

INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL CULTURAL EDUCATION THROUGH THE POETIC STORY “KHAM HAI” FOR STUDENTS IN CAO BANG PROVINCE, VIETNAM

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<https://doi.org/10.54922/IJEHSS.2023.0562>

ABSTRACT

Tay's Nom poetic stories in Vietnam are considered as typical achievements of Tay literature, handed down with its own writing system. One of the outstanding features of Tay's Nom poetic stories is that the works often express the cultural identity of the Tay ethnic group. Poetic stories crystallize cultural and spiritual values, behavioral experiences, practical experiences, language, lifestyle, customs and habits ... of the Tay people over many generations. Therefore, in order to transmit those valuable spiritual values, in the teaching process, teachers need to pay attention to integrating traditional cultural education for students through the lesson content. In this article, we present some general issues about integrated teaching, introduce the poetic story “Kham hai” in Cao Bang province and propose measures to integrate traditional cultural education through the poetic story “Kham hai” for students in Cao Bang province, Vietnam.

Keywords: Integration, traditional culture, poetic story “Kham hai”, Cao Bang province, Vietnam.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tay's Nom poetic stories in Vietnam are one of the typical written literary genres of the Tay ethnic group with a fairly rich number of works. The content reflects all aspects of the social life of the Tay ethnic group. The research and systematic transmission of Tay's Nom poetic stories has received a lot of attention, especially recently, Tay's Nom poetic stories have been initially included in the general education program.

Characters in Tay's Nom poetic stories show a number of characteristics of the mountainous people of Vietnam, such as industriousness, hard work, love for people and deep affection. This also partly shows the national character of the works of Tay's Nom poetic stories. Those poor and honest people are those who overcome difficulties successfully. When the country is in danger, it is these people who become the characters to save the country and save the king.

The preservation and transmission of traditional cultural values of ethnic minorities to the next generation is very important. In the face of the risk of losing traditional cultural beauties in the 4.0 period, the collection, restoration, publication and introduction of Tay's Nom poetic stories is a meaningful job. In the process of educating students, it is necessary to help students understand the traditions and cultural identity of the nation, thereby directing students to have a sense of respect, preservation and promotion of the traditional cultural values of their own community, respect the cultural identity of other ethnic groups. Tay's Nom poetic stories were initially taught in Vietnamese schools. Therefore, the selection of minority literary works in the general education curriculum is essential. This is also an important content in the local literary program of the provinces where ethnic minorities live, including Cao Bang province. Tay's Nom

poetic stories have profound educational significance for students in Cao Bang province in particular and the northern mountainous provinces of Vietnam in general. Among Tay's Nom poetic stories, "*Kham hai*" is an easy-to-learn work that can integrate student education in the process of teaching local Philology in Cao Bang province, Vietnam.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

To conduct this study, we used the method of retrospective documentation to study documents related to integrated teaching, Tay's Nom poetic stories, the poetic story "*Kham hai*", the excerpt "*Vuot bien*" (*Crossing the sea*), the 2018 general education program in Philology in Vietnam. On that basis, we conduct an analysis to propose measures to integrate traditional cultural education through the poetic story "*Kham hai*" for students in Cao Bang province, Vietnam.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Some general issues of integrated teaching in teaching Philology

Integrated teaching is a modern trend which is not new compared to advanced educational programs in the world. However, in order for transition from a theoretical and academic curriculum to a training program that reduces theoretical hours, enhances integrated lessons, and enhances interaction between teachers and learners, it is necessary to have a great effort from the teachers, students and the school. Whether the educational goal is achieved or not is thanks to the strong innovation effort from the approach to teaching methods, reasonable teaching and imparting knowledge.

In the article *Integrated teaching of Philology to meet the goals of developing the quality and competence of students*, Pham Thanh Hung has clearly stated: "According to the Philology program, integrated teaching requires teachers to see the inner relationship in the subject (reading, writing, speaking and listening), whereby the reading content is related and repeated in the teaching content of writing, speaking and listening. The knowledge and reading comprehension skills that students accumulate in the process of receiving texts of different types will help improve their writing, listening and speaking skills. The knowledge and expressions that students learn during reading will be used to practice writing. Similarly, what students learn in reading and writing will be used by students in speaking. Along with the requirement of interdisciplinary integration, while teaching reading, writing, speaking and listening, teachers must also know how to take advantage of opportunities to smoothly and reasonably integrate interdisciplinary educational requirements into the classroom. (History, Geography, Citizenship Education and Arts) and priority educational contents throughout the general education curriculum such as national sovereignty, international integration, preservation of cultural identity, sustainable development, environmental protection, human rights, children's rights, gender equality, financial education,..." (p.32, 33).

3.2. Introducing the poetic story "*Kham hai*" in Cao Bang province, Vietnam

"*Kham hai*" (*Crossing the Sea*) is a famous poetic story of the Tay ethnic group, performed continuously for many nights by Then singers. Although it has a sacred color, not many people living in the Tay village community do not know the poetic story "*Kham hai*". "*Kham hai*" attracts listeners because the content reflects deeply and truthfully the dark life of people in the old society.

“*Kham hai*” (*Crossing the Sea*) has a relatively large capacity, with versions up to 1000 verses long. Currently, there are many collections and translations into Vietnamese, according to Trieu An's collection, the version by artist Hoang Ich Khai from Trung Khanh (Cao Bang) is considered quite good and complete. This version is 660 lines long, describing the Then army crossing the immense sea (which is the sea to the sky), the road is many miles long to bring offerings to Muong Troi culvert (Ngoc Hoang, Mother Ngan, Mother Hoa, Mother Put...). The road is difficult, so the emotional psychology of each type of person is different.

The main purpose of “*Kham hai*” is to praise the Then army who overcome all obstacles on the way to bring the offering to the destination (Mother Buddha, in Tay language, is Mother Put).

The content of the work is about two brothers and their parents who died early, they are very much in love with each other. By adulthood, the older brother got a good wife and gradually became rich. But since then, brotherly love was no longer the same as before. The brother changed his heart, shunned and left his brother to live in poverty. The younger brother was still the same, a love and respect for his brother and sister-in-law. In order to make a living, the younger brother often had to go far away and do hard work. Once, when he returned, he visited his brother in a very pitiful situation, his shirt was torn and his heart was infinitely sad. He wished he was away for so long, his brother would love him. When the younger brother arrived, the older brother was away, only his sister-in-law was at home stirring indigo on the floor. As a kind person, the sister-in-law loved him very much. Seeing her brother-in-law in rags, she asked to mend his shirt. Unexpectedly, because she was stirring eczema, her indigo wet fingers touched the brother's skin and left marks. As soon as the elder brother got home, he saw immediately blamed his brother for having an affair with his wife. He angrily sharpened his sword and killed his brother. The younger brother died in unhappiness and regret. Thought that death is the end of a miserable life, but he never thought that suffering would still follow. The soul of the younger brother is helpless. At that time, the soul was captured by the slay mandarins in the underworld as a sa da, a sa dong - a boatman on the sea of ghosts. The deserters, every time they cross the sea, have to go through a twelve-way sea journey full of monsters and pitfalls waiting for them. They sometimes cried out in terror, sometimes hurriedly urged each other to row in the hope of overcoming the pitfalls. The slays and their entourage pulled each other ashore to Duong Chu market (the market of the ghost country of the King of Hell), while the rower was left lying on the sand melancholy thinking about the return journey, thinking about the bleak future.

“*Kham hai*” describes the marches of the Then army when sailing through twelve waterfalls, they faced many difficulties.

Cheo thuyen xuong thac thu muoi hai

Thuyen xuai ve me Phat rong thenh

Thuyen Keo cung thuyen Nung chap cho

(Rowing down the twelfth waterfall

The boat goes down to the spacious Buddha's mother

Keo Boat and Nung Boat together)

On the way to the Milky Way sandbank, they met robbers. On the way to Phong Luu Phu Quy's way, they saw a fair of fairies going for a walk.

Ai den day quen bua an trua

Loi nay loi mai choi quen bua

(Who came here forgot lunch)

(This way is too busy playing to forget meals)

Despite many obstacles, the Then army overcame all to continue the route. Continuing to the second route, the boat must go through twelve high waterfalls, the water rumbles, the current is fast. Every waterfall is so scary and creepy. The first waterfall *can't see the wharf in front / can't see the shore behind*. The second waterfall *is like a whirlpool*. The third waterfall has strange animals. The fourth waterfall encounters the third wind. The fifth waterfall has the sound of cicadas lamenting the Then army. The sixth waterfall, *the pole can't reach the wharf / the pole can't reach the sand*. The seventh waterfall is seven feet deep. The eighth waterfall *young boys see strange girls*. The ninth waterfall is dangerous:

*Nuoc xoay tron bang vua
Nuoc xoay dao bang nha
Khong nghi chi con cai
Quen ca bon khuc xuong trong nguoi
Di biet may thang troi moi lai
(The water swirls around
The whirlpool is as big as the house
Do not think about children
Forget all bones in the body
Come back after many months)*

The Then army all crossed and completed the route to heaven. Through “*Kham hai*” we see the pain of the old people. The poorest class in society still has to suffer from a miserable situation. There are places near rivers and seas, their job is to carry boats for mandarins, and they also have to live their own lives, having to bear the heavy burden of finding food, going to trade, going fishing on rivers and seas... Therefore, “*Kham hai*” describes the husband in heaven, but it actually reflects the life of the people in the world.

“*Kham hai*” painted the extremely exiled and cheap status of the boatman, symbolizing the poorest class in the old society. That fact not only reverberated strongly in the oral poetry of the people, but also permeated into written poetry. In harmony with the folk poetry in Then singing, the poet Tay Hoang Duc Hau dedicated his touching poems to express that bitter feeling:

*Mang dang roi sao?
Chua dang dau!
Dang phu: chuyen dat ngay dem thau...
Than ai cung tim minh san sat
Con bon cam roi op truoc sau.
(Are the bamboo shoots bitter?
It's not bitter yet!
Bitter husband: moving land day and night...
Everybody is doing hard work
And those who hold whips are front and back)*

Although the characters in the Then singing story have mysterious colors, the characters of boatmen are basically built with many realistic details, drawn from real life. But beyond the mist of incense and smoke, beyond the framework of the ritual worship, the more realistic and vivid that image is, the more the story has a profound human value. Therefore, the poetic story “*Kham hai*” is still a shining pearl in the folk poetry of the Tay people.

3.3. Measures to integrate traditional cultural education through the poetic story “*Kham hai*” for students in Cao Bang province, Vietnam

3.3.1. Requirements of the new general Philology program in teaching local literature

The new general education program provides for the initiative and responsibility for localities and schools in selecting and supplementing some educational content and implementing educational plans suitable to local subjects and conditions. In addition to the content of compulsory education, which is uniform throughout the country, there are also basic or current issues of culture, history, society, etc. Therefore, each locality needs to develop local educational content suitable for students in order to help them have more understanding about the place where they live, fostering students' love for their homeland, a sense of learning and applying things learned to contribute to the construction of the homeland.

The local literary education of Cao Bang province selected the excerpt “*Kham hai*” text to teach students in grade 10. “*Kham hai*” is Tay’s Nom poetic story, a cultural and spiritual product of the Tay people. It contains a lot of cultural values from many generations that have been left for posterity, such as festivals, marriages, funerals, etc.; cultural and behavioral lessons in family relations, teachers and students, friends and neighbors; patriotic feelings and sense of community; love for people... Through studying “*Kham hai*”, students will understand more about the cultural life of their ancestors in history, will appreciate and cherish the cultural and spiritual values of the community and know how to preserve and promote that value in the context of modern life. Integrating education of traditional cultural values from “*Kham hai*” for ethnic minority students - Tay ethnic group in Cao Bang province will contribute to improving the effectiveness of student education and at the same time contribute to preserving and promoting the unique traditional cultural values of ethnic minorities in the current context of development and global integration.

3.3.2. Measures to integrate traditional cultural education through the poetic story “*Kham hai*” for students in Cao Bang province, Vietnam

Organizing a collection of works of the poetic story “*Kham hai*” helps students to have rich knowledge. Only the passage “*Vuot bien*” (*Crossing the Sea*) has been taught in the program. This is an excerpt at the end of the work, selected to be taught in the local general education curriculum. The content of the excerpt describes the hardships that the boatmen have to go through on the way to cross the sea, showing the great stature, the resilient will of the working people and at the same time deeply expressing the worldview and human outlook of the Tay people.

Organizing story-telling contests to help students firmly grasp the content, meaning, and characters in the story, and at the same time practice expression skills and create interest in the poetic story “*Kham hai*”.

Having students collect and listen to or watch a video of the Then performance and try singing a few lines to the Then tune. (Some high schools established Then singing clubs)

Organizing discussion sessions in which students can express their thoughts and feelings about the poetic story “*Kham hai*” from which they have basic knowledge about it.

Organizing extracurricular sessions to help students not only absorb knowledge one-way, but also immerse themselves in the atmosphere of folk festivals, thereby harmoniously developing psychological, physical and creative factors...

Organizing picnic activities that allow students to discover a new and interesting cultural area associated with Tay's Nom poetic stories, thereby creating excitement and impression for learning.

In order to educate, preserve and protect traditional culture capital through the poetic story "*Kham hai*", teachers are required to be pioneers with specific orientations to arouse students' interest in learning Tay's Nom poetic stories in order to comprehensively assess the current situation of preserving traditional culture values of Tay's Nom poetic stories in the educational environment. In the process of teaching Philology, teachers can integrate traditional cultural education through the poetic story "*Kham hai*" in addition to guiding students to recognize the basic characteristics of Cao Bang folk poetry stories and national poetry stories, such as subject, space, time, plot, characters, narrator's words and characters' words, words and artistic methods.... Student can analyze and evaluate themes, ideas ideas, the message of the text. In order for students to be able to write an argumentative essay that analyzes and evaluates the unique features of content and art of a work of Cao Bang folk poetry, we need to cultivate a love of folklore, live responsibly in preserving the value of local folklore. Thereby, students also know how to preserve the traditional culture of the nation.

4. CONCLUSION

Given the limited understanding of students' traditional cultural of local ethnic minorities, it is necessary to educate students on ethnic minority cultures, in order to contribute to strengthening trust and the pride of the young generation in the good values in traditional culture. Thereby, they honor the cultural identity of the ethnic groups on the basis of awareness of the unity and diversity of Vietnamese culture, helping students confidently integrate, contributing to bettering their own lives, their families and the society.

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Sincerely thank the project "The righteous characters in Tay's Nom poetic stories"