

The Strategic Study on Talent Cultivation of Competency-based Costume Design

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Abstract—On the basis of figuring out competency-based connotations, the author proposed to “figure out market demands, locate training objectives; refine professional ability, reconstruct course contents; make the best use of network resources, reform teaching methods; rely on school-enterprise cooperation, promote training level; intensify practical ability and construct a double-teacher team”.

Keywords—Competency standard; costume design; talent cultivation

I. INTRODUCTION

Article 5 in Higher Education Law of the People Republic of China (Revised in 2015) regards “cultivation of senior special talents with practical ability” as an important task of higher education [1]. This confirms the core ability requirement of talent cultivation specification in Chinese higher education from legal level. This is the essential mission for higher education endowed by the strategy of reinvigorating China through human resource development. Batches of high-level costume design talents who have excellent quality, tremendous strength, structure optimization, strong enterprising spirit and pioneering spirit are conclusive powers to promote China to develop into the powerful nation of costumes from the great power of costumes. Under the background of high-speed economic development and progress with each passing day, how to cultivate costume design talents with practical ability is a difficult problem faced by higher education of costume design. In the paper, competency-based theory is considered as a necessary strategy.

II. COMPETENCY-BASED CONNOTATIONS

The narrow “competency-based theory” refers to “competency-based education” (CBE). It was originated from skill training of firearms and ammunition for workers during the World War II period. In 1960s, a Canadian scholar combined system theory, behavioral science and psychology with competency-based philosophy creatively to form a set of complete educational thought system and teaching method system. In the 1990s, with the European integration progress, CBE was widely valued in vocational education and higher professional education in various European countries and it has become fashionable around the world. From the perspective of theory, due to different comprehension on “ability”, CBE shows different morphology in different countries, including

activism orientation and constructivism orientation. With the purpose of cultivating students’ professional ability, CBE mode with the activism orientation values the specific ability engaging in posts, while CBE mode with constructivism orientation emphasizes on connection between subject knowledge and work tasks. The generalized “competency-based” is the “competency-based theory” in the field of philosophy and social science. Chinese scholars regard competency-based as the core cultural philosophy in the development of contemporary China. They think that theoretical value and practical significance of “competency-based theory” lie in (1) “destruction”, namely it is a kind of criticism on power-based, money-based and relation-based; (2) “construction, namely it aims to shape the capable society and capable person.”[2] Thus, it shows that no matter for shaping social man or cultivating professional people, ability is the primary fundamental aim.

III. COMPETENCY-BASED TALENT CULTIVATION STRATEGY OF COSTUME DESIGN

Majorities of this year’s undergraduate graduates in costume design will work in enterprises. Relative to knowledge, theory, and further study, talent cultivation in costume design pays more attention to ability, practice and employment. In order to meet demands of applied design talents who have “availability, comprehension, specialty, good performance and great potential” for clothing enterprises, higher education of costume design should be ability-based. The talent cultivation strategy is constructed from the following aspects.

A. To figure out market demands and locate cultivation targets

Clothing is a competitive industry in Guangdong Province. The output and export values have ranked in the first place for more than 30 years. At present, Guangdong owns more than 30000 clothing enterprises, including 4500 large-scale clothing enterprises. Products cover shirts, western-style clothes, fashion, jeans wear, sportswear, down jacket, wedding dress, dovetail, real silk, woolen clothing, underwear series, gym suit, leather wear and children’s garments, etc., forming the industrial production system with complete categories and considerable scale. With the obvious advantages for industrial cluster development, it forms a special industry cluster including 27 kinds of clothing types, including Humen suit-

dress, Shaxi sportswear, Xintang jeans wear and Chaozhou wedding dress and evening dress, Nanhai underwear, and Dalang woolen, etc.[3]. Market demand is the starting point of talent cultivation. Investigation study is the basic work to figure out market demands and confirm training objectives. The author visited the design departments of production enterprises with different scale and categories in the Pearl River Delta Region, interviewed with seniors in clothing enterprise associations and the trade union, did a survey on graduates of nearly 10 sessions, and discussed with relevant principals about school-running situations of costume design in peer colleges to summarize a report of relevant post qualification and talent ability structure. Based on it, the talent cultivation target is relocated—costume design doesn't aim to cultivate senior clothing or senior customized costume designers, but ready-made clothing design talents—"practice-oriented advanced professional talents in costume design".

The traditional elite higher education with the target of cultivating practice-oriented advanced professional talents begins from cultivating students' desire for exploring theoretical knowledge. It focuses on systematicness of professional disciplinary knowledge and it is the subject-based product. The new-type fashionable higher education with the target of cultivating practice-oriented advanced professional talents begins from cultivating students' interest in solving practical problems and trying to pursue for core ability. It is the embodiment of competency-based theory. The cultivation of the practice-oriented advanced professional talents means to cultivate advanced professional talents required by local economic development facing to production, construction, management and services: the connotations are shown as follows: with the purpose of serving for regional development, orientation of promoting employment promotion, standard of connecting with industrial demands, basis of conforming to post requirements, and foundation of intensifying professional ability, it values compound and application of knowledge and stands out practical ability and innovation spirit[4]. In order to realize the target of cultivating practice-oriented advanced professional talents in costume design, it must be based on the clothing industry, master basic features and future development tendency of read-made clothing manufacturing industry, realize property and status of costume design in ready-made clothing industry, introduce enterprise post qualification and assessment criterion, and regard cultivation of professional practical ability as the key.

B. To refine professional ability and construct course contents

Professional ability can be refined into basic professional ability, professional core ability, and professional expansion ability. In the costume design ability, it corresponds to computer-assisted drawing ability, message integration ability and project scheme ability. Costume design is the work process integrating with style, structure, technology, and fabric design. It has the computer-assisted drawing ability, showing that designers can achieve the visual standards required by styles, structure, technology, fabric design on self-expression layer. It must have the message integration ability, showing that designers can get necessary fashionable elements in styles,

structure, and technology and fabric design from external information. It also has the project scheme ability, indicating that designers can get the necessary commercial property required by measurement styles, structure, and technology and fabric design from the perspective of market. In the process of cultivating competency-based applied costume design talents, course system, teaching contents and teaching quality must cover the above-mentioned abilities.

The growth of students' professional ability should be supported by teaching activities. The accurate course setting is the basic work to cultivate effective knowledge structure of students, conventional cognitive level and some creative quality. It is also the precondition to realize the talent cultivation target. The reform of course setting should firstly solve problems adapting to post demands. Course view should transfer from "knowledge teaching" to "ability cultivation". In addition to necessary fundamental and instrumental knowledge, competency-based professional course setting in costume design should enhance practice proportion, stand out "combination of study and practice", focus on specific ability, reconstruct course contents and construct the scientific and reasonable professional course system on the basis of analyzing professional ability structure in practice-based costume design talents. For example, the current computer-assisted drawing ability is the core indicator required by modern clothing enterprises for designers' quality requirements. It has already become the stepping stone for students' employment. As a result, the clothing effect drawing and fashion illustration giving priority to artistry in Computer-assisted Drawing for Clothing should be deleted. By combining with the enterprises' physical truth and original Photoshop, CorelDraw and Illustrator that are common in the costume design industry should be added. Courses should pay attention to the application of computer-assisted drawing technology in the product realization process and it emphasizes on the effective correspondence between practical skills and duties. By referring to the evaluation standards for costume designers' post ability, the course can be adjusted to clothing plane style and drawing of productive diagram, drawing of clothing patterns, drawing and treatment of apparel fabric, drawing and treatment of clothing accessories matched with enterprise standards, thus students can practice as the status of costume designers or assistant designers.

C. To make the best use of network resources and reform teaching methods

In the current information era, with the combination of network information and traditional textbooks, penetration and integration, teaching concept, teaching objectives, objective contents, teaching framework and teaching means take place revolutionary changes. In the teaching, it must take good advantage of network resources, select high-quality contents, expand classroom space and time effectiveness, create teaching methods and cultivate students' application ability.

Applied costume design talents must be equipped with fashionable cognition, prediction, and transformation and application ability. In the course teaching of Fashionable Tendency and Prediction of Clothing, in addition to basic theories and predictive methods of fashionable tendency, it

focuses on teaching “market investigation” methods and compilation points of “fashionable tendency reports.” In terms of “market investigation”, the previous method requires students to do a relevant survey on brand clothing in supermarkets closing to schools and know about fashionable messages of clothing fabrics in the large-scale fabric market. In recent years, online comprehensive shopping platforms owing 180000 famous brands have been developed, such as “Tmall”. Majorities of famous clothing brands in China establish flagship stores in the website. As a result, “market investigation” methods in the current teaching should be changed to guide students to investigate the website. In clothing commodity information of several hundreds of different brands, it must search, screen, observe and analyze “fashionable tendency”, place costume design talents in the practical commercial environment, and reinforce information message application ability for students.

During the period of guiding students to write the Report of Fashion Trends for Women’s Dress in Spring and Summer of 2017, the author combined with fashionable network messages to do the innovative exploration on teaching methods: step one: data collection: students were arranged to collect data through Tmall and analyze fashion information in every brand carefully. Every student analyzed five brands and summarized common features to draft it. The teacher used contrast, statement and discussion to guide all students to participate in communication and propose respective idea and basis. After integrated settlement, the investigation draft was formed. Step two: conception of framework: students combined with the reasonable investigation draft. Their conception determined the time, content, schedule and possible conclusion of fashion trends and every student should formulate respective writing planning. On the basis of exchanging teachers’ planning feasibility and feedback modification, the basic framework of fashion trends was formed. Step three: submission of reports: The customized theme of every student got involved in fabric, technology, color, type, style, pattern, and detail and matching to analyze and predict trends. Finally, students should submit reports. Step four: detection of evaluation: the teacher gathered Report of Fashion Trends for Women’s Dress in Spring and Summer of 2017 from every student to display and guided students to search for videos and pictures of famous international fashion week in Paris, London, Milan, New York, Tokyo and Beijing 12-18 months ago. Then, students should correspond to their report contents. After summary comparison, they should write an inspection report. In this way, students will have the feasible comprehension process on time point and methods in the fashionable trend of clothing. As exhibiting homework, students should firstly conduct self-evaluation and mutual evaluation. Then, the teacher would summarize contents Trend Report and Inspection Report of every student, thus students’ practical ability could be dramatically improved in observation, reflection and summary.

D. To rely on school-enterprise cooperation and improve training level

The school-enterprise cooperation education is a kind of mechanism with the orientation of market and social need. It is a process of talent cultivation with common participation of

schools and enterprises and focuses on cultivating students’ comprehensive quality, comprehensive ability and employment competitiveness. It is a kind of teaching mode for applied talents by using two different educational environment and educational resources in schools and enterprises and applying organic combination of classroom teaching and students’ actual participation for different diverse employers. Basic connotations are shown as follows: industry-academy cooperation and bi-directional participation. The implementation approach and method is the combination of production and study and post-fixed practice. The target is to strength school-running vitality, improve students’ comprehensive quality, and adapt to demands of market economic development for talent quality [5]. School-enterprise cooperation is the maximal effective approach to realize the applied talent cultivation by using social resources.

For clothing enterprises under the highly global competitive context, school-enterprise cooperation owns the largest right to speak to design ability structure of talents. By virtue of advanced production equipment and manufacturing technology and experienced backbones, it can provide the real post situation and complete practice process required by talent cultivation of applied costume design. Therefore, schools should deepen their service consciousness, get close to the market actively, and use the win-win measures to motivate enterprises to “intervene in advance, participate in depth, cultivate greatly, connect seamlessly, and select talents in priority”, carry out the close cooperation on formulation of talent cultivation schemes, development of course textbooks, quantization of ability standards, and construction of training base, etc., and construct the ability training platform supported by theoretical teaching and practical teaching. For example, by depending on the training base of school-enterprise cooperation, we should readjust practical contents in clothing style design, structural design and technical design, emphasize on professionalism of teaching process and practice of teaching contents, and meet the promotion requirements of post practical ability with the progression of experience → adaption → competence → creation.

It is impossible to finish such a task to cultivate practical ability of applied talents. It is necessary to run a school, depend on school-enterprise cooperation, and improve training level. In terms of costume design, the primary types of school-enterprise cooperation include system, modular type, order type, project-driven type, and substituted post exercitation. Particularly, the project-driven cooperation is a typical strong practical training activity with the orientation of tasks and competency-based theory. It has no high requirements for the scale, site and facilities of cooperative enterprises, thus it is very suitable for training students’ innovative practical ability in costume design. Under the common guidance of professional teachers and enterprise teachers and under the project cooperative development of productive enterprises with different categories, such as women’s dress, men’s clothing, children’s garments, full dress, business wear, sportswear, jeans wear, T-shirt, etc., students have an opportunity to apply professional knowledge in enterprise product development and conduct practical manipulative ability and practical design ability training in accordance with “alternation of working and studying.”

E. To reinforce practical ability and construct the double-teacher team

The construction of professional teachers has the conclusive significance on the failure for applied talent cultivation in costume design, but the truth is that: firstly full-time teachers in costume design subject of Chinese colleges are masters and doctors who just start to teach students, showing congenital shortage of practical experience and skills. Secondly, part-time teachers invited from clothing enterprises though are experienced enterprise experts and technical backbones, but they are short of teaching experience, thus they have no teaching organization and management ability. Thirdly, no matter for full-time teachers and part-time teachers, both of them are hard to give both consideration to enterprise and classroom. As a result, professional teachers and industrial teachers constitute in a teaching team to form the double-teacher team with school-enterprise employment, industry-education integration and full-time and part-time combination. This is the powerful safeguard to regulate teachers' structure, reinforce practical ability and promote professional construction and it also has the obvious integration advantages in description of design post ability, typical work task analysis, formulation of talent cultivation scheme, and promotion of teachers' practical ability, etc.

In costume design, it can integrate high-quality resources in schools and enterprises, regard scheme and development of enterprise product projects as the mode, and implement the cooperative mechanism of "industry-education cultivation and sharing". Full-time teachers bring new products to enterprises, while enterprises also broaden industrial vision for full-time teachers, reinforce cutting-edge consciousness and cultivate the ability to apply new materials, new equipment and new technologies. The cooperative effect of mutually beneficial cooperation between universities and enterprises is the fountain of sustainable development in costume design. In terms of professional courses, full-time teachers in the double-teacher team not only should control the theoretical system of costume design, but also analyze application formation and operation mode of relevant design knowledge in detail and make the best use of extracting and transferring fresh cases in practical work. As a result, full-time teachers in costume design should face to enterprises and acquire front-line work experience, know about industrial dynamic information, master ability standards, post responsibilities, work process, technical specifications and operation skills in style, technology, platemaking, development, quality supervision, management and marketing, etc., as well

as bring new knowledge, achievements, technology, tendency, philosophy and methods in industrial development to classroom. The part-time teachers in the double-teacher team can break the routine, apply the flexible teaching mode, such as site explanation, lecture discussion, operative demonstration, mutual exchange and video teaching, etc., look for the truth, help full-time teachers to broaden professional vision, insist in practical foundation, and ensure high-efficient operation of the double-teacher team in school-enterprise cooperation.

It is worthy of mentioning that within the competency-based field, teachers are also one of learning resources for students. Hence, to reinforce teachers' competency-based theory is the precondition to stand out students' competency-based theory. Only "industry-education cooperation can realize the real development of teachers' practice ability and implement the teaching reform of the competency-based theory.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The competency-based theory is the great reform of talent cultivation and also the new orientation of the higher education value. In the reform process from knowledge-based to competency-based, costume design education must stand out "practice" factor, begin with "figuring out market demands, refining professional ability, making the best use of network resources, relying on school-enterprise cooperation, and reinforcing practice ability, acquire the effects of "locating training objects, reconstructing course contents, reforming teaching methods, promoting training level and constructing the double-teacher team", so as to cultivate the applied talents in consume design suitable for the new situation of industrial transformation.

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