Influence of Early Tang Dynasty Calligraphy Education to Current Pedagogy

Wenlin Liu¹, *, Antonio D Mangaliag²

¹University of Baguio, 2600, Philippines
²University of Baguio, 2600, Philippines
* Corresponding author: Wenlin Liu (Email: 498990064@qq.com)

Abstract: Calligraphy has been listed as a first-level discipline by the Ministry of Education, but calligraphy education is particularly important. The calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty was very comprehensive and had a significant impact on current education. This study aims to summarize the calligraphy education model in the early Tang Dynasty, sort out the theory and practice of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty, analyze the teaching strategies of teachers in calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty, as well as the learning ability of students, summarize the best practices of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty, and evaluate their impact on current calligraphy teaching methods. This article adopts the qualitative research interview method and thematic analysis method, with 6 professors participating in the interview. Important research findings have found that the best educational practices during the early Tang Dynasty have a significant impact and reference value on current teaching methods.

Keywords: Calligraphy Education, Current Pedagogy, Influence, Early Tang Dynasty.

1. Introduction

Calligraphy culture is the core of traditional Chinese culture, and modern calligraphy education is also an important part of the current pedagogy. In recent years, the state has continuously improved the status of calligraphy in the educational discipline. In September 2022, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China officially promulgated calligraphy as a first-level discipline in postgraduate education, which has an important impact on calligraphy education. Under the background of modern diversified society and culture, modern calligraphy education presents diversified modes such as quality, specialization, socialization, private schooling, and leisure (Zhang, 2019).

The types of calligraphy education in the Tang Dynasty can be divided into official calligraphy education, private calligraphy education, court calligraphy education, and calligraphy self-study (Li, 2021). Conscientiously summarize the historical experience of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty, compare the problems and causes in contemporary calligraphy education, and seek ways to improve contemporary higher calligraphy education (White, 2017). Through the continuous in-depth study of the calligraphy education model of the Tang Dynasty, it has played an irreplaceable role in promoting the continuous development of modern calligraphy education in China (Zhang, 2017).

Literature Review

The art of calligraphy is the core culture of traditional Chinese culture, and calligraphy education is also the most special teaching mode in contemporary Chinese pedagogy. There are few articles focusing on Chinese calligraphy in the world, and the main research results focus on China, but the articles on current pedagogy in the world have an important influence on this article.

Pedagogy of the Twenty-First Century: Innovative Teaching Methods

The purpose of the chapter is to summarize the current changes in didactics for the use of innovative teaching methods and study the understanding of changes by teachers. In this chapter, we consider four areas: the expansion of the subject of pedagogy, the environmental approach to teaching, the digital generation and the changes taking place, and innovation in teaching (Aigerim et al., 2017).

Soviet educationalist Lei Fu Zankov's book "Teaching and Development" put forward "the principle that theoretical knowledge plays a leading role and the principle that students understand the learning process", which has important theoretical value for the study of this paper.

It is proposed that the direct reason for the repeated rise and fall of calligraphy is related to the gradual decline of official learning in the Tang Dynasty; The institutional aspect complements the possible impact of book studies (Shi, 2021).

Tang Dynasty officials listed "book" and "judgment" as important subjects, and whether the font was correct and whether the handwriting was smooth would affect the quality of the judgment (Li, 2020).

Mongolian calligraphy education was one of the main forms of calligraphy education in the Tang Dynasty, known as "character and calligraphy education," and had the characteristics of combining literacy with literacy practice. (Zeng, 2021).

Dunhuang private calligraphy education can provide opportunities for local people to self-cultivate and has important reference significance for understanding and studying family education outside Dunhuang Zhangsuo in the Tang Dynasty. (Wei & Wang, 2020).

The idea of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty was divided into three levels: technical education, aesthetic education, and personality education. Technical education is mainly characterized by "Shangfa" and advocates the rules and laws of technical writing; Aesthetic education is mainly characterized by the aesthetic idea of "neutralization" of calligraphy, advocating the peaceful ambition of calligraphy style; Personality education advocates that learning calligraphy can promote people's spiritual freedom and
human kindness, advocate the great influence of artistic beauty on spiritual freedom, and advocate the great influence of books on human virtue (Zheng, 2020).

Calligraphy in the Tang Dynasty established the prominent position of calligraphy in ancient Chinese culture and had a profound impact on the calligraphy style of later generations, and the teaching of calligraphy in the Tang Dynasty also became a model for future generations. (Li, 2016).

Drawing on the teaching mode and advantages of the Tang Dynasty calligraphy judges, it can be applied to today's middle school calligraphy education: using obscure calligraphy theory and summarizing teaching techniques in concise language (Chen, 2019).

Based on the above research conclusions, this paper will summarize the current research results, draw extensively on the research results of experts and scholars, and summarize their best practices in early Tang calligraphy education and their influence on contemporary pedagogy through interviews with professional calligraphy teachers representing different schools and experts and scholars in the field of calligraphy. Based on collecting and integrating interview data, based on the educational development theory of Le. Fu Zankov and Confucius' theory of "teaching according to aptitude", combined with the early Tang calligraphy education, new ideas and methods of current calligraphy pedagogy are proposed.

1.1. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The process of calligraphy education is a gradual process from calligraphy culture to calligraphy writing skills, a single technique to diverse calligraphy styles, calligraphy education should not only follow the characteristics of calligraphy art but also conform to the educational laws of contemporary pedagogy, therefore, this paper is following Confucius's theory of "teaching according to aptitude" and the principles of Zankov's development education theory. Study the best practices of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty and their impact on current pedagogy.

In ancient Chinese society, there was a Confucian tradition of advocating moral cultivation, respecting teachers and respecting the way, teaching according to aptitude, and gradually. When Confucius implemented "teaching by talent", he did not simply impart knowledge. Instead, it pays attention to the differences between students, gives full play to students' initiative, and promotes students' continuous understanding and development of themselves in practice. At the same time, we should adhere to the student-centered education concept, start from the characteristics of students' cognitive development, and be good at using the discourse system that students like and accept to teach (Wang, 2021).

Educational theory, figuratively speaking, has two levels. At the macro level, in the "education-society" relationship, the positive combination of traditional methods and innovative methods, the combination of activity methods and energy information environment methods, and the combination of cognition, constructivism, and connectionism (Aigerim et al., 2017).

1.2. Significance of the Study

In recent years, the state has continuously introduced policies to revitalize Chinese traditional culture, and the art of calligraphy is the core of traditional culture. How to inherit and innovate the art of calligraphy is the research object of calligraphy educators, and effective calligraphy education methods are the goal of teachers. Of course, to innovate a new teaching method, it is necessary to study the existing teaching method. The larger the teacher's teaching strategy, the more interesting and diverse the curriculum it offers, the better it stimulates students' cognitive activity, shapes the experience of solving non-standard problems, and promotes in-depth training and steady absorption of practical activities (Aigerim et al., 2017).

The art of calligraphy in the Tang Dynasty was the heyday of Chinese calligraphy art, and its calligraphy education methods have great research value. The theory and method of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty were the essence of calligraphy education in the Tang Dynasty. Therefore, this paper summarizes the calligraphy education model of the early Tang Dynasty, sorts out the theory and practice of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty, analyzes the teaching strategies of teachers in the early Tang calligraphy education and the learning ability of students, summarizes the best practices of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty, and the impact on the current calligraphy teaching method. The research of this paper has reflection and reference significance for the current teaching method of calligraphy teachers, and proposes a new calligraphy teaching method that inherits the ancient excellent teaching method and combines the characteristics of contemporary teaching methods in the current education. For students learning calligraphy, how to improve their learning ability in the current learning environment is of guiding significance.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

This paper analyzes the current situation and mode of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty and summarizes the influence of the calligraphy education model of the early Tang Dynasty on the current pedagogy.

1. Summarize the calligraphy education model of the early Tang Dynasty,
2. Analyze the teaching strategies of teachers and students' learning ability in early Tang calligraphy education.

2. Methodology

This paper uses qualitative research methods, including interview methods and thematic analysis methods.

2.1. Research Design

The purpose of this research is to analyze the teaching strategies, teaching resources, teaching motivations, and teaching procedures of teachers in calligraphy teaching in the early Tang Dynasty calligraphy education through the interview method, and students' learning ability, values, skills, etc. in teaching activities. Then, the themes are extracted from the interviews, and the theme analysis method is used to summarize the best practices of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty and their impact on current pedagogy.

2.2. Population and Locale of the Study

The research questions in this paper are very professional, and it not only requires experts who have certain research in the early Tang Dynasty calligraphy education, but also teachers who are currently engaged in calligraphy education.
in colleges and universities, and few research objects meet this condition. Therefore, I used purposeful sampling and selected 6 experts or scholars from different universities and research units in Zhejiang Province for interviews.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

Interviews will be conducted to collect data from interviewees. This study will apply to structured interviews, as it will gather relevant information from respondents who have studied early Tang calligraphy education and current calligraphy education.

Researchers will construct interview guide tasks. Questions were distributed to 6 respondents (university calligraphy teachers or scholars) before the interview. Since the purpose of this study is to determine the respondents' views on the teaching resources, teaching motivation, teaching procedures, learning ability, values, skills, etc. of teachers and students in the teaching of calligraphy in the early Tang Dynasty calligraphy education, and summarize the best practices of the early Tang calligraphy education and the impact on the current calligraphy pedagogy. These respondents will provide different data sources from the comparison of early Tang calligraphy education with current calligraphy education, indicating how they summarize the best practices of early Tang calligraphy education and how they can influence and learn from current calligraphy education. The effectiveness of the data collection tool will be determined through the requirements of the R&D center by placing the built tool in the university's tool validation process.

2.4. Data Collection Procedure

Interview questions will be used to collect data and ask open-ended questions to accommodate personal perspectives related to the topic. In this way, the interview questions will be effectively answered by the interviewee.

The purpose of the interview is to determine the interviewee's views on the teaching resources, teaching motivation, teaching procedures, learning ability, values, skills, etc. of teachers and students in the teaching of calligraphy in the early Tang Dynasty calligraphy education, and summarize the best practices of the early Tang calligraphy education and the impact on the current calligraphy pedagogy. Specifically, the researchers conducted one-on-one interviews with six university professors or scholars from other institutions, using independent interviews. The researchers first distribute the interview questions to the respondents, and before answering the questions, the researchers will tell the respondents to collect their views in video or audio format. After answering the questions, the researchers will collect the answers and talk to them to ensure that they express their views clearly and objectively.

2.5. Data Processing

Data processing will take place after the interview. The purpose of data processing is to determine the respondents' views on the teaching strategies, teaching resources, teaching motivation, teaching procedures, learning ability, values, skills, etc. of teachers and students in the teaching of calligraphy in the early Tang Dynasty calligraphy education, and summarize the best practices of the early Tang calligraphy education and the impact on the current calligraphy pedagogy. Data analysis will use the subject analysis method, using the Vivo software to process the data, the specific steps are as follows: a) import data; b) data encoding; c) extraction of subjects; d) thematic analysis; e) Preparation of reports. The use of thematic analysis will enable researchers to capture important data and organize it into patterns, providing implications for the impact of best practices in calligraphy education on current pedagogy by respondents in the early Tang Dynasty.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

There are two main parts of this article for ethical considerations, namely the document, the historical material part, and the interview part.

First, the historical materials and documents section, to ensure the scientific principles of the paper, must consider the authenticity of the historical materials. The authenticity of historical materials is the basic characteristic of historical knowledge. The order of selecting historical materials is: first, there is first-level information, and second-level information is not selected; Second, there is physical information, not written information; Third, there are unequal historical materials, and monographs are not selected; Fourth, there are video materials, do not choose to choose picture materials; Fifth, try to choose materials that are close to the narrative theme in time and space.

Secondly, the interview part, according to the principle of autonomy, experts who not only have certain research in the early Tang Dynasty calligraphy education are selected but also must have interviews with teachers or scholars in colleges and universities who are familiar with the current calligraphy education. The interview is structured, and the participants' information is confidential. The interview data will only be used for the research of this article and will not be used for other commercial purposes. The participant's information will be encoded in the study. The interview process will not affect the professionalism of the interviewee as much as possible, adopt a voluntary principle, and withdraw from the interview at any time. Respect the opinions of experts and professors, and maintain the originality of interview data to the greatest extent. The researchers will publish the interview results to solicit the interviewees' performance. If respondents do not want to disclose personal information, the researchers will anonymize it. If the researchers ensure that respondents are not harmed by participating in the study, do not reveal their identities, and do not provide any clues that lead to their identities. Participants in this study will be named only R, representing the number sequence of respondents plus interviews. For example, the first responder involved will be named R1, while the second responder will be named R2, and so on.

3. Results and Discussion

This chapter discusses the results, interpretation, and implication of data which covers the similarities and differences between the calligraphy education model of the early Tang Dynasty and the current calligraphy education, the teaching strategies of calligraphy teachers in the early Tang Dynasty, the learning strategies and learning abilities of students in the early Tang Dynasty, the best practices of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty, and the influence of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty on current pedagogy. Discussions and supporting literature are also presented.

3.1. Early Tang Calligraphy Education Model

Different educational institutions have appeared in
different historical periods, social environments, and governance needs. R1 pointed out that calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty included three aspects: official education, private education, and family education, presenting different educational objectives and concepts.

R2 and R3 mentioned the existence of two models during the early Tang Dynasty: the official-led academy-style education and the family-style private teaching. Officially led education resources are abundant, with strong teaching staff, targeting the children of the royal family and prestigious families; The family style private teaching focuses on inheriting the unique calligraphy style and techniques of the family.

R6 provided a detailed description of the characteristics of both official and private schools. Government education emphasizes political practicality, and the content taught focuses on philology and various techniques of calligraphy. Private learning is a spontaneous learning method among people, which involves learning calligraphy through private guidance or self-study. Students have the opportunity to take the imperial examination and be absorbed by official schools.

The results of this study are consistent with Liu (2022) research, which shows that the calligraphy education system in the early Tang Dynasty was complete, and a calligraphy education model based on the court, official schools, and private schools was established.

3.2. Differences and Similarities between the Early Tang Calligraphy Education Model and the Current Education Model

This indicates that the educational model has a certain degree of continuity in different periods, especially in the professional field.

R1 and R2 mentioned private and family studies, pointing out similarities between private calligraphy in the early Tang Dynasty and modern amateur calligraphy learning. In the early Tang Dynasty, family education emphasized oral transmission and personal instruction, which has a certain commonality with modern family education. This indicates that families have always played an important role in the inheritance of calligraphy.

This reflects that modern education places more emphasis on the exploration and cultivation of individual potential of students, and pays more attention to the comprehensive development of individuals compared to ancient times.

The results of this study confirm the findings of Li (2020). The existing form of contemporary calligraphy education is consistent with the type of calligraphy education in the Tang Dynasty. Calligraphy education in official schools includes both primary education and higher education. Calligraphy education in private schools can also be divided into family inheritance and teacher education.

3.3. Teaching strategies adopted by calligraphy teachers in the early Tang Dynasty

In the calligraphy teaching of the early Tang Dynasty, teachers adopted various strategies to improve students' calligraphy level and artistic achievement. The main teaching strategies include teaching, demonstration, exploration, and imitation. Through these strategies, teachers impart calligraphy skills and artistic concepts through examples, observation, and imitation.

R1 described how the teaching of calligraphy in the early Tang Dynasty was carried out through teaching, demonstration, and exploration strategies under the background of the imperial examination system. Special emphasis was placed on the importance of demonstration strategies, and it was pointed out that the teaching content follows the principle of gradually progressing from easy to difficult.

R2 mentioned that calligraphy teachers in the early Tang Dynasty taught through words and deeds, imitation, and observation. These strategies focus on practice and emphasize the role of observation in improving students' calligraphy skills.

R6 analyzed the teaching mode of early Tang calligraphy from the perspectives of both official and private education. Official schools focus on classic learning and standardized teaching, while private schools place more emphasis on practicality and the inheritance of teachers and apprentices.

This research result supports the viewpoint proposed by Zheng (2019). Calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty: firstly, it is a calligraphy technique education that upholds the Dharma, secondly, it is a calligraphy aesthetic education that emphasizes the beauty of "harmony", and thirdly, it is a personality education that aims to achieve spiritual freedom and personal perfection as the highest standard.

3.4. Calligraphy learning strategies and abilities of students in the early Tang Dynasty

During the early Tang Dynasty, students showed a high attitude and effort towards learning calligraphy, continuously improving their calligraphy skills through various strategies and methods.

R1 mentioned that during the early Tang Dynasty, most of the students learned calligraphy from family education, apart from official school education. Students are mostly descendants of aristocratic families, and the family's words and deeds are an important way to learn.

R2 pointed out that students have adopted learning strategies such as listening, observation, inquiry, reflection, and practice in calligraphy learning, demonstrating a high learning attitude.

R5 and R3 respectively mentioned that students learn calligraphy through copying, seeing classic works from past dynasties, demonstrating with their teachers, and repeatedly copying and reflecting on themselves.

R6 pointed out that official schools focus on laws and regulations, while private schools adopt simpler and more direct teaching methods.

This research result is consistent with Zheng (2019) research. Calligraphy technique education is the basic education for learning calligraphy, and it is an educational method aimed at writing. The basic techniques such as brushwork and form are the basic prerequisites for ancient Chinese calligraphy. Only by mastering these techniques can one uniquely qualify to start the journey of calligraphy learning.

3.5. The Best Practices of Calligraphy Education in the Early Tang Dynasty

Based on the best practices of several professors on calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty, their multiple perspectives and practical methods are summarized as follows:

R1 pointed out that during the early Tang Dynasty,
calligraphy education adopted multiple models in practice, including official education, folk family tradition, and teacher education. This diverse educational model provides students with rich learning opportunities and environments.

R1 mentioned that during the early Tang Dynasty, the imperial examination included the subject of "Mingshu", which regarded calligraphy as an important criterion for examination. The system of "selecting officials based on calligraphy" promoted the enthusiasm of candidates to learn calligraphy. This practical model has promoted the development of calligraphy education.

R5 mentioned that teachers choose templates, demonstration teaching, personalized guidance, and interactive Q&A in their teaching, creating a high-quality learning environment for students.

R1 emphasized the construction of the teaching staff and pointed out that in the early Tang Dynasty, there were calligraphers who personally taught in the official school system, cultivating many calligraphy talents. This suggests that modern calligraphy education needs to strengthen the construction of the teacher team and achieve a rational allocation of resources.

R6 pointed out that calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty integrated philology with calligraphy, emphasizing students' in-depth understanding and learning of classical literature, ancient works, and traditional writing. The emperor's admiration for calligraphy also promoted the prosperity of calligraphy education.

This research result confirms the findings of Xu & Yu (2020). Calligraphy quality education is not only a knowledge education but also an art education. If students only focus on aesthetic appreciation or calligraphy culture, they will lack writing experience. Therefore, when teachers introduce writing knowledge such as "hidden front" and "center", students will find it difficult to verify each other with theoretical knowledge, and only scratch the surface of their boots, thinking it is very mysterious.

3.6. The Impact of Calligraphy Education in the Early Tang Dynasty on Current Education

When discussing the direction and strategies of modern calligraphy education, calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty became an important reference point. The following is a comprehensive analysis of the viewpoints of several professors, aiming to reveal the enlightenment of early Tang calligraphy education on modern calligraphy education.

R1 emphasized the importance of building a team of calligraphy teachers in calligraphy education, pointing out that the teaching ability of teachers directly determines the quality of student education. This viewpoint highlights the crucial role of teachers in calligraphy education.

R2 pointed out that modern calligraphy education emphasizes individual development and innovation, while also drawing on the traditional teaching models and practical methods of the early Tang Dynasty. This shows that calligraphy education should adopt diversified teaching methods, pay attention to individual differences of students, and promote their comprehensive development and innovative abilities.

R6 emphasizes the importance of philology and suggests that emphasis should be placed on the study of characters and their historical and cultural backgrounds. This suggests that calligraphy education needs to focus on the inheritance of culture and the transmission of values, in order to cultivate students' profound cultural literacy.

R5 mentioned that calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty had a cross-fusion with other disciplines such as natural history and philosophy. He suggests that modern calligraphy education can also introduce interdisciplinary content, such as integrating calligraphy with subjects such as art, literature, history, etc., to enrich students' knowledge breadth and depth.

R4 pointed out that early Tang calligraphy education emphasized practice and individual teaching, and modern calligraphy education should also tend towards systematization and popularization. He emphasized that the teacher's demonstration and guidance can promote students' understanding and learning of the traditional brushwork system, which is of great significance for the inheritance of calligraphy art.

The results of this study are consistent with Zhang (2019) research. In the context of diversified modern culture, calligraphy education in China has also shown a diversified state, which can be summarized into several educational models such as quality-oriented, professional, socialized, and leisure-oriented. The diversified modern calligraphy education model also inherits traditional cultural spirit in modern society.

4. Conclusion

The calligraphy education model in the early Tang Dynasty included three aspects: official education, private education, and family education, presenting different educational objectives and concepts. The modern calligraphy education model is more diversified, emphasizing individual development and artistic expression.

The teaching strategies of calligraphy teachers in the early Tang Dynasty focused on practical skills, traditional cultural inheritance, and self-cultivation. Students demonstrate a high attitude and effort toward learning calligraphy, continuously improving their calligraphy skills through various strategies and methods.

The practical model of calligraphy education in the early Tang Dynasty emphasized diversity, practicality, and the use of words and deeds, while also emphasizing the promoting role of the education system, the combination of theory and practice in learning, and the cultivation of the teaching staff. This provides valuable experience and reference for contemporary calligraphy teaching.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations are necessary to improve Calligraphy Education:

1. It is necessary to strengthen the construction of the calligraphy teacher team and develop talent training methods suitable for the development of modern and contemporary calligraphy (for school)

2. The inheritance of ancient Chinese calligraphy culture and the innovation of calligraphy culture in modern and contemporary times. (for Calligraphy Leader)

3. Adopting a multicultural teaching model, a teaching method that combines theory and practice, and a teaching strategy that caters to individual needs. (for teachers)

4. A learning approach that emphasizes both basic theory and practical techniques, as well as the personality spirit of calligraphy art and self-cultivation. (for students and
References

Book