

Construction of Preschool Music Curriculum System in Chinese Universities

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Abstract

With the change of China's birth policy and the commencement of the second child policy, the number of preschool children has increased steadily in recent years. According to incomplete demographic statistics, China should accommodate at least 14 million preschool children by 2020. At the same time, with the growth of the economy and the improvement of the education background of parents of newborns, the market for preschool children education is rich and abundant. Therefore, there is a higher mounting demand for the quantity and quality of preschool teachers, which is an opportunity and challenge for students majoring in preschool education. However, due to the expansion of preschool education specialty, some universities that are short of teaching staff forces in China are unable to possess a systematic teaching system, which leads to the lack of education teaching methods. This is not only a huge challenge for practitioners in the education practices, but also related to the education quality of preschool children. In view of the expansion of preschool education market and the scarcity of corresponding teachers, this thesis will take music teaching as an example to discuss the construction of preschool curriculum system in Chinese universities.

Keywords

Preschool education, music teaching curriculum system, teacher training, education reform.

1. Introduction

As a basic state policy of China, family planning has had a profound impact on a generation since the 1980s [1]. At the beginning of the 21st century, China made some adjustments on family policy, and the new regulations of family planning relaxed the legal conditions for the birth of a second child. China is expected to accommodate at least 14 million preschool children by 2020, followed by a vast infant and toddler market. Among them, preschool children education has attracted much attention, mainly because of the following three points. First of all, education industry has always been a prosperous sunrise industry. Whether it is preschool education, K12 education, higher education or quality education, it is the focus of parents and society. Secondly, with the development of economy and the improvement of parents' education level, parents' investment in education will increase, no matter money or energy. Thirdly, as the initial stage of education, preschool education is a top priority for children.

In the face of unprecedented opportunities in the preschool education market, the challenges that come along should be our major concern. Compared with other traditional education fields, preschool education development in China is very limited [3]. It is mainly reflected in the lack of scientific education teaching system, supporting preschool education teaching tools, and the high-level preschool education team. Another major characteristic of preschool education is non-test-oriented, while interest tutorial class and knowledge preparation education are the main existing forms of preschool education at present.

As is pointed out in *Modern Curriculum Theory* [4], curriculum is an organic carrier that fully implements education goals in education objects and plays an important intermediary role in the teaching process. Therefore, the scientific rationality of curriculum setting is directly related to the realization of education goals. However, the curriculum setting of preschool education music courses

at the present stage is far from reasonable, and there are a series of problems such as single curriculum setting, which are highlighted in the following aspects. Firstly, the curriculum setting is separated from the actual situation of students. At present, the curriculum setting of preschool education music courses is isolated from the actual situation of students, such as the curriculum setting of each academic year, the order of the curriculum setting and the connection between courses, which affects the realization of teaching objectives. Secondly, part of the curriculum unilaterally pursues professionalism, ignoring the actual teaching needs of preschool education. The course content is inconsistent with children's cognitive characteristics and unable to fully reflect the main knowledge and content of the course. The goal of preschool education is difficult to be fully realized. Thirdly, the curriculum setting pays too much attention to the teaching of skills and the instillation of course content, while ignoring the intrinsic connection between the various courses, and there is a lack of coherence between the courses. These kinds of cramming method of education and interdisciplinary thinking deviate from the training goal of preschool education, reducing the students' interest in learning, which makes the teaching efficiency tough to improve.

This thesis discusses the construction of preschool music curriculum system in Chinese universities. Moreover, the thesis will respectively discuss the development of preschool music education, the foreign classic music teaching system and the curriculum design plan of preschool music education in the following parts.

2. Development of Preschool Music Education in China

From the early 20th century to the late 1940s [5], preschool music education in China's modern and contemporary times entered the initial stage of development from the infancy, which was known as the "school song period" in the history of music. Under the influence of the bourgeois democratic revolution, the school music education at that time mainly emphasized the function of ideological and moral education.

From the 1950s to the mid-1960s, music education in China, on the one hand, inherited the tradition of ideological and moral education; on the other hand, increasingly attached importance to music knowledge and skills. For instance, in 1953, the ministry of education promulgated the "Temporary Regulations for Kindergartens (Draft)", in which the prescribed educational objectives include: 1) cultivating children's interest in music, and developing children's musical auditory and rhythm; and 2) cultivating children's correct voice, singing, performance, and dancing forms. In the mid-1950s, under the guidance of Soviet experts, the Ministry of Education organized and compiled the "Work Guidelines for Kindergarten Education". In particular, emphasis was placed on the musical abilities of children. Necessary skills training should be carried out to ensure that every child can master the songs and dances they have learned.

From the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, due to the influence of the "the Great Cultural Revolution", the political education function of music was promoted to the most prominent position. Preschool children received music education mainly by participating in musical performance practice in social and political activities.

From the late 1970s to the late 1980s [6], intellectual education and creative education were clearly pointed out for the first time, and gradually became the primary goal of Chinese national music education. Meanwhile, the research focus of school music education was increasingly enthusiastic about how to develop intelligence via teaching forms such as music knowledge, music concepts and music score reading and writing. The whole society was also gradually convinced that learning through musical instruments can promote children's intelligence development.

After the 1990s [7], education for all-round development has been widely recognized in the education circles and society over the years. Preschool education, as an important means of developing children's comprehensive quality, has gained recognition at all levels. After the new century [8], preschool music education has entered the track of rapid development and continuous reform under the social background of pursuing comprehensive and harmonious development.

3. Foreign Classical Music Teaching System

Due to the slow development of preschool music education in China, the design of preschool music education curriculum first refer to foreign classical music education and teaching system, and it make improvements combined with Chinese music characteristics.

3.1 The Orff Schulwerk

Orff Schulwerk was founded by Carl Orff, a famous musician of Federal Republic of Germany. The core of its concept lies in teaching from the origin and essence of music. Orff believes that the expression of thoughts and emotions is the instinctive desire of human beings, which has been naturally revealed through language, singing (including instrumental performance), dancing and other forms since ancient times. It's an innate ability of human beings. Music education's primary task is to constantly inspire and improve the expression of this instinct, and good performance is not the ultimate goal of pursuit. However, this is not the case with our traditional music education cognition. Our course has always focused on how to learn well by regarding learning singing and music theory as well as related music skills and abilities as the means and goal of aesthetic education. Orff Schulwerk's teaching content is divided into sound and rhythm. Specifically, it refers to the full use of the sounds that can be made by various parts of the human body to participate in the performance, and the rhythm training is carried out by clapping hands, padding legs, stamping feet, and snapping fingers.

3.2 The Kodály Principles

Zoltán Kodály is a famous Hungarian composer, philosopher and music educator. He is convinced that music education is the birthright of every child, and he advocates for improving learning outcomes with higher efficiency. Kodály calls for chorus teaching to cultivate the concept of collectivism. He believes that children's collective spirit of cooperation can be cultivated by chorus. In chorus, students can learn to listen to and understand music and the importance of tacit cooperation. From his perspective, teachers must be well trained. Only by possessing satisfactory psychological qualities and a noble spiritual outlook can they teach students in accordance of their aptitude in the teaching process.

3.3 The Jaques-Dalcroze Method of Eurhythmics

Emile Jaques-Dalcroze is a famous Swiss composer and the earliest founder of music education system in the 20th century. Dalcroze believes that music is the art of time. Music itself is based on auditory experience, and music education should be completely based on listening. Therefore, in addition to the teaching of music theory, Solfeggio and harmony, his posture and rhythmic movements also focus on training students to use auditory sense subtly and effectively. They are trained to use various parts of the body as musical instruments for expressing music. The various factors of the music they hear (including speed, rhythm, strength, phrases, emotions, etc.), and their inner feelings are expressed in various actions. All these actions expressing music are taught in a game-like teaching method meticulously designed by teachers. Dalcroze breaks down the traditional teaching method, allowing children to freely beat the rhythm, enjoy the music created by themselves, listen to the sound of the body, which stimulates their creativity.

The teaching characteristics of the Jaques-Dalcroze Method of Eurhythmics mainly require students to use their bodies as musical instruments to reproduce the music they hear and feel with actions. This method can cultivate students' attention, auditory memory and academic improvisation ability. In addition, through a variety of teaching modes, students can study in a relaxing atmosphere.

4. Discussion on the Curriculum Setting of Preschool Music Education in China

4.1 Focusing on the Cultivation of Musical Aesthetic Ability

The cultivation of musical aesthetic ability can not only help students develop in an all-round way, but also enable students to obtain higher level subject training [12]. When carrying out music education for preschool major students, teachers must let students realize the importance of music

aesthetics on personal quality growth, so that they will have an interest in learning professional knowledge. In the process of implementing subject education, teachers need to conduct appreciation education of various forms of music. Hence, the students can have in-depth learning of music knowledge through music appreciation education, so as to achieve their comprehensive development. Via a variety of course lectures, teachers can make students develop more active interest in exploring professional knowledge and strengthen their professional level in music education work. By conducting musical aesthetic education for students, teachers enable them to conduct internal exploration of music knowledge and grasp the fascination presented by the current multi-music culture, which can make professional students have stronger education abilities. At the same time, only in this way can professional students guide children to feel the beauty of music, pay attention to the connotation of music and create some beauty in life in their future preschool education job, so that the children can develop an optimistic aesthetic taste.

4.2 Building Core Professional Curriculum Based on Music Activities

According to Multi-Intelligences, effective learning needs to be carried out in a rich variety of activity scenarios [13]. The use of flexible and diverse music teaching methods can change the inherent teaching mode of traditional mechanical training music skills and repeated practicing music skills. In the actual music teaching, teachers can adopt flexible teaching modes such as question, inquiry, situational and heuristic method to cultivate students' independent thinking and autonomous inquiry ability. In addition, teachers can carry out the simulation teaching by virtue of multimedia technology. The multimedia technology can be used to create practical teaching scenes, and vividly show students the various actual situation that may appear in music performances and teaching, which enables students to solve problems autonomously in the process of mutual communication, thus making students master relevant education teaching methods, so that students can be better qualified for preschool education in the future.

4.3 Improving the Test Methods

The music test is an effective method to test students' music teaching ability. However, a single test form cannot achieve the goal of comprehensive evaluation of students. Therefore, the examination may take the form of a live performance in class, supplemented by written and oral exams. The live performance can check out the students' professional ability; the written test can examine the students' grasp of basic music theory, and the oral test can comprehensively evaluate the students' expression abilities and random response capabilities. In addition to music examination, we also ought to pay attention to students' music teaching practices. We can appropriately create a certain opportunity for students to practice music teaching. Hence, students can conduct music teaching practice independently, so as to carry our more targeted tests and guidance for them.

4.4 Music Quality Cultivation Combined with Traditional Chinese Culture

China is a state of ceremonies. The culture of Confucius and Mencius is rooted in the land of China. As a result, we ought to inherit and carry forward traditional Chinese culture. The traditional Chinese music learning can be added into the preschool education music curriculum in institution of higher education, making students grasp the most basic traditional Chinese music. In this section, students can master traditional Chinese culture such as verses, ditties, odes and songs. They can also learn professional courses from the perspective of music, and highly combine art with literature.

5. Conclusion

I The thesis mainly discusses the existing opportunities and challenges in preschool music education under the background of the current times. Its main contents include the deficiencies of the preschool music education curriculum system in China and suggestions for improving the method of cultivating preschool music education qualified people. Teachers should start from the actual needs of children's music education and their psychological cognitive rules, and optimize the curriculum setting by combining children's music activities [14]. For instance, designing background music for the work presented, playing the beats, sing songs, distinguishing the rhythm paradigm of music, explaining the

similarity of music song, making musical instruments, and expressing thoughts and feelings with musical instruments. No matter from the construction of teaching staff, teaching concept, teaching method to the selection of teaching mode, children's actual music needs and students' current learning situation are supposed to be the main consideration. Meanwhile, students are trained in combination with professional needs, so that the artistic mission and teaching practice can be effectively combined to improve the role of preschool education music teaching in cultivating professional education qualified people, thereby enhancing the quality of teachers and the application ability of students.

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