

Exploration of Cultural Context and Practice in Primary School Music Classroom

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Abstract. Central to this treatise lies an examination of the primary-level music classroom with a focus on delineating its cultural paradigm, extant pedagogical dilemmas, and appropriate didactic methodologies. Traditionality, localized ethos, and artistic expression are hallmarks defining the cultural atmosphere within such classrooms. One discerns that traditional musical forms, theatrical arts, indigenous mores, and ethnogenic art infusions foster in pupils a sense of national belongingness, culture-driven assurance, affection for local heritage, and cultivated aesthetic sophistication. Counterposed by reality is the deficit seen in educators' scholarly repositories concerning musics, alongside a discernible rift betwixt instructional praxis and the textbook-inculcated cultural lore, further compounded by a paucity of expressivity observable amongst learners. Teacherly knowledge gaps stand as formidable barriers obstructing pupil comprehension of curricular content. Similarly, when teaching diverges from cultural context, one observes a diminished capacity among students to revel in musical allurements. Learners' performance inadequacies can be attributed to factors intrinsic to the pedagogic environment and to personal aptitudes or lack thereof. By augmenting educators' erudition vis-à-vis musicological subjects, reincorporating textbook-delineated cultural contexts, fostering self-expression among scholars—thus cultivating an affirming ambience while offering refined hermeneutic guidance—they may appreciate and convey musical pieces more fluently. Such contingencies will undoubtedly, both progressive instruction within primary school musicianship facilitate, lifting students' μελοϋχονομία, enlarging their consciousness surrounding cultural perpetuation, and build scaffolds vital to holistic student endowment.

Keywords: Primary School Music Classroom, Cultural Context, Teaching Practice

1. Introduction

Music education, as an important part of aesthetic education, has a profound impact on the comprehensive development of primary school students. The primary school music classroom is not only a place for imparting music skills but also an important front for inheriting diverse cultures. However, in the current teaching of primary school music classrooms, at the levels of cultural context creation and teaching practice, there still exist some problems such as insufficient knowledge reserves of teachers, disconnection between teaching and culture, and poor expressiveness of students. Based on this, this article conducts an in-depth exploration of primary school music classrooms, analyzes the characteristics of the classroom cultural context, dissects the existing teaching problems, and proposes strategies such as improving teachers' professional qualities, restoring the cultural

context, and encouraging students' expressions. The aim is to promote the progress of primary school music classroom teaching and help students improve both their cultural literacy and musical abilities.

2. Characteristics of the cultural context in primary school music classrooms in China

2.1. Traditionality: the cultural foundation of music classroom teaching

The music textbooks for primary schools in China are like a treasure trove carrying thousands of years of civilization, integrating the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation. In terms of traditionality, many classic ancient tunes serve as the key to opening students' journey into music culture. For example, through the melodious melody of "High Mountains and Flowing Water", students can seemingly visualize the touching scene of Boya and Ziqi meeting as friends through the qin and cherish each other as bosom friends, feeling the ancients' value for friendship and pursuit of elegant art [1].

When teaching traditional national instrumental music works, taking "The Moon Reflected in Erquan" as an example, teachers can use the content of the textbook to introduce to students the historical origin, structural characteristics, and unique playing techniques of the erhu, a traditional musical instrument. Let students feel the profound emotions and unique national musical style contained in this classic work while appreciating it, and understand the artistic charm of traditional music, thus inheriting the genes of national music culture. The infiltration of traditional music culture in primary school music education helps to cultivate students' national identity and cultural confidence.

Opera art is also an important part of traditional music. When students come into contact with the Peking Opera "The Drunken Concubine", the magnificent singing and delicate performance vividly show the emotional ups and downs of Concubine Yang. During the learning process, students not only learn about the knowledge of the roles, facial makeup, etc. in Peking Opera but also can experience the profoundness and extensiveness of Chinese traditional opera culture. These traditional music works, with their unique pentatonic scale and rich rhythmic rhythms, inherit the aesthetic concepts and value orientations of the Chinese nation, enabling students to continuously enhance their national cultural confidence in music learning.

2.2. Localization: the cultural premise of music classroom teaching

Local culture is an important manifestation of regional characteristics. Integrating local culture into the primary school music classroom can make students closer to life and enhance their sense of identity and belonging to their hometown. Many music textbooks in various regions have included folk songs and nursery rhymes with local characteristics. For example, in the primary school music textbooks in Hunan Province, there will be the classic Hunan folk song "Liuyang River". The melody of the song is beautiful and smooth, and the lyrics describe the beautiful scenery of the Liuyang River and the praise for the hometown. When students sing this song, they can deeply feel the unique charm of their hometown and understand the local history, culture, and customs.

Contained within certain regional textbooks are nursery rhymes indigenous to the local area, articulated through dialects and imbued with rich life flavors as well as nuanced characteristics quintessential to the locale. In instances of instruction where students engage in vocal renditions of these rhymes, not only does one discern the geniality inherent in the native tongue, but there emerges a profound comprehension of regional customs, celebratory traditions, and cultural elements integral to said communities, thereby kindling an affinity towards one's natal land. Observed from such examples is that the infusion of vernacular culture into musical pedagogy affords an enrichment of instructional material, rendering music education regionally specific and infused with vitality.

In classrooms, diverse folk music exercises reflecting local hallmarks have also been assimilated, manifesting particularly in practices like the Ansai waist drum of Shaanxi or Northeast China's Errenzhuan. Through guided immersion by educators into such folk exercises, learners obtain firsthand engagement with the dynamism characteristic of their surrounding cultural tapestry. Such activities ensure no sole acquisition of rhythmic proficiency regarding, for instance, the waist drum occurs; rather, it results too in observing North Shaanxi's populace's fervor and resilience [2]. It becomes observable that this regionalized didactic approach catalyzes student appreciation for proximal heritage while nurturing consciousness toward continuity in cultural legacy.

2.3. Artistry: pedagogical directionality within the music classroom setting

Encompassing diverse domains, ethnic art culture constitutes an intricate tapestry, incorporating music, dance, and theatrical performance. Concomitantly, it is through content embedded within musical curricula that a conduit emerges for students to engage with ethnic artistic forms. Observing from a perspective focused on musical expressivity, therein lies a distinctive compositional style pertinent to each ethnic group's melodious oeuvre within China. Notably illustrated via exemplification, the Mongolian long-tone melodies resonate with emotive cadence, permitting melodic fluidity, and spanning copious tonalities—embodying in its airy refrain their adulation toward pastoral expanses, coinciding with existential reverence. In-class scenarios invite educators to employ visual media depicting ethnic choreography, hence facilitating experiential encounters with sartorial movements inherent within varied dance traditions juxtaposed with corresponding auditory experiences. Through dissecting kineticism synchronous with harmonic cadences, profundity in rhythmic discernments arises alongside expressing emotive particularities germane to ethnomusical compositions.

Assessments of indigenous instrumentation reveal integral segments of said cultural heritage. Specifically, considerations pertain to unique sonorities infused through mechanisms such as Xinjiang's hand drum or Dai specimens like the hulusi—each exuding aesthetic intricacies and sonic allure. Academic engagements orientate pupils towards encapsulating functional knowledge regarding these instruments' technical manipulations and intrinsic allure. Moreover, the execution of pieces like “Farewell under the Moonlight” upon a hulusi potentially evokes visions analogous to serene Dai locales, immersing learners within suasive traditions emblematic of the associated societal paradigm.

Similarly, curricular offerings occasionally elucidate upon canonical arias derived from storied traditional operas, prominently epitomized by Peking Opera. During instructional methodologies, instructors delineate attributes encompassing elements like facial iconography, vocalization paradigms, and ornamental garb to confer apprehension relative to Peking Opera's esoteric magnetism compounded by performative prowess. The didactic aspiration endeavors to nurture evaluative faculties concerning archaic dramaturgical arts while elevating intellectual appreciation. Ethnic artistry incorporated into pedagogical schemes catalyzes expansive perceptual avenues related to artistry whilst fostering cross-cultural amalgamation concomitant with legacy perpetuation across multifaceted artistic disciplines.

3. Practical problems in primary school music classroom teaching

In the primary school education system, music teachers play a crucial role. Music teachers are the guides for students in the world of music. Through vivid teaching, they convey the beauty of music to students. On the one hand, music teachers should guide students to feel the beauty of musical rhythms and melodies. Through rhythm exercises, let students experience the unique rhythms brought by different rhythms through simple actions such as clapping hands and stomping feet. For example, the

liveliness of duple meter and the elegance of triple meter help students establish a basic sense of rhythm. In melody appreciation, guide students to close their eyes and listen, imagining the pictures depicted by the melody. For example, a lively melody may remind people of a spring garden, and a melodious melody may outline a tranquil lake, cultivating students' perception and imagination of melodies.

On the other hand, music teachers should stimulate students' creativity and expressiveness. Encourage students to make simple adaptations of lyrics and rhythmic compositions according to the learned music, enabling students to have a deeper understanding of musical elements in the creative process and tap their own musical potential. In activities such as chorus and instrumental music performance, cultivate students' teamwork ability, allowing them to understand how to give full play to their musical talents in a collective and jointly create harmonious and beautiful music.

However, the reality is not satisfactory. In some primary school music classrooms, the teaching atmosphere is dull, the teaching methods are single, and students lack the enthusiasm for active participation. It is difficult for them to truly appreciate the charm of music, and the guiding role of music teachers has not been fully exerted.

3.1. Insufficient knowledge reserves of music teachers

Some music teachers have deficiencies in their professional knowledge reserves. Music is a comprehensive art that covers many aspects of knowledge, including music history, music theory, and the characteristics of music of different ethnic groups. When explaining music history, they only briefly mention the life stories and representative works of musicians without deeply exploring the creative backgrounds and cultural connotations behind the works. When teaching music theory, such as basic knowledge of musical notes and beats, the teaching methods are dull and cannot be combined with vivid musical examples, resulting in students' difficulty in understanding. For the music of different ethnic groups, they only stay on the surface of melody appreciation without deeply introducing the unique styles, instrument characteristics, and cultural roots of ethnic music, making it impossible for students to truly appreciate the charm of diverse music cultures.

3.2. Disconnection between teaching practice and cultural knowledge in textbooks

The disconnection between teaching practice and cultural knowledge in textbooks is also a prominent problem. The musical works in textbooks often contain rich cultural connotations. For example, some classic folk songs reflect the local customs and living habits. In teaching practice, many teachers do not fully explore the cultural knowledge in the textbooks, resulting in a disconnection between teaching and culture. When teaching a song, they often only focus on the singing of the song, such as intonation, rhythm, and vocalization, while ignoring the cultural background and emotional connotations contained in the song. For example, when teaching a folk song of an ethnic minority, the teacher does not introduce the customs, cultural traditions, and creative background of that ethnic minority. Students only mechanically learn to sing the song but do not truly understand the emotions and cultural meanings expressed by the song.

In music appreciation teaching, teachers often just let students simply listen to the music without guiding them to analyze and understand the musical works from a cultural perspective. For some classic musical works, they do not introduce the historical background of their creation, the life experiences of the composers, and the social realities reflected by the works, making students' appreciation of musical works lack depth and unable to truly appreciate the charm of music [3].

3.3. Insufficient musical expressiveness of students

Within the perimetered sonority of primarile musicaria, a deficitum of musica-expressivitas—voceous yet bodiless—settles upon the learnerly collective. Confidence, shy-veiled, retreats when song or strok'd instrument is summoned: timbre thins, volume dwindles, the self withholds its audient mask. An atmosphere unsparked, error-dread coiled, teacherial encouragement scarce: from this tri-angulation the inhibition can be sight-read.

To discern and analyze musical compositions, students find their skill to be constrained. Evident from this limitation is an absence of emotive depth and individuality within their performative renditions. A scenario unfolds wherein they execute vocal assignments with mechanistic precision as prescribed by pedagogical directives. Engagement in genuine comprehension of the sentiments conveyed within these compositions appears elusive; a deficiency noted herein precludes effective transmission of any intended emotional resonance towards the observers of such acts. In music creation and performance activities, students also lack innovative awareness and imagination, often just imitating the works of teachers or others and lacking their own unique insights and ways of expression [4].

4. Teaching strategies for constructing primary school music classrooms

4.1. Enhancing the knowledge reserves of music teachers

Music teachers should continuously enhance their knowledge reserves to better meet the teaching needs. Teachers should deeply study basic music theory knowledge, including harmony, musical form, counterpoint, etc. Through systematic study and research, they can improve their ability to analyze and understand musical works. For example, teachers can analyze the harmonic structure of classic musical works to understand the expressive role of harmony in music, so that they can accurately explain harmony knowledge to students in teaching and help students better understand musical works.

Teachers should widely dabble in music cultural knowledge, including Chinese traditional music culture and diverse world music cultures. Deeply study Chinese music history, modern and contemporary music history, and the music cultures of various ethnic groups, and understand the characteristics and development veins of music in different periods and of different ethnic groups. At the same time, pay attention to the music cultures of other countries and ethnic groups in the world, learn their unique musical styles and forms of expression, and broaden their musical horizons. In teaching, teachers can compare and analyze musical works from different cultural backgrounds, guiding students to feel the diversity of music cultures.

4.2. Restoring the cultural context of textbooks in music classrooms

In order to closely combine teaching practice with the cultural knowledge in textbooks, teachers should restore the cultural context of textbooks in music classrooms. Before teaching each musical work, teachers should deeply explore the cultural background contained in the work, including the historical background of its creation, the life experiences of the composer, the social reality reflected by the work, and the relevant cultural traditions, etc. For example, when teaching "The Yellow River Cantata", introduce the historical background of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression to students, so that students can understand the hardships faced by the Chinese people at that time and their indomitable fighting spirit, thus enabling students to better understand the emotions and connotations expressed by the work [5].

A variety of teaching methods can be applied by teachers to restore the cultural context of textbooks. Through pictures, videos, and audio, multimedia resources can be used to display the

relevant cultural scenes for students, which will allow them to more intuitively feel the cultural atmosphere contained in the musical works. Meanwhile, activities such as role-playing and musical story-telling can also be arranged by teachers to let students participate in the cultural context personally and understand the cultural significance of musical works deeply.

4.3. Encouraging students to express themselves

To enhance students' musical expressiveness, teachers should create a relaxed and positive classroom atmosphere and encourage students to show themselves boldly. Respect for students' personalities and creativity, full affirmation, and encouragement in teaching performances should be given. Students can thus obtain a sense of achievement in learning music. Take the example of the classroom context: teachers give explicit praise and encouragement for each of the singing or playing performances by students and point out their strengths and progress so that students feel their efforts are being recognized [6].

Teachers should guide students to understand and interpret musical works through effective teaching methods and improve students' musical performance capabilities. In teaching, teachers can guide students to analyze the emotional connotations, melodic characteristics, and rhythmic changes of the musical work so that students can have an in-depth understanding of the style and means of expression of the work. Meanwhile, teachers can also organize students to carry out activities like music creation and performance, encouraging students to give full play to their imagination and creativity and interpret the music works in their own ways to cultivate the personality and innovation awareness of students.

5. Conclusion

The cultural context and teaching practice in primary school music classrooms are closely linked. A rich cultural context can add charm to music teaching and improve the quality of teaching. However, there are still some deficiencies in the creation of cultural context and teaching practice in current primary school music classrooms. Through the implementation of strategies such as enhancing the knowledge reserves of music teachers, restoring the cultural context of textbooks, and encouraging students to actively express themselves, these problems can be effectively solved, promoting the development of primary school music classroom teaching. This is not only helpful for improving students' musical literacy, cultivating their interest in and love for music, but also enhancing their awareness of cultural inheritance, allowing students to feel and inherit the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation and diverse world music cultures in music learning, laying a solid foundation for students' all-round development. In future primary school music teaching, continuous exploration and innovation are still needed to further optimize the cultural context and teaching practice in music classrooms to meet the development of the times and the needs of students.

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