



Research on the Teaching Path of Ethnic Music in Middle Schools from the Perspective of Traditional Aesthetics

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Abstract

Traditional aesthetics is a humanities discipline with a unique theoretical system developed by the integration of various disciplines with traditional Chinese culture as the mother, which presents the unique aesthetic tendency and the pursuit of aesthetics of the Chinese nation with Chinese folk music, and it is an important bridge for realizing the core literacy of cultural understanding. At the same time, the new standard points out that junior high school music teaching should focus on students' understanding of the spirit of Chinese aesthetics and national culture. In view of this, this study puts forward the strategy of integrating traditional aesthetics into the teaching of folk music for the current situation of folk music teaching, so as to restore the "original face" of folk music, arouse students' interest in folk music, and promote the inheritance of national culture. It is a strategy to integrate traditional aesthetics into the teaching of folk music. It also explores the way of "presenting beauty" by integrating traditional culture into the teaching of folk music.

Subject Areas

Music, Teaching and Learning Technologies

Keywords

Traditional Aesthetic Thought, Chinese Folk Music Teaching, Middle School Music Teaching

1. Analysis of the Current Situation of Ethnic Music Teaching at the Present Time

Chinese folk music, as an important part of music teaching in primary and sec-

ondary schools, has been constantly pushed into the “upsurge” stage in recent years, triggering many thoughts. The Art Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022 edition) states: “The cultivation of cultural understanding helps students form a correct view of history, ethnicity, nation and culture in artistic activities. Respect cultural diversity and enhance cultural confidence [1].” At the same time, music teaching at the secondary school level puts forward the requirement that students can understand the spirit of Chinese aesthetic education and the aesthetic qualities of the nation through music education, so it can be seen that the education community attaches great importance to promoting the heritage and development of national culture through music education.

Ethnic music and national culture are in a symbiotic relationship, so the teaching of ethnic music needs to uphold the teaching concept of national culture as the core, and maintain the localized “personality” teaching. However, in actual teaching practice, many teachers find it difficult to teach folk music because the students often find it difficult to empathize with and feel a sense of belonging to the music because of the connotation of the song, such as “customs” and “sense of scholar character”, which are detached from the cognitive support of the original real life. The students often find it difficult to empathize and feel a sense of belonging without the support of their real-life knowledge. Therefore, how to carry out effective teaching under the premise of upholding the concept of national music culture? It has become a question worthy of in-depth investigation. In addition, the domestic research on folk music is not only limited to the level of form and culture, but also the increasing concern of aesthetics. As an aesthetic discipline formed after thousands of years of development in our country, traditional aesthetic thinking has a profound influence on our country’s aesthetic thinking, which can reveal the aesthetic spirit and literary kernel of our country’s ancient times in the “authenticity”. It can reveal the ancient aesthetic spirit and literary kernel of China in its “authenticity”, so we should follow the pace of academics in the specific practice of teaching, and link the traditional aesthetic thought with the classroom teaching of folk music in a skillful way to create an effective classroom teaching.

2. Tapping the “Aesthetic Implications” of Chinese Folk Music

Traditional Chinese aesthetics has a unique discursive form in the world. A book called *Yue Ji* contains: “Emotions move in the center, so they are shaped in sound.” This sentence reveals the ancient people’s unique way of understanding music that music comes from people’s inner emotions. It is the embodiment of human emotions and emphasizes the inner perception and experience of people. This is consistent with the core concept of traditional aesthetics, which focuses on the spirit of life and the value of life, “the unity of heaven and man”, as well as the idea of sublimation of human emotional meaning in the “theory of mood”. Under the guidance of such philosophical ideas, Chinese folk music is also shaped by the pursuit of the spirit and commonality of “harmony”.

The concept of “Da Yin Xi Sheng” originated from Laozi’s philosophical thinking, the essence of which is the analysis between “something” and “nothing”, and then evolved into the category of music aesthetics, which relates the reality to the true essence of music, thus reflecting the unique beauty of national music [2]. In Laozi’s thought, “Dao” is the origin of all things in the universe. “Dao” emphasizes “nothingness” and its essence is “nothing”, which expresses “seeing without seeing” and “hearing without hearing”, and “Da Yin” is called beauty in the concept of music aesthetics, but its “indistinctness” is not the same as “indistinctness”. “Trance” of non-semantic nature, its essence is “Dao”, not human hearing, but by the heart to perceive the experience, to understand the mood, so the essence of “Da Yin Xi Sheng” is to take “nothing” as the way of music legislation and music aesthetic standard, and use it to recognize the most wonderful music. The “lingering sound that surrounds the beam for three days” is a kind of conversion from the real to the virtual, and “lingering” is the unique “meaning” that arises in the listener’s mind after the melody and rhythm are expressed. The meaning of the song slowly spreads to the listener’s heart for a long time, which is the embodiment of the aesthetics of “Da Yin Xi Sheng”. In Bai Juyi’s “Pipa Xing”, the author heard that the big strings and small strings were intermingled in the pipa song, and the combination of reality and emptiness between the heavy and light strings showed the beauty of the rhythm, and after the “sound breaks”, the meaning of “soundlessness is better than sound” sublimated and spread, and the achievement of the song was “invisible” but “tangible”. Therefore, in folk music, there is an aesthetic pursuit of the aesthetic of the “spirit and god” and the aesthetic of the “great sound” and the aesthetic of the “god of gas”. Combined with the linguistic characteristics of rich tones and the literati mood, Chinese folk music is endowed with the basic characteristics of “accent, gas, meaning, and harmony”. Therefore, if the teaching of Chinese folk music is to reveal the traditional music culture, the teaching should focus on the application of the basic principles of traditional aesthetics, and display the beauty of harmony, the beauty of spirit, the beauty of artistic conception and the beauty of the original in the classroom, so as to realize the unique aesthetic pursuit of the Chinese nation.

3. Realizing the Integration of Disciplines in the Teaching of Folk Music

The author found in teaching practice, students usually think that folk music is boring, the essential reason for resistance is that they cannot rely on their own cognitive level to understand the meaning of the song, and this mysterious “Yi” is due to the traditional folk music of our country’s manufacturing thinking as well as by the influence of the historical social life of the formation of the pursuit of aesthetics caused by the impact. In terms of the fundamental thinking and standard method of traditional music aesthetics, music aesthetics is actually an “aesthetic event”, *i.e.*, music works and music behaviors are a kind of artistic creation and aesthetic behaviors [3]. Generally speaking, music aesthetics is

formed by the creators through the act of artistic creation and conveyed to the listeners. However, in the aesthetic event of traditional Chinese folk music, it emphasizes a kind of beauty in harmony with nature and pursues the humanistic spirit of “harmony between man and nature”, which pays attention to the subject of aesthetics to achieve the aesthetic purpose through the subjective initiative, for example, in the Pipa Xing, the soundlessness is better than the sound of that kind of “real and imaginary”, which requires the listener to have a higher level of knowledge and skills, and to be wholeheartedly involved in the musical work, but this is difficult to realize for the contemporary secondary school students to reach such a high level in a short period of time. However, among the many “homologous cultures” that share China’s outstanding traditional culture with national music, poetry, painting and other artistic disciplines can make up for the lack of aesthetic meaning that is difficult to interpret because of their own forms of real-life presentation of the figurative and commonality of origin with the music of the same soil. At the same time, it is also in line with the new standard that “the creative practice of the integrated use of multidisciplinary knowledge, closely linked to real life, artistic innovation and practical application of the ability to” [1].

Poetry has a close connection with music in terms of aesthetics, and throughout Chinese history there has been a tradition of integrating music and poetry. The *Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons*, says: “Therefore, I know that poetry is the heart of music, and sound is the body of music.” It can be seen that poetry and music are complementary to each other, and poetry can also help the expression of “the heart of music”. Therefore, in the design of ethnic music teaching, the author often uses “poetry” to guide, music in the introduction of “poetry”, more in line with the mood of the poem to create a classroom atmosphere of poetry, which triggered cultural resonance. For example, in the “Spring River and Moonlit Night” this classical national music works, the author in the classroom at the beginning of the use of thematic fragments of music introduction, and take a similar mood of the poem “spring river tide even the sea level, the bright moon at sea with the tide”, presented on the ppt, the students are familiar with the poem with the music of the initial perception will be able to enter the state quickly, and melting into the work. Yang Yinliu once said, “Chanting is the root of Chinese music, and music flows from chanting.” Therefore, in the integration of folk music teaching and poetry, the author will also consider the linguistic characteristics contained in the musical works, and guide students to feel through reciting poems, according to the way of words, students try to recite according to the tone and rhyme of the language, according to the rules of the poetry, and experience the high and low intonation of the poems and the rhythmic characteristics of the rhythm of the voice, so as to obtain the musical aesthetic perception on the basis of the comprehension of the poems. The students will be able to realize the musical aesthetic perception based on the understanding of the poems.

In folk gatherings, festivals, and arts learning, folk songs are often sung in conjunction with embroidery and other fine arts activities, thus the origin and spread of folk music and fine arts show the “same root” in the aesthetic psychology of the two [4]. Therefore, in terms of musical form, folk songs have musical techniques such as “double floating ribbons”, “painting eyebrow through the mountain” and “a branch of plum”, which are similar to the compositional rules of fine arts. In addition, there are also cases of the same aesthetic embodiment of dress patterns and folk songs of the ethnic minorities, such as the comparison between the Miao shouting songs and their national dress patterns, in which the intervals of major tones, variations, discordant intervals in the shouting songs, and the “straight lines” in the dress patterns are all designed to reflect the aesthetic pursuit of the Miao people for the ruggedness and spiciness of the “spiciness”. The design of the “straight lines” in the costume pattern all reflect the Miao people’s aesthetic pursuit of “spiciness”. Therefore, integrating the art of painting, which can figuratively express aesthetic thinking, into the teaching of ethnic music from an appropriate perspective can help students understand the aesthetic thinking and acquire aesthetic cognition, thus triggering their enthusiasm for learning. “Music is a kind of thinking, and every nation has historically formed its own inherent thinking character and way of thinking. Traditional Chinese music, which is mainly monophonic, embodies a unique linear thinking [5].” Monophonic melodic expression is the most significant feature that distinguishes China’s music from that of the West, and the formation of such linear thinking is influenced by thousands of years of feudalistic suppression in China, infiltrated with philosophical and religious ideas such as Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, which have put forward the concepts of “neutralization”, “lightness”, “quietness”, “harmony”, and “quietness” to Chinese music. These philosophies and religions all put forward the requirements of “neutralization”, “lightness and elegance” and “quietness” to Chinese music, reflecting the unique way of thinking and aesthetic concepts of the Chinese people. In painting, lines can give the viewer different feelings, and the image and information conveyed by the lines will show different emotions and mental activities. Students in the appreciation of folk music can present the melody, “lightness and heaviness”, “rhythm”, “speed and slowness” and present the music to the viewer through the drawing of lines. In the appreciation of folk music, students can present the “lightness and heaviness” and “rhythmic speed” of the musical melody through line drawing, which will translate the musical expression into concrete pictures, help students understand the spread of Chinese monophonic lines, and gradually understand the meaning of the song in the flow of the notes.

In addition, in addition to the subjects of poetry and painting discussed by the author, other subjects that share the Chinese humanistic spirit and aesthetic sentiment can also be skillfully applied to teaching from the perspective of “interoperability” with music, helping to integrate traditional aesthetic ideas and promoting the development of Chinese folk music teaching.

4. Grasping the Unique “Musical Form” of Local Folk Music

Looking back at history, the development of modern music in China has been deeply influenced by Western culture, and the system, structure, form and content of Western music education have been deeply integrated into the music education system in China, and the “foreign accent” has become the mainstream of music form analysis in the development of music education. Nowadays, music teaching has long been accustomed to analyzing music materials with western music thinking and using western music education system to carry out teaching activities. Although it is undeniable that in modern music education, Western music education concepts do have their good and advanced aspects, Chinese folk music is very different from Western art music in terms of creative thinking, and Chinese folk music has its own uniqueness, which is closely related to China’s unique historical and cultural background and people’s lives. Therefore, in order to understand national music, it is not appropriate to copy the Western model in a complete way and use the “other” thinking to measure and learn local music, but to focus on the inheritance of the inner music culture spirit from the national culture of China. China’s traditional aesthetic thought originates from history and culture, which can well present the portrayal of social life in our country in various periods, and history and culture is the basis for the formation of distinctive artistic characteristics of Chinese folk music. As a result, it is necessary for the teaching of folk music to start from the perspective of traditional aesthetic thought and to grasp the unique “musical form” of local folk music.

“The study of ethnomusicological typology focuses on the special laws of musical sound movement constituted by the cultural attributes of music [6].” The Chinese nation, because of its unique temperament, has also formed its own national music forms unique to its own nation in music, such as the static form of the work rule sheet music, music law, the flowing form of the oral folk songs, the relatively normative, programmed rule form of the quartet of the Kunqu Opera, the Peking Opera of the Plate Cavity, and so on, which are all the excellent national music forms preserved in the long river of our country’s history and culture. “Music is an international language.” Music has a commonality with each other, which is shared by human music culture. This statement is feasible from the point of view of physical state, but from the point of view of mentality, each ethnic group is different, and its emotional content and connotation are unique to the ethnic music culture. Under the action of the state of mind, the unique musical form of the nation will be formed, and under the action of the state of mind, the intangible form of the collective unconscious will be accumulated, the aesthetic tendency and aesthetic thought. Therefore, grasping the unique musical form of our country is the key to realizing the foundation of “localized” teaching.

In the teaching of folk music, it is not difficult to find out that traditional Chinese music has the characteristic of “no fixed value for the beat”, and it is totally unworkable to measure the strength and weakness of the Western beat by

the accurate quantization of the law of strength and weakness, for example, in the “Flower Shadow Layers” section of “Moonlight Night on the Spring River”, four melodies are played with fast and complicated rhythms, and there are a lot of sound treatments on the strength of the melody, such as strength and weakness, speed and slowness, tightness and looseness, light and darkness, as well as white space, etc., which show the “beauty of the rhyme” of the Chinese folk music, and the sense of the picture of the section is also vividly interpreted. However, if the western concept of beat is taken as the standard and the tempo of the music is followed, it is absolutely impossible to integrate the words, sound, emotion and spirit together and achieve that kind of realm. For example, the speed of singing in opera is often unpredictable; the performance of guqin is often accompanied by the player’s perceptual grasp of the mood, the situation, and the song; the expression and dissemination of folk songs will be based on the geographic environment, humanistic feelings derived from different nationalities unique improvisational singing and shouting. This phenomenon of “having rules but no pattern” has been revealed in all of our national music works.

Therefore, teachers need to interpret and analyze Chinese folk music works with traditional Chinese music theory and “music forms” rich in local cultural attributes, to explore the native beauty of folk music, to let students perceive the pleasant sound formed by the harmony between human beings and the nature in the music, to convey the unique aesthetic thoughts and ideals to students, and to comprehend the spiritual essence of Chinese culture.

5. Searching for the Connotation of Modernity in Ethnic Music

Music as a form of artistic expression, its essence is the embodiment of social life, Yue Ji contains “the rise of all sounds, by the human heart.” This reflects the formation of music from the richness of the human spirit, as society changes and civilization advances, mankind will gradually expand from material needs to diversified spiritual needs, and in the continuous exploration to create rules and systems to express spiritual beliefs, the Taoist method of the three thousand, but same end all roads lead to Rome, Chinese folk music is so, the “Liang Zhu” longing for love to complete the spiritual needs of the “Night of the Moon and Flowers in the Spring River”, the pursuit of perfection of a good time and a beautiful scenery; “White Snow in the Spring” yearning for the freedom and purity of sentiment The spiritual need of “Liang Zhu” for the fulfillment of love; the pursuit of perfection in “Moonlit Night of Spring River”; the ideal of freedom and purity in “Yangchun Baixue”; and the cornerstone and rules for traditional aesthetic thought. However, with the rapid development of social civilization and the liberation of human thought, the traditional aesthetic thought formed on the basis of thousands of years of feudal history and culture has lost the original material civilization soil in today’s life, and shows the thinness of fullness of value only at the spiritual level, which creates the value of national

music and its deep aesthetic thought of one-sidedness and singleness, and then gradually has the tendency to be detached from the civilization of this era.

Therefore, in order to make Chinese folk music rich and full in this era, we still need to change from the unchanging “id” to the “ego” to follow the pace of the times. I have tried in the teaching of “improvisation and creation” link, let the students use Orff tone column, harp flute and other easy to get started with the instrument to “Zuo Yue”, “Xing Yue” way of playing, interpretation of three tone columns The students can perform Chinese folk music forms such as “Three Tones”, “Fish Biting Tail” and “Inverted Pagoda” in a “seated music” and “walking music” way, which seeks for the material enrichment of the instrument’s sound, and at the same time allows the students to integrate themselves into the artistic expression and enhance the motivation of learning. Also from the point of students’ interest, to realize the enrichment of material civilization of folk music teaching, some high-quality adapted works can be presented to students as a knowledge expansion to appreciate, for example, in the teaching of Yueju Opera works of “Eighteen Sendings”, the author will be the violin concerto “Liang Zhu” to be the students to listen to and appreciate, the violin’s tone and playing skills and the “Liang Zhu” of the emotional dimensions of the perfect match, elegant sound and the beautiful love of the collision will be the charm of Chinese folk music, and the rise of Chinese folk music. The collision between the elegant sound of the violin and the beautiful love raised the charm of Chinese folk music to another level, realizing a win-win situation in both material and spiritual dimensions.

Music originates from human spiritual activities, “id” to “ego” transformation also need to pay attention to the traditional aesthetic thought in the development of the relationship between music and human breakthroughs. “Society determines art, the acceleration of contemporary social civilization has cultivated a distinctive national music aesthetics ideology, in addition to the music and beauty, the standard of beauty has been explored in the research, but also pay more attention to the deeper discovery of the relationship between music and people [7].” In the traditional aesthetic ideology, “Da Yin Xi Sheng” and “unity of heaven and man” are focusing on the shaping of the self, realizing the spiritual pursuit of the aesthetic subject, emphasizing the introspection of the human being, but the evaluation standard and the pursuit of the realm is a single one. With the change of today’s society, the development of material and spiritual civilization continues to promote the development of human potential, the role of music education and inheritance has become diversified, and the instillation of countless excellent ideas gradually releases human nature, perfecting and optimizing the quality. Cultures with different characteristic elements and music works presenting different beauties intermingle with each other to enrich human nature, molding the multi-faceted qualities of flesh and blood, joy and sorrow, enriching more aesthetic ways, perfecting the “id” expressed in the traditional aesthetic thought, and gradually realizing the transformation of the “ego”.

Students are the new force in this diversified era, coupled with the provision of material platform for learning, they have the authenticity and epochal nature of the “ego” in the current society. So in the interactive design of ethnic music teaching, the author usually increases the proportion of open-ended questions to explore the students’ understanding and views of traditional aesthetic ideas in their “selves”, to promote the internalization of ideas, and to realize the confidence of national culture.

6. Following the Unique “Aesthetic Habits” of the Chinese Nation

In Western music teaching, we tend to focus on musical elements, thematic differentiation, acoustic hierarchy and harmonic effects, and fully appreciate the acoustic effects that conform to the beauty of form. However, Chinese folk music focuses more on inner feelings than on form, so we need to rethink our listening attitude and way of thinking in the teaching process. The author wrote earlier that the teaching of folk music should lead to the transformation of the “ego”, in which the constant is the “self”. Both the “id” and the “ego” need to follow the unique aesthetic habits of the Chinese people as a prerequisite to realize the “true” teaching. Even though the times are changing, the local cultural thinking is still the foundation of our knowledge construction, just like today’s literature still reveals the aesthetic tendency of “implicit beauty”; Chinese people still have a “neutral” and “harmonious” style of dealing with things; we look at the pursuit of the outcome of events and hope that it is a “happy” ending. So how can we follow the local aesthetic habits in the teaching of folk music, and integrate the aesthetic ideas into the classroom by and granting them to the students?

In teaching practice, the most common application is the “linear” thinking, which is also the most significant feature that distinguishes it from the West. The monophonic melodic expression allows students to quickly grasp the theme melody and analyze the mood of the song. For example, in the teaching of “Rain on the Plantain Leaves” from silk and bamboo music, students can be guided to listen to the theme melody repeatedly and sing the theme melody so as to let students experience the vivid and lively picture of “Rain drips from plantain leaves” in Jiangnan and the people’s joyful and ecstatic mood; and then, by utilizing the characteristics of distinctive timbres of musical instruments, students can experience the interpretation characteristics of the song that the musical instruments are avoiding each other and collaborating together, which can be vividly demonstrated in the different musical expressions of the piece. While perceiving the linear spread of the music, the students can also comprehend the excellent cultural quality of inclusiveness and inclusiveness in China.

The combination of virtual and reality and the use of scenery to express emotion are very consistent with Chinese aesthetics, and there is no lack of similar imagery depicted in national music works, which is full of literary flavor. Such as “colorful clouds chasing the moon” which itself is a very beautiful imagery ex-

pression, through the moon to tell the feelings; another example, “Moonlight Night on the Spring River” “Evening Songs from a Fishing Boat” section, the author in the teaching of the design of the “fisherman” sung by the joy or sorrow of the “dialogue” context. “Dialogue” context, and let them carry out self-substitution, transported to the river scene in the context of the creation of the literary sentiment from their own point of view and cognition; in the work named “Rain on the Plantain Leaves”, there is a sudden transition from the cheerful and lively to the yangqin “plucking the strings” gradually quiet and slow clip in “The Rain Hits Basho”, there is a fragment that suddenly transitions from joyful and lively to quiet and slow with “plucking strings” of the yangqin, and it skillfully combines the movement with the reality and expresses a unique aesthetic sense of the boundless reality and emptiness. It can be seen that the integration of aesthetic ideas into the teaching of folk music from such a unique perspective of the Chinese nation is both appropriate and “soulful”.

By guiding students to “taste” music from the perspective of Chinese unique aesthetic habits, and by opening Chinese folk music classrooms with aesthetic thinking and standards different from those of the West, students can actually perceive the differences between Chinese and Western music, and only then can they truly touch the aesthetic focus of folk music.

7. Conclusion

For the teaching of folk music, the progress of the times requires educators to combine the cultural attributes of the music works with the learning situation on the basis of the inheritance of folk music, and to carry out multidirectional research and thinking for teaching innovation. In recent years, the awareness of traditional Chinese music culture as the core has been increasing, and the author believes that the spiritual level is the key to realizing effective “cultural teaching”. Therefore, the author seeks to break through the limitations of contemporary folk music teaching from the perspective of traditional aesthetics, and to take “authenticity” as the premise for thinking about integrating traditional aesthetics into the teaching of folk music skillfully and striving to realize the real “music to the heart”.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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