

Digital Technologies in Mastering Musical Styles of European Culture by Chinese Students

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ABSTRACT

The article proves that Chinese students’ mastering musical styles of European culture associated with a different musical tradition from the Chinese one is productive when using digital technologies. The semantics of the musical style, which is inextricably linked to the value system of a certain historical period, contains a cognitive, epistemological meaning. The use of digital technologies in the process of teaching Chinese students contributes to revealing this meaning, understanding the content of the structures of European music and the logic of European musical thinking. The purpose of this article is to reveal the most effective methods of mastering musical styles of European culture by Chinese students. The results of the initial diagnostics conducted in a group of second-year students of Tonghua Pedagogical University studying European musical culture through the course included in the curriculum became a guide in the choice of these methods. The following methods were selected and developed in accordance with the capabilities and characteristics of the age of the students. The method of modeling the style context using virtual trips to museums and cities in Europe is aimed at understanding the content of musical intonations by correlating them with similar content in the materials of different arts within a certain era or individual style of the composer. The method of identifying semantic dominants of artistic style, implemented in the independent work of the students with computer audio and video libraries, when creating multimedia presentations, is aimed at building a variety of artistic and stylistic manifestations in the minds of students into a single picture of the world, a style concept. The method of genre-style analysis in practical tasks on the arrangement of musical works using computer programs is aimed at the development of genre marks as meaningful complexes. The method of analyzing the intonation form of a musical work in the process of selecting a video sequence for the sounding music is aimed at understanding the semantic foundations of a musical composition. Methods that combine the perception of music with a variety of practical actions, which are synthesized in multimedia compositions, are aimed at getting the emotional and imaginative content of European music by the Chinese students based on motor, spatial, vocal, visual and tactile sensations. As a result of using these methods in working with the Chinese students, the level of their mastery of musical styles of European culture has significantly increased, which is reflected in the enhancement of their intonation and image bank, the expansion of their ideas about the means of expression in the music of the European tradition, the development of interest and value attitude to European musical culture.

Keywords: *digital technologies in music education, methods of mastering the semantics of musical style by Chinese students, European musical culture*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Studying European musical culture by Chinese students is an urgent task in the modern pedagogy of China, reflecting the global trend towards intensive convergence of Western and Eastern civilizations, strengthening ties and mutual influence of different national cultures. The course on European musical culture

is included as a mandatory component of education in the curricula of secondary schools and pedagogical universities in China, along with disciplines aimed at mastering the national musical traditions by students.

In terms of introducing the younger generation to European musical culture, the Chinese educational system is largely oriented towards the “Russian model”. This trend was developed in the mid-twentieth century, during the period of close cooperation between the People’s Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist

Republics, when training Chinese musicians in Soviet music universities was widely spread [9, p.155]. Most school and university textbooks, which include sections on the history of European musical culture, are still focused on fundamental research by Russian scientists in this field. This applies, in particular, to the interpretation of musical culture itself in the works of B. V. Asafyev, L. A. Mazel, V. V. Medushevsky, E. V. Nazaykinsky, S. S. Skrebkov, B. M. Teplov, Y. N. Kholopov, and others - as the most important component of the culture of humanity, which performs the functions of generating, storing, generalizing and transmitting spiritual and valuable information and life-meaning ideas necessary for society. The very concept of "mastering European musical culture" is interpreted as a complex pedagogical process of involving students in the world of values of European civilization in the process of studying the stages and features of the development of musical art [1, p. 39].

Music in the works of Russian researchers defined the role of "sounding worldview" (in the words of V. V. Medushevsky [7, p. 6]), due to the closest, in comparison with other types of art, connection with the emotional experience of worldview, ethical values. According to the researchers, the musical style acts as a productive basis for mastering the value content of works of musical art. Styles of European musical culture by the atmosphere of spirituality of an era, are the semantic context of musical form, they define the "design concept" (according to A. F. Losev [6, p. 226]) of the entire potential of a piece of music.

The contradiction in the pedagogical process arises from the deep differences between the Chinese and European systems of musical thinking. This significantly complicates the process of introducing the Chinese to the musical styles of European culture and to the European musical experience in general. Thus, the jury members at international competitions of performing musicians, awarding high marks to Chinese musicians for technically perfect performance, note the insufficiency of getting into the specifics of the European intonation [8, p. 59]. At the level of common music education in secondary schools and pedagogical universities, this is manifested in the students' interest, mainly in modern European pop music and their quite formal learning of facts from the history of European musical classics [10, p. 4].

1.2. The processes of forming musical and stylistic representations in the listener are described in the research of B. V. Asafyev as the formation of the "intonation thesaurus of the epoch" in his mind. B. V. Asafyev noted that intonations that "have received the meaning of a visible image or a specific sensation", which occur in mutual "accompaniment" with the word, affect, visual, motor sensations", "form extremely strong associations, in some sense not inferior to meaningful semantics" [2, p. 207].

Explaining the intonation logic of European musical thinking to Chinese students is a key position in their pedagogical support in the development of European musical culture. Chinese musical philosophy is based on the principle of recognizing the defining role of a single

sound taken separately, in contrast to the dominant role of melodic turnover in European music. The focus of listening attention of Chinese students on the semantic content of musical intonations of European music, their meaningful relationship with the stylistic concept of artistic culture, in which they were generated, is the way to understand European music, and, accordingly, to show interest and motivation for mastering it.

One of the ways to solve this problem is the use of digital technologies in the development of musical styles of European culture by Chinese students. Overall computerization in China, which began in the 1990s, has led to the fact that digital technologies are now the main tool for teaching a number of disciplines in the music departments of pedagogical universities in China. Chinese students are well prepared to use digital technologies in their educational activity.

In Russian music education smart education technologies are also widely used, organically interacting with traditional methods of teaching music [5]. The most common use of music education in practice is the use of the following computer programs: Power Point for creating presentations, Windows Movie Maker, Sony Vegas for creating video sequences, videos for sounding music, music editor programs Cakewalk Sonar, Adobe Audition for arranging music, music layout programs Final, Muse Score, Sinelius, as well as the use of digital musical instruments (digital pianos Casio Privia PX-760BK, Yamaha CLP-645R, keyboard workstations Korg C1-BK, Roland Juno, Yamaha MX-61bk) [4].

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Turning to digital technologies helps to activate the process of forming Chinese students' ideas about the stylistic concepts of European culture as various models of world relations. The semantics of the musical style, which is inextricably linked with the system of values and is determined by the worldview at a certain historical period, contains a cognitive, epistemological meaning. The use of digital technologies in the process of teaching Chinese students contributes to revealing this meaning, understanding the content of the structures of European music and the logic of European musical thinking.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study tests the following questions as its hypothesis:

3.1. Chinese students' mastering musical styles of European culture belonging to a musical tradition different from the Chinese one is possible on the basis of emotional and intellectual perception of musical images as phenomena generated by their epoch and expressing its values.

3.2. The effectiveness of the process of mastering European musical styles of European culture by Chinese students will depend on the application of a set of methods related to the use of digital technologies and aimed at

understanding the connection of musical phenomena with the worldview values of a particular era or the work of an individual artist.

4. PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

To determine the most effective methods for Chinese students to master musical styles of European culture.

5. METHODS OF RESEARCH

The research methods are the analysis and summarizing of the literature on the problem of stylistic approach to the mastery of European musical culture by foreign students; generalization of the results of experimental research work carried out at the pedagogical university in China.

6. RESEARCH RESULT

6.1. To test the hypothesis of the study, experiment and search work was carried out, in which participated Tunghua Pedagogical University second-year students, studying European musical culture within the course included in the curriculum. The following criteria and indicators of the students' mastering European musical culture were determined.

The image-content criterion is determined by the following indicators: 1) the wealth of current knowledge about the stages and features of artistic style concepts of European culture; 2) the presence of an intonation and figurative thesaurus - samples of musical works, image-intonations that embody the values and ideas of different epochs of European culture; 3) ideas about the means of expression in the music of the European tradition.

The emotional-motivational criterion is revealed through the following indicators: 1) readiness to understand music of a different cultural tradition; 2) value attitude to European musical culture; 3) ability to be emotionally involved in the perception of intonation drama of a musical work.

The activity-reflective criterion is expressed in terms of: 1) the capacity for aesthetic judgments about musical works as expressions of values of the period (logic, argumentation, comprehensiveness); 2) selection of stylistic manifestations appropriate for musical images in other art forms; 3) understanding and expression of emotional and figurative content of music in their own artistic and practical activities.

The diagnostic at the ascertaining stage of the experiment and search work was based on survey methods and creative tasks for students.

The diagnostic revealed a significant predominance in the group of medium and low levels of mastery of musical styles of European culture. Higher results were obtained for the first indicator of the image-content criterion associated with theoretical knowledge about the stages of development of European musical culture. This material is

presented in the textbooks that second-year students studied in secondary school by. However, in the tasks aimed at expressing emotional and figurative content of music in their own artistic and creative activities, the students demonstrated lack of understanding of the logic of intonation drama of musical works belonging to the European tradition, and the discrepancy between their own feelings and their emotional tone. The responses to the questionnaire aimed at identifying the students' interest in European musical culture were dominated by references to modern European pop music and almost no references to classical music.

The obtained results became a reference point in the development of methods for the Chinese students to master musical styles of European culture.

6.2. The following methods were selected in accordance with the age capabilities and characteristics of the students.

The method of modeling the style context is aimed at a kind of "optimization" of the processes carried out in the real experience of a person who intuitively assimilates the style models of culture based on the perception of a variety of artistic phenomena of the same direction. The teacher, relying on his or her own professional knowledge and skills, selects musical works that most clearly represent the studied style, comparing them with works of other types of art within a single period of culture. The combination of musical intonations with artistic and stylistic manifestations of other arts "defines", or reveals their content.

In the tasks for independent study, the students were asked to develop virtual trips to European museums of fine art, highlighting those works of art that were created during the period of the studied epoch-making musical style or belong to the same national tradition as the composer, if it is the individual composer style. The students used computer programs Windows Movie Maker and Sony Vegas to create a video sequence for a musical work of the studied style. For the Chinese students, such "translations" of music into the material of fine art helped to "materialize" musical intonations and fix them in memory as sounding images of a certain period of European culture or the individual style of the composer.

The method of identifying semantic dominants of artistic style is aimed at systematization in the minds of students of a variety of artifacts included in the circle of the studied period of culture. The selection of leading ideas and value orientations at a given time period of culture helps to build a variety of artistic and stylistic manifestations in the minds of the students into a single picture of the world - a style concept. At the same time, some specific musical works that express the leading ideas of the time are presented in class as representatives of the style of this period, as expressions of its value content.

The students were given tasks to work independently with multimedia encyclopedias posted on the Internet sites, choose from a variety of examples those musical works that most clearly represent the studied style, and present an analysis of the selected work in a multimedia presentation (combining the sound of fragments of the

work, the voice-over text, the video sequence). This work contributed to the systematization of the students' ideas about a certain musical style, the formation of their "core of style ideas" (in the words of Asafyev [8, c. 4]), enriched with biographical, cultural and historical facts and details.

The method of genre-style analysis is also aimed at understanding the connection of musical phenomena with the worldview values of a certain era or the work of an individual composer. European musical culture is characterized by the formation of a system of genres within a certain historical period that delineate the circle of social functions, affects, states, and situations of human life characteristic of the time. The musical genre in European culture always arises as a response to the spiritual aspirations of the epoch and reflects in its structures the content of certain aspects of the life of this historical period. Structural changes in musical genres, which continued their existence in subsequent style concepts, arise as a result of a historical rethinking of life positions in society.

Understanding these processes occurring in European musical culture by the Chinese students was helped by tasks on arranging the theme of a musical work in various styles and genres (using computer music editor programs Cakewalk Sonar, Adobe Audition). Such experiments with musical material made for the Chinese students the thesis about the content of genre structures, their close connection with life in the music of the European tradition more visual, enriched their intonation and style thesaurus based on the development of genre marks as semantic and expressive complexes.

The method of analyzing the intonation form of a musical work is aimed at understanding the semantic psychological foundations of the organization of sound matter. According to V. V. Medushevsky, intonation drama gives the work some meaningful context in which musical means acquire expressive values, and patterns of structure are disclosed in the logic of human relationships - "style character", "the typical personality of the age" - with the world and themselves in accordance with the norms and traditions of the time, the type of reaction to the surrounding reality [8, c. 7].

As for the independent study, the students performed tasks on selecting a video sequence of paintings that correlated with the emotional drama of a musical work (noting the change of emotional states in the musical composition, bright and less significant climaxes, emotional ups and downs with color dynamics and scenes of paintings.). Such tasks for the Chinese students who were brought up in a different coordinate system in the perception of music, allowed them to find semantic supports in the assimilation of means of expression and compositional patterns of musical works belonging to different styles of European culture.

The described methods were supplemented in the classroom with various methods aimed at involving students in practical activities in the perception of music: singing along, improvising movements to music, drawing or painting music, timbre-noise accompaniment, etc. The

significance of the methods based on the interaction of psychomotor and sensory organs in the perception of music is emphasized by modern music pedagogy and psychology. With the help of performing movements or various musical and rhythmic interpretations of music, the emotional fund of the individual is "superimposed" and adapted to the emotional and semantic intonation structures of musical works [3, p. 35].

The experience of various sensor-motor sensations obtained in practical activities in the perception of music was summarized by the students when creating multimedia compositions. The students came up with their own stories for pieces of classical music, created cartoons based on them (often using non-traditional drawing techniques), introducing graphic images and color combinations associated with music. Methods that combine the perception of music with a variety of practical actions were particularly productive in the Chinese students' perceiving emotional and imaginative content of various styles of European music.

6.3. The results of the final diagnostics made it possible to conclude that the level of mastery of musical styles of European culture by the Chinese students who took part in the experimental research work increased, which resulted in the enrichment of their intonation and image bank, the expansion of ideas about the means of expression in the music of the European tradition, the development of interest and value attitude to European musical culture.

7. CONCLUSION

With the general positive dynamics, the comparative analysis of the results of the initial and final diagnostics revealed some problems in the mastery of musical styles of European culture by the Chinese students. Some specific difficulties arose in the development of the ability to be emotionally involved in the perception of a musical work and the actualization of personal experience of the students in the process of understanding and experiencing the meanings that determine the deployment of intonation drama of a musical work. Further development of methods that allow implementing this position in the pedagogical process is a prospect for further research on the problem of Chinese students' mastering musical styles of European culture.

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