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Analysis on the Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Multimedia Courseware in Chinese Folk Dance Classes

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ABSTRACT

The development of technology will affect the development of traditional dance classes. The teaching method is no longer a singular course of teaching and learning. Multimedia courseware is a commonly used course technology, based on computer and projection technology, to convey rich knowledge to students. This paper discusses the use of multimedia courseware in dance classes, then, combined with the majors the author have studied, creatively discusses the influence of multimedia courseware on Chinese folk dance courses.

1. Introduction

Technology and dance are regarded as two different disciplines. However, the development of technology will affect the development of traditional dance classes. The teaching method is no longer a singular course of teaching and learning. Like other art disciplines. Dance now incorporates technical elements in teaching, performance and choreography^[1]. With the advent of the Internet, advances in software and tools, and significant improvements in accessibility, people are exploring and integrating technology not only in the creation and performance of dances. According to Huddy^[2], the use of interactive technologies in dance can

now be broadly categorised in three areas: as teaching and learning aids, ranging from self-learning software and practice partners to instructors and students connecting apps outside the studio; for allowing creative collaboration in the traditional communication platform that takes place outside the walkthrough; and to show techniques through various methods that contribute to the creative process itself. Multimedia courseware is a commonly used course technology, based on computer and projection technology, to convey rich knowledge to students. The most common software now is Microsoft PowerPoint, and other software including Prezi, Google Slides, Camtasia, and Keynote are also used in the classrooms^[3]. These technologies can incorporate a lot of content, such as text, music, and

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video and so on. According to Baker, et al., (2018), some studies have shown that PowerPoint teaching is beneficial to students' perception and cognitive learning compared to traditional teaching. Students can study the content outside the classroom through multimedia courseware, and this can stimulate their interest and prepare them with more detail about "what am I going to learn?", rather than just learning dance movements alone. Interactive digital video and computer-based technologies, with just a click of a mouse, allow you to observe the precise moments in dance, which opens up new opportunities for presenting pedagogy in a specifically created and controlled technical environment^[4]. This essay aims to discuss the use of multimedia courseware in dance classes, then, combined with the majors I have studied, creatively discuss the influence of multimedia courseware on Chinese folk dance courses.

2. The Advantages of Multimedia Courseware

Multimedia courseware is an addition to the teachers' 'toolbox' of instructional aides^[5]. Since the multimedia courseware has three major characteristics (rich expressiveness, good interactivity, great sharing), multimedia courseware can not only represent the colorful audiovisual world more naturally and realistically, it can also simulate macro and micro things, vivid and intuitive representations of abstract and intangible things, simplified reproduction of complex processes, and so on. In this way, the originally complex teaching activities are full of charm. Apart from that, multimedia courseware can not only provide good interactive control in the learning and use of content, but also can use appropriate teaching strategies to guide students in learning and better reflect the individualised teaching based on aptitude^[5]. The development of network technology and the free transmission of multimedia information has made it possible for education to be exchanged and shared throughout the world. The multimedia courseware based on the network provides the sharing of teaching resources. The use of multimedia courseware in teaching improves the expressiveness and interactivity of teaching media, promotes the overall optimisation of classroom teaching content, teaching methods, and teaching processes, and improves teaching results. According to Clemons (2000), multimedia courseware has many benefits for both students and teachers. It can be used as an independent teaching tool to challenge students who have difficulties in a particular unit of study, or to explain details to students who have difficulties. Courseware can also be used as a self-paced teaching tool. Students learn and develop at different rates. Multimedia courseware allows students

who prefer alternative learning styles to learn at their own pace. In addition, courseware can be used as an advanced learning tool, so students can review materials before class, and then prepare class discussions and reports instead of just taking notes.

3. Multimedia Courseware in Chinese Folk Dance

Using multimedia courseware has many advantages for Chinese folk dance teaching. Making the learning experience immersive is one of the benefits brought by multimedia courseware, and this is referred to as situational teaching^[6]. There are 56 ethnic groups in China. In different regions, different ethnic groups have different regional characteristics, cultural characteristics, and aesthetic expressions. Corresponding ethnic dances also have significantly different artistic styles. In the training of Chinese folk dance, the characteristics can be observed as several distinct elements: elements of physical characteristics, elements of quality and ability, elements of exertion methods, elements of operating consciousness, and elements of rhythm. These elements are important contents of national dance training^[7]. One of the very important aspects of the charm of Chinese national dance, the ultimate purpose of dance, is to express the inner emotion of the dancer, represented in the perfect fit of inner emotions and physical movements. According to Zongnan (2019), every move of the Chinese national folk dance is full of the deep emotions of the dancers and expresses the national life customs. Only dances that express emotions are truly good dances. For a teacher of Chinese folk dance, how to enable students to master the ethnic dances in these different regions has become the challenge. The development of technology has given me a better means to address these challenges. Because of the limitations of dance classrooms, we can't let students experience the prairie in Inner Mongolia or the small bridges in Yunnan in real life. Multimedia courseware has helped teachers at this moment. Teachers can display rich photos, video, and audio material through multimedia courseware, so that students can appreciate the style characteristics of a certain area, to help them better use their imagination and let them be people in the classroom, while their hearts are far away. Emotional teaching should be integrated into folk dance teaching, so that the inner emotions of dancers flow naturally through body language^[7]. Multimedia courseware is also an auxiliary tool to stimulate students' emotions. Watching videos and listening to national music can strengthen students' perception and grasp of the inner

emotions of dance. In addition to dance practice classes. In many schools in China, the folk dance studies include theoretical courses to understand the cultural history, movement elements, and teaching methods of the nation. The most important method in teaching dance theory, its purpose is to improve students' interest in learning, and to encourage active rather than passive learning. Interest is the greatest motivation for learning^[3]. To improve students' study interest, this puts forward higher requirements for dance teachers. Only when students are interested in dance can they mobilise their initiative and learn, consolidate and consciously improve. Students' attention will be focused on the use of modern teaching methods and various other forms of teaching methods, especially the use of multimedia teaching methods, which can enhance cohesion and influence, and enable students to seek knowledge desire and learning motivation. Dance is a non-verbal culture. It is difficult to clearly express the movements, postures, skills, and techniques of dance. The introduction of the multimedia teaching mode in the unified mode is really appropriate. The use of images, text, and video combined with the teaching courseware immediately enlivens the boring classroom through the multi-level and multi-angle presentation of teaching content to students.

Apart from that, in addition to the teacher's guidance in the dance course, students can also spend time on autonomous learning using multimedia courseware. Not only in the study of folk dance, but in the case of all dance types, is practice very important^[8]. The teaching of folk dance includes style training, performance skills training, and prop training. In dance learning, students will inevitably encounter some more complicated movements. For example, the Chinese folk dance of the Han culture entails a wide variety of patterns and forms. The differences in the style of Han dance in each region involve different methods of physical exertion, physical operation, breath operation, and key training parts. The differences in these fundamental factors makes the training of students completely different. Some strengthen the upper body, some highlight the feet, some emphasise the sudden force, and some pay attention to the tremor flow. One of the Han dances is called Jiaozhou Yangge. The most prominent feature of Jiaozhou Yangge is twisting, so it is called "twisting Yangge". That is, it involves the three bends twisting out, moving in different directions in the same beat rhythm, thus showing a strong, soft and smooth, and graceful dance posture. Reflecting the variety of Jiaozhou Yangge's postures, dancers make continuous movements from different directions, different angles, and organised with different body parts. It is a dance

form with overall characteristics. The most prominent artistic style of Jiaozhou Yangge lies in the flexibility and stretching of the dancing posture, which reflects the delicate emotions of the dancers. Therefore, the classroom training of Jiaozhou Yangge should guide the students to use the heel rolling and the force of the soles as the support of the action; that is, the rolling and twisting of the foot movements to achieve the extension of the lower right upward force of the body, and the waist movement is driven by the foot movements. This is a folk dance that requires great strength and attention to detail. Using multimedia courseware, students can repeatedly review the important and difficult points marked by the teacher, and can see videos of standard actions. This exercise is relatively effective. What's more, the students' abilities are different. Some students who are slow to accept cannot immediately understand what the teacher is saying or asking and they cannot correct themselves during the dance class. When they watch online, they have a better understanding of the action, since students can slow down the video. According to the research of Li & Teo, (2018), for those students who use the video to study, they began to analyse their dance more critically. They started to learn in a student-centered manner^[9]. Constructivism focuses on student-centered teaching. Students are the subject of information processing and the active builders of meaning. The teacher is a helper and facilitator, rather than an inculcator of meaning construction for the students^[10]. Students pay attention to specific steps, movements, jumps or breathing exercises while in the dance studio. At the same time, by watching other dancers, they can better distinguish what is good performance and what is not.

By using multimedia courseware, students can gain greater flexibility in their studies. For students who are absent from the classroom due to special circumstances, multimedia courseware is a valuable tool. Because the teacher can send the content of the lesson to the class group, the absent student can make up for the knowledge missed in this lesson. However, this does not mean that students can only learn with multimedia courseware. Dance is an art of the body, so the important role of teachers in the classroom cannot be replaced. The reality of computer-aided education is based on regarding computers as medium. "Assistance" is its core character, namely, assisting teachers, rather than replacing teachers. Only "Man" can have the ability to be the host of thinking^[11]. It can be used as a supportive method to ensure that students will not completely deviate from the track in the next course, because in the Chinese folk dance class, the content of each individual course is likely to

be different from the content of the next course because of the rich movement elements. Multimedia courseware can be viewed not only on the computer, but also on mobile devices. Its portability enables students to view videos, texts and images anywhere, thus linking them to classroom learning. In addition, students have the freedom and flexibility to choose when and where to interact with classroom materials. The accessibility of courseware promotes harmony with their lifestyle and other ways of learning^[5]. This is a more visual and intuitive interactive environment, using multimedia-courseware thought network-assisted teaching. The entire teaching process is an integrated process of teacher-student interaction, group teaching of student interaction, and organic combination of individual teaching of human-computer interaction. Restrict communication with each other, communicate with others, and enable them to learn from each other and make progress together.

The video content in multimedia courseware has also greatly helped students' learning, especially in terms of creativity^[12]. From observations, it was found that the students initially imitated the actions shown in the video. However, after the video showed more complex types of dance movements and added some changes, the students began to develop their own dance creations. Malarsih Malarsih's^[12] survey showed that at the end of classroom sessions, teachers asked students to provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of classroom teaching media implementation. The results show that students feel the advantages of media implementation, as it can stimulate students' creativity in creating dance. In short, it is apparent that the media can be successfully implemented in the classroom to help students create dances. The results of dance creation vary. Some students prefer to create solo dances, while others choose to create partner and group dances. Related to this, student creativity successfully brings diversity to the classroom, which means that the goal of creative teaching is achieved. This is a very important issue in dance pedagogy. Research by Farrer^[13] shows that those dancers who leave higher education to enter the industry, especially those who have less chance to perform, are more likely to become teachers or independent dance artists. As more and more dancers graduate while the number of performance contracts declines, it is imperative to strike a balance between performance and skills and the development of creativity and dance skills, as well as knowledge of how to promote and cultivate the creativity of others. Multimedia courseware is an apt way for students to develop their own creativity.

4. Some Disadvantages of Using Multimedia Courseware in Dance Course

Multimedia-assisted dance teaching has unparalleled advantages over traditional teaching methods, but also has some disadvantages^[14]. Among them, the most important point is that the use of multimedia courseware, a new type of teaching^[15], will bring severe tests to the classroom. Because computer-assisted instruction can realize large-capacity and high-density information exchange, teachers are inclined to excessively increase the amount of classroom information, so that computers may replace teachers mechanically, instill knowledge to students step by step, and this has become a new type of injection teaching. Although the use of teaching courseware saves a lot of time and allows students to understand the characteristics of dance styles, it is easy for teachers to ignore the thinking intensity and rhythm of students when they use the courseware to teach, because the excessive input of information and the formation of teaching affects the teaching quality^[15]. For example, if the courseware moves as fast as the TV and movie menus without considering the level and speed of students' thinking, then students will not have enough thinking time, which will be opposite to the desired teaching effect. Therefore, in the course of teaching courseware, students should be given ample thinking time to ensure that they understand and absorb the information. Teaching speed and course content should be considered repeatedly.

There needs to be an improvement in teachers' ability to use multimedia courseware to assist dance teaching. In China, many dance teachers have not undergone systematic training in the use of these tools, so there will be some problems when devising multimedia courseware. For example, if the courseware is too fancy it will be a distraction for students and impair their cognition and memory. Diversified and colorful presentation of courseware content is a major advantage of multimedia teaching. However, if the content of the courseware is not selected properly, with regards to the color, pattern, sound, etc. of the courseware, it will distract students, reduce their attention to learning, and affect their knowledge and understanding, which ultimately impairs the actual effect of teaching^[15]. According to Nian, (2012), teachers are an important consideration when making multimedia courseware, in regards to the following matters:

- (1) Selecting topics
- (2) Analysis of teaching materials
- (3) Teaching design
- (4) Collection of materials
- (5) Manuscript design

(6) Synthesis of courseware

These links are very important. A very good example is given by Nian, (2012): we take the course “History of Chinese and Foreign Dance” as an example and start planning the course according to the above links.

(1) Topic selection: Music and Dance in the Tang Dynasty;

(2) Analysis of teaching materials: The main content of the teaching is the four parts of the history of music and dance in the Tang Dynasty, the classification of music and dance, the establishment of music and dance institutions, and the introduction of famous music and dance. Introduce the teaching of this topic, then the courseware is divided into five sections: teaching content, data analysis, classroom discussion, knowledge quiz, and homework;

(3) Collecting materials: Collecting pictures, music, and dance videos related to this topic;

(4) Manuscript design: Refining the manuscripts in textbooks, concise language, highlighting keywords, it is not required to present all the text on the courseware as this part can be supplemented by the teacher orally;

(5) Courseware synthesis: Select a suitable courseware template, and synthesize and produce all the graphic materials in accordance with the instructional design process. In order to make the courseware page conversion more novel, you can match different transition methods and sound effects. Such a multimedia teaching courseware combining graphics, text and shading. Because there are many complicated processes to make suitable multimedia courseware, it takes a lot of time and manpower to make multimedia courseware, which will also waste resources to a certain extent.

5. A Creatical Thinking

Although the use of multimedia courseware has some disadvantages in Chinese folk dance classrooms, such as the quality of courseware being difficult to judge, it is generally regarded that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages^[6]. In the current situation, there are also some obstacles to the popularisation of multimedia courseware in dance classes, because in China, many traditional dance classrooms have insufficient electronic equipment. For the use of multimedia aids in practical lessons, the first thing to solve is the hardware problem, and multimedia equipment must be installed in the dance studio, including computer consoles, projectors, cameras, audio equipment, etc.^[16] Each link of multimedia-assisted dance teaching is not isolated, but also interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Although multimedia equipment has not yet reached full popularity in dance classrooms, now more and more schools have strengthened the hardware

facilities of dance studios, so multimedia-assisted teaching will also be used more widely in the future. As a teaching form and teaching method, multimedia courseware technology can allow full exploration of the teaching content, and has intuitive, real, specific, vivid, accurate, reasonable and many other advantages. It stimulates students’ enthusiasm for physical exercise and is conducive to changing traditional dance education methods and means to improve teaching quality and master dance skills. The application of multimedia courseware technology in college dance teaching can enrich the teaching content, change the learning style of students, enhance the enthusiasm of teachers and students, broaden the knowledge horizon of teachers and students, and establish a sense of dance awareness. This imbues students with a sense of innovation^[14].

6. Conclusion

Multimedia courseware-assisted teaching has been very popular in the field of liberal arts and science teaching around the world^[6]. However, the research and practical application in the arts, especially dance teaching, is still lagging behind, and needs to be actively studied and applied by our dance teaching professionals. With the continuous introduction of modern technology assisted teaching methods into the classroom, it has greatly promoted the improvement of teaching efficiency and teaching quality. At the same time, it must also have a huge impact on the knowledge transfer mode, educational goals, courses, teachers and students in education. This is normal, because new systems break the balance of the existing teaching order, and at the same time a new teaching balance is being established^[17]. The imbalance is only temporary. With the establishment of a new teaching order, multimedia will play a greater role. A dance teacher must remember that combining technology is not an end in itself, but a means to improve the quality of dance teaching. The physical aspects of dance training, such as the role of a teacher, can never be replaced by technology and its possibilities. However, technology is an important tool to promote active learning, critical thinking, and inclusive culture across disciplines including dance^[18]. The application of multimedia courseware technology in the classroom provides more choices for dance teachers, and also presents challenges. In future education and teaching activities, the use of multimedia technology is an inevitable trend^[19]. The dance classroom should actively integrate multimedia teaching with traditional teaching, give play to the teacher’s leading role in the classroom, pay attention to the subjectivity of students in the classroom, and allow multimedia technology to maximize

its advantages in the course of teaching, and realize teaching methods and teaching by constant innovation of means. In this essay, the author analyses the advantages and disadvantages of using multimedia courseware in Chinese folk dance classes^[20]. The development of science and technology has been moving forward. As educators, we should accept the challenges that science and technology bring to the traditional dance classroom, and then better integrate the teaching methods with technology, developing teaching methods that are more suitable for this era, and then cultivating better dancers.

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