

Course-Setting of Chinese Traditional Culture in China-Foreign Cooperative Programs —— With Universities in Shanghai as Examples

Gan Yutian¹, Hua Jing²

¹(Gan Yutian, first author, BSc student of Sino-German College of Technology, East China University of Science and Technology)

²(Hua Jing, corresponding author, Associate Professor of School of Foreign Languages, East China University of Science and Technology, Shanghai, China)

Abstract: This paper has surveyed the training programs of some universities in Shanghai for China-foreign cooperation education. It was found that most of the cultivation goals of the programs lacked the requirements for Chinese traditional culture, the courses of Chinese traditional culture were mostly general optional education courses, and there were few compulsory courses. Universities need to respond to the national call to bring Chinese traditional culture into the classroom, improve students' traditional culture literacy, and cultivate real "composite" talents in the new era.

Keywords: China-foreign cooperation education, Chinese traditional culture, curriculum

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2017, the General Office of the State Council issued the *Opinions on Implementing the Project of Inheritance and Development of Chinese Traditional Culture* (hereinafter referred to as "Opinions"), and the "key tasks" section of the Opinions mentioned two points: first, Chinese traditional culture education should be conducted throughout national education. Promote colleges and universities to offer compulsory courses on Chinese outstanding traditional culture, increase the content of Chinese outstanding traditional culture in philosophy and social sciences and related disciplines and courses, strengthen the construction of disciplines related to Chinese outstanding traditional culture, and enrich and expand campus culture. Second, promote cultural exchanges and mutual appreciation between China and foreign countries. Strengthen cultural exchanges and cooperation with foreign countries, innovate humanities exchanges, enrich the content of cultural exchanges, and continuously improve the level of cultural exchanges. In China, as of February 21, 2022, a total of 794 China-foreign cooperation programs at the undergraduate level have been opened, involving exchange and cooperation with 27

countries as well as two regions in Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong, China. Among them, the cooperation programs in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia occupy 56% of the total cooperation programs, and the cooperation programs in engineering are about 49%. It can be seen that the China-foreign cooperation education projects have become a common phenomenon. Not only that, the China-foreign cooperation education programs assume the important link of foreign exchange and convergence with the international frontier, which is an indispensable and important part of China's education career. While receiving high-level and international education, students of China-foreign cooperation education programs should be based on the local community and look at the world, bring the Chinese traditional culture out of the country, let the Chinese traditional culture to the world, and physically do what the "Opinions" pointed out, "tell the Chinese story, spread the Chinese voice, explain the Chinese characteristics, and show the Chinese image." Therefore, whether or not to offer courses related to traditional culture in the actual teaching process of Chinese and foreign cooperative majors to improve the Chinese traditional culture literacy of current students, and whether or not Chinese and foreign cooperative majors are aware of the important task of spreading Chinese traditional culture is a question worthy of deep consideration in the new era of reviving the Chinese dream. As of February 2022, the author searched the CNKI platform of China Knowledge Network with the keywords of "China-foreign cooperation education + traditional culture" and retrieved 83 journal papers, 31 dissertations, and 1 conference. It can be seen that the cultural research on China-foreign cooperation studies has received some attention. Zhao Yunyu (2012) used questionnaires and interviews to investigate seven aspects, including the status of students taking humanities and social science courses and their attitudes toward traditional Chinese culture, in an experimental international program at a university, and concluded that students in China-foreign cooperation programs do not have high recognition of humanities courses and generally affirm traditional culture but have a shallow understanding of it, and suggested that more targeted cultivation programs should be developed to improve the current situation. The study concluded that the students in Chinese and foreign cooperative programs recognized humanities courses and generally affirmed traditional culture but had little understanding of it. Zhang Xueli (2013) studied 605 college students from Taiyuan Normal University's China-Canada Hill College to find out their mastery of Chinese traditional culture and their poor English expression of Chinese traditional culture in the China-foreign cooperation education model. Sun (2020) points out three problems of students' lack of cultivation of Chinese traditional culture, blind identification with Western culture, and lack of self-confidence in the exchange and collision between Chinese and Western cultures in the context of China-foreign cooperation education, and proposes four practical paths of "strengthening", namely, strengthening the innovation of ideological and political theory courses, strengthening traditional culture courses, strengthening cross-cultural exchange learning, and strengthening cross-cultural learning. We propose four "strengthening" practical paths, namely, strengthening the innovation of ideological and political theory courses, strengthening the construction of traditional culture courses, strengthening cross-cultural exchanges and learning, and strengthening practical and experiential activities, to guide college students to firmly establish cultural confidence. However, a search on the CNKI platform with the keywords "China-foreign cooperation education + traditional culture + curriculum" only retrieved two journal

articles. Liu Shanshan (2010) took the martial arts courses offered on campus as an example and pointed out three problems: improving the curriculum, students' special techniques and theories need to be strengthened, and campus activities need to be managed in a standardized manner and pointed out the corresponding solutions. Taking Chinese painting and calligraphy courses as an example, Wang Huabei (2019) points out that teaching Chinese traditional culture should become an important part of the curriculum of China-foreign cooperation institutes, and puts forward four suggestions for strengthening traditional culture education in China-foreign cooperation schools, improving teachers' teaching methods, broadening ideas, cultivating students' enthusiasm for learning, cultivating students' practical skills, and using traditional culture to cultivate students' outlook on life. It can be seen that although the curriculum is the most familiar aspect of students' academic life, there is a great lack of research on traditional culture courses for majors in China-foreign cooperation studies at present, and the research angles of existing articles are similar. Both of the above papers take a specific course as an example to discuss how to improve the Chinese traditional literacy of students in China-foreign cooperation studies, and they do not look at the overall curriculum arrangement characteristics and training programs. This paper will take a student's perspective and examine how to improve the Chinese traditional literacy of students in China-foreign cooperation studies. In this paper, we will take some universities in Shanghai as an example to investigate the reasons behind the lack of traditional culture-related courses in Chinese and foreign cooperative education programs in Shanghai, and propose curriculum suggestions for students of Chinese and foreign cooperative education programs according to the curriculum characteristics of Chinese and foreign cooperative education programs.

Current Situation of Curriculum of China-foreign cooperation Programs

In this study, the curricula of 12 colleges and universities in Shanghai for the 2019 class during their undergraduate programs in China-foreign cooperation studies were selected. Based on the training programs disclosed by each university on its school's official website, the following charts were drawn.

School	Major	Professional Direction	Number of Courses Offered (except for general electives)	Chinese Traditional Culture Classes		
				Number of Courses (except for general electives)	Compulsory/elective	Average credits
East China University of Science and Technology	Chemical Engineering and Technology		86	0		
Shanghai University of Finance and Economics	Finance	Banking and International Finance	90	0		
Shanghai University of International Business and Economics	Finance		43	0		
Shanghai Maritime University	Mechanical and Electrical Engineering		72	0		
Shanghai Ocean University	Chemical Engineering and Technology		44	0		
Shanghai University of Technology	Mechanical design and manufacturing and automation		61	0		
Sanda University	International Economics and Trade		53	0		
Shanghai Normal University	Electronic Information Engineering		96	0		
Shanghai Conservatory of	Recording Arts Program	Multimedia art design	47	1	Compulsory	4
		Music and Media	42	2	Compulsory	3
Shanghai Institute of Technology	Mechanical design and manufacturing and automation		85	0		
Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine	Pharmacy		52	5	Elective	3.4
Tongji University	Mechanical design and manufacturing and automation		77	1	Compulsory	2

Table 1 Curriculum conducted by 12 colleges and universities in Shanghai

As can be seen from Table 1, in terms of majors, most of them are science and technology majors, accounting for about 58% of the total; in terms of the number of courses offered, except for general optional courses, the number of courses offered is as few as 42 and as many as 96, and the average number of courses offered is 65, among which most majors do not offer Chinese traditional culture courses, and only 4 majors (including different major directions) offer 1 to 5 Chinese traditional culture courses. Only four majors (including different majors) offer one to five courses in Chinese traditional culture. Among the four majors that offer courses in Chinese traditional culture (including different majors), two majors are in the arts, one is in medicine, and the other is in engineering, and most of the courses are compulsory, including major and general options. It can be seen that, except for the general optional courses, most of the Chinese traditional culture courses are lacking in most of the China-foreign cooperation majors nowadays.

About the general optional courses of universities and colleges, it is found that there are three kinds of situations in the general optional courses. The first one, some universities divide the general optional courses into different sections and make specific regulations on the number and credits of taking the sections. For example, the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics divides the general optional courses into seven sections, "Classical Reading and Historical and Cultural Heritage", "Philosophical Thinking and Ethical Norms", "Art

Cultivation and Sports Health", "Economic Analysis and Mathematical Thinking" and "Social Analysis and Civic Literacy", "Scientific Progress and Scientific Spirit" and "Language and Intercultural Communication". Students are required to choose 5 sections from the 7 sections to take, each section counts for 2 credits, which means a total of 10 credits of general optional courses are required. In the second type, universities do not classify the general optional courses, and only require the number of credits to be taken. For example, at Shanghai Normal University, students are required to achieve 6 credits in the general optional section. According to the list of general optional courses for the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 published on the official website of Shanghai Normal University, there are at least 20 courses related to traditional Chinese culture, including "Introduction to Tibetan Culture", "Chinese Seal Carving Art These courses include "Introduction to Tibetan Culture", "Chinese Seal Carving Art", "Chinese Food and Health Culture and Health Care Methods" and many other traditional Chinese culture courses. In the third case, some colleges and universities do not make specific requirements for general optional courses. It can be seen that most colleges and universities have set up courses related to Chinese traditional culture in the part of general optional courses, and there are many courses with a rich variety. However, since these courses are optional, whether to take traditional culture courses or not is up to students to choose, and the university does not make any rigid requirements.

II. Status Quo of the curriculum of China-foreign cooperation education

2.1 Inappropriate Cultivating Goals

According to the curricula of 12 colleges and universities in Shanghai, most of the courses on Chinese traditional culture are general optional courses, and only some colleges and universities of Chinese and foreign cooperative majors take Chinese traditional culture courses as compulsory courses. This kind of phenomenon is especially obvious in science and engineering institutions. Science and engineering colleges pay more attention to students' hands-on ability and engineering practice. So, is there a connection between the development of the curriculum and the training objectives of their majors? Is the focus of the curriculum different for different training objectives? In the survey and study of Shanghai science and technology institutions, such as Tongji University, East China University of Science and Technology, and Shanghai University of Technology, it can be found that the training objectives of most science and technology institutions involve words such as "solid professional knowledge, complex talents with international vision", and in the "training requirements In the part of "training requirements" (or "graduation requirements"), "effective communication in cross-cultural context" is mentioned, and proficiency in foreign languages is emphasized. However, as students of China-foreign cooperationmajors spread Chinese traditional culture, in the intercultural background, most of the training programs of universities do not involve traditional cultural literacy and spreading Chinese culture, and only some universities mention "effective communication in intercultural context" in the "training requirements" (or "graduation requirements"). Only some colleges and universities have mentioned traditional culture literacy in the "training requirements" (or "graduation requirements"). In the survey and study of art and medical institutions in Shanghai, such as the China-foreign cooperation program between Shanghai Conservatory of Music and Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese

Medicine, it is found that the China-foreign cooperation program of Shanghai Conservatory of Music clearly states in its training program that students are not only required to master solid professional skills, but also in the part of "training requirements" that students should. In the "Training Requirements" section, it is stated that students should have "good knowledge of traditional Chinese culture and literary and artistic cultivation, and be able to reflect the ability to pass on traditional Chinese culture in their designs". Therefore, the Shanghai Conservatory of Music has introduced the "Traditional Chinese Music Course" as a compulsory course to improve the traditional culture and the ability to transmit the culture of the students. Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, as an institution featuring traditional Chinese medicine, aims to cultivate pharmacy professionals with an international perspective, to realize independent work and inheritance and innovation in the professional field, to become a bridge for cultural exchange and scientific and technological integration between China and the West, and to promote the cause of Chinese medicine to the world. "Therefore, Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine offers courses related to traditional Chinese medicine, such as "Traditional Chinese Medicine" and "Pharmacology of Traditional Chinese Medicine", to enhance the traditional Chinese culture of the students from the courses, and bring traditional Chinese medicine to the world. The courses are designed to enhance the students' knowledge of traditional Chinese culture and bring traditional Chinese medicine to the world.

2.2 Problems with the existing curriculum

In addition to the shortage of traditional Chinese culture-related content in the training objectives of colleges and universities, some problems can influence students to take Chinese traditional culture courses in the courses already offered by each China-foreign cooperation school. First, there are many courses and time constraints. As shown in Table 1, the number of courses (including major options) during undergraduate studies can be as high as 96. The number of courses means that not only the study time is tight on weekdays, but also more classes need to be reviewed before and after class, and the pressure is multiplied during the final review period, one exam after another, and the review time for a single subject is shortened, so students are under heavy academic pressure, which can easily cause heavy psychological burden and anxiety and other negative psychology, affecting students' physical and mental health. For some colleges and universities that do not require optional courses, students naturally will not take more courses on top of the already heavy coursework. Second, fewer credits, no one to choose from. For the students of Chinese and foreign cooperation majors who have certain credit requirements for general optional courses, under the premise that Chinese traditional culture courses are commonly found in general optional courses to complete the required credits as soon as possible, students generally have the mentality of "not taking more courses as long as the credits are enough" when choosing courses, therefore, students often give priority to high-credit optional courses. Therefore, students often give priority to high-credit optional courses to reduce the total number of courses, and to reduce academic pressure caused by more courses. Third, it is difficult and stressful. When choosing optional courses, students not only consider the number of credits, but also the difficulty of the course. In colleges and universities, you can often hear "this class is so difficult, I should have

known not to take it in the first place." Such complaints are common. During the course selection period, we often see students asking their seniors on online media for advice about their optional courses, such as "How about the xxx course?" and "What is the pass rate of this course?" In this way, students can initially judge the difficulty of the optional course, and whether to choose this optional course. Therefore, the course is difficult, the failure rate is high, naturally, there will not be too many students to choose from. Fourth, not interested, and do not want to choose. Zhong Kai (2011) points out that students of China-foreign cooperation majors have more opportunities to get in touch with western culture compared with traditional Chinese cultures, such as in language exams, which usually involve western history and culture, and to improve their language scores, there will be cases that students take the initiative to learn about the relevant contents. Over time, the understanding of Western culture gradually penetrates students' minds, which leads to students gradually admiring the Western culture and losing interest in traditional Chinese culture. Not only that, but the tedious content of the course will also reduce students' interest in the traditional culture class. Through a sample survey, NieXiangyan (2016) pointed out that in learning about traditional culture, many students find the learning process boring and difficult to stimulate their interest in learning. The learning process is monotonous, and it is difficult for students to feel engaged in the course, and it often happens that they look down and play with their cell phones and chat with their surrounding students. This also leads to the situation that although students take traditional culture courses, they do not learn about traditional culture, and they are in the classroom but not in the classroom.

III. Suggestions for strengthening the curriculum of traditional culture literacy for students of China-foreign cooperation studies

3.1 To adjust the cultivation goals to improve traditional culture literacy

The development and growth of students in colleges and universities are centered on the cultivation goal. If the cultivation objectives are different, the development direction of talents is naturally different. The cultivation program requires students to master professional knowledge, and at the same time, it should also make certain requirements for students to improve traditional Chinese cultural literacy. In May 2010, Professor Lin Jinhui from the Center for China-foreign cooperation education of Xiamen University delivered a keynote speech at the International Forum on the Development of China-foreign cooperation education and the 11th AUAP Learning and Sharing Forum, pointing out that China-foreign cooperation education should adapt to the reform and development of the country and the development and growth of students. The goal of talent cultivation in China-foreign cooperation education programs in colleges and universities should be in line with the requirements of promoting cultural exchange and mutual appreciation between China and foreign countries and strengthening cultural exchange and cooperation with foreign countries as pointed out by the State in the Opinions. With the role of a cultural communication bridge between Chinese and foreign cooperation majors, improving the Chinese traditional culture literacy of students of Chinese and foreign cooperation majors can effectively promote Chinese traditional culture to the world, truly achieve the cultural exchange between China and the West, and deepen the influence of Chinese culture in the world. The university's Chinese-foreign cooperation majors should start from

the training objectives, and lead the students of Chinese-foreign cooperation majors to improve their Chinese traditional culture literacy and strengthen their awareness and ability to spread Chinese traditional culture.

3.2 To improve the general education curriculum setting to enhance traditional cultural literacy

Students often think that professional knowledge education is more important than general education, so they have a bad idea that general education is "useless" and "just muddle through". Yang Youzhen (2010) points out that liberal education does not emphasize the combination of "arts + science" knowledge, but the cultivation of human knowledge structure, ability quality structure and personality structure, and the development of the human being. As the most familiar part of students' learning process, the curriculum not only has a great influence on students' professional development but also has a certain influence on their overall quality. To improve students' Chinese traditional culture, colleges and universities can start by improving the general education courses and make different arrangements for the general education compulsory courses or optional courses for students of different professional categories. For example, students in science and technology majors, compared with liberal arts and art majors, have less chance to contact with traditional culture, so to improve the traditional culture literacy of these majors, they can change the arrangement of compulsory general education courses and add courses related to Chinese traditional culture. Students in liberal arts and art majors have more opportunities to contact with traditional Chinese culture, so they can add traditional culture-related courses in the general optional courses and increase the course credits accordingly to attract students to choose traditional culture courses.

3.3 To modify the lecture format to increase the interest in traditional culture

The author investigated the students' preference for the lecture format of traditional Chinese culture courses by taking students of East China University of Science and Technology as the research subjects. Among them, 70% of the students hope that the traditional culture courses can be taught in the form of "theory + practice". Traditional does not mean boring. In a heavy classroom environment, a cultural course with all theoretical knowledge is inevitably boring to students. For example, in a traditional calligraphy course, a "theoretical" approach may be chosen at the beginning of the course, to provide students with theoretical knowledge about the origins, development, and representative figures of traditional Chinese calligraphy, and to lay the foundation for their learning. However, long-term "theoretical" teaching may lead to boredom and tedium, so students should not choose "theoretical" teaching. In the middle of the course, a "theory + practice" approach should be adopted. When introducing the history of traditional Chinese calligraphy, the school can provide students with ink, paper, and inkstone, so that they can experience the development of traditional Chinese calligraphy through on-site writing and copying, and feel the charm of calligraphy, turning abstract into the concrete. At the end of the course, students should return to the "theoretical" approach to teaching and summarize the course content. The combination of theory and practice will enhance students' participation in the classroom, make the course more interesting, and increase their interest in traditional Chinese culture, thus improving their Chinese cultural literacy.

3.4 To diversify the curriculum beyond the traditional classroom

The acquisition of knowledge should not be limited to the classroom, and traditional culture should not be limited to the classroom either. Even though many students take traditional culture courses, their impression of traditional culture only stays in the classroom, and once the course is over, students will gradually forget the traditional cultural knowledge, especially during the final exams, to concentrate on reviewing different courses, they will often "forget one course after another", and rarely have impressive knowledge left in their minds. Knowledge is seldom left in the mind. Therefore, to make traditional culture not only exist in the classroom but also to make traditional culture enter students' hearts, traditional culture should enter students' lives. Various kinds of traditional culture exhibitions and folk art-science activities can make students feel the charm of traditional culture. Schools can follow the pace of the times and offer "limited cultural practice classes" to take students out of the classroom to experience traditional culture. For example, we can arrange for students to attend exhibitions related to traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy, and guide them to learn about the types of traditional painting and calligraphy, painting methods, background stories, and other related knowledge from painting and calligraphy, so that traditional culture can be brought out of the classroom and into life. Not only that, because of the epidemic, the teaching of the online platform is gradually penetrating students' learning life. Therefore, traditional culture courses can also enter the online teaching system and build a virtual practical teaching platform of traditional culture. In the virtual platform, students can not only experience the charm of traditional culture but also avoid the problems such as safety hazards due to real operations.

IV. Conclusion

As an indispensable part of China's education, how to improve the Chinese traditional culture of the students of China-foreign cooperation studies through the classroom and to spread the Chinese traditional culture with the platform of foreign exchange of China-foreign cooperation studies is a question worth thinking about nowadays. The entry of Chinese traditional culture into the classroom not only helps students to establish good ideological and moral qualities and improve their comprehensive quality but also contributes to the inheritance and development of Chinese traditional culture.

References

- [1] Zhao Yunyu, Analysis of the current situation of cultural quality of college students in China-foreign cooperation education programs, *Journal of Nanjing University of Posts and Telecommunications (Social Science Edition)*, 14(04),2012,107-111.
- [2] Zhang Xueli, A survey on college students' knowledge of Chinese traditional culture in China-foreign cooperation institutions., *Journal of Taiyuan Normal College (Social Science Edition)*, 12(06), 2013,136-138.
- [3] Sun Guoqiang, Sun Xuelin, How to guide college students' firm cultural confidence in the context of China-foreign cooperation education ,*Educational Teaching Forum*,18, 2020, 91-92.
- [4] Liu Shanshan., The development of martial arts under the mode of Chinese-foreign cooperation, *Talent*, 14, 2010, 255-256.
- [5] Wang Huabei, Some views on strengthening the construction of traditional culture education in China-foreign cooperation schools--Taking the teaching of Chinese painting and calligraphy as an example. *Contemporary Education Practice and Teaching Research*, 02, 2019, 116-117.
- [6] Zhong Kai,Li Xing. Research on the ideological and political education work of college students in China-foreign cooperation education. *Education and Career*, 17, 2011, 54-55.
- [7] NieXiangyan, Li Dawei, The current situation and path analysis of traditional culture education in universities. *Social Science Front*, 03, 2016, 275-278.
- [8] Yang Youzhen, Wang Shuhua, Wei Bo, Research on the reform of talent training objectives and curriculum system setting in colleges and universities, *Journal of Shanxi University of Finance and Economics (Higher Education Edition)*, 13(04), 2010, 10-15.