

The Conceptual Innovation and Practical Path of Primary School Homework Design under the New Curriculum Standard

Wen Junyao, Odkhuu Sanduijav

Otgontenger University, Ulaanbaatar 13343, Mongolia

Abstract: In the context of the implementation of the new curriculum standards and the policy of the so-called Double Reduction, the inadequacy of the old-fashioned, inflexible homework model in primary school has been growing more evident, since the mechanical tasks cannot satisfy the demands in developing the core competencies. This paper based on the educational philosophy of the new curriculum standards and practical experience of teaching in a primary school examines the current flaws in the design of homework, defines the main concepts of conceptual innovation, and defines an innovative approach that will be oriented at competency, focused on people, and integrated with diversity. It provides innovative directions in various aspects through the patterns of cognitive development of primary school students, investigates practical solutions including tiered design, context-sensitive generation of task, and home-school interaction, and suggests ways of optimization. To enhance the homework system, make the most of its educational potential, and assist in the all-round advancement of primary school students competencies.

Keywords: New Curriculum Standards; Primary Education; Homework; Homework Design; Competency Development

0. Introduction

The 2022 version of the Compulsory Education Curriculum Standards clearly states that the main educational goal is the development of core competencies, requiring changes in the volume of primary school homework and improving its quality and structure optimization. Homework acts as a significant link between school-based learning and after-school education, and directly impacts the knowledge retention, habit, and skill development of the students, and thus can be considered as a continuation of and additional to classroom instruction. At present, many primary schools also continue to follow conventional ways of designing homework, so they have homogenous tasks, repetitive forms, and few functional uses, all of which do not fit into the human-oriented educational philosophy stated in the new guidelines. In turn, this article defines the notion of homework design in line with the new curriculum demands, eliminates the limits of traditional design, and investigates the scientific implementation directions that would offer compliant and practicable reference solutions to reforming primary school homework.

1. Existing Issues in Primary School Homework Design Under the New Curriculum Standards

1.1 The design philosophy is rigid and outdated.

At present, there are still some primary school teachers who adhere to the traditional teaching mindset in the homework design philosophy and view homework as an instrument to reinforce classroom learning. They focus more on memorization and mechanical activities disregarding the educational role of homework. The majority of teachers focus on increasing test scores as a major goal, without properly examining the competency development criteria specified in the new curriculum standards, and not considering the physiological and cognitive features of the elementary student. During regular lessons, homework planning is overly geared toward revising theoretical information, ignoring the need to develop the critical thinking, practical abilities, and innovative consciousness of the students. Moreover, teachers are very strict about the idea that the standard homework helps in assessment and control, rejecting to change the conventional homework models, and not embracing the concept of differentiated instruction. Such discrepancy

between the homework practice and the educational intentions of the new curriculum standards makes it unsuitable to address the developmental requirements of the contemporary primary education.

1.2 The content of assignments is highly homogeneous.

At the moment, there is a lot of homogeneity in the content of primary school homework as the tasks assigned to the children of the same grade are similar both in terms of content, level of difficulty, and quantity without considering the differences in individual learning styles. Due to the large differences in the ability to acquire knowledge and foundation level of students, standardized homework causes polarization: talented students cannot develop further, whereas weaker students are under too much pressure to complete it. The homework material is essentially restricted to the information within textbooks, which is largely copying exercises, calculation questions and recitation tasks – material that is boring and detached from everyday life ^[1].

1.3 The format of assignments is monotonous and rigid.

Nowadays, the structure of homework in elementary schools is still predictable and inflexible during the extended period of time where written paper-and-pen tasks are absolutely dominant, whereas practical, hands-on, and inquiry-based tasks make up a negligible amount. The main task of lower grade Chinese homework is copying new characters and memorizing texts, as well as mathematics homework, which is mostly about the mental calculation, columnar calculation. Even though they are high schoolers, their assignments are mainly practice exercises and essay writing without any sense of innovation and attraction. Such a strictly defined format does not encourage students to undertake homework on their own initiative and frequently causes disinterest in the study and does not foster comprehensive skills of students in hands-on practice, independent inquiry and teamwork. This unified homework methodology is against the diversified assignment design needs of the new curriculum standards, it prevents the realization of individual developmental potential of students, and impedes the development of their overall competencies.

2. Conceptual Innovation in Primary School Homework Design Under the New Curriculum Standards

2.1 Innovation in Educational Philosophy: Focusing on Competency-Oriented Education

According to the new curriculum standards, the concept of homework design has left its traditional knowledge-based framework and adopted a new educational ideology in terms of the development of core competencies, the integration of the overarching goal of promoting ethical values and bringing up students during the whole process of homework design. Homework is not only a means of reinforcing knowledge but also an educational vehicle that helps develop core competencies in students, shape their character and improve their overall capabilities. In creating homework, teachers have to change their attitudes towards the design of homework by discarding the exam-centered strategy and replacing it with the core competency requirements stated in every subject in the new curriculum standards to effectively identify the purpose of education. Knowledge transmission, skill development, and value cultivation should be balanced in the design process, and homework should be used to facilitate the formation of habits of independent learning, critical thinking, and active research in students. This change in the paradigm of problem-solving to consolidate into the cultivation of competencies coincides with the requirements of high-quality development of primary education in the contemporary world.

2.2 Innovation in Design Dimensions: Adhering to a Human-Centered Principle

The conceptual approach to innovation is based on the idea of humanistic education that goes beyond a one-size-fits-all homogeneous method of designing homework to create personalized and diversified homework design dimensions. Following Piagets theory of cognitive development, the levels of homework are classified depending on the cognitive characteristics, learning capacity

and interest preferences of students at various stages of education to address the differences in developmental levels of individuals. The innovative design has several dimensions, such as complexity, volume, style, and environment, which complexity is subdivided into three levels (simple, complex, and extra), volume is regulated by the principle of minimizing volume and raising quality, styles are combined with written and practical elements, and environments combine school, family, and social environments. Also, interests of students are considered by providing autonomous homework modules whereby students can choose tasks based on their needs. This is an application of the educational philosophy of teaching based on individual aptitude, making sure that all the students acquire significant development and progress.

2.3 Innovation in Functional Value: Achieving Multi-faceted Empowerment

The conventional form of homework has been only to consolidate knowledge, but with the new curriculum standards, homework has become diversified and innovative in terms of functional values, which includes knowledge review, skill development, emotional cultivation, and home-school interaction. On the knowledge plane, homework strengthens the basic classroom knowledge and fills gaps to improve the knowledge system; on the skill plane, practical tasks promote hands-on, inquiry-driven, and creative thinking; on the emotional plane, life-related tasks connect student learning to real-life situations, developing a feeling of responsibility and the humanistic literacy. Also, homework acts as a mediator between home and school allowing parents to keep track of their children learning accurately and helping teachers to educate them at home, establishing synergism between home-school educational methods. The complex nature of homework is totally consistent with the fundamental demands of the new curriculum standards of holistic education.

3. Innovative Principles for Primary School Homework Design Under the New Curriculum Standards

3.1 The Principle of Competency-Oriented Education: Upholding the Core of Educational Mission

Literacy is an elementary concept of designing homework at primary schools under the new curriculum criteria. This is closely related to the competence development requirements in the subjects as stipulated in the compulsory education curriculum standards, as it incorporates particular literacy goals into each homework task. In developing assignments, instructors are required to sub-divide major aspects of literacy cultivation within a discipline and state explicitly the relevant competency objectives, e.g., Chinese language assignments are centered on language usage and cultural heritage literacy and mathematics assignment aim at developing logical reasoning and practical application competencies. The redundant repetitive exercises need to be removed, homogeneous practice tasks simplified, and homework structures optimized so that each assignment has the desired effect of developing specific competencies^[2]. At the same time, homework should also involve the development of universal competencies that include self-directed learning, collaborative inquiry, and innovative thinking thus ensuring the synergistic development of both subject-specific and comprehensive literacy and maintaining the basic educational intent behind homework.

3.2 The Principle of Adaptability: Tailored to Students' Learning Needs

The principle of adaptability is implemented in a student-oriented way, which means that the design of homework has to be adapted to the cognitive level and learning requirements of primary school pupils at various grade levels and academic levels. To the lower-grade students where thinking is largely concrete, homework must make theory less complex and include hands-on, engaging interactive activities based on their cognitive characteristics. Advanced-grade children with higher logical reasoning can engage in more explorative and holistic assignments to develop critical thinking skills. The categorization of homework into three levels is used to tackle individual learning disparities in a class, and they are as follows; the foundation level is aimed at students

with difficulties whereby it aims at reinforcing fundamental knowledge; the advanced level is aimed at students with average capabilities where it aims at improving the use of knowledge; and the extension level is aimed at the high-achievers where they are challenged with innovative thinking activities. The amount of homework and its length are strictly regulated – written tasks are almost absent in lower grades and assignments at higher grade levels are assigned within specific time limits in order to reduce unnecessary academic load.

3.3 The Principle of Practicality: Integration with Real-life Scenarios

The principle of practicability demands that the separation between homework and ordinary life is eliminated by creating practical, experiential homework tasks that consider the real life situation of students and thus satisfy the teaching demand of using knowledge in practice as per the new curriculum standards. Teachers need to rely on subject-specific teaching resources of everyday life and combine textbook learning with the lifestyle, social life and the environment to make sure that homework goes beyond textbooks and is closely related to the realities of life. As an illustration, Chinese language homework can have records of life observation and oral communication exercises; math homework might consist of shopping calculations and spatial measurement problems; and science homework may contain observations of plants and easy experimental questions^[3]. Further, interdisciplinary practice methods ought to be introduced into thematic integrated practical work, such as campus water saving surveys or studies on local culture, to help pupils learn how to use the acquired knowledge in practice and improve their skills to transfer knowledge and apply it in practice.

4. Practical Approaches to Homework Design in Primary Schools Under the New Curriculum Standards

4.1 Optimize assignment content and enrich material resources

The primary school homework content under the new curriculum standard teaching requirements has been made more efficient through the removal of repetitive, boring, and similar tasks and creation of a diverse homework resource system. The teachers have shifted their attention to the main knowledge points of the textbooks, and maintain the consolidating exercises (which they do not exceed 50 percent of homework) to make sure that students build up their knowledge background. Real-life contexts, natural and cultural aspects as well as topical social issues are introduced into the homework materials along with the fun and practical elements: e.g., Chinese homework consists of creating characters and reading picture books, whereas math homework contains discount calculations at shopping centers and making furniture arrangements plans. Also, interdisciplinary integration requirement is applied through the combination of knowledge across different subjects based on thematic frameworks; the integrated assignments are developed, including those focused on the theme of Autumn Nature, involving Chinese observation writing, art painting, and scientific plant observation, which adds to the richness of the homework content and increases its educational value.

4.2 Innovating Assignment Formats to Optimize the Completion Experience

To get past some of the restrictions of conventional written tasks, we have come up with new types of assignments based on four categories of assignments, that is, written, hands-on, inquiry-based and engaging activities, which will make the homework of the students more enjoyable. The assignments are written with a smaller volume of questions and they focus on thinking-expanding exercises, which decrease mechanical copying and calculation. Hands-on assignments also comprise activities like handicrafts, experimental research, and activities relating to practical living skills so as to enhance the practical capabilities of students. Inquiry-based assignments require extended research efforts, i.e., conducting surveys of local folklore customs or conducting research of waste sorting, so as to develop independent research skills. Engaging assignments are gamified designs and use level based formats such as character themed board games and

mathematical challenge quizzes to curb the monotony of homework. Teachers can strike a balance between active and passive learning, as well as between task completion and relaxation by incorporating different types of assignments based on the stage of teaching, which stimulates the initiative of students in carrying out tasks and reduces their indifference towards learning.

4.3 Improve the Support Mechanism and Strengthen Home–School Collaboration

Develop an overall system of the development of homework, its assessment, evaluation, and supervision, as well as improving cooperation between the home and school to ensure the successful introduction of innovative approaches to homework. Teachers need to create tiered homework design models and dynamically change the content and level of difficulty of the assignment depending on the level of learning progress of students; use various forms of evaluation that balance outcome evaluation with process evaluation, with emphasis on emphasizing the critical thinking abilities of students and the progress they make in learning^[4]. Teaching research platforms must be created in schools and regular professional development sessions organized to improve the innovative design skills of teachers. Direct parents to change their attitude to education and abandon the focus on scores, eliminate unnecessary interference and extra practice loads, and help teachers direct practical homework tasks. Create effective communication lines between the home and school that allow parents to offer prompt feedback regarding homework completion so that teachers can modify assignments appropriately and create an encouraging cycle that will guarantee the continued development of innovative homework practices.

5. epilogue

The present paper is aimed to discuss the existing problems with regards to the ideas, substance, and forms of homework in primary schools, reaching the conceptual novelty at the levels of philosophy, dimension, and value. It provides clear explanations of the design principles concerning competency-based, adaptive, and practical approaches and offers practical directions of content optimization, format innovation, and cooperation between the school and the family. Teachers should continue to enhance their knowledge of the educational philosophy that is outlined in the new curriculum standards in future teaching practice, use the developmental tendencies of students as the basis of their homework design, improve their homework plans, overcome the disadvantages of the traditional homework, and create an effective, high-quality, personalized system of homework that acts as an important educational resource that assists in the comprehensive and healthy growth of pupils in the primary level of education.

References:

- [1] Wang Bangwu. Exploration of Large Unit Teaching in High School Mathematics under the New Curriculum Standards [J]. Research on Mathematical and Physical Problem-Solving, 2025, (36):41–43.
- [2] Xie Ruiping. Reflections on Enhancing Academic Quality through “Interdisciplinary” Teaching of Junior High School Biology under the New Curriculum Standards [J]. Success, 2025, (35):96–98.
- [3] Tan Yonghuan. Research on Teaching Practice of Primary Students’ Writing under the New Curriculum Standards [J]. Chinese Language Construction, 2025, (18):86.
- [4] Hu Xinyi, He Jing, Rong Zhenshan, et al. Development and Application of a Modeling Ability Assessment Tool for Junior High School Physics Based on the New Curriculum Standards [J]. Journal of Capital Normal University (Natural Science Edition), 2025, 46(04):76–84.