

# A Review of the Strategies for Establishing the Intention of Core Literacy-Oriented High School History Classroom Teaching

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## Abstract

The establishment of teaching intention in high school history class is a core content of the national education system and an important form of the school education system. It is a strategic support point for the country's moral education and talent cultivation, and one of the top-level designs of the Party and the government for deepening basic education reform. Optimizing the design of teaching intention in high school history class can effectively improve students' historical cognition, enhance their sense of social responsibility and historical mission, and improve their historical thinking ability. It is of great significance for the sustainable development of students' correct worldviews, values, and outlooks on life in the future and the improvement of their comprehensive qualities.

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## Keywords

Core literacy; High school history class; Teaching intention strategy

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## 1. The importance of transforming the teaching intention strategies in high school history classrooms

Zhu Ke said in "High Intention Building Classrooms: Research on the Teaching Intention of the New High School History Textbooks": "Literature is based on meaning, and classes are based on intention." It is evident that teaching intention is the main goal of history classroom teaching and also the guiding direction for history teachers in their teaching design. In recent years, with the continuous deepening of high school curriculum

reform, the state has successively issued documents such as "Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening Curriculum Reform and Implementing the Fundamental Task of Cultivating Virtue and Nurturing Talent", "Core Literacy for Chinese Students", "Outline for the Construction of an Education Power (2024–2035)", and "High School History Curriculum Standards (2017 Edition, 2025 Revision)", which have focused on the research of teaching intention strategies in high school history classrooms oriented towards core literacy. This is mainly based on the following considerations:

- (1) The practical needs of the current basic education reform and the development of the new college entrance examination model;
- (2) The actual problems encountered in the teaching practice of the current national high school textbooks;
- (3) The development needs of the current national education system and talent selection mechanism reform;
- (4) The practical needs of the current education field's attention and emphasis on teaching intention;
- (5) The educational needs of the transformation of high school students' learning methods and behavioral habits.

Focusing on the optimized design of teaching intention in the teaching practice of high school history can promote the smooth development of history teaching, guide students to independently and cooperatively explore historical issues, enrich the diversity of students' thinking in the classroom, stimulate students' initiative in exploring problems, and enhance the professional knowledge and skills of history teachers. This will be the era mission and social responsibility of history educators and is also of outstanding importance and urgent necessity in the teaching practice of high school history.

## **2. A review of the research on the teaching intention strategies in high school history classrooms**

### **2.1. Foreign research**

It is well known that the development of teaching intention originated from the early European theme teaching theory represented by Professor Morrison, which advocated the cultivation of students' problem-solving abilities and the development of their overall quality through large-unit teaching. Later, from the 1980s to the end of the 20th century, American scholar Susan Kovalik and her research team proposed the transformation from the "integrated theme teaching model" to the "core knowledge" curriculum reform, emphasizing the joint implementation of cross-disciplinary theme teaching. On this basis, the United States further issued the "National History Teaching Standards" at the end of the 20th

century, advocating that history teaching should set up certain scenarios to enhance students' understanding of historical knowledge.

It can be said that from the "comprehensive curriculum theory" of German educator Herbart in the 17th century to Morrison's "Morrison unit teaching method" at the University of Chicago in the United States, then to the "integrated theme teaching model" of American scholar Susan Kovalik and her research team, and then to the modern "core knowledge" and "enduring understanding" in the United States, and finally to the "historical theme teaching" in modern times, the diverse historical perspectives extended under the guidance of the materialist view of history, such as the revolutionary perspective, global perspective, civilization perspective, modernization perspective, and social perspective, all reflect the diverse development of historical facts and historical understanding under the guidance of core literacy in high school history theme teaching strategies.

This is the texture of the development of historical studies, the origin of the progress of historical laws, reflecting the differences in the viewpoints and claims of Chinese and foreign scholars on the research of high school history theme teaching strategies under the guidance of core subject literacy, and has become one of the important research topics in the fields of historical theory and education and teaching.

### **2.2. Domestic research**

From Zhuangzi's "The value of words lies in their meaning" to Gu Kaizhi's "Capturing the spirit in a portrait", and from Jia Sixie's "Cai Lun's intention to make paper was not to avoid the trouble of silk and bamboo slips" to the "new title, new poem, and even newer intention" in "Dream of the Red Chamber", throughout history, Chinese scholars have always attached great importance to the key role of theme intention. Even modern literary giant Lu Xun highly recognized the value of publishing intentions in daily newspapers in his "Letters to Gong Zhuxin", and looked forward to the future of intention and expression methods.

Since the contemporary era, especially in the new century, the promotion of theme education in China has made the theme intention of high school history classroom teaching widely concerned. Many scholars

have conducted fruitful explorations. For instance, in 2011, Nie Youli and Yu Yichuan's "Understanding and Evaluation of the Educational Value of Middle School History Classroom Teaching: Intention, Goals, Logic, Methods and Strategies", in 2012, Zhou Ming's "The Inevitability of 'Teaching Intention' in History Class: Taking 'Advanced Ancient Agriculture' as an Example", and in 2014, Qin Juan's "Grasping the 'Six Degrees' and Scientifically Setting Intention: A Discussion on the Teaching Intention of High School History Classes" have all proposed viewpoints and claims. These theories not only combine specific classroom teaching practices but also provide systematic and theoretical summaries, playing a leading role in the research on the teaching intention strategies of high school history classrooms guided by core literacy.

Later, the Ministry of Education issued the "General Senior High School History Curriculum Standards" (2017 Edition, 2025 Revision), stipulating that "The goal of the general senior high school history curriculum is to adhere to the fundamental task of fostering virtue and nurturing talent. Through the study of history, students should form the core literacy of the history discipline and achieve all-round, individualized, and sustainable development." It is evident that the Party Central Committee and the government are people-oriented and attach great importance to the research on the teaching intention strategies of high school history classrooms guided by core literacy.

According to the search conditions set on the CNKI digital resource service platform, with the time range defined as 1995 to 2025, a total of 22,587 + 2,245 articles were retrieved with "teaching intention" or "teaching intention (English)" as the title or subject. The CNKI database statistics show a considerable number of papers, indicating that in recent years, historians and teachers have paid more attention to teaching intention. Since the contemporary era, especially in the new century, the promotion of theme education in China has made the theme intention of high school history classroom teaching widely concerned. Many scholars have conducted fruitful explorations, such as Huang Enming's "Research on the Teaching Intention of High School History Classroom" in 2016 and Hang Zhiming's "Positioning, Focusing, and Implementation of Teaching Intention in History

Discipline: Taking 'From Planned Economy to Market Economy' as an Example" in 2018.

These works not only combine specific classroom teaching practices but also provide systematic and theoretical summaries, playing a leading role in the research on the teaching intention strategies of high school history classrooms guided by core literacy. By comprehensively summarizing and reviewing the relevant articles and research processes on the teaching intention of high school students, the author has made a brief summary and can roughly summarize it into the following five aspects.

### 2.2.1. Theoretical research

Wang Demin and Zhao Yujie introduced the accurate meaning and issues to be noted of teaching intention in "The Condensation and Sublimation of Lesson Presentation: From 'Presenting Textbooks' to 'Presenting Teaching Intention'"<sup>[1]</sup>. Dai Jiaping's viewpoint in "Three Elements of a Good History Class: Story, Learning Method, and Soul - My View on the Standards of a Good History Class" provided a premise for history teachers to establish a sound evaluation system<sup>[2]</sup>. He Chenggang, Dai Ninghua, and Shen Weihui argued in "Historical Reading and Teaching Intention (Part 1)" that strong reading ability is a prerequisite for achieving teaching intention, and history teachers should keep abreast of the latest academic trends and engage in research to enhance their knowledge and literacy in teaching intention, which provides technical support for the improvement of teaching experience and teaching ability of history teachers on the front line<sup>[3]</sup>.

Hou Guihong's viewpoint in "On the Concept, Determination Method, and Evaluation Standard of Teaching Intention in History Teaching" holds that teaching intention is essentially different from core concepts and teaching threads. It also expounds on the related concepts, implementation paradigms, and evaluation standards of teaching intention, which has a significant impact on both theoretical research and practical exploration of teaching intention<sup>[4]</sup>.

By clarifying the theoretical research system, it is found that the research shows the characteristics of diversified content and rich types. In particular, most experts and scholars focus on the sources, concepts,

methods, and values related to teaching intention. This exposition provides new ideas and new approaches for further research on teaching intention in the future, and also provides new theoretical conditions for sustainable history classroom teaching practice. However, in terms of the requirements and problems of teaching intention, the research pays less attention to student conditions, textbooks, and core historical literacy, lacking the necessary guiding role. This requires history teachers to start from the actual teaching situation and analyze specific problems specifically.

### 2.2.2. Practical research

Examples of practical research are as follows:

- (1) Research on teaching cases: Zhi Yuliang proposed in “How to Enhance Teaching Intention” that history teachers should cultivate students’ diverse historical perspectives and historical thinking through teaching intention, taking a public class as an example <sup>[5]</sup>. Fang Ying advocated in “An Example of History Classroom Teaching with ‘Value Orientation’ Intention” that history teachers should guide students to develop historical thinking and ideological concepts by sorting out the historical threads guided by teaching intention <sup>[6]</sup>. Zhou Ming believed in “Teaching Intention is Indispensable in History Class: Taking ‘Advanced Ancient Agriculture’ as an Example” that teaching intention should be used to grasp the intrinsic essence and core soul of historical phenomena <sup>[7]</sup>. Zhu Ke suggested in “In-Depth Interpretation of Textbooks, Enhancing Teaching Intention” that teaching intention should be used to interpret textbooks from multiple perspectives <sup>[8]</sup>;
- (2) Research on implementation methods: Hou Guihong proposed in “On the Concept, Determination Method, and Evaluation Standard of Teaching Intention in History Teaching” that history teachers should carefully study the curriculum standards and the new compiled textbooks through teaching intention <sup>[9]</sup>. Zhou Ming proposed in “Several Issues to Note in Digging Teaching Intention: Taking the Unit Teaching of ‘Modern China’s Foreign Relations’ in the People’s Education Edition as an Example”

that history teachers should coordinate historical course resources through teaching intention <sup>[10]</sup>;

- (3) Research on related issues: Wang Demin and Zhao Yujie advocated in “The Condensation and Sublimation of Lesson Presentation: From ‘Presenting Textbooks’ to ‘Presenting Teaching Intention’” that history teachers should design teaching questions reasonably and effectively through teaching intention to guide students <sup>[11]</sup>. Zhu Ke believed in “High Intention Builds the Soul of the Class: Research on Teaching Intention Based on the New High School History Textbook” that history teachers should cultivate students’ core literacy through teaching intention <sup>[12]</sup>;
- (4) Research on cultural history theory: In her article “In-depth Interpretation of Textbooks to Enhance Teaching Intention: A Case Study of the People’s Edition of the Compulsory Textbook Three ‘Song and Ming Neo-Confucianism’”, Teacher Zhu Ke believes that history teachers should enhance their professional competence and cultivate students’ historical literacy through the teaching intention of cultural history <sup>[13]</sup>;
- (5) Research on significance: Zhi Yuliang’s “How to Enhance Teaching Intention” holds that teaching intention has a significant impact on the effectiveness of history classroom teaching <sup>[14]</sup>. Yuan Congxiu in “Thematic Intention: The Key to Designing History Micro-lessons: Taking the Micro-lesson Design of ‘The First Industrial Revolution’ as an Example” argues that teaching intention plays a decisive role in the core quality and important value of this lesson in history teaching <sup>[15]</sup>. Chen Jiahua in “Teaching Design Must Highlight Teaching Intention” proposes that a good teaching intention can promote the two-way interaction of teaching and learning.

## 3. Reflections on the review of research strategies on teaching intention in high school history classroom teaching at home and abroad

From the research results summarized from both theoretical and practical aspects, a series of outstanding

achievements have been made in the research on teaching intention strategies in high school history classroom teaching oriented towards core literacy due to the unremitting efforts and exploration of various research experts and scholars. In summary, there are mainly the following aspects done by experts and scholars as well as front-line teachers:

- (1) Sorted out the principles and precautions of teaching intention from the perspective of theoretical analysis;
- (2) Illustrated the importance of teaching intention and the standards for determining teaching intention from the perspective of classroom case analysis;
- (3) Discussed the core position of teaching intention in the design of the history classroom process;
- (4) Carefully sorted out and summarized the methods and approaches of teaching intention

from different angles and perspectives;

- (5) Expounded on the issues to be noted in the process of establishing teaching intention in high school history classroom teaching and proposed corresponding solutions;

## 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, current research on teaching intention strategies in high school history classroom teaching at home and abroad has achieved certain results. However, at present, most of these studies focus on theoretical research on teaching intention in high school history classroom teaching, while practical research is relatively insufficient. Therefore, we need to increase the support and depth of exploration for teaching intention in high school history classroom teaching.

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