

Study on the Aesthetic Value of teaching Mongolian Long Tune and Sanxian Together

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Abstract: This paper explores the aesthetic education value of integrated teaching combining Mongolian long tunes and sanxian (three-stringed instrument). By analyzing the cultural essence and artistic characteristics of these two musical traditions, it examines how their collaborative instruction enhances aesthetic perception and stimulates artistic creativity. The study reveals that this pedagogical approach not only enriches music education content but also promotes the inheritance and development of ethnic musical culture, offering innovative approaches and practical models for music-based aesthetic education.

Keywords: Mongolian long tune; three-string; collaborative teaching; aesthetic education value.

1. Introduction

In an era of multicultural integration, music education bears the crucial mission of preserving ethnic culture and enhancing aesthetic literacy. As a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, Mongolian long tunes embody the profound heritage of nomadic culture, while the three-stringed instrument (sanzhen) showcases unique performance techniques and artistic style. Integrating these elements into music education not only enriches musical resources but also leverages their distinctive aesthetic education functions. However, current research on synergistic teaching between Mongolian long tunes and sanzhen remains insufficient. Therefore, conducting in-depth studies on their educational value and exploring effective teaching models holds significant theoretical and practical importance.

2. The Cultural Connotation and Artistic Characteristics of Mongolian Long Tune and Sanxian

(1) The cultural connotation and artistic characteristics of Mongolian long tune

The creation of Mongolian long-form folk songs is deeply rooted in nomadic herders pastoral lifestyle. Their lyrics draw inspiration from natural landscapes such as grasslands, horses, camels, cattle, sheep, blue skies, white clouds, rivers, and lakes, reflecting the Mongolian peoples profound love and reverence for nature. These songs also serve as vital emotional vehicles, whether celebrating maternal devotion, praising life, expressing romantic sentiments, or conveying homesickness—each resonating through their melodic beauty and heartfelt lyrics. Artistically, Mongolian long-form folk songs are distinguished by their lingering melodies, expansive imagery, and rich ornamentation. Their tunes feature soaring pitches, broad vocal ranges, graceful cadences, dramatic melodic fluctuations, and free-flowing rhythms often employing complex meter structures. Lyrics typically unfold in two-line stanzas with rhythmic repetition, combining poetic essence with concise phrasing through "many phrases but few words" techniques.[1] This results in distinctive artistic styles characterized by characteristic melodic ornaments and elaborate cadences that enhance the musical experience.

(2) The cultural connotation and artistic characteristics of Mongolian sanxian

The three-stringed lute (sanxian) serves not only as a traditional instrument for nomadic herders entertainment but also as a vital medium for storytelling and emotional expression. In Mongolian music, it forms one of the "Four Major Instruments" alongside the four-stringed fiddle, flute, and morin khuur (horsehead fiddle), holding a pivotal position. Its versatile performance style allows solo, ensemble, or collaborative performances while providing vocal accompaniment and even harmonizing with other instruments, showcasing the richness and inclusiveness of Mongolian musical traditions. Artistically, the three-stringed lute is celebrated for its distinctive design, beautiful tone, and strong rhythmic quality. The instrument consists of two main parts: the drum-shaped body covered with python skin to produce rich, resonant tones. Performers sit while using a plucking rod in the right hand to strike strings, with the left hand pressing them. Their techniques are diverse, including plucking, lifting, rolling, and sweeping. The signature "long roll" technique alternates between solid and virtual rolls, mimicking the singing style of long-tune folk songs to create melodies that are both lingering and lyrical.

3. Feasibility Analysis of Teaching Mongolian Long Tune and Sanxian Together

(1) Complementarity of musical elements

In terms of melodic structure, the long tune employs a "linear" melody as its core. Its prolonged, smooth, and continuous melodic lines resemble meandering rivers flowing across grasslands, delicately expressing emotions while creating vast and profound artistic conceptions. The sanxian, as a plucked instrument, features a "dot-like" melodic pattern. Through techniques like "plucking," "picking," and "rolling strokes," it produces clear, lively notes that sparkle like stars across the grasslands. When the "linear" melody of the long tune intertwines with the "dot-like" melody of the sanxian, their fusion creates a harmonious interplay. This combination preserves the long tunes lingering charm while adding the sanxians dynamic vitality, enhancing the musics layered depth and three-dimensional quality. In rhythm, the long tune maintains a relatively free and relaxed tempo with

improvisational flexibility, allowing performers to adjust rhythms according to emotional expression. The sanxian, however, possesses distinct and stable rhythmic characteristics. Its unique playing techniques generate rhythmic and granular sound effects.[2] This synergy enables the sanxians steady rhythm to provide robust support for the long tunes performance, allowing its free rhythm to be better expressed within an orderly framework. Consequently, the music gains enhanced overall rhythmic coherence and melodic momentum.

(2) The compatibility of cultural connotation

The Mongolian long tune and the three-stringed instrument demonstrate profound cultural resonance. Both deeply rooted in the nomadic heritage of the Mongolian people, they serve as living embodiments of their history, spirit, and aesthetic values. As the soul of Mongolian musical culture, the long tune poetically captures nomadic life. Born from the vast grasslands, its lyrics frequently feature imagery like "grassland," "steeds," "blue skies," and "white clouds" —all reflecting the Mongolians reverence for nature. The singing style is free-spirited and emotionally intense, whether celebrating the grasslands grandeur or expressing longing for loved ones. These works embody the Mongolians profound understanding of life and simple sentiments, showcasing their optimistic, resilient national character. Similarly, the three-stringed instrument bears deep imprints of nomadic culture.[3]Its unique design and performance techniques epitomize Mongolian wisdom and creativity. In Mongolian life, it serves multiple roles: as entertainment, a companion for storytelling, and an essential element in religious ceremonies and celebrations. Having accompanied the Mongolian peoples growth and development, it has witnessed their rise and fall, bearing historical memories and cultural legacies. When the long tune meets the three-stringed instrument, their cultural essence resonates with each other. They complement each other. They jointly convey the Mongolian peoples awe of nature, love for life and adherence to national spirit, which provides a profound cultural foundation for collaborative teaching and enables students to deeply feel the unique charm of Mongolian culture in their study.

4. The Embodiment of Aesthetic Education Value of Teaching Mongolian Long Tune and Sanxian Together

(1) Improve aesthetic perception ability

In melodic perception, the long-tone melodys extended and undulating "linear" texture resembles clouds drifting freely across grasslands, conveying freedom and vitality that allows students to deeply appreciate both the beauty of melodies and their subtle emotional expressions. The sanxians "dot-like" melodies, produced through skillful plucking techniques, emit crisp, bright notes with a granular texture—like lively lambs frolicking on the prairie. When these two forms interact, students simultaneously experience the interweaving and collision of different melodic patterns, contrasting their diverse variations to broaden their understanding of melodic lines and rhythmic shifts, thereby enhancing their ability to keenly perceive melodic aesthetics. In timbre perception, the long-tones pure, resonant, and piercing sound carries the ethereal quality of grasslands, seemingly penetrating human consciousness.[4] The sanxian showcases rich tonal

variations through its versatile playing techniques, displaying crisp brightness and deep resonance. Through collaborative teaching, students can listen to the fusion and complementarity of these timbres, experiencing unique auditory effects from different combinations. This process strengthens their ability to distinguish and appreciate timbres, helping them learn to discern the distinct emotions and artistic conceptions conveyed by various tonal qualities.

(2) Stimulate artistic creativity

The long tune possesses distinctive improvisational singing characteristics, providing students with expansive creative freedom. In collaborative teaching processes, learners break free from rigid musical scores and conventional performance patterns. They can improvise melodies and rhythms based on personal emotional experiences and musical interpretation. [5] For instance, when performing long tunes, students may flexibly adjust note durations and dynamics according to their mood, adding personalized ornaments to transform each performance into a unique artistic expression. This approach cultivates both improvisational skills and acute musical perception. The sanxians rich playing techniques also serve as a wellspring for artistic creation. Its diverse methods—plucking, flicking, rolling, and sweeping—generate distinct acoustic effects. Students boldly experiment with combining these techniques to create innovative musical outcomes. For example, integrating rolling techniques with specific rhythmic patterns can simulate howling winds or galloping horses on the grasslands, enhancing the musics vivid imagery. When performing long tunes alongside sanxian, students explore creative integration. They consider how to harmonize the melodys lyrical quality with the instruments dynamic qualities, refining vocal-acoustic coordination and crafting unique transitional passages to innovate. Create new music works, fully stimulate students artistic creativity, let students freely roam in the ocean of music, and blossom their own artistic light.

5. Tag

The integrated teaching of Mongolian long tunes and the three-stringed instrument (sanzheng) holds profound aesthetic education value. Through analyzing their cultural essence and artistic characteristics, we have validated the feasibility of this collaborative approach. In practical teaching scenarios, such integration enhances students aesthetic perception and stimulates artistic creativity. Therefore, it is recommended to actively promote this integrated teaching model in music education. This initiative enriches musical educational resources, promotes the inheritance and development of ethnic music culture, and contributes to cultivating new-era talents with refined aesthetic sensibilities and multicultural awareness.

Reference Documentation

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