

A Brief Discussion on the Guiding Significance of Life Elements for the Painting Course in Colleges and Universities

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Abstract—Life elements have important guiding significance for the improvement of the teaching quality of painting course in colleges and universities. Aimed at certain universal problems in current teaching of the painting course, teachers should skillfully introduce life elements in the teaching activities so as to motivate the learning interest of students and achieve the teaching objective of painting course.

Keywords—life elements; painting in colleges and universities; current teaching situation; motivation of interest

I. INTRODUCTION

Art is a course integrated with life. Inspiration of fluctuation of each line and accumulation of color applied in the work of art derives from life and the work of art also shows the pursuit and yearning of people for good life. The main responsibility of art teachers is to lead students to learn art and appreciate life in the teaching process. Therefore, teaching of art teachers should start with life elements so that life can be integrated into art and students can feel the charm of life and art.

Standards for Fine Arts Courses points out that the art teaching in colleges and universities should divide learning areas based on learning activity modes, strengthen the comprehensiveness and exploration of learning activities and lay emphasis on close relation between art and life experience so that students can improve imagination and aesthetic judgment, enhance love and as well as sense of responsibility to the nature and human society and develop the desire and ability to create good life in active emotional experience. As the famous educator in China Mr. Tao Xingzhi said, "Education is life". The painting course is one of important content of the art teaching in colleges and universities. Introduction of life elements into the organization process of the painting course teaching activities has great significance to improvement of the classroom teaching quality.

II. PROBLEMS EXISTED IN THE PRESENT PAINTING COURSE TEACHING IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A. Students: Lack of Learning Interest

Lack of learning interest of students is the primary problem that the implementation of painting course in colleges and

universities is faced with. Many students express that they pore their eyes out over the drawing board, drawing paper and color palette all day. Moreover, they do not know what they are drawing and have no sense of achievement. For them, to draw and not to draw make no difference. After the teacher assigns the sketch homework, students discuss the sketch homework enthusiastically. They just regard the sketch course as the sightseeing course. Therefore, it is difficult for the teacher to organize teaching activities. The author of this paper carried out a questionnaire survey on the attitude of college students toward the painting course. The number of questionnaires issued is 100 with 50 questionnaires for students of the art major and 50 questionnaires for students of other majors. Through analysis of results of questionnaires, the author finds that 47% of the students express that they regard the painting course as the selective course and just hope to pass the examination. For students of the art major, 36% of the students express that although the painting course belongs to the required course, they feel that the painting course is impractical. They seem to have no choice but to be the art teacher after graduation. Several students express that they listen the painting course carefully. However, it is not because they love art and painting but because they want to finish the learning task. That's to say, attending class is a task for them and they do not like painting course.

In the teaching process of the painting course in colleges and universities, the three-dimensional teaching objective made up of knowledge & skills, process & method and emotional attitude & value fails to achieve the organic unity. Although students learn the theoretical knowledge of the painting, they do not know how to apply the theoretical knowledge to the reality. The teaching fails to motivate the learning emotion of students. Therefore, the classroom that should have been exuberant becomes lifeless.

B. Teachers: Backward of Teaching Methods

The classroom teaching activities should be a mutual integrated whole between "teaching" of teachers and "study" of students. For the painting course teaching, students should not only listen to the teacher but also should participate in the classroom teaching. Throughout the present teaching situation of the painting course in colleges and universities, readers can find that students are lack of the subjective position in learning

due to backward of teaching methods and other causes. As a result, teachers become rulers of the classroom; the painting course teaching fails to motivate the unique aesthetic experience of students; it is hard for teachers to improve the painting teaching quality for a long time.

The painting course should train the unique aesthetic judgment and creative ability of students so that student can improve the imagination and develop the desire and ability to create beauty in the participation process of classroom activities. Students should be the subject of the classroom teaching, but adoption of “indoctrination type” teaching method and “cramming type” teaching method make students lose their speech rights and make their subjective position in learning deprived. When the teacher is taking about the theory of painting, painting school or painting knowledge at the rostrum, students listen to the teacher with a blank expression.

In fact, art is also a wall to show life. Through art, people can truly recognize many pictures of life. For example, *Along the River during the Qingming Festival* depicts the prosperity of busy streets and figures vividly; *The Last Supper* is also a picture that reflects life, in which mental world of different characters can be understood through portrayal of Jesus and Jews. All of these artists show some meaningful and valuable things in life through art and bring people spiritual inspiration and visual enjoyment.

Teaching of knowledge never ends. The talent training program in colleges and universities should be different from that in primary and middle schools. The main purpose of the education of primary and middle schools is to help students to accumulate knowledge and lay a good foundation for students to receive the higher education. At the higher education stage, students have possessed certain knowledge accumulation and have grasped basic independent learning ability, cooperative ability and scientific inquiry ability. Therefore, colleges and universities should pay attention to discover the self-consciousness of students and permeate the course emotional attitude and value education in the participation process of teaching activities so that students can grasp knowledge and methods in the reception process of higher education. Just as the old saying says, “give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime”. Implementation of the painting teaching in colleges and universities should lay emphasis on education of learning methods so that students can carry on self-learning after class and set up the lifelong learning consciousness. The “cramming” type education imparts all knowledge to students and students do not experience the participation pleasure of learning activities in the learning process. Moreover, they regard learning as burden. Therefore, they naturally fail to promote the learning efficiency not to mention promoting the classroom teaching quality.

Aimed as theses problems existed in the painting classroom in colleges and universities, it is very necessary for teachers to introduce life elements into the classroom and lead students to observe life. Only in this way can work created not be empty and boring. Life elements not only can transform the present awkward situation of improvement of teaching quality for a long time but also has very important significance to

motivation of painting emotion of students, optimization of the art major talent training program and realization of the course teaching objective.

III. IMPORTANT SIGNIFICANCE OF INTRODUCTION OF LIFE ELEMENTS TO IMPROVEMENT OF THE PAINTING COURSE TEACHING QUALITY IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A. Observe Things in Life and Provide Painting Teaching Aids

Rodin had said that, “Beauty is everywhere. It is not she that is lacking to our eyes, but our eyes fail to perceive her.” Art is everywhere. Implementation of the painting course teaching needs to look for objects from life so that students can develop a pair of eyes to perceive beauty and cultivate the ability to create beauty through depiction. Art is everywhere in life. In the sketch teaching process, teachers can provide some teaching aids for students and find painting objects from life for students. The teaching aids have many kinds. Pulley still life table, still life lamp, plaster statue, pottery still life, fruit still life and so on are common teaching aids in the painting course. Plaster statue, pottery still life and fruit still life are especially common things in life. Therefore, teachers can make use of locally available materials and provide these objects for students in the sketch process.

For example, in the painting process of fruit still life, the teacher can buy some fruits and put them on the rostrum before class and organize students to carry on still life sketch in accordance with their own observation angles. Students can mutually change their positions and carry on painting from different directions. The teacher can give comments and instructions on work of students and make students learn to consider the light and shadow projection effect from different angles and improve the painting level. Da Vinci had drawn one egg after another and had continually dug into the effect of angle on work. To make students carry on painting in accordance with different locating angles of fruit is just out of this point.

The British pragmatism educator Spencer had put forward such viewpoint in the *What Knowledge Is of Most Worth* that every science must take pure experience as the forerunner and creation cannot begin only after it accumulates rich materials. Learning of the painting course must be based on accumulation of certain materials. As to the art major students in lower grade and other non-professional students, observation of objects in life has important practical significance to painting. These students do not have very good painting foundation. Therefore, in terms of the painting teaching aimed at theses students, teachers should lay emphasis on training their observing ability and discovering ability, lead them to learn imitation on the basis of paying close attention to objects in life, motivate the emotion and ability to create beauty and close the distance between students and the painting course.

B. Create Life Situations and Motivate Painting Interest

The situational teaching method has been a hot topic in recent years. In the organization process of classroom teaching activities, many teachers attempt to create specific situations

for students so that they can experience the fun of “learning by playing” in situations and motivate the learning emotion. In the teaching process of the painting course, when the teacher create life situations related to the teaching content for students, it can make students experience the relation between art and life, mobilize the painting learning emotion of students and motivate learning interest of students on art. Teachers can skillfully set up the story context, sound situation and game situations, bring students into specific painting space, lead students to combine visual sense with other senses, broaden the recognition breadth and width to objective things, open the imagination gate, and improve the learning efficiency.

Application of the multimedia information technology has great important significance to creation of life situations. For example, when the teacher plays a news broadcasting video about Syrian Wars in class and makes students feel cruelty and bloodiness of war through visualized and vivid video screen. Then, the teacher can organize students to carry on theme-based painting with the theme of “war”. Combination of teaching content and war situation through presentation of the video screen can make students extend imagination based on certain situations, motivate the emotional resonance with the painting work, create strong creative desire and wholeheartedly participate in the painting activity.

Art originates from life, but higher than life. For painting activities, teachers can find corresponding things of many imitation objects in life such as mountains, rivers, birds, beasts, insects, fishes and so on. However, when the teacher organizes students to paint the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain, does the teacher can really take students to the mountain peak? For the painting activity aimed at the “war” theme, does it mean students also need to look around on the spot? Situations created related to the painting content through utilization of multiple means can improve limited teaching resources, move the situations that cannot temporarily show in life to the classroom and make students have the feeling of being personally in the scene so as to help students to rapidly enter the painting situation in the scene full of audiovisual effects, motivate the creative desire and maximally improve the art creative ability.

C. Organize Art Practical Activities and Embody the Beauty of Life

The experience-oriented learning perspective thinks that practice is the basis of cognition. Only through continuous practices can learners clear the universality and particularity of things in detailed and complicated appearances. Many students express that learning of painting does not have any practical value and is seldom used in life. When the content taught by the teacher in class cannot be used in life, students will completely forget the content after class right away. For these students, to learn and not to learn make no difference; they just learn the painting casually in class and forget it after class. Some students express that they do not get inspired during painting and do not know to paint anything. They are so anxious that they scratch their ears and checks. Aimed at “the idea of the uselessness of painting”, lack of creative inspiration, and other problems, teachers might organize some experience-oriented art practical activities and stimulate the visual sense,

auditory sense, sense of touch of students in practice so that they can feel the ubiquity of art, obtain the creative inspiration and use painting to embody the beauty of life and beautify life.

Social life, campus life and family life contain unlimited painting teaching resources. Teachers can connect with the life experience of students and organize colorful art practical activities so that students feel the artistic charm and experience the practical value of painting.

For example, teachers can utilize vocation time of students to organize the painting practical activities based on specialty directions and actual individual situations of students so as to provide opportunity for students to understand art, recognize the social environment and improve painting skills. Take students of teacher-training specialties for example, colleges and universities can help students to contact the local kindergarten to carry on the “voluntary teaching activity of children’s painting class” and let students to make a contribution so that they can bring happiness and hope to children, exercise their practical ability, advance the education teaching level in practice and get ready for their devotion to the education al career after graduation.

Social practice is an important content of the extra-class education of college students. Therefore, the painting course in colleges and universities should focus on training of self-competence of students and organize social practical activities through a combination of actual learning situations of students so that students can exercise themselves and improve the professional ability in the process of social practical activity. The emergence of the idea of the “uselessness of painting” reflects that the painting course in colleges and universities is separated from actual situations of students and fails to make students find new knowledge and broaden their horizon in learning. The painting course targeted for college students cannot actually rest on the tightly scripted indoctrination type teaching for the purpose of exam-oriented education in the middle school. The painting course carried on colleges and universities should organize social practical activities related to the painting learning, make students understand the unique value of the painting course, deepen knowledge and skills in practice, obtain the joy of learning, break through the confinement of the cramming type teaching and improve the teaching quality.

IV. CONCLUSION

The American famous educator Dewey once said that all learning activities come from experience and the education should proceed from experience. The painting classroom in colleges and universities not only should carry on professional art education for students but also should carry on life beauty education for students. Only in this way can learning of painting course be useful to the life of students in the future, contribute to the healthy development of mind and soul of students and improve the life quality of students. However, all art teachers still need to continue to discuss how to skillfully introduce life elements into the painting course, get painting back to life and make students find and understand art in real living world.

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