

A Study on Methods and Approaches for Internalizing Knowledge in Literature Courses of Foreign Language Majors to Enhance Professional Competence

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Abstract: *With the continuous development of globalization and cross-cultural communication, the importance of foreign language education has become increasingly prominent. Literature courses, as a core component of foreign language education, not only serve to cultivate language skills but also play a crucial role in developing students' critical thinking, cultural understanding, and innovative capabilities. This paper discusses the mechanisms and approaches for internalizing knowledge in foreign language literature courses, elaborating on the role of knowledge internalization in enhancing professional competence, and proposes optimization strategies. The research indicates that knowledge internalization is not merely about understanding the language structure of literary works, but also involves a profound comprehension of their cultural context and social values.*

Keywords: *Foreign Language Major, Literature Courses, Knowledge Internalization, Professional Competence, Critical Thinking, Cross-Cultural Communication*

Introduction

Foreign language education, especially in literature courses, has long been an important avenue for cultivating students' cross-cultural communication abilities and critical thinking skills in higher education. With the accelerated process of globalization, foreign language learning has shifted from being confined to language skills acquisition to a more comprehensive focus on cultivating students' overall competencies. The "Guidelines for Undergraduate Foreign Language and Literature Majors in Higher Education," compiled by the Foreign Language and Literature Teaching Advisory Board of the Ministry of Education in 2022, states that foreign language programs should aim to cultivate compound talents with "patriotism and global perspectives," focusing on the holistic development of students' cross-cultural communication abilities and humanistic literacy. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has repeatedly emphasized that humanities disciplines should center on developing students' critical thinking, cultural appreciation, and innovation abilities to better meet the needs of social development in the new era ^[1].

Both domestic and international scholars have provided extensive theoretical and practical support for foreign language education. For example, Widdowson believes that literary teaching not only extends language skills but also serves as an important means to cultivate students' cultural sensitivity and critical thinking ^[2]. Kramsch pointed out that literature courses help students build meaning between language and culture, enhancing their cross-cultural competence. Domestically, scholars such as Wang Chuming have emphasized that through deep reading and analysis of literary texts, students can strengthen their recognition and understanding of foreign cultures, while simultaneously developing the integration of language skills and humanistic literacy. Although many studies have focused on the role and significance of foreign language literature teaching, certain gaps still remain. On one hand, most research primarily concentrates on the goals, content, and methods of literature teaching, with relatively little systematic exploration of the key process of knowledge internalization. On the other hand, existing studies often focus on the cultural educational function of literature courses, while research on how critical thinking, cross-cultural understanding, and innovative abilities are cultivated through knowledge internalization remains insufficient. Against this background, this paper aims to explore how effective mechanisms of knowledge internalization in foreign language literature courses can promote the enhancement of students' professional competence, thus improving the quality

of foreign language education and better meeting the demands of talent development in the context of globalization.

1. Theoretical Basis of Knowledge Internalization in Foreign Language Literature Courses

1.1 The Concept and Mechanism of Knowledge Internalization

Knowledge internalization refers to the process by which learners transform explicit external knowledge into internal cognitive structures, making it the foundation for autonomous thinking and behavior. For foreign language students, knowledge internalization is not only about memorizing linguistic knowledge but also involves deeply understanding and integrating the cultural background and social values embedded in literary works. In literature courses, the process of knowledge internalization encompasses multiple stages, including perception, understanding, application, and reflection, from the reception of knowledge to its internalization. Through academic activities such as reading, discussion, and writing, students gradually transform external knowledge into their own cognitive framework, thus forming critical thinking and cultural awareness. This process includes language analysis, cross-cultural understanding, and the development of literary critique skills^[3].

In the process of knowledge internalization, the guidance of teachers, classroom interaction, and the design of academic tasks are crucial. By engaging in deep learning, stimulating intellectual exchanges, and introducing knowledge from multiple perspectives, students can more effectively internalize knowledge into their cognitive system. In this process, literature courses guide students to engage in critical reading and analysis, encouraging them to reflect on works, culture, and ideas, thus promoting the development of critical and innovative thinking.

1.2 Composition and Educational Goals of Foreign Language Professional Competence

Foreign language professional competence refers to the comprehensive abilities students develop through language learning and cultural immersion. Specifically, it includes language skills, cultural understanding, cross-cultural communication abilities, critical thinking, and literary appreciation. Language skills serve as the foundation of foreign language professional competence, involving the five core abilities of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation. Cultural understanding emphasizes students' deep understanding of the cultural context of the target language, including literature, history, philosophy, and other areas. Cross-cultural communication competence requires students to effectively communicate and interact in different cultural contexts, which not only extends language ability but also reflects sensitivity to and adaptability to cultural differences. Critical thinking involves students' ability to analyze, evaluate, and reflect on literary works or cultural phenomena. Literary appreciation refers to students' ability to understand and appreciate the artistic value and cultural significance of foreign literary works^[4].

1.3 The Relationship Between Knowledge Internalization and Professional Competence

Knowledge internalization and foreign language professional competence are closely interrelated. First, knowledge internalization serves as the foundation for cultivating professional competence. In foreign language courses, learning about literature involves not just mastering linguistic forms but also understanding the deeper cultural and societal values behind the language. By internalizing knowledge of language structures, cultural symbols, and historical contexts in literary works, students can enhance their cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural communication skills, thus laying the foundation for the improvement of their professional competence. Second, knowledge internalization is key to enhancing critical thinking and innovation abilities. Critical reading and analysis in literature courses encourage students to question, analyze, and evaluate information, thereby developing independent thinking and critical judgment abilities. This process is essential for the development of students' intellectual capabilities, academic skills, and innovative thinking.

2. Approaches for Implementing Knowledge Internalization in Literature Courses for Foreign Language Majors

2.1 Internalizing Knowledge through Literary Analysis and Critical Thinking

The analysis of literary works is not only the core content of literature courses for foreign language majors, but also a key approach to promoting knowledge internalization. Through in-depth analysis of literary works, students are able to connect the surface-level language structures with the deeper cultural, social, and historical contexts, thus achieving a more profound internalization of knowledge [5].

2.1.1 Interpreting Language and Structure

In the analysis of literary works, interpreting the language and structure is the most fundamental and crucial step. By closely analyzing the language, students can identify the language features, rhetorical devices, narrative structures, etc., in the work. This not only helps them understand the surface meaning of the text but also provides a foundation for deeper reflection and critique.

2.1.2 Understanding Cultural Background and Cultivating Critical Thinking

Literary works are always embedded in specific cultural, historical, and social contexts, and when analyzing these works, students must deeply understand these contexts. This cultural and historical interpretation not only helps students accurately understand the text, but also encourages them to critically reflect on the values, societal issues, and other elements presented within the works. For example, by analyzing cultural conflicts in a foreign literary work, students can not only understand the differences between cultures but also examine the social and ethical challenges that these differences bring.

2.1.3 Literary Criticism and Stimulating Innovative Thinking

The analysis of literary works is not merely about reconstructing the author's intentions but should also involve offering new insights and judgments from a critical perspective. In this process, students' innovative thinking is exercised, especially through the practice of literary criticism. Students learn how to raise new questions, challenge established viewpoints, and analyze works from previously unexplored angles. This combination of critical and innovative thinking encourages students to transform external knowledge into their own modes of thought, further facilitating the internalization of knowledge.

2.2 Cross-Cultural Learning and Cultivating Interdisciplinary Competence

In literature courses for foreign language majors, cross-cultural learning and the development of interdisciplinary skills are of great significance. They not only help students understand the cultural background of the target language but also cultivate their interdisciplinary competence through the comparison and dialogue of different cultural perspectives.

2.2.1 Deepening Cross-Cultural Understanding

As a carrier of culture, literary works reflect the history, customs, and values of the society in which the author belongs. Through cross-cultural learning, students are able to closely connect the literary works with their underlying cultural context, gaining a deeper understanding of social phenomena and humanistic ideas in different cultures. For instance, when reading Shakespeare's works, students are not only analyzing the language and structure but also experiencing the social background and humanistic thoughts of the English Renaissance. This kind of learning enables students to understand the target language's culture more comprehensively and allows them to communicate and interact effectively across cultural barriers [6].

2.2.2 Integrating Multidisciplinary Perspectives

Cultivating interdisciplinary competence is one of the key goals in literature courses for foreign language majors. Literature is not just a manifestation of language; it is deeply connected with disciplines such as history, sociology, and philosophy. When analyzing literary works, students need to draw upon knowledge from multiple disciplines, combining perspectives from historical events, social structures, philosophical ideas, and other fields to interpret the multifaceted meanings of the works. For example, to understand a British absurdist play, students not only need to grasp the surface meaning of the language but also consider the social and historical context of 20th-century modernism and

existentialist philosophy. Similarly, when reading Charles Dickens' works, students can gain insight into the historical landscape of the Victorian era. They can also explore aspects of daily life, such as clothing, food, and societal issues like child labor, the corruption of workhouses, and crime in London. Only through this interdisciplinary approach can students truly understand the deeper implications of the works.

2.2.3 Enhancing Cross-Cultural Adaptability and Innovative Thinking

Through cross-cultural learning, students can not only improve their awareness and adaptability to different cultures, but also stimulate innovative thinking through the collision of cultures. The cross-cultural analysis of literary works allows students to reflect on themselves from a multicultural perspective, teaching them how to maintain independent thinking and an innovative attitude in the context of globalization.

2.3 Language Practice and Academic Writing as Pathways for Knowledge Internalization

Language practice and academic writing are indispensable components of literature courses for foreign language majors, playing a crucial role in the process of knowledge internalization. Through language practice, students can translate theoretical knowledge into practical use, while academic writing serves as an important way to deepen knowledge understanding and dissemination ^[7].

2.3.1 Active Learning in Language Practice

Language practice activities provide students with opportunities to transform classroom learning into practical abilities. By engaging in language interactions, discussions, and presentations, students can deepen their understanding of literary knowledge in real language environments and flexibly apply it in practice. During these activities, students not only enhance their language skills but also improve their perception and expression of literary works. This active learning approach effectively facilitates students in internalizing knowledge into their own language abilities and cultural awareness, thus enhancing their cross-cultural communication skills and linguistic flexibility.

2.3.2 Cultivating Academic Writing Skills and Internalizing Knowledge

Academic writing is the main way to transform the knowledge acquired in literature courses into academic outcomes, and it is an important part of the knowledge internalization process. Through academic writing, students can convert their understanding of literary works and cultural phenomena into systematic academic language. This not only deepens their mastery of knowledge but also helps them organize and further develop their thoughts during the writing process. Academic writing is not just training in language expression, but also a reflection of critical thinking and academic innovation. During writing, students must learn how to clearly present their viewpoints, use critical thinking for in-depth analysis, and support their arguments with references to scholarly literature.

2.3.3 Interaction Between Writing and Reflection Promoting Knowledge Internalization

Academic writing is not only a process of knowledge output but also a process of reflection and knowledge deepening. As students write, they continually revise and refine their ideas, which drives the internalization and innovation of knowledge. Each academic paper or writing task prompts students to reflect on existing knowledge, reconsider literary works and their cultural contexts, pose new questions, and seek solutions. Through this interaction between writing and reflection, students continuously strengthen their independent learning abilities, making literary knowledge truly internalized as part of their academic resources, laying the foundation for future academic research ^[8].

3. Optimization Strategies for Knowledge Internalization in Literature Courses for Foreign Language Majors

3.1 The Role of Innovative Teaching Methods in Promoting Knowledge Internalization and Competence Development

In literature courses for foreign language majors, innovative teaching methods play a crucial role in promoting both knowledge internalization and the development of various competencies. Traditional teaching methods often focus on teacher-centered knowledge delivery, which can limit students' active learning and cognitive development. In contrast, innovative teaching methods such as flipped classrooms, case-based teaching, and project-based learning (PBL) effectively encourage active student engagement and critical thinking.

The flipped classroom, by shifting learning tasks to before-class activities, allows students to learn independently and use classroom time for discussions and problem-solving. This approach fosters active participation and the development of critical thinking, facilitating the deep internalization of knowledge. The case-based teaching method guides students to apply theoretical knowledge to solve practical problems through specific literary analysis scenarios, thereby enhancing their academic thinking and creativity. Project-based learning (PBL), through the completion of real-world projects, strengthens students' teamwork and interdisciplinary abilities, connecting classroom theory with practical application and further promoting the transformation and internalization of knowledge^[9].

3.2 Optimization of Course Content and Textbook System

Optimizing course content and the textbook system is a key factor in enhancing the effectiveness of literature courses for foreign language majors. Course design should strike a balance between the depth of theoretical knowledge and the cultivation of practical skills, while also integrating interdisciplinary perspectives to broaden students' academic horizons.

Course content should keep pace with the latest developments in the field, integrating diverse areas such as literary theory, cultural studies, and cross-cultural communication. This not only improves students' academic abilities but also enhances their cross-cultural understanding and global perspectives. The optimization of the textbook system should incorporate modern literature, literary phenomena in the context of globalization, and recent academic research findings, avoiding outdated or irrelevant content. Additionally, textbooks should emphasize cultural diversity, strengthening students' cross-cultural communication skills, enabling them to understand and apply literary knowledge in a globalized context.

3.3 Integration of On-Campus and Off-Campus Practices and Evaluation Mechanisms

Integrating on-campus and off-campus practical activities with evaluation mechanisms is an important strategy for promoting knowledge internalization and enhancing comprehensive competence. Off-campus practical activities, such as cultural exchanges, literary field trips, and on-site research, help students connect classroom knowledge with real-life experiences, deepen their understanding of literary works, and improve their cross-cultural communication skills.

Regarding evaluation mechanisms, a diversified assessment approach should be adopted, incorporating assignments, academic writing, class participation, and project outcomes for comprehensive evaluation. This type of assessment is more reflective of students' academic levels and overall competence, avoiding the narrow focus of traditional exam-based evaluations. It is a more effective way to promote both the internalization of knowledge and the improvement of students' competencies.

Conclusion

This article discusses the implementation approaches and optimization strategies for knowledge internalization in literature courses for foreign language majors, emphasizing the importance of innovative teaching methods, course content optimization, and both on-campus and off-campus practical activities. The research shows that knowledge internalization is not only about mastering language skills in foreign language learning, but also involves a profound understanding of the cultural, historical, and social contexts behind literary works. By engaging in in-depth literary analysis, cross-cultural learning, and academic writing, students can undergo a transformation in their thinking patterns within a multicultural context, cultivating critical thinking and innovative abilities. However, challenges remain in the process of knowledge internalization, especially in terms of effectively integrating interdisciplinary perspectives into teaching practice and strengthening academic writing skills. In the future, the teaching of literature courses for foreign language majors should further enhance the cultivation of globalization and cultural adaptability, focus on strengthening practical components, and employ more flexible and diverse teaching evaluation mechanisms to promote the deep internalization of knowledge.

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