



A Comparative Study on the Orff-Schulwerk Pedagogy and the Pedagogy in the New System of Diathesis-Based School Music Education in Primary School

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Abstract. The Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy is one of the world's three most famous and widely influential systems of music education today. Although it seems like a group of children playing games, it stimulates children's imagination and creativity, arousing their great interest and talent in music. The pedagogy in the new system of diathesis-based school music education (the New System Pedagogy) is a music pedagogy emerging from the introduction of the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy and other international pedagogies and combined with Chinese music culture and the national conditions of Chinese education. Both pedagogies have been practiced successfully in Chinese primary classrooms. However, since the New System Pedagogy learns from and improves upon the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy, it is worth discussing why the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy is still so prevalent in China, accounting for a large part of the market for children's education. After experimenting with the control experiment and classroom observation, it can be concluded that the New System Pedagogy is more appropriate in Chinese primary schools.

Keywords: Orff-Schulwerk · The New System Pedagogy · Music Pedagogy

1 Introduction

Music education differs from education and other subjects and can be summarised as emotional, experimental, practical, autonomous, and enjoyable. Hence, there are impediments to teaching music that requires innovative pedagogies. The application and exploration of the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy in primary school have received a lot of attention and innovations from Chinese educators, such as integrating the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy with folk music [1]. The New System Pedagogy is a methodology summarized based on the current situation of music education and teaching practice in China at this stage, including a combination of subjective and objective teaching philosophy, comprehensive music core literacy development, and diverse teaching implementation paths [2]. It has shown numerous flashes of superiority in practice [3]. There is a lack of a comparative study that applies these two pedagogies to current observations. Hence, the

research will be carried out through an experiment that involves a control experiment and classroom observation. The investigation took place in a primary school in Shenzhen, a city with well-developed economic conditions located in Guangdong province in southeastern China, where parents value education and are willing to invest heavily.

2 The Lesson with the Orff-Schulwerk Pedagogy

2.1 Teaching Material

The reason for choosing to experiment here is that this primary school is a private bilingual school with an open philosophy of education, a willingness to experiment with new ideas, and few government restrictions on teaching methods. Two Grade 5 classes were chosen for this research, and each class consisted of just under 30 students, with around 1/5 of them from foreign countries. Each class was given a music lesson with the same teaching materials, one with the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy and another with the New System Pedagogy. It was the pedagogy that varied in the experiment.

The teaching material is a song translated by a Chinese educator, Naixiong Liao. He cracked an outstanding piece by Carl Orff called “Tanz, Mädchen, Tanz”, which can be summarized into the following features after analysis:

- 1 Musical form—It is a catchy song with an upbeat, bright, energetic rhythm, neat structure, phrases, and parts. It is in line with the zone of proximal development of Year 5 students, especially suitable for music activities at this level.
- 2 Emotional experience—this song brings students a joyful and relaxing mood, allowing them to complete the lesson without pressure by enjoying themselves.
- 3 Social impact—in addition to learning about German dance rhythms and Orff instruments, students can communicate with their foreign friends through singing, rhythms, and Orff instruments when they encounter a specific occasion.

2.2 Teaching Objective

The overall aim is for students to enjoy music to the fullest, achieving a complementary effect of pleasure, promoting learning, and participating in artistic activities [4].

First and foremost, as for the initial impression of the song, it should be given to students actively through experiential teaching rather than passively received. As for the melody part, everyone is required to sing, not just the students in the first part sing. This is because students in both the accompanying parts and the instrument parts must be familiar with the first part, helping them experience their roles better.

As for simplifying the rhythms that are simplified in the first teaching procedure. It is not a reduction in difficulty but rather an increase in difficulty, preventing students from singing boringly. The simplified rhythms should be very natural and comfortable as they blend in with the music. Students in the first part won't feel bored when they sing during the whole class. As for those who sing the accompaniment, they are required to get the intonation right, balance their volume and adjust the timbre. The style should also be flexible. As for the simple instruments, small bells and triangles, the small bells

play the ostinato, which means it is a fixed pattern. The triangle is also not difficult for students in Year 5. Their roles differ, from playing alone to blending into the whole piece. Therefore, students can experience it directly if there's no difficulty. There are some mistakes for the first time, for example, it may be a messy, noisy, or wrong tune. But it doesn't matter as the students will gain a great music experience.

Then the teacher should point out those mistakes expressly. The Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy class is not allowed to be rigidly repetitive, and the teacher needs to give students different requests each time practicing, for example, students in the second part could give an attack of each bar, or the parts of the instrument could rit so that the first vocal part can be heard. In addition to fostering their creativity and cooperation ability, students' emotions are created to the fullest by the end, achieving a sense of self-satisfaction and achievement through repeated stimulation. The most vital goal is achieved—the fundamental value of music activity is the emotional experience [5].

2.3 Teaching Procedure

First, the difficulty is reduced by teaching bars 1–7 first and leaving the last two bars untaught. Simplify the original rhythm from “feet hands feet hands, feet hands hands hands hands” to “feet—feet—, feet hands hands hands hands” (This means simplify it with two fewer hand claps). The teacher claps this simplified rhythm in class and asks the students to imitate it. After they have learned it, they keep repeating the fixed body rhythm while the teacher sings the melody (up to bar 7, without singing the last two bars). The second time, students sing with the teacher. It doesn't matter if they get it wrong. The main thing is to feel a cheerful, lively, and jumpy mood. The third time, students look at the music score and sing.

Second, the teacher teaches in groups. Students in the first part sing while doing the fixed body rhythm. Students in the second vocal part sing the intervals in a long tone in order to get the right intonation, balance volume, and suitable timbre. After they complete the task, they sing the score and do the fixed body rhythm while singing. Students in the soprano xylophone part play 1–2 times (depending on how well the students have done). Students in the alto xylophone part play for 1–2 times, then all the two xylophone parts play together for 1–2 times. By the end of this part, Students who have practiced go through 1–2 times together (1st and 2nd vocal part, and two xylophone parts).

Third, once the group teaching was completed, everyone rehearsed together. The simple instruments, small bells, and triangles don't need to practice alone as it's more vital for them to gain a great music experience. In this part, all students need to play at a fast tempo.

Next, after teaching bars 1–7, the teacher adds the last two bars in with the same teaching procedures. The only difference is that the two vocal parts sing the same melody and can be taught together.

Lastly, perform the whole song (9 bars in total) together. Most interestingly, students participate in their own groups to arrange this song in any form and perform their own arrangement.

3 Description 2: The Lesson with the New System Pedagogy

3.1 Teaching Objective

The Chinese government put forward a basic task of “Li de shu ren” which means strengthening morality and cultivating people through education and achieving the key objective of “The core literacy” in 2016 [6].

In the New System Pedagogy, core literacy refers to “Systematic music experience concretized”, which means students are self-motivated to perform musical activities after graduation (they know how to use music as a tool) instead of forgetting everything after graduation after graduation—a drawback of the traditional Chinese education system. There are four main parts to this key objective of “enhancing students’ core literacy”.

The autonomous music needs: this is the primary psychological motivation [4], students treat music more than an interest, but the air they take in. For example, students will choose to sing between watching TV and singing in their spare time. In this class, the teacher arouses students’ interest in the song by singing with solid and powerful feelings. After changing the beat, the same tune but with some differences will stimulate students’ interest in exploring.

Practical music ability: this is the main requirement [4]. Students develop their listening and singing skills when the teacher leads them in singing lyrics. They build their music site-reading skills when they sing on their own, and they can review the tune and hear the whole music effect when they do the music activity together.

The emotional experience of music: is the main value [4]. Music is an expressive art and a significant way for people to express their emotions, reflecting the extension and sublimation of feelings [7]. By watching the video, students can access associative emotional experiences at the beginning of the class. They gain a complete listening experience when singing lyrics with their teacher, and they can experience the ternary beat rhythm as they read the lyrics aloud. Finally, when the teacher allows them to arrange their own songs, they develop their creativity and cooperation ability. Through repeated stimulation, students’ emotions are created to the fullest by the end, achieving a sense of self-satisfaction and achievement. The most vital goal is achieved—the fundamental value of music activity is the emotional experience [5].

Musical, cultural understanding: this is the social and cultural perception of music practice and has a unique role in stimulating the overall development of students [8]. A region’s music gives students a unified sense of its local customs and natural features. When people of different nationalities are together, it can promote communication. Through this class, students learn about German culture and Orff instruments, generating situational imaginary.

3.2 Teaching Procedure

First, students need to experience the song before they start singing. In the beginning, the teacher will play the Orff instrument version of the video for this song, then introduce its background. After their initial understanding, the teacher sings the whole song expressively, making eye contact, facial expression, and body contact with the students as they sing.

Second, the students can start singing, beginning with the leading by their teacher. The teacher leads them to sing the lyrics one sentence at a time, and then they can look at the music score, following their teacher to sing so-fa once and lyrics once—both in a slow tempo. After teaching, the teacher asks them to sing the lyrics by themselves in a fast tempo.

Third, this is as far as the original piece goes, followed by the new teaching content. The teacher sings this song twice—the first time in binary beat and the second time in ternary beat. Ask students if there's any difference between them. After hearing their answer, "the rhythm is different", the teacher can let them look at the music score in ternary beat and read the lyrics in rhythm, then sing the melody in ternary beat by themselves.

Next, please return to the original piece and add the teaching of its rhythms. Students sing the last melody (binary beat) while the teacher is doing the body rhythm, then the teacher teaches them how to do it. After they have learned, the teacher divides students into two groups. One group sings the melody, the other does the body rhythm, then switches over.

Lastly, the way to end this lesson is to let students participate in their own groups to arrange this song. Both binary beat and Ternary beat are allowed. Finally, students will perform their own arrangement.

4 Comparative

4.1 The Difference in Teaching Philosophy

The Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy is a creative approach to movement and music education that involves singing, instrumentals, speech, and movement activities [9]. Carl Orff, a world-renowned contemporary German composer and music educator introduced it. His educational thought is that everyone can learn and experience music. Its conception is liberal. Orff believes that the ability to express emotions through music is something that people already have, and this ability can be made fuller through teaching. His educational idea is sensual and human-centered. To awake, develop and enhance the musical instincts of expression. His teaching objective is to enable students to learn and experience music in group play and have a sense of happiness, which was introduced with an element of play. Thus, providing a chance for all; thus, musical freedom and improvisation are essential to a child's musical learning [10]. As for his pedagogy—①combine music, language, and body movement. ②Orff instruments are playing. (Having appropriated many of its activities and instruments from African and Indonesian cultures, it propagates an interpretation of music as an acultural and universal practice [11]. These instruments solve technical problems for students, such as playing skills and difficulties in reading music, so that they can perform various musical activities and enjoy music thoroughly. Orff instruments have an immeasurably positive effect on music education worldwide and are now an essential teaching aid for music teaching in kindergartens and primary and secondary schools). ③Emphasis on synthesis, improvisation, and participation.

The pedagogy in the new system of diathesis-based school music education (the New System Pedagogy) was presented by the Music Education Department of the Central Conservatory of Music in 1999. Based on the roots of Chinese music culture, it introduces

and studies the three international education systems, taking a national, scientific, and popular path of music education that adapts to the educational reform in the new era. Its educational thought is that it is oriented toward all students, music education makes people better. Its academic idea is to cultivate students through moral, emotional, and aesthetic education. Let students experience the truth, kindness, and beauty in music. Its teaching objective is to enable students to gain perceptual musical experience as a basis for loving, learning, and using music as its pedagogy—①use comprehensive emotional music experience activities as the teaching principle line and the primary teaching content. ②experiential teaching method: to sing, listen, move, create, and other synesthesia to cultivate the ability to perceive, express, imagine, create, communicate and cooperate in musical activities [4].

4.2 The Difference in Teaching Procedures

As for the first class with the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy, the teacher teaches one section at a time, not the whole piece at first, while the second class with the New System Pedagogy teaches the entire piece directly. The body rhythm is taught first in the first class and is taught last in the second class. In the first class, Orff instruments are fully and flexibly used, but no instrument is used in the second class, singing is the main focus. Students who take part in the first class are able to gain a whole experience of binary beats, and students who take part in the second class can experience binary and ternary beats. The last difference is the playing speed. Students in the first class learn the song in fast tempo at once, while students in the second class learn from slow tempo to fast tempo step by step.

4.3 The Difference in Teaching Effects

As for the effectiveness of the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy, overall, the class was not quite in line with the expected teaching procedure. The teacher made flexible adjustments and did not strictly follow the intended teaching steps. The students' responses showed that using the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy exclusively would lead to a fast pace. Most students were unable to get some of the requirements from the teacher. The teacher needed to go back to the previous step from time to time to repeat the teaching and let students practice several times. Students who had instruments would secretly tap them. The class was lively, and students exploded with the sounds of each instrument, which stimulated their creativity and participation. However, it was a difficult task for the teacher to maintain discipline and keep the class going. Most students were restrained and not brave to improvise and create. Especially the students with new instruments were afraid to try them out for fear of making mistakes. Students fully experienced the joy of dance music and were cheerful but not satisfied enough. When the learning task of musical knowledge and skills was not completed, they could no longer experience the music.

As for the effectiveness of the New System Pedagogy, the class was mainly in line with the expected teaching procedure. The teacher followed the original teaching steps. The response of the students showed that the progress with The New System Pedagogy was just right. This is because The New System Pedagogy introduced and studied another

international pedagogy—The Kodaly Pedagogy from Hungary. Each step of this teaching has its principal and routine. This routine is based on the current learning patterns of Chinese students so students can learn quickly. It has a gorgeous thread of learning musical knowledge and moves from perceptual experience to rational perception. Most students could complete the teacher's requirements, and some did so quickly. The class atmosphere was not particularly lively, and there were times when some of the students were bored and not interested, but most were engaged in class. It was not hard for the teacher to take the lead and manage discipline. The improvisation and adaptation tasks were not complex. Although there seemed to be no limits and the possibilities were varied, there was a defined range of improvisation and adaptation. Hence, the students knew what was proper and safe to do, so everyone should be commended for their final performance. Students achieved the autonomous music need, practical music ability, emotional experience of music, and musical, and cultural understanding. However, the most critical part of those objectives—the emotional experience of music—hasn't been fully achieved yet. This means that students haven't thoroughly experienced the completely joyful emotions in the song.

5 Conclusion

The teaching effects show that both pedagogy can achieve their teaching objectives respectively, but still has problems to solve.

The main reason for the problems in the Orff classroom is that Orff's concept of teaching is immensely liberal and flexible in its use of music teaching. This pedagogy does not require any strings of musical knowledge or musical skill, so it is arduous for teachers to capture and apply in Chinese primary school classrooms. Another reason is the generally high musical accomplishment of the German people, so Orff did not emphasize "step-by-step teaching". However, in Chinese primary school classrooms, a prerequisite for students to achieve Orff's "instinctive experience of music" is mastering some musical elements, as understanding and feeling are both essential.

In the New System classroom, students' emotional experience of music should be taken care of. In addition, the cultural background of the song should be introduced to students.

Reply to the question "Which pedagogy can be better applied in Chinese primary classrooms?" and "Does one of these pedagogies need to be discarded?" this research illustrates that the pedagogy in the new system of diathesis-based school music education is more suitable for the Chinese primary school, as it is sufficiently localized in terms of ideas, concepts, objectives, and methods of teaching. However, it doesn't mean that we have to completely discard the use of the Orff-Schulwerk pedagogy as it has been developed over centuries and is still alive today, and we shouldn't underestimate the significant roles it is undertaking.

This research can be used as a reference for music teachers in their lesson planning in Chinese primary schools, allowing them to draw on it and apply it flexibly in their teaching.

The experiment of this study has limitations. Whether the experimental results are universal needs to be further verified, and more comparative experiments can be carried

out in different regions in the future. In addition, in the experimentation process, the region's various educational situations can be used as a mediating variable that affects the results.

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