

The Teaching Design of Dance Course in General Education in Institutions of Higher Learning

Ting Lin¹, Tianle Zhuang²

1. School of Theater, Film and Television, Communication University of China, Beijing 100024

2. School of International Studies, Communication University of China, Beijing 100024

Abstract: Core literacy in education has long been a heated topic in the world. UNESCO and countries including the United States, France, New Zealand, Japan, and Singapore have established goals, road maps and requirements for core literacy in education. The Ministry of Education in China has officially unveiled *the Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening Curriculum Reform and Implementing the Fundamental Task of Moral Education*. The document elaborates on the importance and urgency of comprehensively deepening curriculum reform and implementing the fundamental task of moral education. By analyzing the dance course in institutions of higher learning, this article summarizes the status of the dance course in institutions of higher learning and puts forward the three core requirements for the design of the dance course—flexible teaching time, diversified teaching spaces, and distinctive teaching tasks.

Keywords: general education, dance course, teaching design

Introduction

As a part of general education in institutions of higher learning, the dance course embodies the cultivation of artistic literacy and demonstrates the campus culture. According to the document from the Ministry of Education (No. 2 [2014]), the core literacy system in institutions of higher learning emphasizes personality cultivation, social care, and patriotic sentiment. It focuses more on students' self-development, team spirit, and innovative practice.

1. Status of dance courses in institutions of higher learning

1.1 Technicalization and feminization

Generally, the dance course is a public elective course for students in all schools, majors, and grades. Firstly, according to the author's teaching experience and practical investigation, most of the students selecting dance courses are girls, with a gender ratio as high as 1:99. The majority of students in the dance course that is female-dominated are interested in the art of dance. Even a few female students have had professional experience, which is a reason behind technicalization and feminization.

1.2 Emphasis on skill over artistry

In teaching dance courses in higher learning institutions, emphasis on skill over artistry persists. Courses are often centered on specific dance genres, or one or two classic choreographic works, whose professional design and movements are complex for amateur students.

1.3 Sole knowledge structure

In addition, the dance course is mainly the concern of two departments. The first department is the physical education department, which is in charge of the dance physique course, and the other is affiliated with the Art Teaching Group led by the Youth League Committee or the public art education department in institutions of higher learning. Therefore, the knowledge taught in class is mainly confined to a single subject.

The above are the main features of the current dance courses in institutions of higher learning, which are incompatible with the core literacy education system that pursues comprehensive and whole-process education by all staff.

2. The teaching design of dance courses under the general education system

2.1 The core of teaching design for dance courses

The principles and core of the teaching design for dance courses lie in “who are to be cultivated” and “How to cultivate them”. “Who is to be cultivated” is the key to education. From the perspective of core literacy, students are supposed to be equipped with the literacy and capacity to achieve lifelong development and meet the demands of social development, which is also stressed in the document from the Ministry of Education.

The road map to achieve this goal relates to the specific design and development of the course, which should include not only dance education and the basic knowledge structure but also the demonstration of unique aesthetic education in institutions of higher learning.

2.2 Fragmented teaching time

Generally, the lecture time of the public courses in institutions of higher learning is relatively centralized, featuring short total teaching time but a long time for a single lecture. Take the Communication University of China as an example. In a single lecture, The public courses generally begin in the fourth week in one semester and end in the fourteen weeks, with a single lecture lasting for 3 class hours. As the last 2 class hours in the last lecture are for exams, the total lecture time reaches 30 class hours. Nowadays, with a faster pace of life and more convenient access to information, people may put more emphasis on higher efficiency. Compared to the other types of courses, the teaching time of elective courses is relatively fixed, hence the importance of the design for a single lecture. In a single lecture, maintaining students’ enthusiasm and interest in the course is the first and foremost, so teachers need to divide the whole lecture into several sessions and adopt complementary or opposite teaching styles. For example, the teacher’s explanations can be combined with movement demonstrations. Students’ practice can be combined with creative expression, and students’ reflective presentations can be combined with the teacher’s listening. In short, this process fragments the complete teaching time, which helps accomplish teaching tasks and impart knowledge more efficiently.

2.3 Diversified teaching space

Dance is the art of time and space. It’s also a process for dancers to construct dancing images, so the spatial mobility of dancers’ movements needs more concern. However, the dancer’s individual existence

and the environment around the stage relate to the construction of multiple spaces. For the spatial design of dance courses in institutions of higher learning, we can also further improve the teaching design, getting rid of the restriction of technicalization and feminization. Instead of sticking to the teaching of a single type of dance, the course is expected to break through the limitations of physical standardization and consistency, foster students' self-expression, and increase the design related to physical and mental care for students. As Schiller said in *Beauty and Theory*, suggests, aesthetic education makes a sane person. Only aesthetic concepts can promote people's sound development. He called for the harmonization of the two human natures (sensibility and ratiom), and this is where the charm and attraction of aesthetic education lies. Education should not just be the transmission of knowledge, especially in today's information society, where information and knowledge are easily accessible. As aesthetic education enjoys a broader space for development, we need to grasp this key advantage to further improve the teaching design of the dance course and to cultivate the core literacy of college students in the new era.

2.4 Distinctive teaching task design

Moral education is the core for education with Chinese characteristics, and it is the essential requirement for cultivating socialist builders and successors with all-round development of virtue, intelligence, physical condition and mind status. The speaker in charge of basic education in the Ministry of Education directly put forward in the interview that moral education has far-reaching significance in the new era. While cultivating students' moral sentiments, scientific and cultural literacy, physical and mental health, and aesthetic tastes, we should also carry forward Chinese cultural deposit and the common ideals of socialism with Chinese characteristics and equip students with an international outlook so as to stand out the distinctive features of moral education. Therefore, in modern society, where the world is more unified and competition is more fierce, the key to realizing the ultimate goal for moral education is to deepen the curriculum reform, which focuses on the Chinese culture and students' core literacy, thus enhancing cultural confidence and international competitiveness. From the perspective of teaching design for the dance course in institutions of higher learning, the development of both national culture and dance art is a cumulative process, and we all stand on the shoulders of giants to learn, grow, develop, and interact. In the new era, the dance course is expected to embrace a pluralistic knowledge structure, thus realizing the goal of all-round education. However, the teaching design needs key points and highlights, which revolve around the demonstration of Chinese culture and traditional elements. It calls for not only the teaching of cultural knowledge but students' personal dancing experience. In addition, teachers are advised to adopt diversified and interesting tools and emphasize students' active engagement.

3. Conclusion

The system of students' core literacy meets the demand for moral education in the new era and is an important part of the national talent strategy, which relates to the future of the Chinese nation and the cultivation of innovative talents. In institutions of higher learning, dance courses should adhere to aesthetic education. The purpose of education is not simply the mastery of knowledge but the cultivation of the ability to integrate into social development. The value of aesthetic education is reflected in fostering perfect personality and innovative consciousness. Therefore, it is necessary for institutions of higher learning to realize the educative value of dance courses, deepen the curriculum reform, and optimize the teaching design for dance courses.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

[1] Chu Hongqi. The International Perspective and China's Stance of Key Competencies--The Enhancement of National Qualities and the Transformation of Educational Goals in 21st Century in China. *Educational Research*. 2016; 37(11): 8-18.

[2] Zhou Xing, Ye Kai. A Garden of Well-Cultivated Citizen The Current Campus Culture Construction Task. *Aesthetic Education Research*. 2013; (01): 17-20.

[3] Wang Yichuan. Breaking New Ground in Aesthetic Education:Thoughts on the Study and Implementation of the Central Government's Directives on Aesthetic Education. *Beijing Social Science*. 2016; 7(02): 26-30.

[4] Wang Yichuan. The Road to Public Appreciation of Art--Centered on the Perspectives of Art Theory Scholars in Peking University (I). *Chinese Literary World*. 2014; (05): 4-10+14.

[5] Wang Yichuan. The Road to Public Appreciation of Art--Centered on the Perspectives of Art Theory Scholars in Peking University (I). *Chinese Literary World*. 2014; (06): 4-11.

Fund: This paper is the achievement of the research cultivation project of the Communication University of China (CUC). Project: Research on Video Development of Dance Art. (No. CUC18B051)