

Analysis of the Teaching of Ancient Chinese History in the Heritage Conservation Technology Major

Ying Wang*

Department of Cultural Relics Protection Technology, Beijing Landscape Architecture School, Beijing 102488, China

*Corresponding author: Ying Wang, 13810128290@163.com

Copyright: © 2024 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

Abstract: Ancient Chinese history is an important part of the curriculum of the Heritage Conservation Technology major. Students can better understand the history of cultural relics and improve their humanistic literacy, which will help them in restoring cultural relics. At present, there are numerous challenges in teaching ancient Chinese history in the Heritage Conservation Technology major. These challenges necessitate the development of effective teaching reform strategies. This paper outlines these challenges and explores effective teaching reform strategies to provide a reference for educators.

Keywords: Ancient Chinese history; Heritage Conservation Technology; Teaching reform

Online publication: June 5, 2024

1. Introduction

To meet the requirements of the national cultural development strategy and improve cultural relics protection and restoration, many colleges and universities have set up a Heritage Conservation Technology major. Ancient Chinese history is a compulsory course for students majoring in Heritage Conservation Technology, and its role is to improve students' mastery of historical knowledge and facilitate cultural relics protection and restoration. These include inadequacies in teaching content and methods, resulting in suboptimal learning outcomes for students. To address these challenges, it is imperative to organize and implement teaching reforms aimed at enhancing the quality of both teaching and learning, thereby fostering continuous improvement.

2. Problems in the ancient Chinese history course of the Heritage Conservation Technology major

2.1. Inadequate content

The primary teaching content of ancient Chinese history encompasses various aspects such as the ancient political system, major political events, diplomatic and military situations, and economic development. Studying these topics enables students to comprehend the social changes and developmental processes of ancient China.

This allows students to gain a macro-level understanding of history and subsequently enhance their historical literacy ^[1]. However, the teaching content regarding the daily lives of dynasties, craftsmanship, the movement of cultural relics, and the production processes of cultural relics are less emphasized. This neglect hampers the overall improvement of students' quality and understanding of heritage protection and restoration knowledge.

2.2. Problems in the teaching methods

Currently, due to the influence of exam-oriented education, some teachers still employ a centralized indoctrination approach when teaching ancient Chinese history. This method lacks teacher-student interaction and fails to provide adequate guidance to students, thus limiting their inspiration and hindering the cultivation of creativity and active learning consciousness ^[2]. Additionally, some teachers overlook the characteristics of heritage conservation technology, leading to a teaching process that does not effectively integrate cultural and historical knowledge. Furthermore, the failure to utilize various cultural relics props in teaching also impacts the enhancement of students' abilities.

2.3. Lack of practical lessons

Practical lessons hold a significant position in the Heritage Conservation Technology major. Its primary objective is to enable students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical issues and enhance their practical skills. However, in the teaching of ancient Chinese history, teachers predominantly emphasize explaining the background, context, outcomes, and specific significance of historical events. As a result, students' core learning objective often revolves around memorizing historical knowledge, with theoretical learning taking precedence over practical learning. This imbalance affects the overall enhancement of students' comprehensive abilities ^[3].

3. Teaching reform strategy of ancient Chinese history course of the Heritage Conservation Technology major

3.1. Integrating the knowledge of cultural relics into the teaching of ancient Chinese history course

To meet the requirements of professional training in the Heritage Conservation Technology, teachers must integrate knowledge of cultural relics into the teaching of ancient Chinese history. This approach allows students to comprehend the historical context behind artifacts, thereby enriching their understanding of cultural relics and fostering their ability to protect and restore them. For instance, when discussing historical figures, teachers can incorporate relevant information about cultural relics. For example, while discussing the Spring and Autumn Period's Five Hegemons and King Goujian of Yue, teachers can present images of King Goujian's sword and related cultural relics to students. This visual aid can help students observe and comprehend the inscriptions on King Goujian's sword, grasp its significance, and appreciate its historical importance ^[4]. Similarly, when explaining ancient systems, teachers can introduce cultural relics closely associated with those systems. For instance, when discussing the Qin Dynasty's standardization of currency, teachers can display images of currencies from various pre-unification states alongside those from the unified Qin Empire. This comparative analysis encourages students to discern similarities and differences, thereby deepening their understanding of the subject matter. By employing these teaching methods, teachers can seamlessly integrate the study of ancient Chinese history with cultural relics, enriching students' comprehension of cultural relics' historical context. This approach enhances students' literacy and lays a solid foundation for their future learning endeavors.

3.2. Enhancing students' ability to recognize and discover the historical value of cultural relics

Cultural relics possess significant historical value, so teachers should provide students with opportunities to engage with and understand them during the teaching of ancient Chinese history. The focus should be on fostering students' comprehensive ability to recognize and develop the historical significance of cultural relics^[5]. The focus should be on fostering students' comprehensive ability to recognize and develop the historical significance of cultural relics. For instance, when explaining King Wu's conquest of the Zhou Dynasty at the end of the Shang Dynasty, teachers should delve into the details of the Battle of Muye. After the explanation, teachers can pose questions to students, such as the controversy surrounding the timing of King Wu's conquest of the Zhou Dynasty, which is recorded in *Shangshu* and other historical documents but lacks clear evidence from cultural relics. To address this, students can naturally consider analyzing cultural relics. The teacher can provide details about the Li Gui, explaining that it was unearthed in March 1976 at the Lintong County site in Shaanxi Province. The vessel measures 28 centimeters in height and 22 centimeters in diameter, with a square base and a bird-shaped head. The surface features a dragon pattern. Guided by the teacher, students can carefully observe the inscriptions on the Li Gui to determine the timeframe of King Wu's conquest of the Zhou Dynasty. Additionally, teachers can introduce students to new technologies like C14 detection, astronomical projections, and Jinwen genealogy to assist in determining the answer to the question by combining relevant literature. Through this teaching approach, students are encouraged to think critically, enhance their learning interest, and recognize the historical significance of cultural relics^[6].

3.3. Enhancing students' ability to interpret the historical value of cultural relics

Cultivating students' ability to interpret the historical value of cultural relics is a key teaching objective of the Heritage Conservation Technology major. Therefore, during the teaching of ancient Chinese history, teachers should integrate textbook content and guide students to analyze cultural relics deeply, exploring and interpreting their historical significance to enhance students' overall quality^[7]. For instance, when explaining the history of the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, teachers can present images of bronze swords from the State of Chu and the State of Qin to students. They can then guide students to observe and analyze the similarities and differences between the two. Students may notice that the bronze swords of Qin are longer than those of Chu, with the longest Qin bronze sword approaching 1 meter in length. Teachers can prompt students to analyze the reasons for these differences, leading to various student interpretations. Subsequently, teachers can explain the reasons to the students, emphasizing the proverb "an inch long, an inch strong." They can elaborate on how the length of the sword can significantly impact the outcome of battles, highlighting how the longer swords of the Qin army contributed to their victories over other states. Through this teaching approach, students can gain a deeper and more detailed understanding of the historical value of cultural relics, thereby enhancing their historical literacy to a certain extent^[8].

3.4. Organizing and carrying out field teaching

Teachers should go beyond the confines of classroom instruction when teaching ancient Chinese history. They should incorporate real-world experiences by organizing field trips to historical sites, enabling students to explore historical relics firsthand and deepen their understanding of historical knowledge. This approach helps students develop a broad understanding of cultural relics and enhances their interest in learning. For example, when discussing the military history of the Tang Dynasty, teachers can arrange visits to local historical weapons museums. This allows students to visually examine Tang Dynasty armor, cavalry equipment, and other artifacts, thereby reinforcing their understanding of the period's military history. Similarly, when teaching about ancient

cities, teachers can take students to nearby archaeological sites to illustrate the layout characteristics of ancient urban centers, providing a tangible connection to the historical content ^[9]. Furthermore, when covering topics related to ancient cave art, teachers can organize visits to cave sites, allowing students to appreciate the intricate craftsmanship of ancient artworks firsthand. By integrating theory with practical experiences, students can deepen their understanding of ancient historical knowledge and cultural relics, creating a conducive environment for the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage ^[10].

3.5. Using vivid and intuitive teaching methods

Ancient Chinese history can be quite abstract, making it challenging for students to memorize and engage with the material. A purely abstract approach to teaching can dampen students' interest in learning, ultimately hindering overall teaching quality. To address this issue, teachers should employ vivid and intuitive methods to deliver lessons, allowing students to develop a clear and intuitive understanding of historical events, figures, and cultural relics. This shift from perceptual to rational cognition deepens students' comprehension and retention of ancient Chinese history knowledge. In the classroom, teachers should incorporate archaeological excavations of cultural relics and use storytelling techniques to narrate historical events and introduce significant figures. This approach helps students connect emotionally with historical knowledge and fosters a sense of identification with China's ancient civilization ^[11]. For example, when explaining the feudal system of the Western Zhou Dynasty, teachers can simplify the concept by describing it as a system of governance where territory is divided among meritorious ministers and clan members, who become vassals responsible for managing land. These vassals would then interact with the ruler and pay taxes regularly. Simplifying complex concepts using straightforward language can help students grasp difficult concepts. To further enhance understanding, teachers can supplement explanations with visual aids such as mind maps and artifacts related to the feudal system. These tools provide a visual representation of the feudal system's structure, helping students visualize and internalize the hierarchical relationships involved. By employing these methods, teachers can facilitate a deeper understanding and memory of ancient Chinese history among students ^[12].

3.6. Adopting the comparative method to complete the teaching

The teaching of ancient Chinese history encompasses numerous dynasties and scattered knowledge points, posing challenges for students in understanding and memorization. To enhance teaching quality, teachers can employ the comparative method, guiding students to vertically analyze the political, economic, legal, military, cultural, ethnic, and foreign relations characteristics of each dynasty. This approach helps students elucidate the historical development trajectory and promotes overall improvement in their knowledge level ^[13]. For instance, after explaining the Sui Dynasty, teachers can facilitate a comparative analysis between the Sui Dynasty and the Qin Dynasty to deepen students' understanding and memorization of knowledge. Both dynasties existed for relatively short periods, with the Qin regime lasting only 15 years and the Sui regime 37 years ^[14]. However, their historical impacts differed significantly. The Qin Dynasty's main impact was ending the division and fragmentation of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States period, establishing a centralized power system, and introducing the title of emperor, laying the groundwork for the Western Han Dynasty's development. Conversely, the Sui Dynasty ended the 200 years of division between the Western Jin Dynasty and the Northern and Southern Dynasties, and introduced administrative reforms such as the three-province system, six ministries, and imperial examinations, paving the way for the Tang Dynasty's prosperity. Through this teaching method, students can accurately grasp the distinguishing features of each dynasty, conceptualize the historical progression, and establish a strong foundation for future learning ^[15].

4. Conclusion

Ancient Chinese history holds significant importance in the curriculum of the Heritage Conservation Technology major, exerting a profound influence on students' intellectual development. Consequently, teachers must analyze existing teaching challenges and implement proactive reforms. This involves integrating cultural relics knowledge into the ancient Chinese history course, enhancing students' comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the historical significance of cultural relics, refining their ability to interpret the value of such artifacts, and organizing field trips to bolster teaching quality.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Chen Y, Huang C, 2023, The Importance of Character Historical Materials in High School History Teaching: Taking the Part of Ancient Chinese History in Chinese and Foreign History Outline (Upper) as an Example. *Secondary School Teaching Reference*, 2023(10): 64–67.
- [2] Lu S, 2023, The Practice of “Return To The Scene of History” Teaching Method in the Course of Ancient Chinese History: Taking the Teaching of Six Dynasties’ Documents as an Example. *Journal of Higher Education*, 9(26): 111–114.
- [3] Wang S, Wang Z, 2021, Problems of “China View” in Teaching Ancient Chinese History in Colleges and Universities--Taking Liao, Song, Xixia and Jin History Courses as an Example. *Education and Teaching Forum*, 2021(21): 13–16.
- [4] Wang S, 2023, Teaching Strategies of Ancient Chinese History in Junior High School under the Background of New Curriculum Reform. *Forest Teaching*, 2023(8): 60–63.
- [5] Xi Y, 2021, Exploration of Practical Teaching in Higher Education Courses: Taking “Ancient Chinese History” course as an Example. *Heilongjiang Education (Higher Education Research and Evaluation)*, 2021(6): 36–38.
- [6] Kong X, 2023, Exploration of Character Teaching Activities and Strategies in High School History Curriculum: Taking the Teaching of Ancient Chinese History as an Example. *Examination Weekly*, 2023(9): 114–118.
- [7] Wang Y, 2009, Analysis of the Advantages of Multimedia Teaching in Ancient Chinese History. *Education and Career*, 2009(5): 149–150.
- [8] Yu Z, 2010, Reflections on the Teaching of History Courses in Colleges and Universities--Taking the Teaching of Ancient Chinese History as an Example. *Journal of Inner Mongolia Normal University (Education Science Edition)*, 23(9): 82–84.
- [9] Zhao L, 2014, Teaching Historical Materials in History Classes in Colleges and Universities: Taking Ancient Chinese History as an Example. *Education Teaching Forum*, 2014(28): 242–243 + 244.
- [10] Yang S, 2017, Exploration of Classroom Teaching Reform of Ancient Chinese History in Higher Teacher Institutions: Taking the History Department of Xinzhou Normal College as an Example. *Journal of Xinzhou Normal College*, 33(3): 79–82.
- [11] Li Y, 2015, A Few Thoughts on the Teaching of Ancient Chinese History in Colleges and Universities. *Journal of Inner Mongolia Normal University (Education Science Edition)*, 28(1): 130–132.
- [12] Hao J, 2017 Research and Practice Exploration on the Construction of Teaching Team at the Autonomous Region Level: Taking the Teaching Team of the Ancient Chinese History Course Cluster in Baotou Normal College as an Example. *Academic theory*, 2017(7): 214–216.

- [13] Xiong G, 2015, Ruminating on the Problems Existing in the Teaching of Ancient Chinese History and its Countermeasures. *Academic Weekly*, 2015(36): 6.
- [14] Rao L, 2023, Current Problems and Countermeasures in Teaching Ancient Chinese History in Colleges and Universities. *Think Tank Times*, 2023(6): 121–124.
- [15] Li R, Wang X, Ning W, et al., 2013, The Construction of A New Mode of Teaching Ancient Chinese History from Modern Educational Concept. *Journal of Hebei North College (Social Science Edition)*, 2013(4): 98–101 + 116.

Publisher's note

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.