

## Exploration of the Use and Reform of Vocal Music Teaching Materials in Chinese Art Colleges

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### Abstract

With the development of economy and society, new backgrounds and new situation have new expectations of China's vocal education and higher and higher requirements of vocal teaching materials. This paper raises the idea that "Only brave to create, continue to create, and accelerate to create, can promote the scientific development of vocal music education", and on this basis, the research idea "taking the applicability of vocal teaching materials as a foothold and taking the language of teaching materials as a breakthrough" is proposed. Meanwhile this paper points out it needs to focus on the unity of means and content in dissemination results; focus on the unity of localization and internationalization in the vision of development; focus on the unity of heritage and learning of tradition and future in study resources; focus on the unity of external expression and grasping the essence in the interpretation of works; focus on the unity of short-term and long-term in the guidance of education. Meanwhile, pointing at the chaos of current textbook publishing and actual situation of many problems, this paper develops a specific reform idea and train of thought, and proposes the wishes and expectations to all the vocal music educators: often having the mind of innovation, often grasping the innovative spirit, often having innovative behaviors and often presenting innovative contribution. It is believed that with the efforts of musical colleagues, our enterprise of vocal music will flourish, the compiling of vocal materials will also become increasingly standardized, and we can expect the appearance of standardized textbooks with professionalism and applicability.

**Key words:** Vocal musical teaching materials; Using status; Ways of reform

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### INTRODUCTION

Teaching materials, which are commonly known as textbooks, are good tools of wide application for students achieving self-learning, improvement, and enhancement and also are one of the most original and most important carrier for teachers "preaching, imparting knowledge, disabusing" to students. Among many attributes of teaching materials, the core and the first condition is applicability, because teachers are able to scientifically, reasonably and accurately to carry out teaching by works and guidance on great teaching materials. Specifically, whether the teaching materials of vocal music are applicable, directly affects the effectiveness of the teaching of vocal music.

The times go forward and vocal music education also goes forward. With the development of economy and society, new backgrounds and new situation have new expectations of China's vocal education and higher and higher requirements of vocal teaching materials.

Combing with the current teaching practice of vocal music education of Chinese art colleges, I think that as an inexhaustible and motive force for national progress, innovation is the "propeller" for progressive education, which we should pay great attention and firmly grasp. In which, the compiling of teaching materials must adhere to the idea that "brave to innovate, continue to innovate, and accelerate to innovate to promote the scientific development of vocal music education", and establish research idea of "taking the applicability of vocal teaching materials as a foothold and taking the language of teaching materials as a breakthrough".

## **1. THE MAIN PROBLEMS CURRENTLY EXISTING IN TEACHING MATERIALS OF VOCAL MUSIC**

### **1.1 Teaching Materials Are Lack of Characteristics of Times**

Some textbooks are old, rarely include outstanding vocal works reflecting the achievements of China's reform and opening up, or promoting a new era of spiritual civilization. From the characteristics of times, some of the teaching materials have been difficult to adapt to the growing needs of the development of today's society and civilization, and people's spiritual and cultural needs.

### **1.2 The Compiling of Teaching Materials Is Lack of Rigor**

In recent years, many music colleges have published educational books of vocal music with many versions, and there are some common problems being found in teachers' use. There are serious mistake of some materials in publishing spectrum due to time constraints; there are inaccurate analysis for the term and structure of the songs in some materials. These materials will undoubtedly confuse teachers and students, especially those with limited teaching resources and in remote areas in technical affairs and affect the quality of teaching radically.

### **1.3 Materials of Sampling Are Lack of Comprehensiveness**

Due to time and geographical limitations to compile, the collections of some teaching materials are not wide enough, the coverage is relatively narrow, and many vocal music works with a strong foreign style are not collected into an album.

### **1.4 The Notation Method Is Lack of Maneuverability**

Some teaching materials are compiled with numbered musical notation, and students can only do impromptu accompaniment when singing, which is too arbitrary; although some materials use staves with spectrum accompaniment, but it often occurs that high, middle and bass voices of men and women are suitable for singing the same song in teaching, which will make trouble for transposition. While some material compilers consider it and mark out texts suitable for singers of different voice parts, but most teaching materials still compile scores only suitable for one part. Other voice parts must transpose on the basis of their own original spectrum if want to perform it, which is complicated. The compiling of teaching materials in China can consider using numbered musical notation and staves by contrast (except overseas versions).

### **1.5 The Teaching Materials Are Lack of Comprehensiveness**

Most teaching materials only include music scores and lyrics, without the content of fundamental analysis of the

work and singing tips, etc., these materials can only be positioned as songbooks. Strictly speaking, the content of teaching materials of vocal music should include the title, melody, piano accompaniment spectrum, and tuning, tone, style of the work, and include professional tips and advice for singing skills, keys and difficulties.

Strictly speaking, vocal music comprehensive art form expressing thoughts, feelings and artistic image by combining singing and language. The foreign and Chinese pronunciation of the works often becomes the bottleneck constraining the improvement of students' singing and teaching performance. Marking out phonetic annotation for lyrics in the works, and adding sketches, pronunciation and other content in teaching materials has great benefit.

Due to these problems in teaching materials, it is imperative to develop a new set of teaching materials of vocal music with applicability. I believe that it may advocate a combination of tradition and modernity when we study and discuss the compiling of teaching materials, and compile a set of materials featuring in both freshness and times, typical and practical works, on the basis of learning, absorbing the essence of teaching materials of other vocal music, and I believe the proven selected vocal boutique will be an invaluable teaching resource. Good resource also needs a great spot for it to root, sprout and grow. There are rich educational resources and numerous practice bases in China, so in the form of specialized materials, compiling a set of works suitable for international voice training but also reflecting the characteristics and styles of domestic and international folk music which can be learnt and practiced by students should not be a difficult task.

## **2. THE MAIN IDEAS OF THE REFORM OF VOCAL TEACHING**

So, how to carry out the specific implementation? To some degree, the comprehensiveness, signification, and normalization of vocal music teaching depend on the knowledge coverage of vocal music teaching materials. Seeking new achievements of applicability in compiling vocal music teaching materials and achieving a new leap forward, there should be a main concept of "one body with two wings" and way of "five reunification", which is the theory of the research and summary of this paper.

What is "one body with two wings", "one body" is the subject itself of vocal music, "two wings" are two cores of sounds and languages must be mentioned in vocal music teaching materials. We talk about and promote the concept, mean to take full advantage of vocal teaching law, reiterate the equal and important role of language and sound in vocal music teaching, take teaching as a carrier, promote the sound and language merging, promoting and complementing each other, thus further highlight the main features of vocal music, and optimize the communicating effects of vocal music.

So, under the guidance of “one body with two wings”, make teaching materials of vocal music more dynamic, appealing and influential, we must focus on the following five aspects to enrich the connotation of teaching materials:

### **2.1 In Terms of the Dissemination Results, Teaching Materials Need to Focus on the Uniform of Methods and Content**

Strictly speaking, vocal music teaching is a form of communication behavior, sound and language are necessary media and major content of propagation behavior, and vocal technique and performance style are the modes of transmission. If there are problems of pitch, rhythm, articulation and other issues even if slight may affect the dissemination results.

With the evolution of history and development of times, the scientificity of vocal skills is increasingly accepted by the majority of vocal music educators, and even domestic and international vocal music field have called it the crystallization of human wisdom, it should serve the requirement for works of sound and language. We should penetrate it in the process of compiling teaching materials.

### **2.2 Need to Focus on the Unity of Localization and Internationalization Unity in the Vision of Development**

For half a century, with the introduction of western music, western opera is also introduced to China. Since the reform and opening up, China is also trying to make our outstanding musical works to go abroad and embrace the world. Such as the piano solo “Cowboy and piccolo”, the violin solo “Butterfly lovers” and a number of excellent instrumental work has been recognized by the world. If the majority of vocal workers devote themselves to research, work hard, and promote the essence of our national and vocal music culture to the world, there is reason to believe that we can see candidates participating in international vocal competition sing Chinese songs with Chinese language; Chinese vocal music schools have a place in the international music field is not out of reach. This is also one of the keys we must focus on in the reform of our teaching materials.

### **2.3 Need to Focus on the Unity of Heritage and Reference in the Resources of Knowledge**

Western countries have a long history of vocal singing skills, creating of works and other aspects, which made great contributions to the development of music in the world, which is worth learning. Compiling teaching materials of vocal music is a creation; we propose inheriting tradition, making the past serving the present, preserving the characteristics of various ethnic vocal music, and reflect the tradition and essence of Chinese music; we must also look at the whole world, be future-oriented, and be good at drawing and absorbing advanced

culture, so that “copinism”, “making foreign things serve China”, so that truly reflect the advanced cultural achievements of human culture.

### **2.4 In the Interpretation of the Works, We Should Pay Attention to the External Expression and Grasp the Essence of Unity**

With frequent international exchanges in culture and education, foreign works are increasingly favored by domestic teachers’ and students’ concern, and more and more people aspire to perform in international vocal music competitions. Currently, international vocal competitions adopt Italian, French, German, etc., and contestants must sing in original lyrics. So we must firstly understand their language and culture to sing foreign vocal works. Only master basic laws of language and culture systematically and scientifically, could truly comprehend the essence of exotic music.

### **2.5 In Education and Guidance, We Should Focus on the Unity of Short-Term and Long-Term**

The core of education is uniting people with the quality of educational outcomes, guiding people with the right educational concept, and motivating people with the characteristics of educational culture. On the one hand, we should base on the current situation, steadily push forward reform and innovation on vocal music teaching materials, scientifically determine the field and direction of the first test, adjust and improve the teaching framework, and try to resolve practical difficulties and problems in vocal music teaching; on the other hand, we should focus on long-term, continue to promote the innovation of vocal music education system and mechanisms, explore new educational models and methods, and provide strong support to the standardized and fine management of vocal music education, to lay a solid foundation for the healthy and orderly development of vocal music.

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## **3. WORKING STATUS OF TEACHERS IN THE REFORM OF VOCAL MUSIC TEACHING MATERIALS**

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Teachers are “the transmitter of human culture, disseminator of advanced thoughts, cultivator of modern talents, and builder of harmonious society”. Education is a career only with a starting point and without an ending, which needs efforts of teachers, schools, and all sectors of society, needs generations of people to improve, maintain, and develop. Teachers of vocal music stand on the first line of teaching, know every aspect of teaching, especially have personal insights in the use of teaching materials, so vocal music educators should be main force of the reform of teaching materials. They need to achieve:

They need to have the innovative mind. Facing the new situation and new requirements, vocal music educators need to stand forefront, take advantage of current

situation, and stick in practice, to solve the problems of education development in the vision of development. They need to focus on innovation on the basis of grasping vocal regularity, presenting the times, and being rich in innovation; they need to innovate on the basis of cracking difficulties and highlighting the hotspot.

They need to have innovative spirit. On the basis of the innovation, vocal music educators need to actively demonstrate the theoretical courage to explore, the practical spirit of pioneers and strong and indomitable will. In the compiling of teaching materials, they need to initiatively break the restricting the ideas blocking development, get rid of outdated stereotypes, and change regulations on practices affecting education. Then there will be a good atmosphere protecting innovation and enthusiasm, encouraging innovative practices, and tolerating innovative frustration, to fully release the collective creative energy and make innovations emerging.

They need to have innovative behaviors. Innovation is an important starting point breaking the bottleneck of education development and solving problems in teaching materials compiling. Vocal music educators need to continue to broaden vision, plan new ideas, and actively explore new content and new ways, to achieve teaching carrier transmit from tradition to modernity, and to promote integrated construction of higher education to a new level.

They need to have remarkable construction of innovation. Our education, need to be “people -oriented”

and responsible for students and society. Vocal music educators should always adhere to the fundamental principle of “there is no small matter in education”, take students’ requirements as the first signal, students’ satisfaction as the first choice, and students’ satisfaction as the first standard, through innovation to further enhance the artistry and effectiveness of teaching, to further enhance standardized and scientific level of vocal music teaching, and effectively make students, schools and the society enjoy the outcomes of innovation and development of education.

I believe our business will flourish with the efforts of music colleagues, the compiling of vocal music teaching materials will become increasingly standardized, and the standardized teaching materials with professionalism and applicability will appear.

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