Enabling the Exploration of Cultural Geography by Students

--- A Case Study of Teacher-librarian Collaborative Cognitive Education

Shucheng Liu  Qiuru Wu

Evergreen Education Foundation
Danfeng High School
The Cultural Geography Project

Inquiry-based Learning

- Background
- Methodology
- Evaluation
- Design and Process
Background
- The School Library Development

Phase 1
2002-2008

Partnered with EEF for basic development:
- Automated circulation
- Developing collection
- Annual training and exchange

Phase 2
2009 till now

Service development:
- Leveraging EEF small projects
- Reading program => inquiry-based learning
Training student volunteers

Hand-made bookmark contest

Project tutoring by teacher and librarian

Studying local hermits in Qin Dynasty
Origins of the Project
– Extension of the Textbook
Outcome-based Planning and Evaluation (OBPE)

Learning objectives (expected outcomes) → Learning activities and work products

To what extent the objectives achieved → Work products

Process reflection → Design improvements

Rubrics
Bloom's Taxonomy (2001)

Higher order thinking skills
- Creating
- Evaluating
- Analyzing
- Applying
- Understanding

Lower order thinking skills
- Remembering
Learning by Doing

- Experiencing
- Reflecting
- Applying
- Abstracting
Project Design and Process

Task 1: Self study what is culture and its relationship with the geographical environment => study report

Task 2: Find photos of cultural landscapes with regional characteristics and analyze their geographical backgrounds => photos and analysis

Task 3: Select cultural phenomenon, analyze the geographical factors in its formation => essays

Task 4: Traveling students: analyze the influence of the geographical environment on culture in destinations => essay
Self Study, Tutoring, and Exchange

Teacher tutoring before self study

Students doing background research

Librarian answering questions

Exchange after the trips
analyzed the geographical factors which lead to the architectural features of the Beijing courtyard.
Outcome-based Evaluation and Reflection

Evaluation Results

Success factors

Future improvements
Evaluation Results and Analysis

Outcome 1 and 2 – All Students

**Outcome 1**: Understanding of the relationship between cultural differences and geographical environment
Reality: about half of the students reach the levels of applying and analyzing
Reason: weak research capability, lack of knowledge on geographical theories and weak geographical analysis capability

**Outcome 2**: Information literacy
Reality: 35% of the students selected topics clear and feasible, lack of academic information sources, 20% of the students analyzed logically and relatively comprehensively
Reason: the librarian and the teacher themselves weak, lack of systematic training for students
Evaluation Results and Analysis

Outcome 3 and 4 – Seven student travelers

**Outcome 3**: Ability of sensing and then analyzing the relationship between culture and geographical environment
Reality: only 29% showed good sensitivity, and only 14% provided good analysis.
Reason: weak geographical analysis capability, lack of in-depth tutoring

**Outcome 4**: Communication skills
Reality: 57% of the students could not understand questions or comments from others accurately, 86% of the students had no eye contact with others.
Reason: oral presentation skill is long overlooked, ad-hoc collaborative learning
Inquiry-based learning on daily life topics
Teachers moving away from the habit of spoon feeding students
Setting up realistic goals based on students’ current status
Future Improvements

- Students’ understanding in geographical knowledge, theories, analysis methodology
- Leveraging quality geography magazines and documentaries, also travels, to observe, ask, listen, think and analyze
- Training of teachers, librarians and students in research literacy
- Combined with pedagogies: inquiry-based, collaborative, interdisciplinary and learning through real work in life, etc
Future Improvements

Stringent implementation of the outcome-based planning and evaluation

1) Backward design, formative assessment => adjusting the rubrics and design

   e.g. rubrics missed 2 evaluating dimensions -- the information search strategy and citation -- for information literacy outcome

   => missing pieces in the design

2) OBPE is brand-new to students --- training and continuous guidance important
Future Improvements

Facilitators: refine training and tutoring

1) Systematic training (teacher and librarian play complementary roles)
2) Fine tutoring – break the old habits

Collaborative learning design

use detailed intermediary working products to observe and guide students’ collaboration
Key points:

- With topics from daily life, an inquiry-based and collaborative learning process can help the students regain their initiative.

- The guidance and support from librarians and teachers need to be systematic and tailored at the same time.

Future plan:

- Study the relationship between local culture and geographical environment of the Danfeng County.
Questions

• What shall a secondary school librarian bring to the table in cognitive education considering the teacher-librarian collaboration?

• Considering these unique capacities, how do the librarian as an individual and the library as an organization work together to facilitate the capacity building of the librarian and the team?
Thank You

Shucheng Liu
gaozhongdl@163.com

Qiuru Wu
1046333529@qq.com
+86 13309143936

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