

The Practice and Assessment of Cantonese Opera in Interdisciplinary Chinese Language Courses in Hong Kong

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Abstract: Cantonese Opera is a valuable asset of the Chinese culture and is also the essence of Hong Kong's culture. Cantonese Opera (aka Yueju Opera) had been inscribed in 2009 on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanities. Started in 2006, "Seed Project of Cantonese Opera --- Integrate Cantonese Opera in Education" (the "Seed Project" in short), carried out by the Faculty of Education, the University of Hong Kong, aims at letting students to understand, reflect and appreciate the art of traditional Chinese opera. The project also aims to integrate Cantonese opera into the Chinese language school-based curriculum, especially for the sake of the New Senior Secondary Curriculum reform. The project was completed in May 2009. This paper analyses the student learning outcomes and reflections of the seed schools of the project, using Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences and Model of Learning Styles.

Keywords: Cantonese Opera, Hong Kong, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Language Education, Student Learning Outcomes, Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Model of Learning Styles

Background

ACCORDING TO THE second draft of the "Proposed New Senior Secondary Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks for Chinese Language Education of Hong Kong" (jointly compiled by the Curriculum Development Council and the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment, May 2005), the new senior secondary school curriculum will generally be designed to cater for students' different needs, and to enable "every student to possess the learning capability, as well as their own characteristics". "Their learning interests, attitudes and styles can be different, and their performances can also be distinct. Teachers should design the curriculum based on the individual personality and capability of each student, to help them to learn efficiently... if required, students can also be provided with opportunities to exert their personal potentials. With the assistance of various language teaching activities, we can achieve the interaction between teachers, students and efficient learning."

Cantonese opera is a typical local form of art and culture, and became Hong Kong's intangible cultural heritage in 2009. It is a primary mission for language teachers to have secondary school students understand local culture, and to further intensify language study through Cantonese opera education. The Centre for Advancement of Chinese Language Education and Research at The University of Hong Kong started its "Integrated Cantonese Opera in Education" Project in 2006. The project explored the "3-3-4" education system, grasped the spirit behind the new Chinese language course reform in high schools, and attempted to ex-

pand students' spans of studying. Cantonese opera education, and is considered to be the best way to achieve the goals mentioned above. This project stimulates students' motivation and interest in learning Cantonese opera through polyandry interdisciplinary courses.

The interdisciplinary course is a new teaching trend in the 21st century. It can enhance language learning efficiency and arouse students' motivation and interest to learn. However, its effect is not obvious in the short term. It will be better to merge the concept of inter-discipline into Cantonese opera education, as the content of Cantonese opera education, including script analysis, text processing, singing, acting and narrating and so on, will manifest the spirit of inter-discipline better. The appointed project school has been promoting the interdisciplinary course, Cantonese opera, since 2006. From quest to practice, and from practice to experience accumulation, we have gone through numerous attempts. During the past three years, researchers have obtained much experience and have summarized factors of success from the Cantonese opera course.

This project will become a good demonstration and a new direction for the Cantonese opera course in secondary schools, so that teachers and students can understand that both quality and quantity of Cantonese opera education can be enhanced by interdisciplinary activities.

In this paper, the discussion focuses on the assessment of students' learning outcomes and their reflection on the project in 2010.

Framework of the Research

Gardner - Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences has given teachers a big revelation. Actually, the theory allows the teachers to take care of students' diversity and individual discrepancies, and eventually to achieve the final learning goals.

Gardner classified "Intelligences" into 7 different categories, and then (1995, 1999) added the eighth intelligence. They are analyzed as follows.

(Eight Intelligences by Gardner)

Eight Intelligences	Description	Characteristics of People those who are Good at
1. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence	To express oneself purposely using oral and written languages, e.g. debating, persuading, telling stories, writing poems, literary creation, teaching etc.	People good at this intelligence are fond of playing with texts, and are good at using puns, metaphors, similes. They can usually read for long time, and also possess high listening skills. They will achieve their best learning effect when they can listen, speak, read and write.

2. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence	This intelligence is the fundamental of science and mathematics.	People good at this intelligence will emphasize rationality, and are strong in figuring out patterns, constructing causalities, executing experiments that precisely controlled and order. They often think in the form of conception or questions and are fond of trying new ideas.
3. Spatial Intelligence	Involving perception, innovation and picture and image reconstruction	People strong in this intelligence can be sensitive to even very tiny parts visually. They can show concepts in charts, and can also transform texts or impressions into mental graphs. They think in the form of graphs, and are sensitive to directions and locations.
4. Musical Intelligence	The ability to compose music, including understanding, appreciating and commenting on music.	Those able to sing accurately, follow rhythm, identify musical types and compose music all possess this intelligence. They are sensitive to all non-lingual sounds and the melody of daily noise.
5. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence	Related to physical fitness and the ability to operate one's body.	People strong in this intelligence can operate mechanical objects easily or act accurately. Their senses of feeling are highly developed, and are fond of physical challenges. This kind of people can achieve their best learning effect by operating, moving and acting.
6. Interpersonal Intelligence	Possessing this intelligence can enable an individual to be an active person in social interaction.	People strong in this intelligence can get along well with others, work efficiently, and are sensitive to other's changes of emotion, attitude, and desire. This kind of people is usually friendly, extroversive. Usually they know how to judge and identify others, and react properly. They are always the best team member, and can achieve the best learning effect by learning together.
7. Intrapersonal Intelligence	This is an ability to understand their feelings and emotional status.	People strong in this intelligence usually prefer to work independently, and guide themselves by understand themselves.

8. Naturalist Intelligence	This intelligence is possessed by those who can get along well with natural plants, animals, minerals, clouds and planets.	Those who are strong in this intelligence are fond of staying outdoors. They are sensitive to synusiologic laws, characteristics and exceptions. They are used to and good at classifying natural sceneries and organisms through these laws and characteristics. They show care of and treasure the nature. They have a deep understanding about the nature.
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By practicing and studying interdisciplinary activities in Cantonese opera, this study reflects “multiple intelligences” of students in the following table:

Interdisciplinary Activities in Cantonese Opera	“Multiple Intelligences” used by Students							
	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧
Script analysis	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Singing	✓	✓		✓		✓		
Acting			✓		✓	✓		✓
Speaking	✓	✓				✓		
Martial Art			✓		✓	✓		✓

Professor Kai-ming Cheng also stated that “Cantonese opera is an integration, including literature, music, fine arts, drama and so on, and requiring high level skills of interpersonal communications, interactions, collaborations, and syncretism. The process of studying Cantonese opera is completely compatible with the key factors of modern learning theories: interconnection between understanding and practice, mingling of individuals and groups, combination of inheritance and creation, compound of multiple intelligences, and alternate thinking at different levels”(The "Princess Chang Ping" Classroom, 2008). Therefore, we can see that it will reflect interdisciplinary studies and the cultivation of multiple intelligences to bring Cantonese opera education to secondary schools.

Carl Jung - Model of Psychological Type

The Model of Psychological Type (1923), developed by Psychologist Carl Jung, suggested that the distinction of people come from two fundamental functions of acknowledgement: perception and judgment. We can absorb information in two ways: absorbing specific information through sensing, or absorbing abstract information through intuition. We can also do it through logical judgment of thinking, or through subjective judgment of feeling.

Each of the four kinds of personality aspects corresponds to an apparent and conscious method of acquiring experiences. Sensing tells you the existence of an object; thinking tells you what it is; feeling tells you whether you agree or not; intuition tells you where to come and where to go. (1923, p.481) What’s more, Carl Jung considered whether an individual is

active (extroverted) or cogitative (introverted) when an individual is interacting with the external world. Jung described a “four category classifying method”, which is shown below.

Functional Mandela of Carl Jung

	Sensing (procedures step by step, concreteness)	
Thinking (logic and objective-ness)	Perception Judgment	Feeling (sentiment and spontaneity)
	Intuition (insight, abstractness)	

		Judgment	
Sensing	Intuition	Thinking	Feeling
Sensing is a specific function. It makes use of five kinds of functions, the senses of listening, sight, taste, smell, and feeling to collect information. Through these senses, we can absorb the actual facts and details in the world, handle the characteristics of people, locations and events in this world, and know the facts.	Intuition is a relatively abstract function. By guessing, enlightening and insight, find out the rules, inferences and meanings behind the facts and details, to help us to know the hidden essence, and then to get a macroscopical conception, and give the fact a meaning and predict the possible changes insides the fact.	Thinking allows us to make judgments rationally. When thinkers are making decisions, they are guided by logics, orders and objectiveness. They do not need the community to confirm their decisions, and feel uncomfortable in situations that involve emotions. They handle everything in a rational way.	Feeling makes our decisions purposeful. When feelers are making decisions, they tend to make judgments by heart; their golden rule is subjectiveness or the feels. They do not have affectation, and are good at social interaction. They are fond of sharing creative ideas with others. They seek others’ agreement. In their points of view, everything has a meaning related to people.

Chinese language courses involve many aspects. As well as language skills training, they also include the cultivation of morality and emotion. Cantonese opera education has the potential not only to enhance students’ writing, but also to enlarge the traditional language learning spaces, as well as give direct guidance to emotional education. Furthermore, of the study of the lyrics can help students to experience the artistic attainments of Cantonese opera.

The two frameworks described in this section have been utilize for the analysis of the students’ learning outcomes and their reflections.

Research Design and Methodology

The programme described here was developed from the "Integrated Cantonese Opera in Education" Project, and based on the integration of Cantonese opera and Chinese language courses. The number of participating schools has been increased from 4 to 7 to 11 during the three years. The True Light Middle School of Hong Kong has participated since the beginning of the project, so the sample was drawn from this school (27 students from S.2). The study aimed to collect information about the following.

1. The script analysis of Cantonese Opera by Tang Ti-sheng in the "Integrated Cantonese Opera in Education" Project, "The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom".
2. The trial teaching process and classroom discourse of "The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom" (The True Light Middle School of Hong Kong, was selected as the key schools for analysis)
3. Questionnaire Analysis on Theatre Appreciation of "The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom"
4. Reports, interviews and self-reflection with students participating in the "Integrated Cantonese Opera in Education" Project.
5. Students' worksheets and classroom observation of "script teaching" and "performance teaching".

The first step in the interdisciplinary courses is script teaching. Based on the script content and language usage, students can be trained in language lessons to develop their abilities in reading, writing, listening and speaking. In addition to the practice of singing, posing, shouting and beating, the understanding of script can be intensified. Students participate in guided tours before watching operas in order to grasp the main ideas of the operas, appreciate the stage performances, and experience the traditional culture of Cantonese Opera. In this way, they can reflect more deeply.

The Learning Mode of Immersing Cantonese Opera Education into Chinese Language

Script Teaching (Language Learning)	• Reading
	• Writing
	• Listening
	• Speaking
	• Literature
Performance Teaching and Practice (Performance Training)	• Singing
	• Acting
	• Speaking
	• Martial Art

Opera Appreciation (Art Appreciation and Analysis)	• Pre-watching guided tour (back stage)
	• Watching live opera
	• Understanding traditional culture
	• Post-watching reflection / feedback

Assessment of Students’ Learning Outcomes

Analysis of the Questionnaire on Theatre Appreciation of the Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom (Questionnaire in the Appendix)

Prior to the study of the script and content of the Cantonese Opera *The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom*, the school conducted a theatre appreciation lecture to draw students’ attention to the highlights of the play, and they were also given a chance to take a closer look at the backstage. Having completed the activity, the teachers invited their students to complete the questionnaire, and 26 out of 27 copies were returned. The key findings from the questionnaire are as follows:

Q1 is about the number of participants, 26 out of 27 took part in the theatre appreciation lecture, thus the number of students attending the lecture was the same as the number of people filling in the questionnaire.

Q2 was about the theatre appreciation seminar. Over 90% of the students found the introduction of characters and costumes to be the most helpful sections in appreciating Cantonese Opera. This illustrates that students appreciate and realize the importance of plot and characters in a play, and this links closely with the aims and objectives of teaching Cantonese Opera of TLMS. In addition, over 90% of the students considered the importance of “using speech to explain some terms in Cantonese Opera”, “[the need] to explain lyrics with common terms used in Cantonese Opera” plus “explaining movement with clip illustrations”. Significantly, over 97% of the students thought that they had benefited from the instructor’s sharing and explanation about the characters and the characterization of the play; and over 50% of the students thought that “a trial reading/singing” helped them to appreciate Cantonese Opera even more, as it is an art that requires lots of effort and time in practicing. It is noteworthy that students had limited knowledge about Cantonese Opera, and they also began to realize that Cantonese Opera is a highly skillful musical form, and that it takes time and training to perfect the performance.

The analysis of Q3 shows that 25 students had joined the backstage visit, with 2 students being absent. For Q4, what students considered to be the most interesting and impressive was the information about the actors’ costumes, makeup and hairpieces, in particular the wooden box containing the costumes, tree gum and makeup tools. The students managed to experience all these by going backstage and not merely from a museum setting. From observing the minuteness and colourful patterns of the costumes, the students were exposed to the sophistication and artistry of Cantonese Opera.

On Q5, over 96% of the students thought that the activity helped them to “understand the meaning of the lyrics”, “the personality of each character”, and “the structure [as well as]

the plot development of the play”. This illustrates that the activity deepened the students’ interest and ability to appreciate Cantonese Opera, and they were therefore more involved in the play.

For Q7, students considered the introduction of “plot development”, “characters”, “reading the script [in advance]” and “playing extract of the play” to be the most helpful in appreciating Cantonese Opera. In addition, students also suggested the need to introduce the basics of Cantonese Opera, e.g. costume, makeup, movement, etc. They suggested it would be even more helpful if they were taught to understand the characterization and were given a chance to have a trial singing/acting.

For Q8, 26 out of 27 students indicated their willingness to spend extra time taking part in theatre appreciation activities. It is noteworthy that the students who were not inclined to spend extra time were the ones who were absent from the activity, which indicates that all of those who were present were enthusiastic about the activity and all of the experiences helped them to appreciate this traditional art form gradually.

The Students’ Reviews Illustrate that the Learning of the Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom helped to Develop their Multiple Intelligences, as is Indicated by the Following Analysis

Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence

By appreciating *The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom*, the students were exposed to the preciseness of the poetic artistry. Not only did they manage to understand the plot, they also managed to realize that the story belongs to the genre of romance. The students had been developing their Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence through speaking and writing.

One of the students reviewed that “While watching the performance, I paid more attention to the meaning of special terms used in Cantonese Opera. I managed to understand most parts of the story plot, and it helped me to complete the worksheet on theatre appreciation. In particular, I appreciated the lyrics of the play, which I found really meaningful and lyrical. I am amazed by the talent and articulation of the playwright.”

A poem written by S2 Chow HT

[My Song]

Footfalls floating through the festive streets
while coarse gossip brews tender feelings;
perplexing pining

finally transforms into a passion,

and the fog within the soul disperses

as honey brushes through the gentle night.

Your words sway the fallen leaves to regain its green,

your poems cause the flowers to blush in beauty.

With your burdened heart

you walk towards the distant desert,

taking with you not even a single piece of cloud.

So, holding the purple hairpin you once touched

and also all of life's longing and waiting,

I yearn for your return.

Logical-mathematical Intelligence

The scenes of *The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom* requires students to understand the paradox of the play, for example in Act II of the play the female character Lee Wai-leung is beaten up and dead, yet there is a girl who looks similar to Lee reappearing in Act III. This stimulates students' ability to interpret the plot development with logical thinking.

One of the students reviewed that "There are lots of unexpected plots in *The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom*. For example, who can imagine the female character has already passed away tragically in the beginning? And who can foresee her coming back to life? This plot is so amazing and I am not surprised that the play is one of the four legendary works of Tang."

Spatial Intelligence

The development of Spatial Intelligence can be achieved by the stage setting of the play. By appreciating the play, the students had a hands-on experience of how lighting and sound effects enrich the play, and how they could become more involved in the story.

One of the students reviewed that “After joining the Cantonese Opera class, I have learnt more about the related knowledge, there are even different exits for ascending and descending from the stage. The stage design is a work of sophistication.”



Painting by Lee LT



Painting by Cheung SW

Musical Intelligence

The development of Musical Intelligence is the most explicit result of theatre appreciation, since it is a distinct feature of Cantonese Opera to narrate a story in singing. Such expression is embodied further by various pieces of music for the voices (*chang qiang*) of the female and male principals, as different music for voices signifies different roles, mood and contents of the speech. The poetic lyrics and unique melody impress the students.

One of the students reviewed that “The female principal had a really nice voice, and I appreciated the performance. The distinct music arrangement and rhymes of the play were artistic in nature.”

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence

The staging of Cantonese Opera requires the coordination of music and movement. All these are highly stylistic yet demanding movements, which require years of practice. The students were given a chance to learn the basics of the movements, and they realized that body coordination is by no means easy.

One of the students reviewed that “I appreciated the effort paid by the male and female principals, in particular their highly stylized movement. These make take them years to learn and perfect their practice.”

Interpersonal Intelligence

Cantonese Opera is not a solo performance, rather it is a collective artwork that requires the efforts of all crews, both on-stage and backstage. For example, makeup artists play a key role in preparing the costumes for the actors, and backstage staff are also responsible for the

lighting and sound effects of the stage. The activity once again reinforced the importance of interpersonal skills, and students had to learn to collaborate with others.

One of the students reviewed that “I am also amazed by the incredible memory and accuracy of the actors. They have to incorporate long speeches into the highly stylized movements.”

E-platform of “The reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom”

• The Encounter of Lee Wai-leung •


Man SY S2

If I were married,
was I supposed to think and stay calm?
Tomorrow onwards, I will be marrying Kar Chi-to; tomorrow
onwards, I will be his 37th concubine.

When I was in despair and looked at the willows near the river bank,
I saw, a handsome, decent intellectual. I looked at him, and I fell for
him...

We, however, are of different classes, and of a different world. He, is
well read and with a brilliant future; he, must be able to wed
someone he truly loves. I, on the contrary, am destined to be Kar's
concubine. I, with pain, can only decline his courtship. He looks sad,
he left with his broken qin and his broken heart.

I began to reflect upon myself: "why can't I choose my own life
path?" I am in despair, and I am searching for my true love. All of a
sudden - I came up with an idea of ending my life. Having lost my
love, it would be meaningless for me to live on, nor would Kar be
able to do the same to others because of this.



Intrapersonal Intelligence

The performance of Cantonese Opera requires students to be involved in the play, and they also have to be articulate about their emotions as embodied in the lyrics and music. By appreciating the lyrics and music, the students were given a chance to know whether the actors achieved in embodying the development and central ideas of the story. Most important of all, the play reminded the students that they should not take excellent performance for granted, as it requires years of practice.

One of the students reviewed that “The male and female principals are all great actors. I appreciate their involvement and effort, and the audience was more involved in the play. Cantonese Opera is indeed an art that requires years of practice.”

Naturalist Intelligence

The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom is about love and hatred, man and ghost. This is a common theme explored in Chinese literary works, an embodiment of traditional Chinese culture. The coexistence between man and ghost, and all the greens and creatures, are the proof of life within nature. It is noteworthy that there are many references to nature in the play, for example plum blossom signifies the female character; how Lee Wai-leung becomes

Lo Chiu-yung symbolizes Lee coming into life again. This illustrates the inclusive nature (both in form and in content) of Cantonese Opera, and it is indeed an intangible cultural heritage that we treasure.

One of the students reviewed that “If you pay more effort in watching, you will then discover the art and the amazement of the traditional art, and we should also contribute to the conservation and promotion of Cantonese Opera.”

Feedback and Reflection of Participating Students

As mentioned earlier in this article, the Model of Psychological Type developed by Carl Jung suggested that the distinction of people come from two fundamental functions of ac-knowledgement: perception and judgment. Students absorb information in two ways: absorb-ing specific information through sensing, or absorbing abstract information through intuition. As well, students also do this through logical judgment of thinking, or through subjective judgment of feeling.

Students	Students ’ Feedback and Reflection	Model of Psychological Type (Carl Jung)			
		Perception		Judgment	
		Sensing	Intuition	Thinking	Feeling
Student 1	My knowledge of Cantonese Opera has increased a lot since Form 2. I still feel Cantonese Opera is one of the most difficult arts. After the interaction with other students and professionals in this industry, I learnt a lot about Cantonese Opera. Besides, I got many unforgettable memories and my interest in Chinese has also been aroused.			✓	✓
Student 2	After participating in the Project of Cantonese Opera, I learnt a lot about Cantonese Opera and I changed my mind towards Cantonese Opera. I found it very interesting. I hope this project can keep running in the future to let more students know the culture of Cantonese Opera.			✓	✓

Student 3	Originally, I joined this project merely out of my curiosity. I just wanted to know what Cantonese Opera is and to know more about Chinese culture. Therefore, when I heard the introduction from my teacher, I found myself interested. I wanted to learn one song to show that I am Chinese. In the future, I hope I will have other chances to have connections with our traditional culture – Cantonese Opera.	✓	✓		✓
Student 4	I got unexpected rewards by joining the Project of Cantonese Opera. I was impressed every time after lessons and watching shows. I used to hate Cantonese Opera! Cantonese Opera is no longer a stranger to me now. I have even tried to pay attention to the things about it and I am eager to watch shows. It will be wonderful if I have another chance to participate in this project with my teachers and classmates.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student 5	After the project, I changed my mind towards Cantonese Opera. Besides learning the four elements of Cantonese Opera – Singing, Posing, Shouting and Beating, I learnt how to appreciate the performers of Cantonese Opera. They made me understand how hardworking they needed to be before performing in front of us. Their persistence in Cantonese Opera is worthy to be learnt.	✓		✓	✓
Student 6	My interest in it has been developed gradually, especially the aspect of make-up. I understood different roles need to wear different make-up. This really impressed me. In this project, I realized that a lot of trainings and preparations is required before the actual performance. This also earns my respect for this traditional art.	✓		✓	✓

Student 7	After the project, I know more about Cantonese Opera. In the lessons, teachers gave us plenty of chances to practise, for example, role play. I also had an unforgettable experience of performing on the stage during the joint-school sharing session.	✓			✓
Student 8	I thought Cantonese Opera was very boring and it was only for the elderly. However, after joining the project, I found my perception towards Cantonese Opera was wrong. Cantonese Opera is the uniqueness of Chinese culture. I hope it can be a heritage from generation to generation.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Student 9	The project of Cantonese Opera provides a platform for teenagers to learn about Cantonese Opera. Cantonese Opera is the quintessence of Chinese culture. It is also a traditional art. It is worthy for us to learn, study and appreciate it. The content of this project covers thoroughly. From backstage to stage, it includes all elements. Tutors plant the elements bit by a bit into our hearts. Through studying it, we can know more and study more about Chinese traditional culture.	✓		✓	✓

Conclusion

To conclude, it is evident that Cantonese Opera is compatible with school curricula. By studying a wide range of topics in Cantonese Opera, students can learn to appreciate the local culture, which their language ability should have further enhanced. The activities of Cantonese Opera, on the other hand, enable students to work with one another, and it is a chance to improve their interpersonal and communication skills. Since 2006, cross-disciplinary teaching and learning of Cantonese Opera have been a success; not only is it a breakthrough in language education, it also furthers teacher-student relationships, with their efforts in exploring innovative, educational topics.

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[Appendix]

Theatre Appreciation of The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom

(The theatre appreciation activity is mainly divided into two parts; lecture and backstage visit.)

	Questions	Students' View(s)				
1	Did you take part in the theatre appreciation lecture of <i>The Reincarnation of Lady Plum Blossom</i> ? (Delete as appropriate)	Yes (26) / No (1)				
2	For the theatre appreciation lecture, how helpful do you consider the following section(s) to be? (please <input type="checkbox"/> the appropriate box)	Not helpful	A bit helpful	Helpful	Quite helpful	Very helpful
	Introduction to story plot			3	17	6
	Introduction to characterization		1	4	13	8
	Introduction to costume	1	2	13	9	1
	Explaining lyrics with the common terms used in Cantonese Opera, such as <i>zhongban</i> and <i>quan fa</i>	2	7	11	6	
	Using speech to explain some terms in Cantonese Opera	1	7	10	6	2
	Explaining movement with clip illustration	1	3	8	13	1
	Inviting students to give a trial reading and singing	2	12	7	3	
	The Instructor explains and shares his/her experience of acting		2	10	11	3
3	Did you go backstage before the show?	Yes (25) / No (2)				
4	After the backstage visit, is there anything that you find interesting? What impresses you?					

		Not helpful	A bit helpful	Helpful	Quite helpful	Very helpful
5	Compared to theatre appreciation activities that are without lecture and guidance, how helpful do you consider the lecture to have been?					
	Understand the meaning of the lyrics		1	7	9	9
	Understand the personality of each character			9	11	6
	Better understand the structure and plot development of the play			4	12	10
	Learn to appreciate the acting of each actor		3	14	6	3
6	In sum, the theatre appreciation has enable me to appreciate theatrical performances more:			8	12	5
7	If the school will be organizing similar activities in the near future, which of the following do you consider the most helpful?					
	Introducing the plot development			7	9	10
	Introducing the characters in detail		2	8	10	6
	Reading the script before watching the play		1	10	9	5
	Playing extract of the play, and with detailed analysis		1	13	6	6
	Other suggestions (you may list more than one):					
8	I am willing to spend extra time to join the theatre appreciation activity.	Yes (26) / No (1)				

	Questions	Students' View(s)
4	After the backstage visit, is there anything that you find interesting? What impresses you?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am surprised to see how the makeup artists help the actors in putting on their wig, and the tool is tree gum. 2. I find the big wooden box (that are with all the costumes of each actor) really interesting. 3. I find the boxes interesting, we can find the tree gum that are used to treating and protecting the wig. 4. The boxes at the backstage are old yet big. 5. Ladies should not be sitting on this box. 6. Many interesting things that I have never seen before. 7. The costumes are tidily presented, and we can see the boxes within the makeup room. 8. Actors are with different costume and hairdo. 9. Special makeup techniques. 10. The cloth and pattern of the costumes are nice and delicate, it is indeed an artwork. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The costumes are minute and delicate. 2. Makeup and hairstyling. 3. The place is occupied by the costume, makeup place and <i>shen-wei</i>. 4. The makeup artists use tree gum to fix the hairdo of the <i>actors</i>. 5. Makeup 6. I am impressed by the varieties and the maximized use of space within the backstage. 7. Costume and wig 8. Wig 9. The makeup and costume of each character is amazing. 10. I just learnt that the hairdo of the actors are soothed with the tree gum, it is interesting yet not hygienic. 11. Background, costume and styling of each actor. 12. We were given a chance to take a look at how the actors put on their makeup prior to the performance.

7	If the school will be organizing similar activities in the near future, which of the following do you consider the most helpful?	
	Other suggestions (you may list more than one):	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introducing students to the basics of Cantonese Opera, e.g. costume, makeup, movement, etc. 2. Demonstrating the skills of makeup and movement to students. 3. Enabling us to see the movement demonstration of the characters in person. 4. Introducing the music and musical instrument used in Cantonese Opera, and the significance of each hairpieces. 5. Teach us how we should appreciate Cantonese Opera. 6. Highlight and explain the significance of the music and particular movement(s). 7. Enabling chances for students to try and act. 8. Introducing students to some movements of the play. 9. Extending the theatre appreciation activity. 10. Introducing students to watch a live performance on an extracted act of the play. 11. Explaining the connection among the characters of the play. 12. Enabling students to have a trial singing/reading, and the instructor can also explain more about the costumes of Cantonese Opera.

About the Authors

Dr. Fung Ping, Dorothy Ng

Dr. Ng joined The University of Hong Kong in 1995. She is currently an Assistant Professor within the Language and Literature division, Faculty of Education and was previously an Assistant Professor within the Department of Curriculum Studies. Dr. Ng is also a member of the Hong Kong University Fundraising committee. Dr. Ng’s PhD titled “A study of the role of medium of instruction in mediating learning experience in CMI (Chinese as medium of instruction) and EMI (English as medium of instruction) classroom in Hong Kong” was nominated for the best thesis of Social Science in 2006. Of particular interest, Dr. Ng recently designed a new course to integrate Cantonese opera into the new senior Chinese language curriculum. To develop this course, Dr. Ng received a significant donation of 2.5 million. Cantonese opera is a significant cultural treasure and thus integrating it into the curriculum is a highly significant development in Hong Kong schools. Dr. Ng also has an interest in variation theory in teaching and learning and conducts workshops for teachers in developing reading skills training in Chinese.

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