

A Comparative Study on Poetry Education in Chinese Department of Teaching Private Universities on Both Sides of the Taiwan Straits

Bosheng Hong

School of Literature and Media, Nanfang College of Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangzhou, China

hongbsh@nfu.edu.cn

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Abstract: Poetry is an important form of traditional Chinese literature. Nowadays, Chinese language and literature departments of universities on both sides of the Taiwan Straits all offer courses related to classical poetry. However, due to the different major emphases and teaching methods of teachers in diverse universities, there are differences in the curriculum arrangement and teaching methods of classical poetry. Taking the school of literature and Media of Nanfang College of Sun Yat-sen University and the Chinese Department of Shih Hsin University as examples, this paper puts forward two similarities and differences between “Curriculum Arrangement” and “Curriculum Practice” based on the author's previous teaching experience, so as to analyze the current problems in the education of classical poetry in private universities between Taiwan and Mainland.

1. Introduction

Classical poetry is a treasure of Chinese culture. Taking the curriculum arrangements of major Chinese departments on both sides of the Taiwan Strait as an example, “Selected Chinese Poems” aims to learn professional knowledge such as the evolution of poems and artistic performance; “Selected Chinese Tzu” is Change the horizon from “poetry” to “Tzu” and “Chyu” to further understand the knowledge about “Tzu” and “Chyu” and their unique artistic value. In addition, there are many “Expert poems” and “Expert Tzu” courses for students to choose for further study. Chinese students should be more in-depth than other majors in classical poetry, and should have a systematic overall plan for personnel training. The author takes the Chinese department of these two universities as the object of observation. The reasons are as follows: Firstly, the two universities are both teaching private universities, which are similar in system. Secondly, Shih Hsin University is famous for its major in journalism and media. This feature is also integrated into the Chinese Department. According to the characteristics of the department published on the official website of the Shih Hsin Chinese Department^[1], the curriculum is designed according to the following concepts:

“Classical Literature” and “Modern Literature and Art” are equally important. “Chinese Application” and “Literary Appreciation” are both crucial. “Theoretical Study” and “Practical Application” are developing simultaneously. In practice, we should master the pulse of social development, give full play to the characteristics of classical and modern culture, and make school education closely related to social development, and students can immediately invest in cultural and social construction after graduation.

The school of Literature and Media of Nanfang College of Sun Yat-sen University is divided into “Chinese Language and Literature”, “Journalism” and “Network and New Media” majors. According to the published talent training program for Chinese language and literature^[2]:

The goal is to train senior applied talents who have systematically mastered the theoretical knowledge and basic skills of Chinese language and literature, are familiar with the development history of Chinese and modern literature, have rich knowledge of Humanities and good humanistic quality, have strong literary appreciation and writing application ability, and have innovative spirit and practical ability.

It can be seen that the purpose of the two departments is to combine theory and application, classical and modern, hoping to cultivate applied and interdisciplinary talents; moreover, the two universities have cooperated and exchanged for many years, the educational ideas have been integrated to some extent. This paper mainly discusses the teaching of “Classical Poetry”, hoping to compare the differences in the curriculum setting and teaching methods of “Classical Poetry” in private universities on both sides of the Taiwan Straits, and reflect on some problems in the development and dissemination of “Classical Poetry” in Today's China, hoping to make some contributions to the teaching of classical poetry.

2. The Planning of Classical Poetry Courses in the Two Universities

2.1 The Course Arrangement of Classical Poetry in Nanfang College of Sun Yat-Sen University

According to the “curriculum schedule of professional education” in the “2016 undergraduate talent training program for Chinese language and literature major”, the courses related to “classical poetry” in the curriculum arrangement are as follows: “Introduction to Poems of Tang and Song Dynasties” (required course, 2 credits, half academic year), “Intensive Reading of the Book of Songs” (optional course, 3 credits, half academic year) “Introduction to Classic Literature of Wei and Jin Dynasty” (optional course, 3 credits, half academic year), “Classical Poetry Reading and Writing Training” (optional course, 2 credits, half academic year), “Du Fu's Poetry” (optional course, 2 credits, half academic year), “Tao Yuanming's Poetry” (optional course, 2 credits , half academic year), a total of six courses.

2.2 The Course Arrangement of Classical Poetry in Shih Hsin University

The courses related to “Classical Poetry” in the “Planning of Applicable Courses for New Students of Bachelor's Class 105 (2016), Department of Chinese Language and Literature, Shih Hsin University” include: “Reading and Exercising in Chinese Poetry” (required course, 2 credits, full academic year), “Reading and Exercising in Tzu and Chyu”(required course, 3 credits, full academic year), “The Book of Songs” (optional course, 3 credits, full academic year), “Li Bai's Poetry” (optional course, 2 credits, full academic year), “Du Fu's Poetry” (optional course, 2 credits, full academic year), “Tao Yuanming's Poetry” (optional course, 2 credits, half academic year), “Selected Readings of Song Dynasty Poetry” (optional course, 2 credits, half academic year), “Su Shi's Poetry Reading” (optional course, 2 credits, half academic year) , a total of eight courses.

2.3 Viewing the Problems of Learning Process from the Classical Poetry Courses of Two Departments

From the above arrangement, we can clearly see the similarities and differences between the two courses. In terms of the curriculum, both departments pay attention to the popular classical poetry courses. For example, Chinese Department in Nanfang has:”Introduction to Poems of Tang and Song Dynasties”and”Introduction to Classic Literature of Wei and Jin Dynasty”. Shih Hsin Chinese Department has: “Readings in Chinese Poetry”, “Reading and Exercising in Tzu and Chyu”, “Selected Readings of Song Dynasty Poetry”. In addition, they also attach great importance to the classical poetry courses of experts. For example, both departments include”Book of Songs”, “Du Fu's Poetry”, and “Tao Yuanming's Poetry”. Moreover, Chinese Department in Nanfang has: “Classical Poetry Reading and Writing Training”, Shih Hsin Chinese Department has: “Su Shi's Poetry Reading”.

In fact, the poetry before the Tang Dynasty is also very important. If students can have an understanding of the artistic style of poetry from pre-Qin to Han and Wei dynasties before learning Tang poetry, and then study poetry after Tang Dynasty, they will: On the one hand, students will have a better understanding of the evolution of the history of classical poetry, which enables students to combine theory with practice while studying the history of ancient Chinese literature. On the other hand, students can have a more detailed understanding of the origin and background of

the poet's poems, which will be helpful for the study. Compared with classical poetry, the curriculum of classical Tzu is less problematic, because "Tzu" was formed in the late Tang dynasty and the Five Dynasties, it developed after the Song Dynasty. Therefore, how to appreciate the art of each author's Tzu has naturally become the primary focus of teachers' attention. In the course arrangement, we should pay attention to the relationship between the history of Tzu and the style of expert Tzu. For the former, teachers should understand the history of Tzu, and teach courses according to the development of Tzu; for the latter, the authors have different styles and teachers can think about how to arrange it. For example, "The Tze of Su Shih and Hsin Chi-Zi", the two poets' poems are similar in overall style, so they can be set up as one course.

After understanding this point and comparing the two departments' curriculum, the Chinese Department of Nanfang put the required course "Introduction to Poems of Tang and Song Dynasties" in the second semester of grade three, other optional courses such as "Intensive Reading of the Book of Songs" and "Du Fu's poetry" in the second semester of grade two; the "Introduction to Classic Literature of Wei and Jin Dynasty" in the first semester of grade three; "Tao Yuanming's Poetry" and "Classical Poetry Reading and Writing Training" are all placed in the second semester of grade three. However, Shih Hsin Chinese Language and Literature Department places the required courses which named "Selected Chinese Poems" in the grade two and "Reading and Exercising in Tzu and Chyu" in the grade three. ;the optional "The Book of Songs" in the grade two; "Li Bai's poetry", "Du Fu's poetry" and "Tao Yuanming's poetry" are placed in the grade three; "Selected Readings of Song Dynasty Poetry" and "Su Shi's Poetry Reading" are placed in the grade four. From the comparison of the above courses, it is actually very clear that Shih Hsin Chinese's arrangement of classical poetry is actually more in line with the ancients' understanding of the process of poetry.

Secondly, it is the difference of class schedule between the two departments. The curriculum arrangement of Shih Hsin Chinese department is mostly full academic year, while that of Nanfang Chinese major is all half academic year. These two arrangements have their own advantages and disadvantages. In terms of the meticulousness of the courses, it is natural that a course can be very comprehensive and in-depth during the whole academic year. Comprehensive courses such as "Selected Chinese Poems" should be arranged in this way. However, from the author's experience as a student and the practice as a teacher today, whether some courses of the Shih Hsin Chinese Department will take a full academic year can be considered. The most important reason is, as an applied compound department, whether it should meet the needs of today's era and reduce the class time in order to allow students to learn more other courses; or whether the curriculum can be combined with practice to make the life of classical poetry continue to this day. To sum up, we should consider the process of four-year classical poetry when designing the curriculum planning of Chinese major. What are the required courses? What content is suitable for teaching in a certain grade? How to handle class hours? These are the necessary considerations to improve students' ability to learn poetry.

3. Practical Problems of Classical Poetry Courses in Two Universities

In contrast, Shih Hsin Chinese department pays more attention to the synchronization of "theoretical study" and "practical application", while the Chinese major in Nanfang emphasizes that students should have strong literary appreciation and application ability, and it is better to have innovative spirit and practical ability at the same time. In the teaching of classical poetry writing, the most important question for teachers of both sides of the Taiwan Strait is "How to write"? In fact, not only classical poetry, but any art will involve this question. This question reflects nothing but method and skill, which namely: How to better combine creativity with skills and methods to practice in real life. In this regard, the two universities differ in their approach. In the case of the Nanfang Chinese major, in order to implement the training goals of applied and compound talents, it has set up "Classical Poetry Reading and Writing Training". The introduction of this course is as follows: This course begins with an introduction to poetry, understanding what poetry is, forming the background, stylistic characteristics and reading methods. After that, the teacher selected and

discussed famous poems, and led the students to try to write poems, hoping to experience the beautiful artistic conception of poems through personal creation. What's more, it can be used in daily life and combined with cultural creativity.

From now on, teachers hope to be based on the classical, the practice applied to the society. Looking at the progress of the course, the teachers pay special attention to the teaching of verse forms. The author still remembers that Mr. Yeh Chiaying once said: "As a scholar who engaged in the teaching and research of classical poetry, I feel that although there are many students who like classical poetry, there are not a lot who have a deep understanding of the tradition of classical poetry. The main characteristic of Chinese classical poetry is the function of inspiring and moving, and the origin of this aesthetic feeling is closely related to the tradition of Chinese recitation."^[3]In addition, the teacher also hopes that students can visit different places to create poems for scenery, places of interest, or even for certain commodities or plays. The purpose of this course is to integrate poems into the application of real life by combining culture and personal creativity. Although it is a good idea to set up a course for the purpose of writing, in practice, because of the large number of students and different interests, the teacher cannot take care of everyone. Take a look at the Chinese department of Shih Hsin. Although there are two courses, "Reading and Exercising in Chinese Poetry" and "Reading and Exercising in Tzu and Chyu", the practice part is still insufficient. However, Shih Hsin Chinese Department also knows the importance of creative practice, so it teaches students who are interested in classical poetry to create and appreciate poetry by organizing a "Summer Cultural Study Camp" every academic year. The theme and course arrangement are as follows:

Firstly, the theme. The "Cultural Study Camp" aims to teach "literature" and "culture" to students through a lively curriculum design. The teaching camp team can teach students to be free of form and direction, so that students can experience the richness and artistic conception of Chinese and Western literature and culture, inspire creative inspiration, enhance the taste of appreciation, and become an excellent creator and appreciator.

Secondly, planning concept and goal. By strengthening the teaching of culture and literature, students' interest in learning is enhanced, students' appreciation ability is cultivated, the positive functions of literature and culture are brought into play, and students' healthy personality is nurtured.

Thirdly, the activity content includes classical literature and modern literature appreciation and creation practice; The activities are mainly delivered by teachers, lecturers, group discussions and creative exercises.

The "summer culture training camp" held by the Department of Chinese language of Shixin in 2017 was put in the summer vacation. In this way, the number of students is suitable for small class teaching, which is conducive to teaching and learning. Although this idea is good, the whole training camp only has two days. It is necessary to teach "Appreciation and Creation Practice of Classical and Modern Literature" in a short period of time, which may not enable students to absorb knowledge effectively.

4. Conclusion

First, in terms of "Curriculum Planning", this paper actually inspected the courses of the Chinese major of Nanfang College and the Chinese Department of Shih Hsin University, found the similarities and differences between the two departments, and from the perspective of literary history, proposed that the teaching of poetry should have a process in four years of University, rather than designing the curriculum without any system and plan, so that students can not effectively absorb knowledge, or even help them grow up. In addition, the curriculum planning is also worth pondering in the arrangement of the class hours. However, this matter is related to the trend of a department or even an university. The author is specifically speaking about the ideal situation for those who arrange courses.

Second, in terms of "Practice of the Curriculum", this article proposes the basic structure of the aesthetic sense of classical verse forms. Although verse forms has gradually ignored by people due

to factors such as time and voice. However, as a student of the Chinese Department, it is necessary to be able to master this art path, whether in appreciation or actual creation. In the teaching of classical poetry creation course, this paper compares the methods of the two departments. In fact, there are advantages and disadvantages of each other. The length of teaching, the number of students and the depth of content are worth pondering.

As mentioned above, it is not easy to know that the course of “Classical Poetry” should be combined with “Theory” and “Practice” in private universities across the Straits. However, as the common cultural treasure of Chinese, classical poetry is a bridge linking the cultural memory of Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Today, we should not let it sink or blindly accept the poetry of the ancients. If we want to pass on the beautiful literature, it really depends on the education inheritance. The author hopes to make educators on both sides of the Strait to think about how to continue this cultural tradition through my humble discussion.

References

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