

Exploration of Practical Paths for Interdisciplinary Thematic Learning based on High School History, Chinese, and Politics

-- Take the teaching of "The Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marxism" as an example

Mengyao Li*

College of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Qiqihar University, Qiqihar, Heilongjiang, 161006, China

*Corresponding author: Mengyao Li (Email: drly96@163.com)

Abstract: In the textbooks of various subjects, there are many contents that are interrelated. This article takes the content of "The Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marxism" which is commonly covered in high school history, Chinese and politics as an example to conduct cross-disciplinary thematic teaching, guiding students to raise questions and solve problems, and helping students form cross-disciplinary abilities and the cross-disciplinary literacy needed to adapt to the future social development in the process of solving real problems.

Keywords: High School History, Politics, and Chinese Language Teaching, Interdisciplinary Thematic Learning, The Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marxism.

1. Integrate Contents from Different Disciplines to Form a Theme for Interdisciplinary Subject Learning

In the textbooks of various disciplines, there are many contents that are interrelated. Teachers can gather them together and integrate them under a unified framework for overall planning, thereby forming cross-disciplinary thematic learning themes. In the case of high school history, the disciplines that are highly related to it are high school politics and ideology and high school Chinese. The curriculum standards or textbooks of high school history, high school politics and ideology, and high school Chinese often pay attention to the same academic issues or real-world problems.

Therefore, teachers can, based on the integration of a certain content in the high school history textbooks, link the relevant contents of high school political science, high school Chinese, etc., and then integrate the knowledge according to the requirements of the curriculum standards and the teaching requirements. For example, the theme of "Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marxism" for interdisciplinary learning is formed based on the interpretation and integration of the relevant contents of high school history, high school political science, and high school Chinese textbooks. The current curriculum standards or textbooks of high school history, high school political science, and high school Chinese all emphasize the content and significance of the Industrial Revolution and the birth of Marxism in multiple places and regard it as an important content in teaching. Regarding the textbooks, the situation is as follows: From the unified compilation high school history textbooks, the content and significance of the Industrial Revolution and the birth of Marxism are in the fifth unit of the second volume of "Outline of Chinese and Foreign History"; from the unified compilation high school political science textbooks, the first lesson of the compulsory course "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" discusses the process of socialism from the

idea to science, from theory to practice; from the unified compilation high school Chinese textbooks, the fifth unit of the compulsory lower volume introduces the significance of Marxism. Thus, the theme of "Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marxism" can be used for interdisciplinary theme learning, which is of great significance for improving students' comprehensive abilities and shaping their worldviews, values, and life perspectives. Based on the above considerations, the author has chosen "Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marxism" as one of the themes for interdisciplinary theme learning in high school history.

After determining the topic, under the guidance of the topic, in accordance with the requirements of the curriculum standards and relevant subject content, and based on the actual learning situation of the students, the teaching objectives were formulated. Centering on the theme of "The Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marxism", the following teaching objectives were set.

1.1. Teaching Objective One

Combining the content of high school history and the core competencies of the high school history curriculum, students create mind maps to organize the main threads of the background and process of the Industrial Revolution. Students also make tables to summarize the major inventions of the first and second Industrial Revolutions, and mark the places of origin of the major inventions of the first and second Industrial Revolutions. From the perspectives of productivity, capitalist production relations, and world patterns, students consider the similarities between the two Industrial Revolutions. Based on the reading materials provided by the teacher, students think about the impacts of the Industrial Revolution from economic, social class, social life, and world appearance perspectives.

1.2. Teaching Objectives Two

Interpret classic texts, obtain key information, understand why the publication of "The Communist Manifesto" provided

scientific theoretical weapons for the workers' movement, enabling it to shift from spontaneity to consciousness. Collect and organize the stories of inventors during the two industrial revolutions, and have students reflect on the lessons they have learned. Also, in combination with what has been learned, discuss how to apply these lessons to solve problems encountered in real learning.

1.3. Teaching Objectives Three

By jointly focusing on issues related to Marxism in the history and ideological and political subjects, and finally using the writing skills of the language subject to accurately express the ideas. Students should think about how we, who are in the era of artificial intelligence, should face the opportunities and meet the challenges. Students can independently think about unfamiliar problems in real situations and propose new viewpoints and perspectives.

2. Guide Students to Organize Their Knowledge Framework, Complete Learning Tasks, and Implement Interdisciplinary Thematic Learning

After students are aware of the teaching objectives, teachers should guide them to utilize tools and methods to sort out the knowledge related to the teaching objectives. The aim is to deepen students' understanding of the teaching objectives. When students are organizing the knowledge framework, teachers can instruct them to focus on the teaching objectives, ensuring that knowledge from different disciplines can all revolve around the theme, in order to prepare for the effective solution of complex problems with interdisciplinary nature in the future.

Teachers should also aim at solving real problems, and create specific learning tasks that contain the construction of core concepts and core competencies and are developmental in nature, so as to stimulate students' self-motivation and help them solve practical problems. During the problem-solving process, students should be able to connect "background and germination", "conflict and awakening", "birth and response", and "deepening and practice", and deepen their understanding of knowledge through the learning and practice of different subject knowledge. Therefore, based on the relevant contents of the textbooks of Chinese High School History, Chinese High School Politics and Chinese High School Literature, the author has made the following teaching design.

2.1. The Process of "the Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marx" is Divided into the Following Four stages.

2.1.1. Background and Origin (1860s - Early 19th Century)

In the 1860s, the British bourgeois revolution established political safeguards; the occurrence of the enclosure movement led to the unemployment of a large number of farmers on the one hand; on the other hand, it provided a large amount of labor and a broad domestic market within the UK [1]. colonial plundering and slave trade accumulated initial capital; the development of workshop handicrafts laid the technical foundation[2]. After 1760s, technological innovations such as the steam engine (Watt) and the Jenny spinning machine emerged, and machine production began to replace manual labor, establishing the factory system. Modern industrial bourgeoisie and industrial proletariat were born.

This was the background and emergence of the Industrial Revolution.

The Industrial Revolution brought about a huge social division, making the living conditions of early workers extremely miserable, and the initial class opposition began to emerge, causing Marxism to start to sprout. During the stage of the sprouting of Marxism, a large number of theoretical pioneers emerged: Utopian socialism (Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen). They conducted profound criticism of the capitalist system and designed blueprints for an ideal society, but were unable to find the path and strength to realize their ideals[2].

2.1.2. Conflict and Awakening (1930s - Mid-1940s)

The social impact of the Industrial Revolution was fully manifested, and class conflicts intensified, providing direct practical needs for the birth of Marxism. Starting from the 1930s, the Industrial Revolution spread to Western Europe and North America, and railway construction became the new engine of the economy. This also led to the periodic outbreak of the inherent economic crises in capitalism, exposing the inherent contradictions of the system. The social gap between the rich and the poor widened, and the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie became the main social contradiction[2].

At the same time, the workers' struggle evolved from the most primitive spontaneous destruction of machines to large-scale, organized, and efficient large-scale political movements, the most typical of which was the Chartism Movement in Britain. This indicated that the proletariat had emerged as an independent political force on the historical stage[3]. On the eve of the birth of Marxism, the great revolutionaries Marx and Engels began to delve into the workers' movement and theoretical research, completing the historic and epoch-making transformation from idealism to materialism, and from revolutionary democracy to communism.

2.1.3. Birth and Response (Mid-to-late 1840s)

The inherent economic contradictions and social conflicts in capitalist society provided the most abundant real-life analysis materials for the birth of Marxism. In February 1848, "The Communist Manifesto" was published, marking the official birth of Marxism[4]. Core content: 1) Systematically expounded the basic principles of historical materialism. 2) Analyzed the emergence, development, and opposition between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. 3) Announced that capitalism was bound to perish and communism was bound to prevail. 4. Pointed out that the historical mission of the proletariat was to overthrow capitalism and establish a new society .

The publication of "The Communist Manifesto" provided a scientific theoretical weapon for the awakening workers' movement, enabling it to shift from being spontaneous to being conscious[5].

2.1.4. Deepening and Practice (19th Century 50s - Late 19th Century)

The impact of the Industrial Revolution deepened and initiated a new stage. Marxism underwent development and was tested in practice, and began to be combined with the practice of the workers' movement.

After the first Industrial Revolution, the second Industrial Revolution began in the 1950s. Compared with the first Industrial Revolution, capitalism shifted from free competition to monopoly, and the process of globalization accelerated. At this time, the ranks of the proletariat expanded

unprecedentedly and their organization became stronger.

Marxism developed and participated in practice. In 1867, Marx's "Das Kapital" Volume 1 was published, through the theory of surplus value, it thoroughly revealed the secrets and internal contradictions of capitalist exploitation. It enabled Marxist economic theories to be systematically and scientifically demonstrated.

In 1864, Marx and Engels issued the great call of "All the workers of the world unite", actively promoting the international unity of the working class, and establishing the International Workingmen's Association in London, which is known as the "First International"[6]. In 1871, the French branch of the First International participated in and led the Paris Commune Movement. During the movement, the working class proposed to break up the old state machinery, establish a government agency and judicial institution that are integrated in administration and legislation; abolish the old army and police, and replace them with the National Self-Defense Army and the Public Security Committee; the people have the right to supervise and dismiss elected public officials, so that the salaries of public officials should not exceed those of skilled workers.

The Paris Commune Movement was the first great attempt by the proletariat to establish a regime. Marx summarized its experiences and lessons in his work "The French Revolution", developing the theory of proletarian revolution and dictatorship. Therefore, Marx became the soul figure of the workers' movement, and Marxism became the guiding ideology of the workers' movement in the struggle against various ideologies.

To gain a deeper understanding of the learning topic "The Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marxism", the teacher should also assist students in focusing on solving two key questions: The impact of the Industrial Revolution? The significance of the birth of Marxism? For this purpose, the author has set up two learning tasks and divided them into several sub-tasks. The details are as follows.

2.2. Learning Task 1: Explore the background, content and impact of the Industrial Revolution?

(1) From the perspectives of politics, economy and culture, students create mind maps and analyze successively to determine the reasons why the Industrial Revolution first broke out in Britain?

(2) Students independently design and fill in the table contents. The teacher provides guidance. Students mark the locations of the major inventions that emerged during the Industrial Revolution on the world map in chronological order. Observe the marked world map and combine it with the table. Consider what differences there are between the second Industrial Revolution and the first one? What are the distinctions and connections between the two Industrial Revolutions? Is the second Industrial Revolution a simple continuation of the first one?

(3) From the perspectives of productivity, capitalist production relations, and the global landscape, consider the similarities between the two industrial revolutions? Based on the reading materials provided by the teacher, from the aspects of economy, social classes, social life, and the global appearance, what were the impacts of the industrial revolution?

In Task 1 of the learning materials, the key point of the question regarding "the background of the Industrial Revolution" lies in how to clearly analyze the reasons why the

Industrial Revolution first broke out in Britain. Therefore, the setting of question (1) aims to guide students to understand and clarify the reasons for the outbreak of the Industrial Revolution through the method of creating a mind map. Students will be able to comprehensively understand and organize these reasons, and also be able to distinguish the relationships between various elements. This is beneficial for cultivating students' logical thinking ability, historical evidence-based literacy, and historical interpretation literacy.

The setting of Question (2) aims to guide students to recognize the significant inventions of the two Industrial Revolutions. Moreover, students can clearly and smoothly sort out the process of the Industrial Revolution by using the table. By comparing the two tables that record the "significant inventions of the two Industrial Revolutions", students can quickly understand the relationship between the two Industrial Revolutions. This is beneficial for cultivating students' ability to collect and organize information and enhancing their historical research skills. During this process, teachers can provide reading materials. Together with the students, they can analyze the impacts of the Industrial Revolution on European countries and even the world from economic, social class, social life, and world appearance perspectives in sequence. This helps cultivate students' ability to read tables and graphs, read historical materials, and extract key information from the materials. Students can understand the impacts of the Industrial Revolution and thereby cultivate their historical empirical literacy, historical interpretation literacy, and spatial concept literacy.

The setting of Question (3) aims to guide students to analyze the economic impact. By integrating the explanations in the first lesson of the first module of the People's Education Press high school political textbook, students can further deepen their understanding that from handicraft workshops to capitalist large factories to monopolistic enterprises, all are inevitable results of the continuous development of productivity. This also helps cultivate students' historical materialism literacy.

2.3. Learning Task 2: Investigating the emergence, content and significance of Marxism.

(1) Please have the students summarize and outline the main content of the People's Education Press high school political textbook, and think about and answer why The Communist Manifesto marks the birth of Marxism?

(2) By integrating the content of the high school political textbook published by People's Education Press, understand and master the meanings of "the theory of surplus value" and "materialist conception of history", and, based on the knowledge acquired, summarize the significance of the birth of Marxism from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

(3) Based on the content of the high school history textbooks, students independently design and fill in the tables. Under the guidance of the teacher, they master the relevant historical facts of the international workers' movement and the Paris Commune.

(4) Please, based on the reading materials provided by the teacher and in combination with what you have learned, analyze the reasons for the failure of the Paris Commune Movement.

The setting of the above learning tasks 2.3. aims, on the one hand, to guide students to understand the background and theoretical sources of the emergence of Marxist philosophy,

as well as the organic combination of materialism and dialectics, and to recognize why Marxism is a scientific worldview and methodology. On the other hand, it aims to guide students to actively absorb Marxism, understand its scientificity and development, and comprehend the reasons why Chinese people ultimately chose Marxism in the process of striving to save the country and pursue development since modern times, thereby profoundly understanding the connotation and significance of revolutionary culture.

3. Develop Evaluation Scales and Utilize Them in the Assessment of Students' Learning Outcomes to Foster Their Interdisciplinary Skills.

During the process of interdisciplinary learning, students will develop core competencies in different disciplines. These competencies can be refined from three dimensions: learning acquisition, practical exploration, and thinking methods. Therefore, teachers conduct systematic evaluations of students' academic performance from these three aspects. When assessing students' learning acquisition, teachers can guide students to utilize the acquired information in problem situations, process and analyze the information systematically, multi-dimensionally, and at multiple levels, form accurate analysis and judgments, and incorporate multiple disciplinary knowledge into a new knowledge system through generalization and adjustment. When evaluating students' practical exploration, teachers should encourage students to develop cross-disciplinary learning skills, propose new viewpoints, and comprehensively apply various tools to solve real problems. They should also possess the ability to accurately express related issues and communicate effectively. When assessing students' mastery of thinking methods, teachers should guide students to acquire logical thinking methods through empirical means to generalize cross-disciplinary problems, and also guide students to comprehensively apply systematic thinking methods to solve real problems, and be able to independently propose new perspectives and viewpoints using innovative thinking.

3.1. Regarding the Tasks Designed for Mastering Indicators

Complete the corresponding tests and reflect on the achievement of one's core competencies during the learning process of this unit.

Design intent: Both teachers and students can promptly grasp the progress of core literacy cultivation, facilitating the timely identification of knowledge gaps.

3.2. Task of Designing the Practical Exploration Indicators

Collect and organize the stories of inventors from the two industrial revolutions, and reflect on the insights you have gained from them. Please, based on what you have learned, discuss how to apply these insights to solve the problems encountered in real learning.

Design intent: By learning about the stories of inventors during the Industrial Revolution, students can not only enhance their understanding of the course content, but also learn about the outstanding deeds of historical figures,

cultivate their innovative consciousness, inspire them to strive hard, and develop their courage to overcome difficulties.

3.3. Task for Designing the Index of Thinking Methods

Please, after class, read the speech commemorating the 200th anniversary of Marx's birth and combine your knowledge to express your views on Marxism. Think about how we, who are in the era of artificial intelligence, should face the opportunities and meet the challenges. Please choose your own topic and write a short essay on Marxism. (Requirements: Clear topic, logical structure, well-written text)

Design intent: By having students write short essays, we aim to assess their ability to solve complex interdisciplinary problems. To successfully complete the writing of the short essays, students need to focus on issues related to Marxism through the joint attention of history and political ideology subjects, and finally express their thoughts accurately using the writing skills of the language subject. The ultimate goal of this design is to help students comprehensively apply dialectical, historical, and systematic thinking methods to solve real problems, enabling them to independently propose new perspectives and viewpoints.

4. The Significance of Interdisciplinary Thematic Learning

The implementation of interdisciplinary thematic learning can be carried out in various ways. Among them, conducting high school history interdisciplinary thematic learning based on the related contents of different disciplines is relatively easy to operate and is conducive to solving the current practical problems existing in high school history interdisciplinary thematic learning. The practice of the "Industrial Revolution and the Birth of Marx" interdisciplinary thematic learning shows that this approach helps students form interdisciplinary abilities and acquire interdisciplinary qualities necessary for adapting to future social development in the process of solving real problems.

References

- [1] Ji, Z. (2022) A Panoramic and Empirical Study of the Enclosure Movement: Reading Professor Hou Jianxin's "The Enclosure Movement and Land Titling". *Monthly Journal of Historical Studies*, 5:132-132.
- [2] Zhang, H., Xu, L. (2019) *Outline of Chinese and World History (Volume II)*. People's Education Press, Beijing.
- [3] Zhang, H. (2025) Research on Engels' Series of Articles "The Condition of England". *Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics*, 17-17.
- [4] Le, H., Guo, Q. (2021) The Development of Socialism in the Context of Contemporary Technological Revolutions. *Issues of Contemporary World socialism*. 4: 24-24.
- [5] Chang, F., Zhang, K. (2025) Five Origins of Young Marx's Shift to Political Economy Research: From the *Rheinische Zeitung* to the *Communist Manifesto*. *Journal of the Party School of the CPC Chengdu Municipal Committee*, 4: 32-32
- [6] Pu, G. (2024) A Monument in History-Commemorating the 160th Anniversary of the Founding of the First International. *Contemporary World and Socialism (Bimonthly)*, 5:99-99.