

An Exploration of Integrating Humanism and Practical Application in College Chinese Education

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Abstract: This study investigates the integration of humanistic values and practical application in college Chinese courses. By examining five key dimensions—curriculum positioning, teaching content, pedagogical innovation, evaluation systems, and faculty development—it offers theoretical insights and practical implications for enhancing teaching effectiveness and fostering students' humanistic literacy and practical competencies. In addition, the research explores how the alignment of course objectives with contemporary societal needs can promote students' critical thinking, cultural awareness, and communication skills. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses, the study identifies effective strategies for balancing traditional literary education with real-world applicability, thereby providing a comprehensive framework for curriculum design, instructional practice, and continuous professional development in higher education. Ultimately, the findings aim to support educators in cultivating well-rounded graduates who are both culturally informed and practically capable in a rapidly evolving global context.

Keywords: College Chinese; Humanism; Practical Application; Integration Strategies

0. Introduction

In the contemporary context of higher education, which emphasizes the cultivation of well-rounded talents with both moral integrity and professional competence, the value of College Chinese courses has become increasingly prominent. Far beyond serving as a means of transmitting linguistic knowledge, College Chinese functions as an important platform for preserving China's traditional cultural heritage and fostering students' humanistic spirit. At the same time, it plays a crucial role in developing practical abilities such as language expression, official document writing, and logical reasoning.

The core attributes of humanism and practical application in College Chinese courses are not mutually exclusive; rather, they form an interdependent and dialectically unified whole. Humanistic values provide ethical orientation for language use, guiding students to uphold sound values in practical communication, while practical skills offer concrete contexts in which the humanistic spirit can be internalized and embodied through real-world language practice.

However, current College Chinese teaching in many universities reveals a notable imbalance between humanistic cultivation and practical application. Some instructors treat the course primarily as a "literary appreciation class," overemphasizing textual interpretation while neglecting the development of students' language application skills. Others, by contrast, adopt an overly pragmatic approach, reducing the curriculum to a "practical writing course" and thereby weakening its humanistic function and educational significance. This imbalance fails to meet students' needs for humanistic development as well as society's growing demand for practical language competence.

Therefore, exploring effective pathways for integrating humanistic values with practical application in College Chinese courses and reconstructing the teaching system has become an urgent task in contemporary pedagogical reform.

1. The core connotations of humanism and practical application in the College Chinese curriculum

1.1 Humanism: The Nourishing Core of Classical Texts

The humanistic essence of College Chinese courses lies in transmitting humanity's outstanding cultural achievements and nurturing students' humanistic spirit and moral integrity through language and literature. This essence is reflected in three key dimensions.

First, cultural inheritance. The selected classical texts encompass a wide range of genres, including poetry, prose, novels, and historical biographies. These works embody the core values of China's traditional culture, revolutionary heritage, and socialist development, serving as important channels through which students can understand national history and strengthen their cultural identity.

Second, spiritual cultivation. The virtues embedded in classical texts—such as patriotism, benevolence, perseverance, and pragmatic realism—subtly influence students' value formation, helping them establish sound worldviews, views on life, and moral standards.

Third, aesthetic development. Through the interpretation of literary works' linguistic beauty, artistic conception, and emotional depth, students enhance their aesthetic sensibility and creative abilities, thereby enriching their spiritual world.

The humanistic essence of College Chinese education is not an abstract concept, but a spiritual force embedded in concrete texts and teaching practices. For example, when studying the famous line from *Record of Yueyang Tower* – “Worry before the world worries, and enjoy after the world enjoys”—students are guided to appreciate the patriotic sentiments of ancient scholars. Such teaching not only enriches students' literary knowledge but also provides enduring spiritual nourishment for their personal growth.

1.2 Practical Application: Empowering Language Competence through Practice

The applied dimension of College Chinese courses focuses on cultivating students' ability to use language and writing to address real-world problems, thereby supporting their academic studies, career preparation, and long-term development. This dimension is manifested in three main aspects.

First, foundational language skills, including accurate reading comprehension, effective oral expression, and standardized written communication. These abilities form the basis of all academic learning and practical activities.

Second, discipline-specific language competencies. Students from different majors have diverse language needs: science and engineering students require skills in writing experimental reports and academic papers; humanities students focus on research reports and critical essays; and business and management students must master business documents and official correspondence. Accordingly, College Chinese courses should cultivate targeted language application skills aligned with students' disciplinary backgrounds.

Third, workplace adaptability, which emphasizes professional communication, business writing, and presentation skills. These competencies help students transition smoothly into professional environments and enhance their overall career competitiveness.

The applied nature of College Chinese education is distinctly practice-oriented, highlighting the transformation of knowledge into ability. For instance, activities such as writing reading notes and reflective essays effectively strengthen students' written expression skills. Through such practices, students' practical language competence is directly enhanced, laying a solid foundation for their future development.

1.3 Dialectical Unity: The Symbiotic Relationship between Humanism and Practical Application

The humanistic and applied dimensions of College Chinese courses are not contradictory; rather, they are dialectically unified and mutually reinforcing.

On the one hand, humanism serves as the guiding principle and spiritual core of practical application. Without a humanistic foundation, language use may lose its value orientation, leading to practices that compromise moral standards or violate public ethics in pursuit of utilitarian goals. For example, in commercial copywriting, an excessive focus on attention-grabbing effects and profit maximization—while neglecting integrity and social responsibility—runs counter to the principles of humanistic education. Therefore, only when humanistic values guide applied language training can students maintain ethical awareness and proper value judgments in their language use.

On the other hand, practical application functions as the carrier and realization of humanistic values. Without concrete practice, humanistic cultivation risks remaining abstract and detached from students' actual competencies. Humanistic spirit cannot be effectively nurtured through theoretical instruction alone; it must be gradually internalized through authentic language practices. For instance, by participating in social investigations and writing research reports on issues related to vulnerable groups, students not only improve their research and writing skills but also deepen their sense of social responsibility and humanistic concern.

Therefore, only by integrating humanistic values into applied teaching processes can the humanistic spirit truly take root in students' development, ultimately fulfilling the educational ideal of "cultivating individuals through culture and educating through literature."

2. The Reality Dilemma and Integration Path of Humanism and Practical Application in College Chinese Courses

2.1 Structural Dilemmas in Course Positioning and Teaching Content

Teaching content constitutes the primary vehicle for achieving curriculum objectives. However, current College Chinese courses in many universities face structural constraints stemming from unclear course positioning and rigid content design, which hinder the effective integration of humanistic values and practical application.

First, the selection of classical texts lacks innovation and contemporary relevance. Many textbooks continue to emphasize traditional literary classics, which, despite their profound humanistic significance, are often disconnected from students' lived experiences, academic pursuits, and future career needs. As a result, students struggle to translate the humanistic spirit embedded in these texts into concrete language practices.

Second, the content of applied writing instruction remains monotonous and outdated. Some curricula still focus heavily on traditional official documents while failing to address emerging forms such as new media writing, workplace communication, and academic writing. This mismatch prevents College Chinese courses from meeting the evolving language application needs of modern students.

Third, insufficient linkage exists between humanistic education and applied training. Literary appreciation and practical skill development are frequently taught in isolation, making it difficult for students to achieve coordinated growth in humanistic literacy and language competence. Such content fragmentation reflects ambiguous course positioning and constitutes a fundamental obstacle to educational integration.

2.2 Constraints of Teaching Methods and Evaluation Systems

Teaching methods and evaluation systems play a decisive role in shaping learning outcomes.

However, current instructional and assessment practices in College Chinese courses reveal notable limitations.

On the one hand, teaching methods remain overly singular, with teacher-centered lecturing dominating classroom instruction. This approach limits student engagement and reduces opportunities for experiential learning and value internalization, thereby weakening the integration of humanistic cultivation and practical training.

On the other hand, evaluation systems lack scientific design and developmental orientation. Assessment is often overly dependent on final examinations, focusing primarily on literary knowledge retention and applied writing formats, while neglecting the evaluation of humanistic literacy, critical thinking, creativity, and real-world language performance. Moreover, assessment methods rely heavily on summative evaluation, with insufficient use of formative assessment to capture students' learning processes. Evaluation subjects are also limited, with minimal involvement of self-assessment, peer evaluation, and social feedback, resulting in reduced objectivity and comprehensiveness. This flawed evaluation framework reinforces exam-oriented teaching and perpetuates a vicious cycle between instruction and assessment.

2.3 Faculty Competency Gaps and Insufficient Support Mechanisms

Faculty capacity constitutes the cornerstone of curriculum reform. However, many College Chinese instructors face structural limitations in meeting the dual demands of humanistic and applied education.

Some teachers possess strong literary expertise and excel in textual interpretation and humanistic analysis, yet lack practical experience in areas such as workplace communication, applied writing, and new media discourse. Conversely, instructors with applied writing backgrounds often lack sufficient humanistic depth, limiting their ability to explore the cultural and ethical dimensions of texts. This imbalance hinders the organic integration of humanistic values and practical training.

In addition, universities often fail to provide systematic training programs and institutional support tailored to integrated pedagogy. The absence of professional development opportunities, interdisciplinary collaboration platforms, and teaching innovation incentives further constrains instructors' capacity for reform, resulting in persistent weaknesses in both faculty development and support systems.

2.4 Integration Path: Reconstructing Course Positioning and Optimizing Content Systems

Clarifying course positioning serves as the foundation for integration, while content optimization acts as the core mechanism. Universities should establish a curriculum orientation that equally emphasizes humanistic literacy and language application ability, aiming to cultivate well-rounded talents with cultural depth, linguistic competence, and sound value orientation.

This overarching goal should be translated into two complementary objectives: cultivating humanistic spirit and enhancing practical language skills. To ensure effective implementation, College Chinese courses should be positioned as compulsory general education courses across disciplines, with adequate class hours and close integration with professional education and innovation-oriented programs. Such positioning will promote collaborative education that links general education, disciplinary training, and practical innovation.

In terms of content design, it is essential to move beyond the fragmented model of "literary classics plus practical writing" and construct an integrated system centered on "humanistic essence and practical application." This includes excavating the practical value of classical texts, expanding applied writing instruction to cover contemporary genres such as new media and academic writing, and designing thematic modules that organically combine literary texts with practical language tasks.

2.5 Pedagogical Innovation and Evaluation System Reform

Innovative teaching methods constitute the key pathway to integration. Instruction should move beyond traditional lecturing toward interactive, student-centered, and practice-oriented pedagogical models.

Situational teaching can be employed by constructing authentic scenarios such as job interviews and business negotiations, allowing students to develop communication skills while internalizing values such as integrity and responsibility. Project-based learning approaches—such as campus culture research or community investigation projects—can further promote the coordinated development of humanistic awareness and practical competence. Additionally, information technology should be leveraged to develop blended learning models, utilizing online platforms and new media tools to extend teaching space and enrich instructional forms.

Simultaneously, evaluation systems must be reformed to support integration. A diversified assessment framework combining formative and summative evaluation should be established, incorporating classroom participation, project performance, reflective writing, and practical outputs. The evaluation subjects should also be diversified by integrating self-assessment, peer review, and social feedback, thereby enhancing fairness, objectivity, and a developmental orientation.

2.6 Strengthening Faculty Support: Building a High-quality Integrated Teaching Team

Faculty development provides essential support for integrated teaching reform. Universities should adopt multi-dimensional strategies to cultivate high-quality, interdisciplinary teaching teams.

First, targeted professional development programs should be implemented, including regular training in humanistic education, applied writing, and digital pedagogy. Inviting literary scholars, industry professionals, and educational technology experts can help teachers address competency gaps. Second, practical platforms should be established to encourage teachers' engagement in enterprise practice, community research, and interdisciplinary collaboration, while introducing industry experts as adjunct instructors to form complementary teaching teams. Third, incentive mechanisms should be improved by incorporating integrated teaching achievements into performance evaluation, promotion criteria, and research funding systems.

Through systematic faculty development and institutional support, a solid foundation can be established for the sustainable integration of humanistic values and practical application in College Chinese education.

3. Conclusion

The integration of humanistic values and practical application in College Chinese education is an essential requirement for talent cultivation in the new era. This study argues that reconstructing course positioning and optimizing teaching content constitute the fundamental prerequisites and core pathways for achieving such integration. At the level of curriculum positioning, clarifying the goal of balancing humanistic literacy with practical language competence and establishing College Chinese as a compulsory general education course can effectively connect general education with professional training and innovation-oriented education, thereby forming a collaborative educational framework.

In terms of content design, it is necessary to move beyond fragmented teaching models and construct an integrated system that combines humanistic depth with practical application. This can be realized by excavating the practical value of classical texts, expanding contemporary applied writing genres, and designing thematic teaching modules to promote organic integration. Looking ahead, with the continuous development of educational technologies, future College Chinese teaching should actively explore innovative models such as artificial intelligence-assisted

instruction and virtual simulation. By aligning curriculum reform with social development and students' evolving needs, College Chinese courses can be revitalized with renewed vitality and play a more significant role in cultivating well-rounded talents in the new era.

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