficult to be carried out comprehensively. In addition, there is no unified traditional evaluation and assessment method, and due to the shackles of the college entrance examination, text-based drama has fallen into a marginalized situation.

Family Attention

Parents' educational concepts have an inescapable impact on text-based drama teaching. Whether parents can see that education ultimately aims at the comprehensive cultivation of literacy determines their support for text-based drama activities. In addition, parents' literacy also has a subtle impact on students' expression, aesthetics, and creativity.

Limitations of Teaching Materials

With the development of the market economy, the quality of literary works is uneven, and the sources and forms are various, making it difficult for students to control the selection of the original script, and values are challenged. Works with profound thoughts and those with simple emotional catharsis are mixed, resulting in few excellent works.

Student Ability

Whether text-based drama rehearsal can be successful largely depends on the level of students' abilities, such as writing, structuring, and thinking. Therefore, the cultivation of students' literacy is crucial for text-based drama.

The Coincidence Point Between Chinese Core Literacy and Text-Based Drama

Chinese core literacy can be infiltrated through the practical learning of text-based drama. The process of text-based drama activities is a process of integrating textbook knowledge into life perception. Chinese practical activities require relatively rich language materials and speech activity experience, and can express and communicate according to specific language situations and specific objects by grasping the laws of language use. This process can enhance students' ability of thinking in images, obtain intuitive experience of literary images and language, and at the same time develop students' certain logical thinking, so that they can actively analyze and summarize the experience of Chinese practical activities, improve the ability of language use, and enhance the agility, profundity, and originality of thinking.

Chinese practical activities can also promote the improvement of students' core literacy. The process of students' creation and performance of text-based drama can fully experience and understand Chinese learning, prompting students to develop in many aspects, which is also the specific operation process of the improvement of core literacy.

Cultivation of Students' Abilities in Text-Based Drama From the Perspective of Disciplinary Core Literacy

The existence and development of text-based drama face difficulties. The introduction of the *General High School Chinese Curriculum Standards* (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision) has lit a guiding light for us. It clearly points out that Chinese core literacy includes "language construction and application", "thinking development and improvement", "aesthetic appreciation and creation", and "cultural inheritance and understanding", which makes directional requirements for the writing and rehearsal of text-based drama, and the existence value of text-based drama also coincides with the cultivation of literacy.

Cultivation of the Ability for Adaptation

Text-based drama adaptation is a reproduction based on the original text. It needs to accumulate relatively rich language materials and speech activity experience, and adapt styles such as novels, poems, and prose into

drama forms. This is undoubtedly accumulating language materials and establishing an organic connection among them. And this process deepens the understanding of the connotation of the text in the adaptation and then grasps the basic laws of language and writing application, realizing the cultivation of text conversion ability.

For example, in the script adaptation of *The Man in a Case*, the short story was adapted into a multi-act play. The events of love, bicycle, and portrait that were briefly mentioned in the original work were replaced by dramatic languages such as dialogue and monologue. It was especially vivid and funny when performed on the stage. And in this process, students experienced the difference between the novel style and drama, and their language ability was cultivated.

Cultivation of Thinking Ability

To obtain intuitive experience of language and literary images, in script creation and rehearsal, association and imagination must be used, thereby enriching the feeling of literary images, deepening the understanding of real life, enriching intuitive experience and language expression. Screenwriters achieve this in rewriting, and actors understand it in performance, so the ability of thinking in images is cultivated.

The rewriting of the script often re-examines the original language and critically examines language and writing works, explores and discovers the language differences between drama writing and other styles of writing, and in order to make the play wonderful, it is bound to make multiple adjustments to the plot to achieve the best performance effect. This process will surely improve students' logical thinking ability.

Cultivation of Aesthetic Appreciation and Creativity

Aesthetic appreciation and creation are the correct aesthetic consciousness formed by students in the process of Chinese learning through aesthetic experience, evaluation, and other activities. Screenwriters and actors feel and experience the language, image, and emotion of literary works, and reproduce them in text-based drama, which is the process of forming noble aesthetic taste and aesthetic grade. Through the innovation of the script, the expression and creation of beauty are truly realized, and the innovation consciousness is strengthened.

Cultivation of Group Collaboration Ability

From the creation to the rehearsal, and finally to the stage presentation of text-based drama, the whole process requires group collaboration. Taking the novel *Blind Spot* as an example, this work was originally a short story. The part that touched people in the story was the inner monologue of the protagonist and the thinking about life. When adapted into a script, it was not an excellent work with stage impact. However, students divided the story into five acts. I, the director, and the screenwriter adjusted it many times, hoping to make the seemingly uninteresting play have philosophical thinking. Just like the parallel montage in a movie, we finally chose the parallel narrative method, making Xiao Yu, mother, angel, and passer-by appear at the same time, asking what the "blind spot" is. This process is obviously the result of group cooperation. Students strengthened cooperation in continuous adjustments, and finally the script was finalized.

Conclusion

Admittedly, the development of text-based drama has various difficulties. However, with the proposal of Chinese core literacy in the *General High School Chinese Curriculum Standards* (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision), the dilemma of text-based drama has found clear policy support. Its practice meets the requirements of China for the cultivation of students' abilities. Text-based drama stimulates students' creative interest, taps students' creative potential, broadens their horizons in cross-time-space, cross-culture, and cross-media Chinese practice,

and develops their respective Chinese specialties and shows their unique personalities in a broader space. The educational value of text-based drama under the perspective of core literacy is reflected. It is believed that it will shine brightly as a characteristic cultural activity in the future.

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