

Research on Methods of Infiltrating Folk Culture into Calligraphy Teaching for Elementary Education Major -----Take the Case of “Writing Chinese Characters of Nine-Strokes” in Winter Solstice for Instance

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Abstract. Calligraphy is the traditional culture and art of Han Chinese (the dominant ethnic group of China). To learn from the folk customs of “writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes”, of “drawing nine flowers that each has nine petals” at winter solstice, combine calligraphy and folk art effectively, and penetrate folk culture through calligraphy teaching with natural infiltration method, extension and expansion method, and thematic exploration method, so as to create way of culture syncretism based on calligraphy education, then generalize the achievement into elementary class.

Introduction

On winter solstice in the year of 2010, a report has got the attention of many scholars at home and abroad. The Modern Calligraphy Research Center of China Academy of Art has hosted a special calligraphy party at the boat on the west lake. A dozen calligraphers, *Wang Dongling, Gao Fagen, Bai di, Han Tianyong, Lu Dadong* and so forth, has written characters with poetical sensation---the weeping willows before the pavilion are waiting for spring breeze solemnly. They toast the calligraphy in such elegant way, and are looking forward to the spring breeze of next year together. They try to draw people’s attention to promote the traditional Chinese art, through the way of combine Chinese calligraphy with folk art.

Calligraphy is the traditional culture and art of Han Chinese, its generation and development is inextricably linked with traditional Chinese culture [1]. Recently, with the gradual excavation of traditional art, the special calligraphy art has gained more and more attention of our country and education department gradually. The traditional calligraphy art is inextricably linked with Chinese folk art, we should learn from the traditional customs of “writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes”, of “coloring nine flowers that each has nine petals ” at winter solstice, and combine it with traditional Chinese calligraphy education. I think we can make the traditional customs of “writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes”, of “coloring nine flowers that each has nine petals ” at winter solstice as point cut, advance interests of students majored in elementary education on calligraphy learning, propel the inheritance of traditional folk culture; meanwhile, takes the traditional calligraphy as carrier, integrate brilliant folk culture resource, and combine folk culture and calligraphy curriculum, to provide new ideas for the heritage and development of traditional Chinese culture and traditional folk art[2].

The Cultivating Objective of Elementary Education Major in Five-year Normal College and Characteristics of Students

The primary task of elementary education major in five-year normal college is to cultivate elementary teachers of high quality, and has sustainable development potential and certain skills. The most notable feature of it is low starting point, high landing point, long schooling length, and strong orientation. At present, elementary education major in five-year normal college has become an important part of elementary teacher training, the graduates of this major is becoming the main major force of elementary education, and so, their literacy will influence the growing quality of elementary students directly[3]. People studying Chinese calligraphy and then engage in calligraphy creation, only with traditional literacy and profound acknowledge of traditional culture can they understand the essence and mystery of Chinese calligraphy [4]. It's an important subject laid before us college teachers, that how to combine with the calligraphy education currently developed for elementary education major in five-year normal education, to make students majored in elementary education fully understand our folk art and then inherit the folk culture with long history. Based on the inheritance of tradition, to excavate worthwhile nutrients from folk art further, to inherit and promote our calligraphy art, to reappear folk customs from the angle of protecting national cultural heritage, are also bounden duty of every Chinese.

The Folklore of “Writing Nine Chinese Characters That Each Has Nine-strokes”, of “Drawing nine Flowers That Each Has Nine Petals” at Winter Solstice

Every year, the northern hemisphere will step into coldest days gradually from winter solstice on, the coldest days is called “nine nine-days”. Folklores such as “writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes”, of “drawing nine flowers that each has nine petals” has been popular since ancient times. Ancient Chinese people used to take nine as extreme number, which means highest, most and longest. The “nine nine-days” start from winter solstice, after nine nine-days, that is eighty one days, the winter goes, and spring comes. This has record in *Solar Terms of Jingchu* (Liang Dynasty), which says “from the day of winter solstice on, day by day, after eighty one days, the cold winter will come to end”. Customs of “writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes”, of “drawing nine flowers that each has nine petals” has strong cultural atmosphere. The most elegant way is to make nine nine-days calendar, experienced old man even can speculate the amount of rainfall, and the good year or bad year of crop.

In ancient times, activity of “showing respect for teachers” has to be held on winter solstice. Firstly, the teacher should lead students to bowling and kneeling to Sage that is Confucius; secondly, the students bow and kneel toward teachers, the students themselves bow to each other. Before the Chinese republic is founded, every school, no matter private school or public school, all pay great attention on this customs. After the Chinese republic founded, the activity of “showing respect for teachers” is still popular among some private schools. At present, the activity is no longer held in anywhere, and the custom also disappears.

There are four main ideas among traditional Chinese culture: the first one is the thought of Yin-Yang and five elements, which is considered as basic philosophy; the second one is philosophical thinking of “correspondence between man and nature”, it is about the relationship between human and nature; the third one is the philosophy of golden mean, it is about dealing with the social things; the fourth is the philosophy of self-restraint and self-cultivation. The four ideas have guided and infiltrated into the

traditional calligraphy art profoundly [5]. Calligraphy is the traditional culture and art of Han Chinese, its generation and development is inextricably linked with traditional Chinese culture. Therefore, people studying Chinese calligraphy and then engage in calligraphy creation, only with traditional literacy and profound acknowledge of traditional culture can they understand the essence and mystery of Chinese calligraphy.

The Infiltration between Calligraphy Teaching and Folk Culture

The folk culture originates from conventional production and living habits, and is closely connected with the real life. Meanwhile the calligraphy education holds an important position in elementary education major. The fresh, special and interesting folk culture will help to promote calligraphy learning, and also the achievements of calligraphy learning can be applied into folk activities and daily life, the whole process can not only draw students closer to calligraphy, stimulate their interest in learning calligraphy, develop their mental ability, but also can cultivate their ability in transforming knowledge, their practical ability, artistic ability, innovative ability, exploring ability and cooperative ability. Meanwhile the infiltration of folk culture is undoubtedly an effective way in educating students on national spirit, morality and aesthetic perception [6].

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Natural infiltration method. That is, without changing the existing course content and learning schedule, immerse the related knowledge of folk culture into course, which can enrich the teaching material to a certain extent, and will not make students feel that things are imposed on them. Specifically speaking, it's better to train students in "writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes" during the correspondent time, from winter solstice on, students write one stroke a day, and the writing will finish till the eighty-first day, then the spring will come. Meanwhile the school can edit and publish the textbook Interesting Calligraphy (the atlas of "writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes" and "drawing nine flowers that each has nine petals"), and promote the use of it in calligraphy teaching for elementary education major.

Extension and expansion method. The folk culture is broad and profound, quite an amount of parts can be grafted on existing teaching material through extension and expansion method, then through further extension and expansion, accomplish the natural link from folk culture to the existing curriculum learning. For instance, during the coaching process on extracurricular interest groups, teacher can introduce the customs of "writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes" and "drawing nine flowers that each has nine petals" into teaching practice, cultivate students' interest in writing Chinese character, to make them feel the profound cultural connotations of folk culture and the great wisdom of the laboring people, to enlighten wisdom and cultivate morality, to build cultural confidence.

Thematic exploration method. Given the fact that the folk culture covers an extensive range, and has rich contents, the special study can be carried out when it is necessary. Teacher can design particular themes according to the festivals and seasons, and lead students to explore the corresponding folk customs, thus the teaching material will not be so obtrusive, and relatively it will be much more natural for students. For instance,

students write “nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes”, and then explore the customs of winter solstice together, such thematic exploration is closely related to the real life, so it tends to interest students more, and resonate among students, and the exploration outcome can also be applied into daily life faster and much more directly. Certainly, the thematic exploration on folk culture’s infiltration into calligraphy teaching can also learn from the corresponding contents of art course and assimilate it, then present it in the form of multidisciplinary comprehensive teaching. During the exploration and communication of such comprehensive course, students can apply what they have learned into practice, and play their own advantages, create something new, therefore they can enjoy the fun of learning and applying calligraphy.

The methods and strategies of infiltrating folk culture into calligraphy teaching for elementary education major is certainly more than the methods above, there must be much better infiltrating methods, which has yet to be explored continually in the future teaching practices.

Summary

The ancient Chinese people included literature into daily life, and came to care for it, explain its theory, and apply it in practice. Calligraphy makes the nerve endings of fingers much more sensitive. At the time that computer replaces pencil, instead of confining itself into Chinese-character cultural circle and being narcissistic, calligraphy must get close to the modern life, and go out into the world. Calligraphy has been the card of China, to enlarge its popularity around the world, to make it learn from folk culture, then propel it into the international art zone, is the sacred mission of every Chinese people. To inherit the traditional Chinese calligraphy and folk culture is also our unavoidable responsibility. The traditional calligraphy art is inextricably linked with Chinese folk art, we should learn from the traditional customs of “writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes”, of “coloring nine flowers that each has nine petals” at winter solstice, and combine it with traditional Chinese calligraphy education. I think we can make the traditional customs of “writing nine Chinese characters that each has nine-strokes”, of “coloring nine flowers that each has nine petals” at winter solstice as point cut, advance interests of students majored in elementary education on calligraphy learning, propel the inheritance of traditional folk culture; meanwhile, takes the traditional calligraphy as carrier, integrate brilliant folk culture resource, and combine folk culture and calligraphy curriculum, to provide new ideas for the heritage and development of traditional Chinese culture and traditional folk art.

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