

# Analysis on the Advantages of History Student in the Museum Interpretation

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**Abstract**—In recent years, due to blindly expanding the enrollment of colleges and universities, the number of graduates has expanded, making the saturated job market always in an oversupply situation. The competition is fierce. Many students majoring in history are interested in becoming a history teacher. However, they are helpless because of the particularity and high threshold of teaching. And many students shrink back at the sight of the status. In recent years, with the rapid increase in the number of museums, the museums have begun to openly recruit a large number of interpreters from the society to solve the problem of lacking the professionals caused by free admission, which has added a new direction for the employment of history major students who dream of being teachers. Also, these students can find a sense of belonging in this industry.

**Keywords**—*history major; employment; museum; interpretation; analysis on advantages*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the colleges and universities blindly expand the enrollment, and the number of graduates has expanded, making the saturated job market always in an oversupply situation. The competition is fierce. The employment of college students has become a common concern of the society. Many normal college students majoring in history want to become the history teachers. However, it is helpless because of the particularity and high threshold of teaching. And many students direct the eyes upon the status and step back. However, with the rapid increase in the number of museums in recent years, the museums have begun to openly recruit a large number of interpreters from the society to solve the problem of lacking the professionals caused by free admission, which has added a new direction for the employment of history students who dream of being teachers. At the same time, these students can find a sense of belonging in this industry. This paper makes a brief analysis on the importance of museum interpretation and the advantages of history students in the museum interpretation work, expecting to play a certain role in improving the employment rate of college students and the development of museums.

## II. THE MUSEUM INTERPRETATION

### A. *The Definition of Museum Interpretation*

"Museum interpretation work is actually based on museum exhibits. It is an educational activity in which the interpreters refine and select the interpretation words and use language arts, interpretive skills and sincere feelings to spread knowledge and information to the audience directly. Its purpose is to reveal the meaning of culture and natural resources, strengthen our understanding and appreciation of historical monuments and natural wonders, and further protect it [1]<sup>P63</sup>." It is an important part of museum work.

### B. *The Importance of Museum Interpretation*

The museum interpretation enables the visitors to gain more knowledge and information in a short period of time. This is reflected in the interpreter's ability to speak. An excellent interpreter has fluent Mandarin, clear thinking and logic, which are consistent with the requirement of speaking as a teacher.

The museum interpretation can meet the different needs of visitors with different cultural levels and different comprehension skills. To achieve this goal, just as the teachers face dozens of students, they should have different emphasis for different students, while the teachers should provide education for all people without discrimination.

Through the introduction of the displayed exhibits, the visitors are guided to transform the non-continuous perceptual knowledge initially acquired by the vision into a correct understanding of the theme of the exhibits. That is to say, the interpretation of each cultural relic should be coherent. Like a good history teacher, he has clear logic in the class, and the link among the sections is close.

Through the interpretation of the exhibits, the experts, museum fans or the visitors can know the relevant knowledge, and make more valuable suggestions for the museum, which could be a reference for the improvement of museum. As an interpreter, the job is not only to guide visitors, but more important work is to enlighten people.

### C. *Museum's Requirements for the Interpreters*

1) *Solid professional knowledge*: As the interpreters, while making the interpretation for others, they should be

very clear about the relevant historical facts, and they must ensure the correctness of the interpretation without caring about the amount of content.

2) *Clear oral expression skills*: The interpreter is an attractive career by explaining the art. A good interpreter must have good language expression skills, so as to make people comfortable. This is the basic skill for the interpreter.

3) *Noble professional ethics*: The work of the interpreter is a work of conscience. The interpreters receive visitors from all corners of the country every day, and the work content is roughly same. However, it is full of expectations for tourists. Therefore, the interpreters must have professional ethics, so as to complete this job better.

4) *Dignified and generous image*: The museum is a window unit, and the interpreter is the employee who works at the front line. The first impression of the service industry is the most important. It is convenient for developing the work with the affinity image.

### III. ANALYSIS ON THE ADVANTAGES OF HISTORY STUDENTS IN THE INTERPRETATION

The museum has clear requirements for the museum interpretation. "The museum interpretation is not based on the textbook. On the basis of fully studying the exhibition collection, history, culture and visitors of museums and memorials, the interpreters should refine, sublimate, break through and innovate the contents and expressions of the propaganda. They can study and deal with the interpretation words from perspective of thinking analysis. At the same time, the interpreters should give the museum interpretation according to different visitors [2]<sup>P26</sup>." Through comparative analysis, history students, especially the normal college students majoring in the history, have some advantages rather than other majors. The following is an analysis on the four aspects of language, facial expression, concept change, and knowledge that history students have in the museum interpretation work.

#### A. Language

1) *Interpretation language*: In the museum interpretation, the interpreters must pay attention to the artistic nature of the language, and the interpretation language should be "creative".

First of all, the interpreters must be good at using the prologue tips. The simple opening remark gives the visitors a clear understanding and expectation of the content.

Secondly, the interpreters must be good at "re-creating" language according to the specific exhibits, breaking the routine of language expression, and opening some of the topics that seem impossible to explain freely and reasonably.

Third, the interpreters should abandon the written interpretation words. It advocates using spoken language to make the expression more flexible, closing the distance between the exhibits and the visitors.

The above three aspects are hand-to-hand for students majoring in history, especially the normal college students of

history. As a normal college student majoring in history, language is an important pass that must be passed. Students have the courses of pedagogy, history teaching training, speech and communication, etc. during college, and they have passed the Putonghua Proficiency Test. All have had educational internships in secondary schools. The intimacy and normativeness of language expression are professionally trained. It is necessary for the interpreters to have the language richness, fluency, popularity, comprehensibility and flexibility, just as well as the teachers. In the aspect of interpretation language arts, the normal college students majoring in history have obvious advantages.

2) *Body language*: The graceful and harmonious body language likes a painting. And it is more like a landscape, making people have endless aftertaste and love. Therefore, the interpreters could have some necessary body language in the museum interpretation, which can promote the effect.

Body language includes:

a) *Expression in one's eyes*: The eyes are the windows of the soul, and have an important influence on the communication between people. At the same time, as a way of interpreting body language, eye contact is an important tool for communicating with the visitors.

b) *Gestures*: Gestures can make up for the shortages of sound and language to a certain extent, which is conducive to the visitor's understanding of the interpretation content. Therefore, in order to meet the needs of the interpretation content, appropriate gesture can be used to prompt the display content in the museum interpretation. In addition, the interpreters should learn to use the gestures accurately and appropriately according to the display content.

c) *Standing posture*: Standing should be natural, straight, dignified, giving a sense of stability and beauty. In addition, the interpreters can stand naturally on both feet, which make people elegant, beautiful, and energetic.

Interpreters and teachers are two professions that are respected because they are the window for imparting knowledge and the backbone of propaganda culture. The three feet platform is not for anyone to stand up. It has extremely high requirements for the image, posture, body and language of the teacher. Because teachers are the leaders in the education industry and shoulder the heavy responsibility of cultivating the next generation, their words and deeds affect the physical and mental development of the next generation of the motherland. Therefore, college students trained in the direction of being teachers, regardless of their temperament or physical movements, must be graceful and dignified, and this will also provide the advantages for normal college students majoring in history.

#### B. Facial Expression

In the museum interpretation, it is necessary to use facial expression appropriately. When making the museum interpretation, the interpreters can't open the mouth widely. The facial expression can't be rigid or serious, and it should

be kind, confident, relaxed, and consistent with emotions, so as to achieve bilateral interaction between the interpreter and the visitors.

In addition, "we should also learn to carefully capture the eyes of the visitors, 'snooping' their reactions, and seeking an emotional resonance and blending in the blink of eye contact [3]<sup>P153</sup>." A good teacher must be very friendly with the students. They will use their eyes to communicate with students. Students majoring in history have studied educational psychology during their university studies. They can be keenly aware of the visitor's thoughts, better serve the visitors, and better communicate with the visitors. This will apply the relevant content and practical experience of pedagogy to the future work; bring advantages and convenience to the work. In fact, the interpreters and teachers are interconnected in many aspects. They are all publicity and education work, and they are all respected professions. They all use vivid language, complete knowledge, noble professional ethics, and dignified image to reflect the profession literacy and professional belonging. Therefore, the normal college students majoring in history have a great competitive advantage in the museum interpretation.

### *C. Concept Change*

Instead of blindly pouring knowledge into the students' heads, the teachers should let them understand the knowledge. The purpose of the museum interpretation is not to give a speech, but to help the visitors truly accept it. Therefore, if the history graduates are engaged in museum interpretation in the future, they can make a change in the museum interpretation concept.

First, it can change the traditional single interpretation mode through the visitors participating in the interactive interpretation. In the past, it is mainly the method of the interpreter making the interpretation, and the visitors listening to the content passively. This is rigid statement that is not conducive to stimulating the visitor's interest or enthusiasm for thinking, which greatly reduces the visitor's interest in visiting museums. Therefore, we need to change this single interpretation mode, so as to make the visitors participate in it. It is like a teacher guiding students to learn in the classroom, maximizing the enthusiasm of students to learn independently, increasing the interaction between teachers and students, and activating the classroom atmosphere, so as to achieve better teaching results.

Second, the interpreters must change the traditional interpretation concept. For a long time, most of the interpreters believe that their work is to make the interpretation. Usually, they do not pay much attention to the visitor's experience. Therefore, the same commentary makes the visitors uninteresting, and they will not have the idea to come again. In order to improve the visitor's interest and the quality of the interpretation, it is necessary for the interpreters to change the concept and take the initiative to show the soul of exhibits through the explanation work to meet the needs of the visitors. As the history students, they will be able to give full play to their initiative in the process

of receiving tourists according to their own educational knowledge. They can also mobilize the enthusiasm of tourists and make the traditional interpretation concept change. Both the tourists and the museums will benefit from this.

### *D. Knowledge*

As the interpreters, the ancient and modern Chinese and foreign historical knowledge reserve is a necessary premise. Only when professional knowledge is solid, can the interpretation contents be clarified in a simple way. Then, they can better serve the public. If the interpreters have superficial knowledge when making the interpretation, the visitors will feel unprofessional and leave the museum with regret and dissatisfaction. History students have learned about Chinese general history, world history, museum studies, archaeology, and cultural relics during their college years. This often makes them more comfortable than other professional students in the museum interpretation, and their interpretation will be in place. Therefore, to become a museum interpreter, it is necessary to reserve the ancient and modern China and foreign historical knowledge. The history students have great advantages in this work compared with other professional students.

*1) Professionalism:* History is a professional discipline. It is not easy to learn history well. This discipline is not as boring as the imagination of outsiders. It is actually a social discipline that runs through all times and all over the world. There are many subjects offered by history majors. Students should learn Chinese history, world history, and various special histories. The history knowledge that students have acquired in college for four years must be more professional than those of other majors. That is to say, the four-year university's professional knowledge and related courses have made it possible for the students of history majors to engage in museum interpretation after graduation. This job matches their majors. They can reproduce the past history and even give the cultural relics a fresh life. For example, the tourists visited the Lintong Terracotta Warriors Museum. The history students can tell the tourists from the history of the Qin Dynasty to the bronze chariots and horses and then to the unsolved mysteries, and from imperial mausoleum of the first Qin emperor to the cause why the Qian mausoleum was not excavated... One cultural relic can trigger one Historical story, as well as the prosperity and decline of ancient dynasties. History students can give cultural relics vitality due to the combination of professional knowledge and vivid interpretation. Compared with other professional students, history students have more cultural heritage. The director of the Shaanxi History Museum, Cheng Jianzheng, once said that if the interpreter of the history museum is graduated from the history major, the interpreter is more likely to combine the width and depth than others. This is the advantage of the students majoring in history in museum interpretation work. This advantage is what other majors lack.

2) *Education direction*: Many university history majors belong to the normal education majors, that is to say, the purpose is to cultivate the history teachers. The teacher's job is to teach and educate people, and the profession requirements are very strict. Therefore, in the museum interpretation, history graduates have certain advantages in terms of professional knowledge. They have studied pedagogy, psychology, teacher research, speech and communication, the management of teachers in charge of classes and other related courses during the university period. The history students have great advantages in the application of language and expressions, the management of the visitors, etc. The university students who work as museum interpreters can better understand the psychology of tourists, and make the interpretation in a more suitable way for tourists. The ideological and political education courses and the learning of educational policies and regulations will further strengthen the students' ideological and moral qualities and professional quality. In the future work, they will show their positive and serious images to the tourists. It can be seen that the advantage of normal students working as the museum interpreters are more obvious.

Viewing from the four aspects of language, facial expression, concept and knowledge, the teacher profession has the similarity with the museum interpretation. Today, when the employment situation of college graduates is severe, history students can take the museum interpretation as a good choice when they apply for the jobs. If they choose this work, the knowledge learned in the university is not in vain, but it is useful. And the history students who are interested in the teacher profession can find a sense of professional belonging and social presence in this job.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Nowadays, more and more museums are being opened for free. The number of museums has increased dramatically, and the number of visitors has risen sharply. The museum leaders have paid more and more attention to the publicity and education functions of museums. Therefore, whether it is for museums or the visitors, to make a good interpretation is an important measure to promote the development of the museum. A successful interpretation can not only build a bridge between the museum and the visitors, but also enhance the exchange between the museum and the tourists. It can also enhance the museum's reputation. (The author has brought many historical students to Dunhuang to visit and study. Many Dunhuang interpreters are the experts in the study of Dunhuang relics. The authors were deeply impressed by the superb interpretation and professional quality. The Dunhuang Museum has become a professional practice base for students majoring in history.) Therefore, history students as the museum interpreters have many advantages that other profession students do not have. They may broaden their thinking, give play to their own advantages, and serve as bridges and ties between museums and visitors. They can devote the strength for their ideal

realization, and for promoting the development of the museums.

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