

Action Research on Enhancing the Classical Chinese Poetry Teaching Skills of Elementary Education Program Students

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Abstract—This study evaluated student learning outcomes in elementary education programs through teaching practice for the *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* course. The action research methodology was adopted to produce the desired teaching practice outcomes among students in elementary education programs. This research involved eight natural classes with 269 undergraduates over three academic years. The study was guided by outcome-based education theory and a student-centered and outcome-oriented philosophy while pursuing continuous improvement. The findings were cross-validated through the “Course Learning Self-awareness Survey” questionnaire designed by the researcher. We used quantitative and qualitative analyses regarding course objective attainment. In the spirit of teachers as researchers for educational action research, this study focused on student learning, with teachers reflecting on the course and teaching quality and students reflecting on their study. As such, measures for continuous improvement were proposed and integrated into the plan for the next round of teaching. The findings provide insights for educational authorities responsible for education program accreditation and for practitioners in the field.

Keywords—appreciation of classical Chinese poetry, poetic aesthetics, teaching practice, teaching skills, education program accreditation

I. INTRODUCTION

Classical Chinese poetry is considered a Chinese cultural treasure. However, in the 21st century, students often neglect it unless it is integrated into exams. China’s current elementary Chinese curriculum includes approximately 132 classical Chinese poems, enabling students to immerse themselves in Chinese culture from a young age. This inclusion elicits a favorable turning point, where the *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* course has played a pivotal role in transforming crisis into a promising opportunity.

China’s Ministry of Education has issued a *Notice on Issuing the Measures for the Accreditation of Education Programs in General Institutions of Higher Education (Interim)*. This document states that education program accreditation (EPA) should adhere to the philosophy of being student-centered, outcome-oriented, and pursuing continuous improvement [1]. The accreditation principles include: (1) establishing a unified accreditation system, (2) promoting coordinated efforts between provincial and ministerial levels, (3) strengthening the primary responsibility of colleges and universities, and (4) employing a variety of accreditation methods. Accreditation serves to reinforce the application of its results [2]. Reflecting on these results and the application after reflection are expected to improve the quality of basic education [3, 4].

II. OVERALL COURSE DESIGN

A. Course Objectives

Based on the training program (version 2023) for the Elementary Education Major (Teacher Training) at the School of Education, Huanggang Normal University, students are expected to meet the following requirements in terms of knowledge, skills, and qualities: Objective 1: Professional Ethics; Objective 2: Teaching Competence; Objective 3: Educational Capability; Objective 4: Development Capability. The *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* course objectives for this major are detailed in Table 1:

Table 1. The *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* course objectives for the elementary education major

| Training Objectives | Graduation Requirements |
|---------------------|---|
| Course Objective 1 | Students can understand the basic development trajectory and characteristics of classical Chinese poetry and preserve traditional Chinese culture. Their moral sentiments, literary literacy, poetry appreciation skills, and ability to teach classical poetry are enhanced. |
| Course Objective 2 | Students can master the differences, similarities, and fundamental features of the three major genres in classical Chinese poetry, <i>Shi</i> , <i>ci</i> , and <i>qu</i> , as well as the primary methods for appreciating poetry. |
| Course Objective 3 | Students can grasp the basic development course and classification of classical Chinese poetry. They can understand the essential characteristics of the eight main categories of classical poetry, as well as the main ideas and artistic features of exemplary works. |
| Course Objective 4 | Teamwork enhances students’ teaching skills. Furthermore, students can produce engaging and informative slides and teach classical poems in elementary Chinese textbooks. |

B. Overall Course Structure

The course structure was designed based on the teacher-as-researcher spirit [5] and outcome-based education (OBE) theory [6, 7]. Moreover, suitable and effective methods were devised to help students attain the competencies expected of EPA graduates [8–10]. The course was built on Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956) theory [11], encompassing learning objectives in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains [12], and the life education principles that examine the relationships with oneself, others, society, and nature. Additionally, teaching practice was used as an outcome measure, subject to teacher and student assessments. The course syllabus was designed based on Pengzhen

Zhang's *Classical Chinese Poetry Appreciation* [12]. Fig. 1 illustrates the overall course structure.

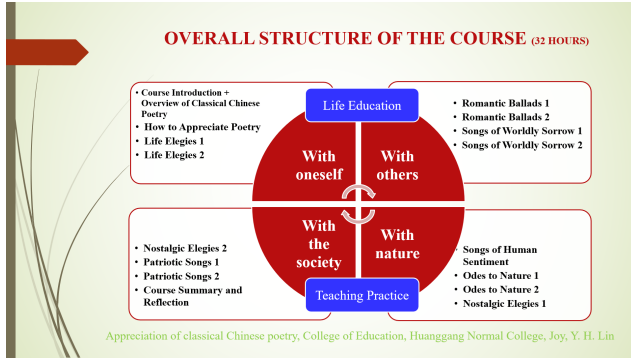


Fig. 1. Course structure.

EPA served to verify student learning outcomes while ensuring teaching quality and universities' educational management quality. In this process, learning outcomes are crucial, as they indicate whether students can excel in and effectively deliver the course, thereby contributing to preserving and promoting Chinese culture. This lays a

foundation for students' future teaching.

C. Course Assessment Methods

Teaching practice was conducted at the School of Education, Huanggang Normal University. This study used action research as the research methodology. Undergraduates majoring in elementary education at the school were recruited as participants. The study lasted three academic years and enrolled 269 participants from eight natural classes. Adhering strictly to academic research ethics, the researcher ensured all participants provided informed consent.

Quantitative and qualitative analyses regarding the attainment of course objectives were conducted to cross-validate the findings. This was based on the course objectives outlined in the syllabus. The assessment method was based on the *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* and the *Report on the Evaluation of Course Objective Attainment and Continuous Improvement* course (see Table 2), which was prepared by the Teaching Quality Monitoring and Evaluation Center and the Academic Affairs Office of Huanggang Normal University.

Table 2. The *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* course objectives for the elementary education major

| The <i>Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry</i> Course Assessment Method for the Elementary Education Major | | | | | |
|---|---|------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Course Objective | Classroom Discussion (10%) | Quiz (10%) | Discussion Assignment (10%) | Teaching Practice (Oral) (20%) | Final Exam (Written) (50%) |
| Objective for Ideological and Political Education | Evenly embedded in Objectives 1-4, ideological and political education is implemented weekly, each lasting three to five minutes. Each student delivers a 5-minute lesson on <i>Ideological and Political Education</i> at the end of the semester, subject to evaluation by both the teacher and classmates. | | | | |
| Course Objective 1 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 10 |
| Course Objective 2 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 20 |
| Course Objective 3 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 30 |
| Course Objective 4 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 40 |
| Calculation Method for Individual Course Objectives Attainment | $\text{Sub-objective attainment} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \text{i Sub-objective score} * \text{i Weight}}{\text{Assessment method n-1 Total score for the sub-objective} * \text{Expected value for the sub-objective}}$ | | | | |
| Calculation Method for Class Course Objective Attainment | Number of students with attainment evaluation values greater than 1/Total number of students in the class/Evaluation standard for the expected value: Only scores greater than 1 were considered qualified. The class course objective attainment was determined by the weighted average of the sub-objectives. | | | | |

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A. Objective Attainment Evaluation

Regarding the first year's four natural classes, if the course

objective attainment evaluation value was ≥ 1 , the objective was considered attained. *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* course objective attainments are presented in Table 3. Class course objective attainment summary is shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Course objective attainment

| Course Objective Attainment of <i>Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry</i> | | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| Class | Class 201901 | | Class 201902 | | Class 201903 | | Class 201904 |
| Course Objectives | Number of students with attainment evaluation values ≥ 1 /Number of students in the class | Class objective attainment | Number of students with attainment evaluation values ≥ 1 /Number of students in the class | Class objective attainment | Number of students with attainment evaluation values ≥ 1 /Number of students in the class | Class objective attainment | Number of students with attainment evaluation values ≥ 1 /Number of students in the class |
| | | | | | | | Class objective attainment |
| Objective 1 | 33/33 | 1.11 | 30/31 | 1.08 | 31/31 | 1.11 | 31/31 |
| Objective 2 | 33/33 | 1.25 | 30/31 | 1.21 | 31/31 | 1.25 | 31/31 |
| Objective 3 | 33/33 | 1.25 | 30/31 | 1.21 | 31/31 | 1.25 | 31/31 |
| Objective 4 | 31/33 | 1.17 | 29/31 | 1.13 | 29/31 | 1.13 | 26/31 |

Table 4. Class course objective attainment summary

| Class | Course Objective Attainment | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Course Objective 1 | Course Objective 2 | Course Objective 3 | Course Objective 4 |
| Class 201901 | 1.11 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.17 |
| Class 201902 | 1.08 | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.13 |
| Class 202103 | 1.11 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.13 |
| Class 202104 | 1.11 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.05 |
| Class 202001 | 1.08 | 1.14 | 1.25 | 0.74 |
| Class 202002 | 1.08 | 1.18 | 1.22 | 1.12 |
| Class 202101 | 1.01 | 0.99 | 1.18 | 1.30 |
| Class 202102 | 1.08 | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.39 |

B. Course Objective Attainment Analysis

Exploring teaching practice aims to evaluate the learning outcomes of students in elementary education programs (EEPs) through teaching practice for the *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* course. The analysis was based on the course objective attainment data:

- 1) The expected coefficients for Course Objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4 were set at 0.9, 0.8, 0.8, and 0.8, respectively.
- 2) An evaluation value for Course Objective 1 > 1 indicates the objective was attained. This means that all students in the four classes, guided by the course's ideological and political education, exhibited a strong commitment to education and preserving traditional Chinese culture.
- 3) An evaluation value for Course Objective 2 > 1 indicates

the objective was attained. This means that all students in the four classes possessed a high level of subject literacy, understanding the fundamental characteristics and methods for appreciating classical Chinese poetry.

- 4) An evaluation value for Course Objective 3 > 1 indicates the objective was attained. This means that all students in the four classes deeply appreciated the exemplary works of classical Chinese poetry across eight major categories.
- 5) An evaluation value for Course Objective 4 > 1 indicates the objective was attained. This means that students, through teamwork, could create visually compelling slides and delivered lectures on classical Chinese poetry in elementary Chinese textbooks.

C. Course Learning Self-Awareness Survey (Table 5)

Table 5. Course Learning self-awareness survey

Course Learning Self-awareness Survey for the *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry*

Dear student, I would like to know if this semester's course design and teaching strategies have met your learning requirements and helped you achieve the desired learning outcomes.

Please select the most suitable options based on your experience over the past 16 weeks. Your input will help me understand your learning requirements and improve the course and teaching. Thank you!

Question 1: Academic research ethics/Informed consent: This survey aims to understand student learning requirements, status, and outcomes while helping the teacher to improve the teaching method. It serves the purpose of academic research only. Your responses will not affect your grade performance.

Agree to use the survey as academic research materials; 2. Do not agree to use the survey as academic research materials (A. Strongly agree, B. Agree, C. Fair, D. Disagree, E. Strongly disagree)

| Question No. | Question | A | B | C | D | E |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | I can understand and apply the concepts in the "1 How to Appreciate Poetry" unit. | | | | | |
| 3 | I can understand and apply the concepts in the "2 Life Elegies" unit. | | | | | |
| 4 | I can understand and apply the concepts in the "3 Romantic Ballads" unit. | | | | | |
| 5 | I can understand and apply the concepts in the "4 Songs of Worldly Sorrow" unit. | | | | | |
| 6 | I can understand and apply the concepts in the "5 Songs of Human Sentiment" unit. | | | | | |
| 7 | I can understand and apply the concepts in the "6 Odes to Nature" unit. | | | | | |
| 8 | I can understand and apply the concepts in the "7 Nostalgic Elegies" unit. | | | | | |
| 9 | I can understand and apply the concepts in the "8 Patriotic Songs" unit. | | | | | |
| 10 | After completing the course, I have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills for appreciating classical Chinese poetry. | | | | | |
| 11 | After completing the course, I believe the weekly 3-5-minute "Ideological and Political Education" sessions will help me with my future teaching endeavors and moral education. | | | | | |
| 12 | After completing the course, I understand the team spirit and garnered collaborative experiences through "Teaching Practice" and teamwork. | | | | | |
| 13 | After completing the course, I believe that the integration of "life education" into the course <i>Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry</i> is aligned with the teacher's course design philosophy. | | | | | |

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|----|---|
| 14 | After completing the course, I believe that the teacher's use of the "classical Chinese poetry textbook for elementary Chinese" as part of the "Teaching Practice" module is aligned with my future career requirements as a teacher. |
| 15 | After the "Teaching Practice," the timely feedback from the teacher was helpful for my future teaching. |
| 16 | After completing the course, I believe that the <i>Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry</i> course is aligned with the EPA student-oriented philosophy. |
| 17 | After completing the course, I believe that the <i>Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry</i> course is aligned with the EPA outcome-oriented philosophy. |
| 18 | After completing the course, I believe that the <i>Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry</i> course is aligned with the EPA philosophy of pursuing continuous improvement. |
| 19 | Unit ranking based on your preferences: Please rank the course units 1-8 according to your preference (starting with your favorite) . |
| 20 | Regarding the "Feedback on Last Week's Course" weekly session, what insights or thoughts do you have? What have you learned from these sessions? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 21 | Regarding the 3-5-minute "Ideological and Political Education" weekly session, what insights or thoughts do you have? What have you learned from these sessions? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 22 | Regarding the "Quiz," "Discussion," and "Assignment" modules set up by the teacher in the Chaoxing Learning Platform before class, what insights or thoughts do you have? What have you learned from these modules? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 23 | Regarding the 5-minute "Teaching Practice" session for each student, what insights or thoughts do you have? What have you learned from these sessions? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 24 | Regarding your evaluation of each student's performance in teaching practice, including self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and inter-group evaluation, what insights or thoughts do you have? What have you learned from this? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 25 | Overall, what has impressed you the most about this course? What content or activities have left a deep impression on you? What have you learned from them? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 26 | Regarding <u>course design</u> , what aspects do you think should be continued? What aspects do you think need improvement? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 27 | Regarding the <u>teacher's teaching</u> , what aspects do you think should be continued? What aspects do you think need improvement? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 28 | Regarding <u>teacher-student interaction</u> , what aspects do you think should be continued? What aspects do you think need improvement? (Please illustrate your point.) |
| 29 | Your reflection on the course (Please feel free to express yourself.) |
| 30 | Do you have any other suggestions regarding the course? Is there anything else you would like to share with the teacher? (Please feel free to express yourself.) |

D. Learning Feedback from Students

According to the reflections and feedback from students via the "Course Learning Self-awareness Survey," most

students were particularly impressed with the "Teaching Practice" module design. Student feedback is summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Student feedback on the "teaching practice" module design

| Student | Student Feedback in the "Course Learning Self-awareness Survey" |
|-----------|--|
| Student 1 | The lessons given by my classmates have impressed me the most. I learned about the details and teaching skills required for a successful lesson. |
| Student 2 | I was impressed with the 5-minute poetry teaching practice by each student. This hands-on approach has helped us master skills and motivated us to actively study poetry. I learned: 1. How to prepare lessons, i.e., how to prepare lesson plans; 2. How to give a lesson, i.e., a 5-minute lesson and review recordings to identify and improve on weaknesses; 3. How to reflect and revise course material and lesson plans for improvement. |
| Student 3 | Teaching practice has allowed us to practice essential skills, from preparation to presentation and other teaching details we should consider, laying a foundation for our future teaching. |
| Student 4 | The most impressive part was the teacher's timely and targeted feedback after each student's teaching practice, which helped me learn how to conduct a good lesson. |
| Student 5 | Teaching practice and subsequent feedback from the teacher on our content, performance, and demeanor were particularly impressive. Previously, I had no experience with hands-on teaching. But now, through the teaching practice, I am becoming more skilled at giving lessons. |
| Student 6 | The most impressive part was the teaching practice for the <i>Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry</i> course. Each student had a chance to share their favorite poems with the entire class. This improved our teaching skills and provided us with mutual learning opportunities. I have learned from my classmates' lessons, including familiarity with the course material and a deep understanding of the poems' background and emotions. Furthermore, Hsueh-Yun Chiao's elementary classical |

| | |
|------------|---|
| | poetry lectures have taught me helpful teaching methods and experience, allowing me to correct my mistakes. |
| Student 7 | The teacher's feedback and the excellent performance of some of my classmates were most impressive. I have learned how to give lessons more confidently and naturally from observing my peers. |
| Student 8 | Giving lessons on classical Chinese poetry freely in class has taught me the essential elements and content required for a good poetry lesson, including preparing and adjusting according to students' needs. I have learned that as a teacher, it is necessary to pay close attention to students' responses and adjust teaching accordingly. |
| Student 9 | The teaching practice was most impressive. The teacher's feedback on our weaknesses and suggestions for improvement have significantly enhanced my teaching skills over the semester. I have learned to be mindful of copyright issues when producing slides, set learning objectives, and use mind maps. |
| Student 10 | The most impressive part was the 20-minute group presentation; each member had only five minutes to present. Initially, it seemed impossible to fully deliver the content within such a short period, but we managed it. This has underscored the importance of self-confidence and trust among group members. |

E. Primary Issue and Cause Analysis

- 1) Primary issue: Some students received low grades on their teaching practice performance.
- 2) Cause analysis: After teaching practice, the teacher provided immediate feedback. While most students listened carefully and applied the suggestions to improve, some ignored this feedback. These students also failed to engage well in group discussions, which led to inadequate mastery of the teaching skills and methods required for teaching practice.

F. Targeted Measures for Improvement

Through teaching practice and exploring the *Appreciation of Classical Chinese Poetry* course, this study has identified student learning requirements. This is conducive to reflecting on course instruction and learning. The proposed measures for improvement in the next round of teaching are as follows:

- 1) Before students begin teaching practice, videos of exemplary presentations by upper-level students should be shared. This can provide current students a chance to learn from upper-level student performances.
- 2) Students can be reminded to value the teacher's feedback and to revise their teaching slides, techniques, attire, and demeanor accordingly.
- 3) Students who excel in teaching practice can be praised on-site as encouragement. With their consent, their video presentations can be used for research and as teaching materials to encourage students to work harder.
- 4) Before class, targeted follow-up and tutoring can be offered to students struggling with learning. After class, platforms such as QQ and the Chaoxing Learning Platform can be used to facilitate individual communication, remind students to complete discussion assignments on time, and provide timely feedback.
- 5) During class, student-teacher interaction can be prioritized. The teacher can also encourage participation and focus on meeting student learning requirements to foster a positive learning attitude.
- 6) After class, teachers can regularly reflect on course instruction and learning while adjusting teaching based on student feedback.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on OBE theory and student-centered, outcome-oriented and pursuing continuous improvement philosophies, this study explored EEP student learning outcomes through teaching practice for the *Appreciation of*

Classical Chinese Poetry course. The goal was to contribute to EPA and boost the high-quality development of basic education. While the overall objectives were met, the findings indicate room for continuous improvement in teaching practice. Students rated teaching quality for three academic years on a scale between 93 and 94 points. The proposed measures for continuous improvement in this study will be incorporated into the plan for the next round of teaching. The findings provide valuable insights for EPA educational authorities and practitioners in the education field.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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