

# The current situation of dance classes in preschool education in China

Wang Dan and Pariphon Dinlansagoon

Bangkokthonburi University, Thailand

Corresponding Author, E-mail: nicha.musiced@gmail.com

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## Abstract

Dance education is an important component of quality education, which belongs to the art and health field of preschool education, and preschool education is an important stage of physiological and psychological development in one's life. In the modern art system, dance and music are each independent arts, but dance, music, body movements, thoughts and emotions are usually inseparable. Dance education plays an important foundation role in promoting children's mental health and cultivating children's multiple abilities. Therefore, it is very necessary to strengthen the enlightenment education of children's dance. Preschool teacher need to put their own positions in order, unify their thinking and understanding, clarify the implementation strategies, and effectively ensure the proper position and practical role of quasi Dance education in the current care and education work and children's lifelong development. Preschool dance is a "happy game" for young children, a dance form that showcases their innocent personality and emotional characteristics, with strong fun and entertainment. Young children have imagination and a way of thinking that adults do not possess. Children's dance is their dance, and the key to performing it is to make it understandable to younger audiences and not have overly complex emotional expressions. An excellent children's dance can showcase the artistic literacy and life accumulation of the choreographer, while also showcasing the cute and lively characteristics of the children themselves

**Keywords:** Current Situation; Dance Class; Preschool Education; China

## Introduction

Preschool education is the initial stage of early childhood learning and the most important part of the preschool education system. It is also the most fundamental stage for the development of young children's intelligence, and the fastest stage for the development and formation of intelligence. Correct and reasonable preschool education plays a great role in promoting their intelligence and development. The formation and development of children's intelligence are related to proper preschool education, especially in terms of intelligence. The development of preschool intellectual education is a comprehensive process, and correct preschool education is also crucial for the psychological health of young children. Therefore, the significance of this stage is very significant

Dance is a performing art that uses the body to complete various elegant or difficult movements, usually accompanied by music, and is primarily represented by rhythmic movements. It usually relies on music as well as other props. Dance itself has diverse social meanings and functions, including sports, socializing, courtship, sacrifice, etiquette, etc. Before the origin of human civilization, dance was very important in ceremonies, etiquette, celebrations, and entertainment.

Dance is an elective course for both preschool and primary education majors, and falls under the category of art education courses. Dance courses not only cultivate students' good physique, temperament, and personality, but also effectively help them master the basic theories, methods, and techniques of dance. They have profound significance and value for future practical and theoretical research in the field of children's education.

### **The current situation of dance classes in preschool education**

Su Miao's (2021) teaching method is mechanically monotonous, and the educational and teaching methods adopted by teachers have a very direct and far-reaching impact on students. For dance courses in preschool education, in the process of promoting teaching innovation and reform optimization, it is necessary to adhere to the educational philosophy of seeking truth from facts and analyzing specific problems, think and analyze problems from the perspective of students, understand various problems in subject teaching, and then propose corresponding transformation strategies and teaching ideas. Teachers directly rely on the imparting and preaching of simple theoretical knowledge as the foundation, without adopting individual tutoring and group teaching forms to carry out teaching practice activities. Among them, teacher preaching has become the protagonist of the entire classroom teaching. This normal single teaching mode cannot attract the attention of students, and it is difficult to mobilize their enthusiasm for participation. Students' ability to learn independently has stagnated, and they are relatively dependent on teachers. Therefore, students majoring in preschool education cannot truly stand from a macro development perspective, actively combine their personal learning initiative, achieve independent learning and bold innovation, and their professional literacy level is not ideal enough.

Preschool education dance teachers overly focus on learning and imparting dance skills, without focusing on the substantive needs of students' long-term development to improve their comprehensive abilities, ultimately leading to The teaching of dance majors is superficial. Students only know what they know but do not know why, making it difficult to apply the theoretical knowledge they have learned to practical life. In addition, when organizing dance classroom teaching activities, teachers did not adhere to scientific and systematic educational principles based on the design requirements of the teaching activities, and ignored the analysis of educational teaching strategies and the effective application of gamified teaching elements. Students find it difficult to achieve effective integration between different disciplines, and their understanding of the knowledge they have learned is not comprehensive enough. Therefore, their ability to apply what they have learned and apply it to others is insufficient.

The class hours of dance classes are too few. In terms of education and teaching in schools, the preschool education major only has three years of study, but in reality, the class time is only five semesters, with only 18 class hours per semester. Some schools only have two or three classes per week for preschool education dance teaching, and some even fewer. Moreover, there is a trend of further reduction in class hours, which may result in fewer and fewer classes for preschool education dance teaching, Five semesters combined don't have much time for dance learning. The consequence of such a short class time is that the dance content taught is limited. Even if students learn dance classes in preschool education, their skills will not be too comprehensive and there will be various problems. It is impossible for dance majors to develop good dance skills in such a short period of time. The lack of

standardized or suitable dance textbooks is sometimes not only a matter of short class hours, but also the lack of standardized content can lead to a lack of high-quality professional knowledge for dance majors. For students, textbooks are like swords and spears in the hands of soldiers. If a soldier's swords and spears are fast, the likelihood of survival is high. Therefore, the knowledge points in the textbooks in the hands of students are comprehensive, making it easy for them to recognize, and the acceptance of learning dance by students is greatly different. A reasonable textbook structure also has a significant impact on the quality of teaching, teaching efficiency, and achievement of learning objectives for teachers. However, most schools that offer dance related majors in preschool education currently do not have suitable teaching materials for this field. Even if some schools have teaching materials, they have not reached a perfect level due to the short duration of professional courses. The incomplete and insufficient teaching materials have resulted in poor teaching effectiveness, which seriously hinders students' learning of dance related knowledge and the accumulation of dance foundations. Tired, if this continues for a long time, it is not conducive to the cultivation of talents in the field of preschool education dance, nor is it conducive to achieving breakthroughs and significant progress in preschool education dance teaching. At the time of graduation in three years, students majoring in dance may not be very proficient in dance skills and their basic knowledge may not be solid enough to be competent for the future work. As a result, the serious consequences caused by insufficient or incomplete teaching materials will become increasingly serious. This problem should be taken seriously and corresponding measures should be taken to solve it. The problem of incomplete teaching materials should not be allowed to continue to affect the development and progress of preschool education dance teaching. Dance teachers are not professional enough or their professionalism is too strong. Dance education has risen unprecedentedly, and the demand for teachers is constantly increasing, resulting in a problem of supply shortage. At present, the number of dance teachers in schools is too small, and most dance teachers still study music and dance majors. For dance education, teachers who study music and dance may not seem very professional, but they need to consider the learning situation. For elementary school students, teachers who graduate from music and dance research are too specialized, and the knowledge points taught by teachers are difficult for students to understand or accept at this age, which leads to teachers not making significant progress in teaching. At the same time, students have not gained anything useful from teaching. In terms of learning dance skills, teachers who study music and dance seem too professional. Professional dance teachers cultivate non professional dance teachers, and excessive professionalism can put a lot of academic pressure on non professional and low-level students. Therefore, cultivating and introducing professional dance education teachers also needs to consider the situation of students.

Liu Weishan (2020): With parents and the country increasingly valuing the comprehensive development of students, dance education has become increasingly important in the early childhood stage. Therefore, dance teaching in preschool education is irreplaceable and indispensable. In order to ensure the effectiveness of dance learning for kindergarten students and to provide them with benefits, the dance major in preschool education is increasingly valued. However, according to specialized research, it has been found that there are still certain shortcomings in the current dance teaching model for preschool majors. In order to clearly understand and discover the shortcomings of the dance teaching model in preschool education and make improvements, Conducted an analysis of the current situation and optimization strategy research on dance teaching in preschool education. The mismatch

of dance teachers in dance education majors brings a lot of trouble to students in learning dance courses. The unscientific design of dance courses and the unreasonable content of the courses result in students not being able to gain much in dance. The unscientific and unplanned curriculum has led to dance teachers blindly teaching dance, teaching whenever they want, and the teaching content is also to teach whatever they want. It seems to give teachers good teaching autonomy, which is beneficial for students to exert their subjective initiative and enable them to learn dance better. However, it leads to students not being able to effectively learn the dance skills they need, which undermines their right to learn dance. Students in preschool education dance teaching do not learn professional knowledge well, which leads to the disadvantage of having only a partial understanding. The curriculum design is also one of the key issues that need to be considered in current preschool education dance teaching. We all know that learning dance should start from a young age due to the limitations of students' own conditions. This does not mean that adults cannot learn dance. Learning dance first requires good flexibility in the body. Generally, when people are young, their bones have not yet developed and formed, and their bodies are relatively soft. Practicing various basic movements of dance will not be as difficult as adults. However, students majoring in preschool education do not have a foundation in dance before entering school. They have not received professional training and are older, with mature or even no longer fully developed bones. Therefore, they are limited by their own conditions in dance learning. Poor plasticity in basic training, lack of understanding and exposure to the essence of dance, and inability to effectively interpret the thoughts and souls in dance. So there are great difficulties in learning dance. Lack of clear teaching objectives. As the dance major in preschool education is an emerging field, many schools currently do not have teaching plans, objectives, and content for preschool education dance, resulting in students lacking specific standards and focus in dance learning. They face difficulties in learning basic dance knowledge due to their lack of foundation and poor imitation ability. Lack of expressive power and profound understanding of dance make it difficult to create dance. Therefore, in order for students majoring in early childhood education dance to have real talents and practical learning, schools need to develop teaching objectives and practical teaching content that are in line with their respective majors, so as to cultivate skilled early childhood education dance teachers (Liu, 2020).

Shi Yi (2019) found that there is a deviation in the teaching objectives, which play a guiding role in educational activities. Therefore, in the teaching process, teachers should effectively integrate various teaching resources, transform the screened objectives into specific teaching objectives, and then carry out teaching according to the teaching plan, and evaluate the applicability of the teaching objectives. There is a deviation in the understanding of dance teaching objectives between teachers and students, and no consensus has been reached. In the selection of teaching objectives, students tend to focus on teaching ability, followed by the cultivation of professional theories, mastery of dance knowledge and skills. However, the vast majority of dance teachers tend to focus on mastering dance skills, and during interviews with teachers, some have pointed out that there are different understandings of teaching objectives among teachers and between teachers and students. The teacher's philosophy is outdated and the teaching method is single. The vast majority of dance full-time teachers in preschool education majors in higher vocational colleges have graduated from teacher training colleges. They are influenced by traditional dance education concepts and the basic training system of dance art colleges, and tend to focus on basic dance skills and

technical skills. They do not have a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of preschool education majors, and their understanding is not comprehensive enough. In addition, the current preschool education major in China is still in the stage of continuous exploration, and there has not yet been an authoritative dance teaching model for preschool education majors. Teachers have not updated their teaching concepts for preschool education majors. Therefore, the main teaching method in dance classrooms is for teachers to demonstrate and explain dance movements in the front, and students to imitate the teacher's movements in the back. After the teacher explains and demonstrates all the movements, let the students practice and familiarize themselves with the movements. This single teaching method makes students only mechanically imitate, which is not conducive to the development of creative thinking. Moreover, through interviews, we also learned that students hope that teachers can tailor their teaching according to their actual abilities and try to take into account every student in the class. The dance foundation of students is relatively weak, and there is a close relationship between the source of students and the quality of teaching during the teaching process. Teachers in preschool education often need to reduce the difficulty of teaching in order to make it easier for students to accept, which seriously reduces the quality of teaching. The contradiction between the two has always been a serious constraint on the improvement of dance teaching quality. The teaching content is shallow and the textbooks are not scientific. Based on the school's training plan, the teaching content of preschool education majors is relatively single. The dance teaching content of the three grades is basically skill courses, including basic dance training, ethnic folk dance, children's dance, etc.

There is no dance theory class or content on dance appreciation. Therefore, within the limited teaching time, It can be quite difficult for teachers to involve each course content, so that students can understand and master it. And dance textbooks are the basic basis for students to learn dance, so preschool education majors must choose scientific and applicable dance textbooks in order to achieve good teaching results. Higher vocational colleges must combine the characteristics and educational characteristics of preschool education majors, actively reform dance teaching content, cultivate students' professional abilities in preschool education majors, improve their dance quality, enhance their professional skills, and promote the development of preschool education majors in higher vocational colleges. The limited conditions of teaching facilities and equipment, having a good teaching environment, are conducive to greatly improving the quality of teaching. With the advent of the information age, the reasonable application of information technology methods in dance teaching can further improve the efficiency of dance teaching, and also benefit the enrichment of dance teaching modes, thereby expanding students' horizons, mobilizing their learning interests, and activating the atmosphere of the classroom. Timely updates of teaching equipment and facilities will help accelerate the reform and exploration of dance teaching models, thereby improving the quality of dance teaching in preschool education majors. The effectiveness of teaching practice is not obvious. According to surveys, there are two main problems in current dance teaching practice: firstly, teachers do not attach much importance to training students in dance performances, and there are not enough opportunities for students to participate in both on and off campus performances, which leads to a serious lack of opportunities for students to showcase, thereby limiting individual development. Secondly, the duration of student internship practice is short and concentrated, usually concentrated in the last academic year. There is basically no teaching practice in the first two academic years, and there is a lack of effective supervision and guidance during the internship process, which cannot guarantee the

quality of teaching practice. During the interview, some students expressed that the internship time and trial lecture time organized by the school were insufficient, which made many students feel that they did not gain much after the internship (Jin, 2023).

### **Enhancing practical skills in dance teaching**

The forms of dance are very diverse, and the connotations conveyed by various forms of dance are also different. For example, the cultural connotations conveyed in ethnic dance and ballet are very different. Through the learning in dance courses, students can cultivate their artistic appreciation for different forms of dance

Appreciation, in the process of appreciation, expands one's artistic perspective and cultivates a healthy artistic taste. In addition, there will be many other forms of art involved in the development of dance classes, and students can enrich their emotional understanding of different forms of artistic expression and improve their artistic cultivation during the learning process.

### **Cultivation of dance practice ability**

#### **1) Training Path for Dance Performance Ability**

Improving the dance performance ability of preschool education majors is the first step for universities to cultivate their dance practical abilities. To cultivate students' dance performance ability, you can generally start with the following steps.

Firstly, cultivate students' awareness of dance performance. Teachers need to guide students and enhance their awareness of dance performance during the teaching process. There are many ways to guide, and teachers can guide through both speech and action, with the aim of providing students with a clear understanding of the role of dance performance during the learning process. After students have a clear understanding of dance performance, they can internalize this understanding into their own dance movements and showcase them in the performance (Zhang, 2018).

Secondly, cultivate students' childlike awareness. Preschool dance is different from other forms of dance. Its forms mainly express the living conditions of young children, imitate small animals, and convey truth, goodness, and beauty. The movements are mostly exaggerated and require exaggerated body language to present. Therefore, students should try to exaggerate their body movements when performing dance, so as to attract the attention of young children. If students want to achieve a high level of performance, they need to view these dance movements with a childlike perspective. Many students are unable to let go of early childhood dance at the beginning, ultimately because they gradually lose their childlike consciousness as they age. Teachers should consciously guide students, awaken their childlike consciousness in their hearts, and project this emotion into the dance to enhance the infectiousness of dance performance.

Thirdly, cultivate students' ability to improvise dance. Improvisation dance refers to the process in which dancers mobilize their limbs to perform based on their own experience without any rehearsals or pre design. During this process, all student movements occur spontaneously. Improvisation dance can effectively enhance students' body control ability, develop their motor thinking, and tap into their inner dance potential. After students have the ability to improvise dance, they can effectively guide young children to express their emotions and imagination freely without being bound, making them happy in the learning process. Improvisation dance is an improvement for students majoring in preschool education An

indispensable means of dance performance ability (Yan, 2019).

## 2) The cultivation path of dance teaching ability

Dance teaching ability is one of the practical abilities that students must master. There are several effective paths to cultivate students' dance teaching ability. Firstly, teachers should clarify the goals of dance teaching and choose reasonable teaching content. The goal of dance teaching is to enhance students' overall quality

Quality is essential for better engagement in early childhood education and teaching, and teachers should always prioritize this goal in their teaching. Firstly, teachers should pay attention to imparting professional dance knowledge to students and solidify their theoretical foundation in dance. Secondly, it is necessary to continuously enrich teaching content. Teachers should not be limited to existing textbooks, but should also explore more dance related topics

Other knowledge can broaden students' knowledge base, improve their cognitive level, and enable them to integrate and improve teaching quality in their future practical teaching. Finally, teachers should guide students to watch more excellent children's dance videos, help them summarize the rules of children's dance, and lay the foundation for forming their own teaching methods. Secondly, cultivate students' ability to lead by example. Most students majoring in preschool education will face young children in the future. Young children are different from adults, and their language expression and thinking abilities are still in a state of undeveloped. Therefore, preschool teachers usually need to help young children understand knowledge through their own body language. University teachers need to pay attention to this characteristic when cultivating talents in early childhood education, and cultivate students' ability to lead by example. In the process of cultivating students' ability to lead by example, the first thing to focus on is to cultivate their physical expression ability. Whether students can use their body movements to accurately and vividly convey the course content and increase children's interest in learning dance is an important reflection of their dance teaching ability. In addition, teachers should also pay attention to the cultivation of students' basic dance skills. After students have solid basic skills, their control over dance movements will be correspondingly enhanced, thereby improving their dance demonstration ability. Thirdly, increase practical opportunities and establish a scientifically effective assessment and evaluation system. Dance is a course that focuses on practical teaching, and improving students' dance teaching ability should start from practical activities. Schools can organize various practical activities, such as large-scale competitions and performances, or collaborate with kindergartens to allow students to have direct contact with young children, providing students with diverse practical platforms and helping them accumulate teaching experience. When evaluating students, the existing evaluation system should be improved, changing the previous system that only focused on theoretical knowledge and constructing an evaluation system that emphasizes both theory and practice. Increase the proportion of assessment and evaluation of practical activities for students, comprehensively consider their learning outcomes, and only students who have both theoretical knowledge and practical experience can become excellent early childhood education talents.

The author concluded from the above literature that the preschool education major in vocational schools should be guided by the work process oriented curriculum theory, formulate training objectives based on the needs of kindergarten positions, deepen the talent training model of "learning training interaction+practical support", combine the actual work process with vocational education courses, so that students can quickly adapt to job requirements, and

complete the connection between school training objectives and vocational needs. In addition, the preschool education major in vocational schools can divide the curriculum objectives into three dimensions: knowledge objectives, ability objectives, and emotional and attitude objectives, so as to combine the goals of dance courses with social needs and enable students to master the comprehensive dance skills necessary for preschool education (Xia, 2020).

### **Add dance aesthetics knowledge to the course content**

The author analyzed the job requirements of kindergartens and found that kindergartens generally require high emotional attitudes and professional qualities from teachers. In response to suggestions for improving course content, the author surveyed a dance teacher in a vocational school and suggested adding dance appreciation courses to allow students to appreciate excellent children's dance works and improve their dance quality. Research on dance appreciation has shown that dance aesthetics can affect people's inner feelings and mental state. Dance appreciation courses can help students learn to experience and feel beauty, and discover beauty in future teaching activities. After receiving dance aesthetics education, students majoring in preschool education will have a higher professional enthusiasm for dance education, continuously improve their professional qualities, integrate emotions into communication with young children, and guide them to love dance.

### **Improve the implementation mode of the curriculum**

Firstly, set a reasonable proportion of dance and cultural courses to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Secondly, emphasis should be placed on process oriented teaching, integrating the teaching content of cultural courses into practical courses, and optimizing the structure and content of the curriculum. Finally, integrate the teaching content of practical courses into cultural courses, so that students can deepen their understanding of theoretical knowledge through specific practice and lay a solid foundation for future teaching practices.

### **Increase opportunities for teaching practice**

Firstly, when designing dance courses, practical teaching segments can be appropriately added. Secondly, arrange for preschool education students to intern in kindergartens for a period of time every academic year, so that students can understand the work content of preschool teachers and master the necessary skills of preschool teachers in a timely manner. Thirdly, establish or build a practice room to allow students to practice dance in their spare time, laying a solid foundation for future dance teaching.

### **Encourage internship units to participate in the comprehensive evaluation of student course.**

A scientific curriculum evaluation system not only requires schools and teachers as evaluation subjects, but also requires the participation of internship units. Because the internship unit has a better understanding of the actual needs of the position and places more emphasis on teaching practice, while the school and teachers place more emphasis on teaching theory. The participation of internship units in the comprehensive evaluation of student courses helps to provide timely feedback on teaching results, encourage schools to adjust their curriculum system reasonably according to market demand, supervise teachers to improve course content, and thus improve teaching efficiency and quality (Peng, 2017).



### Using multiple teaching methods

Dance teachers in preschool education majors in vocational schools should explore various teaching methods, not only teaching students basic theoretical knowledge, but also guiding them to think from the perspective of young children, so that students can better perform the role of preschool teachers. For preschool children, preschool teachers can serve as enlightenment teachers for dance performances. Preschool teachers should grasp the psychology of preschool children and use various forms such as games and paintings to enlighten them with dance. And dance teachers majoring in preschool education in vocational schools can infuse this idea into their daily teaching activities, allowing students majoring in preschool education to

### Conclusion

Not only does it value child psychology, but it also adopts various teaching methods to enhance students' competitiveness in employment. In addition, in the dance education of preschool education majors in vocational schools, students need to learn various types of dances, but their dance foundation is weak. Therefore, teachers can design dance course content guided by employment, selectively integrate different dance courses, and enable students to achieve more fruitful learning results in a shorter learning time.

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