

Study on the Combination of Wicker Art with Manual Class for Preschool Education

Fan-lei MENG*
Linyi University,
Feixian, Shandong, China
*Corresponding author

Chunyu Xie
Linyi University,
Feixian, Shandong, China

Abstract—The traditional wickerwork represented by Linshu is green and environmental friendly. It is shaped with techniques of the wrapping, pressing, and squeezing in using of the wicker. Wickerwork is an art with typical regional characteristics in Chinese folk art, which is also a suitable material for manual course of preschool education. The approach to apply this art work to the manual class in preschool education would be divided in two ways - directly introduction and using for reference.

Keywords—Wicker Art; Preschool Education; Artistic Characteristics; handwork

I. INTRODUCTION

The wicker art represented by Linshu is one of the arts with typical regional characteristics in Chinese folk art. As early as the Yongle period of the Ming Dynasty, residents of Qingyun Town of Linshu (The names of places in Shandong Province) County used wickerwork for their production and daily life. The daily necessities play an important role in people's life. The traditional wickerwork is mainly used in production, storage, carrying, packaging, and entertainment. It is based on the actual production of the working people, and is mainly applied to production and life [1]. The wickerwork is a plastic art created by working people which aimed at to decorate the routine life and embodied with their dreams for life. It carries with Yimeng people's yearning for a better life and the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty with the strong customs of the Yimeng region. It truly reflects the attitude, aesthetic sentiment, and artistic spirit of the Yimeng people, which have become an important carrier for studying Yimeng culture, history, economy, and folk life.

II. THE FEATURE OF WICKERWORK FOR PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Ingredient. Linshu traditional wicker material is mainly composed of *salix integra*, which is also called *salix suchowensis*, *salix juparica*. If the willow skin is peeled off, it becomes white wicker.

Knitting Technique. Knitting steps include bottom processing, upper die, knitting, closing, adjusting, and handle installing. The traditional weaving methods of Linshu wickerwork mainly include five types: flat knitting, lines weaving, tie-up weaving, bundle knitting, and intertwining weaving. The flat knitting and lines weaving is made up with weaving of vertical and horizontal lines, which mainly apply to

flat mat and pallet products. The tie-up weaving is also called "Tie-up goods", which is the sign of the maturity of traditional wickerwork [2].

Shaping. The "Shaping" of wicker art refers to a certain common shape feature. It is not refers to the individual shape of the stuff, but relates to the common attribute of the same category. According to the type of the appearance, there is mainly a cage shape represented by the wicker cage, which possesses a convenient storage function. Makers would add a semicircle handle or lifting bar for the cage in central axis for the convenience of carrying, raising, and lifting the cage. The original material for the product including wood, metal, etc. In addition, there is the square product represents by the basket; the round type represents by the cover pad; the bottle type represents by vase; the shallow basket represents by dustpan-like shape; the box type represents by the picnic basket; and the spoon type represents by colander, etc. Modern wickerwork is updated and improved on the basis of traditional deep basket, basket, and bucket types to meet the requirements of modern aesthetics and practicality.

Appearance. Appearance indicates the style and form of the wickerwork. The style and form of the wickerwork from Linyi area are in difference. For example, the style of basket-shaped wicker products contain single or double baskets according to the size the size and function with a round or square appearance. The round bucket products are made by bamboo and willow pelt with different sizes. It is divided into the bucket with lifting, semicircle, and rope handles, according to the shape; the original color and colored buckets according to the color; the tools for holding food, storing goods, and wedding supplements according to the function. The shallow baskets are in different sizes with round bottom, handles, and no-grip design. Only the shape of the small shallow basket is divided into a round and elliptical one, with different volume and functions in food storage or sundries collection [3]. Besides, different products are distinguished by various styles and forms.

Colors. The traditional wicker is mainly made up of monochromatic colors such as the original color, red, and brown. While the modern wicker color is more abundant, where the use of white, brown, and other color pigment is added. The modern staining technique increases the color choice of the product which attracts more attention from the consumers. Also, the colored cloth decoration established a colorful effect and improved the grade of modern wicker

products. The color and decoration of the wickerwork are endowed with new features. The various color of materials combined with colorful accessories, which paid more attention to the detail decoration. It focuses on continuous innovation in decorating with different materials with the combination of cloth and metal in the modern gardening.

Quality and texture. The traditional wicker products are simple in good taste, which present the natural quality and texture of the material. Although it is not smooth, it is natural. After finished the product, the craftsman would decorate them with lacquer coating and dyes to obtain the beauty and bright color. Most of the colors are monochrome. Modern products are added with technological factors in using dyeing and painting techniques, which changed the physical properties of the traditional materials. It enhanced the toughness and hardness of the wicker. Also the light color and material color of the product are brighter [4]. The traditional flat knitting, tie-up weaving, vertical knitting, and lines weaving are full of changing, with a fine, firm, and smooth texture. The mix weaving, endways knitting, and hollow weaving are processed with large pattern and fine texture. While mix weaving is free and easy, the surface of the wicker is in an irregularly oriented unique. The artistic value embodied in Linshu wicker art possesses the characteristics in the beauty of material, skills, and shape.

III. THE INHERITANCE OF LINSHU WICKERWORK FOR PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

The reason for the decline of traditional handicrafts is that modern society could not provide a suitable development space for the work. Due to the changes of the times, some traditional craftsmanship adapts to people's culture and routine needs have changed. The function, form, and taste of the traditional handicraft have deviated from the actual needs to some extent. However, the low cost, high efficiency, and large profits of modern industrial products which provided great convenience for people's lives, have resulted the situation that traditional crafts gradually lose the market competitiveness and slowly disappearing or struggling to exist. Shandong is a traditional handicraft province in China; Linshu wickerwork is one of the traditional handicrafts with regional characteristics. There's a saying in Linshu, the basket and bucket of wicker are everywhere in local families, which represents the popularity of Linshu wickerwork.

The significant feature of craftsmanship is closely linked to our lives. Creating in life and enriching life in creation is a material embodiment of our way of life. The way of inheritance is to teach this art from the father to son, from the teacher to student, and from generation to generation, which kept this ancient and excellent skills till now. With the development of the times, the concept and value of the individual have changed, which affects the mentality, emotions, and values of the craftsmen. Especially in recent years, some young people are more willing to explore the outside world as well as to locate their jobs outside. They are not willing to stick to this old craft at home. There are limited people who are really devoted in this kind of old craftsmanship, which leads this old skill in facing of extinction.

The needs of human lifestyle are multi-faceted and multi-layered, which are the cause of human creation activities. The first element that needs to be satisfied is the survival and life of the people. Meanwhile, when the original demands are met, new life demands will be generated, while the constant changes in demands are the driving forces behind the ever-changing human activities. Comparing to other handicrafts, semi-mechanical or workshop-based production, wickerwork follows in the traditional way of materials and technology, from raw materials to finished products; it is still completely processed by manpower. It is the fruit of the combination of skills and wisdom, which carries with the rich cultural connotation, local flavor, and unique artistic style. Wickerwork is a record of the people's life, as well as a reference to history.

Wickerwork is the product of the natural conditions; the material is a property derived from the natural environment. The natural posture and temperament that people is longing for, and the kind of warmth that makes people feel natural is something that modern design couldn't bring to people. It possesses the sense of returning to home and fill out the gaps between modern design and people's emotion. As an art with a long history, handicraft has rich artistic wealth. People could dig out its art forms and elements as a source of inspiration for the creation of the new modern design. Its harmony with nature is what we are craving in our lives. The design of craftsmanship is not a simple patchwork of craftsmanship's elements and modern structure, but the integration of design culture.

IV. THE METHOD OF INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL WICKER INTO PRESCHOOL EDUCATION MANUAL CLASS

Preschool education is an educational discipline that specializes in preschool children. The manual class is an educational skill course for preschool students. The manual class is a sub-discipline that belongs to the art discipline and has unique styling characteristics and means of expression. It not only has the general nature of the art discipline, but also emphasizes the use and application of the characteristics of the styling media. Firstly, in styling, all the content of the handmade works must be presented through external forms, and resort to visual perception in a concrete and tangible form; Secondly, in visualization, the final form of the handmade work is the visible form, which could observe the specific artistic image and obtain a visual aesthetic feeling with the intuitive feature; Thirdly, in the uniqueness of its expression medium, the manual class is always based on the specific material, and the corresponding modeling means is given. The material is not only the carrier of the work but also the way of its existence. Therefore, in order to exert the appeal of the work, the handwork class should study the performance value of the media material.

The manual textbook of the current preschool education manual textbooks are divided into sections by materials, such as paper shape, cloth shape, knot shape, mud shape, etc, which did not contain the traditional wickerwork process. Therefore, the introduction of wickerwork to the manual class of the preschool education would be an expansion and extension of the manual class. It is the enrichment of the material media for the manual course.

The traditional wickerwork represented by Linshu is green and environmental friendly. It is shaped with techniques of the wrapping, pressing, and squeezing in using of the wicker. As a product of nature, it is a readily available natural production and an undoubted ecological environment material. Besides, the wickerwork is environmental friendly and recyclable. It is closed to the natural environment and could reduce the sense of coldness and boring brought by industrial and social products to people. In the modern home decoration materials that advocate green, environmental protection, and health, the wicker goods occupy an important position. It gives people the opportunity to touch the nature with its natural state. Wicker possesses the irreplaceable formal beauty in nature which distinguishes it from others. The constantly changing structure of various weaving patterns could produce mechanism features with different characteristics. The knitting process is meticulous and exquisite. It is a suitable material for manual course. The manual class of preschool education also needs to introduce the traditional wickerwork to achieve a win-win situation.

The manual textbook of the current preschool education manual textbooks are divided into sections by materials, such as paper shape, cloth shape, knot shape, mud shape, etc, which did not contain the traditional wickerwork process. Therefore, the introduction of wickerwork to the manual class of the preschool education would be an expansion and extension of the manual class. It is the enrichment of the material media for the manual course.

The approach to apply the traditional wickerwork to the manual class in preschool education would be divided in two ways - directly introduction and using for reference. Direct introduction is to bring some traditional weaving methods and materials into the classroom teaching, so that students could master the basic skills of the wickerwork. Using for reference is to refer to the process of wickerwork, using the other materials instead of wicker for knitting, to understand the characteristics of the wicker processing art.

Wickerwork training is an essential part of the student practice. During the process, teacher should encourage the student in exploring different design ideas of wickerwork, and motivate the student in their creative design skill during mastering the basic knitting method. These attempts could bring some enlightenment to the development of the handcrafted classes. It is not only purely an inheritance of the traditional craftsmanship, but also the root of China's profound traditional culture. It draws nutrition from the design ideas of Chinese handicrafts, and provides new concepts for the development of the preschool manual class.

V. CONCLUSION

The long-established Linshu wickerwork is rooted deeply in folk's life. Embodying the simple aesthetic concept and spiritual quality of human beings, it possesses valuable artistic value and cultural connotation, and is a significant intangible cultural heritage of our country. Gathering the regional culture, humanities, and customs, Linshu wickerwork didn't fade away under the impact of modern design civilization, but built an independent cultural values system and became a cherished cultural art with the change of history and times.

Linshu wickerwork is simple, concise, and elegant, with complicated craftsmanship. It selects the natural material and reveals the traditional Chinese culture with fresh art style. Its craftsmanship is in perfect harmony with the green, ecological, and humanistic design concepts advocated by contemporary art, and also comfort to the strong expectations of people in returning to nature [5].

The integration of traditional wickerwork into the preschool professional handicrafts is a good means of protection and inheritance of this art. It could attract more talents to involve in this creation. The most important part of inheriting handicrafts is people. If the inheritor gone, the craft would disappear. Only this kind of positive inheritance could guarantee the healthy development of the wickerwork. The second element is innovation, which is the driving force for development, especially the innovation of color and shape, which are easier to learn in the course. Thus, integrating the creative ideas, artistic quality, and cultural connotation of wicker art into the manual class teaching is not only the inheritance and promotion of this craft, but also a rich performance material for preschool education. The combination of wickerwork and manual class offers a broad space for the curriculum design.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors wish to give their sincere thanks to the editor and the anonymous referees for their valuable suggestions and helpful comments which improved the presentation of the paper.

REFERENCES

- [1] Wang Hongjian, Yuan Baolin. Introduction to Fine Arts [M], Beijing: Higher Education Press, 1997.
- [2] XuZanyou. Wickerwork Craft [M], Beijing: Higher Education Press, 1992.
- [3] Li Guoping. Study on Folk Wickerwork Convention of the Town of Willow Handicraft [D], Northwest Minzu University, 2005:1-43.
- [4] Wang Haixia. Folk Arts and Crafts [M], Beijing: China Social Press, 1997.
- [5] Li Zehou. The Path of Beauty [M], Tianjin: Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2001.3.