

Research on Middle School Guzheng Appreciation Courses Based on Core Artistic Literacy—Taking "Zhan Tai Feng" (Fighting the Typhoon) as an Example

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Abstract. In accordance with the core literacy training requirements of the Compulsory Education Art Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition), and addressing the gaps in existing research, this study takes "Zhan Tai Feng" as a teaching case to explore the teaching strategies of middle school guzheng appreciation courses. From the four dimensions of core artistic literacy—*aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice, and cultural understanding*—the research analyzes specific teaching paths and emphasizes the synergistic coexistence of the four dimensions. The purpose of this study is to provide practical reference for the implementation of core literacy goals in middle school guzheng appreciation courses, and to contribute to the inheritance of traditional national music and the cultivation of students' cultural confidence.

Keywords: core artistic literacy, middle school guzheng appreciation courses, "Zhan Tai Feng", teaching strategies, cultural understanding

1. Introduction

On April 21, 2022, the Ministry of Education officially issued the Compulsory Education Art Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition), which clearly states that "the core literacy to be cultivated by art courses mainly includes aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice, and cultural understanding" [1], requiring the integration of core literacy training throughout the teaching process. Through a search on CNKI, the author found that there is a wealth of research literature on "core literacy", which elaborates on the connotation, content, and teaching application of core literacy from various dimensions. Further searching with the keywords "core literacy + middle school music appreciation courses" yielded 17 relevant documents, including 5 journal papers and 12 academic theses. Based on specific school teaching cases, these documents refine music appreciation teaching from the perspective of core literacy, integrate diverse teaching theories and methods, and explore teaching strategies combined with some lesson examples, providing new ideas for teachers to implement core literacy requirements. However, among the existing literature, there is no research that systematically explores the teaching content and strategies of the guzheng piece "Zhan Tai Feng" from the four dimensions of core artistic literacy.

"Zhan Tai Feng" is a solo guzheng piece in Unit 5 "The Fragrance of National Music (I)" of the 8th Grade Volume 1 published by People's Music Publishing House, composed in 1964. With a majestic momentum and distinct musical images, the piece successfully portrays the fearless spirit and heroic spirit of dock workers fighting typhoons. As an ancient plucked instrument in China, the guzheng has a history of thousands of years, nourished by cultural elements such as local languages, customs, folk songs, traditional operas, and folk arts, and embodies profound cultural heritage. After music learning in primary and junior high school, 8th-grade students have accumulated certain aesthetic experience and basic music appreciation abilities, but due to limited life experience, they find it difficult to accurately capture changes in musical elements. This requires teachers to guide students to perceive the role of changes in musical elements in image shaping and emotional expression during teaching, deepen students' understanding of the work in the process of appreciation, help students resonate emotionally with the work, and enhance cultural confidence.

2. Aesthetic perception in "Zhan Tai Feng"

Aesthetic perception refers to the ability to discover, feel, recognize, and respond to the characteristics, significance, and functions of beauty in the natural world, social life, and works of art. Centering on the four keywords "discovery, feeling, recognition, and response", Xu Xinli divides the generation mechanism of aesthetic perception into four progressive stages from superficial to in-depth, from appearance to connotation, and from sensibility to rationality, namely aesthetic discovery, aesthetic feeling, aesthetic recognition, and aesthetic response.

Aesthetic discovery is the starting point of aesthetic perception [2]. In music appreciation teaching, when students listen to "Zhan Tai Feng" for the first time, they will form a preliminary perceptual understanding based on existing aesthetic experience, and their understanding of the piece will gradually deepen with the integration of rational thinking. Teachers can design questions after students listen to the entire piece to guide their rational thinking. The questions should be based on students' initial perceptions, start with the explicit characteristics of the piece, and at the same time stimulate students' analytical and inductive abilities to lay the foundation for subsequent teaching. For example: "Please roughly judge the components of 'Zhan Tai Feng' according to the speed, and talk about how many sections the piece consists of?" In this process, a relaxed and harmonious classroom atmosphere can strengthen students' aesthetic experience, and a harmonious teacher-student relationship helps improve the quality of interaction and teaching efficiency, promoting in-depth thinking among students.

Aesthetic feeling is the central link of aesthetic perception. Teachers can guide students to form aesthetic feelings from the dimensions of perception, imagination, mood, and emotion [2]. First, before students listen to the piece, activate their direct experience through open-ended questions, such as "How do you feel after listening to this section of the piece?"; then enrich students' aesthetic perception process and strengthen the perception effect by demonstrating and playing specific sections; then ask questions again about the same section to guide students to carry out association and imagination and initially construct musical images, such as "What kind of scenes does this piece remind you of?"; for the adagio section of the piece, teachers can demonstrate and play again, organize students to listen carefully, guide them to capture emotions, and deepen their emotional experience. Through questions such as "Please describe the musical picture presented by the adagio in vivid language", students' emotional experience and imagination ability can be further enhanced.

Aesthetic recognition is the in-depth expansion of aesthetic perception [2]. This stage requires students to organically combine perceptual understanding with rational understanding. Teachers can first guide students to conduct rational thinking based on musical language, select specific sections

such as the second and fourth sections of the piece for demonstration and performance, and design questions around the characteristics of melody, rhythm, timbre, and dynamics, such as "What are the characteristics of the dynamic changes in the second section of the piece?", prompting students to appreciate and analyze the piece in a targeted manner. Students' analysis of musical language can accelerate the construction of musical images, and clear musical images can in turn deepen the understanding of musical language, which not only enriches aesthetic experience but also accumulates aesthetic experience. To further deepen students' understanding of musical images, teachers need to combine musical images with real life and cultural backgrounds, and use various teaching methods to help students perceive musical language. When clarifying the musical image of "Zhan Tai Feng", teachers can start with typhoon disasters, play relevant documentaries, and let students intuitively feel the damage caused by typhoons to people's lives and property; at the same time, combine the cultural heritage of eulogizing labor and the historical background of the piece's creation to deepen students' cognition of the worker image.

Aesthetic response is the behavioral manifestation of aesthetic perception, with the core markers being the generation of aesthetic emotions and the presentation of corresponding behaviors [2]. A relaxed and harmonious classroom atmosphere can effectively reduce students' psychological defense and stimulate their enthusiasm for generating aesthetic responses. On this basis, teachers can promote students to express aesthetic responses through physical movements and other forms through language guidance, picture display, video playback, etc. Taking measures 39-50 of "Zhan Tai Feng" as an example, the special speed, accents, and rhythm of this section imitate the characteristics of dockers' work songs and have strong appeal. Teachers can guide students to sing this part, instruct them to capture musical rhythm through physical movements, and naturally express aesthetic responses. This kind of physical expression is not mechanical imitation, but a natural presentation after students resonate emotionally in the process of listening and singing, which helps improve students' musical innovation ability.

3. Artistic expression in "Zhan Tai Feng"

Artistic expression refers to the practical ability to create artistic images, express ideological feelings, and show artistic beauty in artistic activities [1]. In junior high school music appreciation courses, teachers need to guide students to master basic music knowledge and skills, and further grasp musical images and the style of Zhejiang guzheng music from the perspective of ornamentation. Teaching can be carried out around three aspects: music score reading, performance techniques, and ornamentation. Considering that most students have no contact with guzheng techniques, relevant techniques can be explained through demonstration, pictures, or videos.

3.1. Mastery of techniques

Performance techniques play an important role in the teaching of "Zhan Tai Feng". They are not only the carrier of the style of Zhejiang guzheng music but also the key means for composers to interpret musical images. Composer Wang Changyuan learned guzheng from her father Wang Xunzhi, the founder of the Zhejiang guzheng school, since childhood. During her studies at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, she assisted her father in sorting out guzheng pieces and revising fingerings, proficient in the traditional techniques of the Zhejiang guzheng school, laying a solid foundation for her subsequent creations. When composing "Zhan Tai Feng", she achieved innovative breakthroughs on the basis of inheriting traditional techniques, creatively using techniques such as

hooked vibrato, sweep vibrato, pointing technique, and off-bridge glissando to vividly depict the heroic image of dock workers fighting typhoons.

3.1.1. The "typhoon" image in the piece

The piece mainly uses hooked vibrato and off-bridge glissando techniques to depict the scene of a typhoon approaching. Hooked vibrato means that while the right hand performs vibrato, the left thumb and index finger pinch the vibrating strings and move left and right; off-bridge glissando (glissando on the left side of the bridge) refers to performing glissando on the left side of the bridge. Both techniques are innovations based on traditional vibrato and glissando, simulating the scene of typhoon howling and approaching from afar through the special timbre produced by playing. Teachers can demonstrate the second section and measures 92-93 of the piece to show the application of these two techniques, then play the corresponding sections with traditional vibrato and glissando, and guide students to compare and think about the advantages of innovative techniques in depicting the typhoon image.

3.1.2. The "worker" image in the piece

The composer mainly uses sweep vibrato and pointing technique to depict the heroic image of dock workers fighting typhoons. Sweep vibrato combines right-hand sweeping with vibrato, and pointing technique is the rapid alternating plucking of strings with the index fingers of both hands. Both techniques can create intense and dramatic musical effects. Teachers can play the third section of the piece to show the application of these two techniques, guide students to imagine the scene of dock workers rescuing goods in the typhoon, and deepen their understanding of the musical image. In addition, the piece also uses techniques such as large strumming, fast clamped playing, and arpeggio to show the scenes of dock workers working hard before the typhoon and after the typhoon.

3.2. Application of ornamentation

"Ornamentation refers to the various possible embellishments and decorations made by performers of national music (including traditional music) when singing or playing music (arias) with Chinese national style and characteristics, making them perfect works of art with a strong sense of three-dimensionality, rich colors, unique styles, and strong charm [3]. " Teachers can draw on the four dimensions of "pitch ornamentation", "rhythmic ornamentation", "dynamic ornamentation", and "timbral ornamentation" proposed by Mr. Dong Weisong to guide students to experience and imitate the musical images and artistic expression styles in "Zhan Tai Feng".

3.2.1. Pitch ornamentation

In guzheng performance, techniques such as glide, vibrato, and pressed vibrato are often used to ornament the pitch. Although pitch ornamentation is not extensively used in "Zhan Tai Feng", it plays an indispensable role in depicting musical images. The composer uses pressed vibrato in measures 21-22 and 32-33 of the piece, making the pitch of the musical notes slide up and down. Teachers can let students compare and listen to the differences between the same section with pressed vibrato and simple pressed notes through demonstration and performance, so as to feel the vigorous momentum of workers' hard work and the tense atmosphere before the typhoon.

3.2.2. Rhythmic ornamentation

Rhythmic ornamentation includes speed and meter elements [3]. "Zhan Tai Feng" is divided into five sections, each with a different speed. There are no clear speed marks in the score. Teachers can import Wang Changyuan's performance audio into the vmus website, calculate the average tempo of each section, and make the following table.

Table 1. Tempo of each section

Section Tempo	Section 1 Measures 1-33	Section 2 Measure 34	Section 3 Measures 35-156	Section 4 Measures 157-179	Section 5 Measures 180-210
Unit (BPM)	J=200BPM		J=183BPM	J=90BPM	J=206BPM

Analysis of the table shows that the first section has a lively melody and a heroic momentum, vividly portraying the image of hardworking dock workers and vividly showing the dock labor scene; the second section is in free time, indicating the arrival of the typhoon. When Wang Changyuan performed it, the speed gradually accelerated, presenting the surging typhoon approaching from afar; the fast speed and variable rhythm patterns of the third section intensify the increasingly tense atmosphere. The integration of melody and performance techniques vividly shows the scene of workers bravely fighting the typhoon, with the sound of wind, rain, and work songs interweaving; the fourth section has a melodious tune, depicting the scene after the rain clears up, and the soothing melody conveys people's relaxed mood after defeating the typhoon; the fifth section reproduces the melody of the first section with changes, and the speed is similar to that of the first section, implying that the dock has returned to its former bustle. Teachers can combine listening to the piece, observing the table, and teaching to fully mobilize students' vision and hearing, enabling them to intuitively feel the musical images depicted by the speed of each section and realize multi-sensory collaborative learning.

3.2.3. Dynamic ornamentation

Dynamic ornamentation is a common technique in music creation [3]. Some accents are marked in measures 39-50 of the score. The combination of these regular accents and rhythm patterns vividly depicts the scene of workers shouting work songs to rush to collect goods when the typhoon comes. Teachers can first demonstrate, guide students to accurately sing the accents and rhythms, stimulate students' interest and emotions, and deepen their understanding of the magnificent scene of dock workers facing the wind and waves, shouting slogans, and racing against time to collect goods, as well as their fearless spirit. In addition to accents, the score also contains some dynamic marks, such as measures 35-38 and 119-121. These dynamic changes not only enhance the tension of the piece but also vividly show the process of the typhoon approaching from afar. During performance, teachers can strengthen the contrast of dynamic changes and clearly explain the important role of dynamic ornamentation in shaping musical atmosphere and depicting musical images.

3.2.4. Timbral ornamentation

The two innovative techniques of off-bridge glissando and hooked vibrato can produce unique timbres. Teachers can first play music fragments containing these two techniques, then explain the reasons for the different timbres produced: when performing off-bridge glissando, the left side of the guzheng bridge is an invalid sound area with no actual pitch, and rapid off-bridge glissando can produce a strong and chaotic sound effect, simulating the howling of the violent wind; when

performing hooked vibrato, the left hand needs to move left and right, forming different timbres through position changes, simulating the sound effect of the typhoon being far and near. Finally, teachers can play the corresponding fragments with glissando and off-bridge glissando, vibrato and hooked vibrato respectively, and deepen students' understanding and depiction of musical images through timbre comparison.

4. Creative practice in "Zhan Tai Feng"

Creative practice refers to the ability to carry out artistic innovation and practical application by using multi-disciplinary knowledge and closely connecting with real life [1]. This requires teachers to integrate music discipline and other multi-disciplinary curriculum resources in the teaching of "Zhan Tai Feng", design teaching content, conceive the implementation path of students' creative practice, and carry out teaching from the perspective of multi-disciplinary interaction. Peng Lanlan proposed four teaching methods: intra-disciplinary creative practice, multi-disciplinary creative practice, interdisciplinary creative practice, and transdisciplinary creative practice [4]. Teachers can draw on this classification to guide students to think and practice step by step. At the same time, creating a suitable atmosphere is also an important link in creative practice. When preparing lessons, teachers should pay attention to the way of introducing new lessons, and stimulate students' imagination and learning interest through association and vivid content based on multi-disciplinary knowledge.

4.1. Introduction to new lessons

"Zhan Tai Feng" mainly describes the scene of dock workers fighting typhoons. Teachers can design the introduction to new lessons around the two themes of "typhoon" and "dock workers".

First, combine current events to ask students if they have personally experienced natural disasters such as typhoons, discuss the defense and self-rescue methods when facing such disasters, and naturally introduce the theme of "typhoon". Then play Liszt's "Orage" to let students feel the piano's interpretation of the "violent wind" musical image, and then ask: "How should the guzheng interpret and express the 'typhoon' in terms of techniques, dynamics, and speed?" to guide students to imagine. Finally, play the second section of "Zhan Tai Feng", and in combination with the thinking of the question, detail the application of the off-bridge glissando technique and the scene of the surging typhoon approaching from afar presented by the changes in speed and dynamics.

Then, take the familiar scene of shouting slogans during morning jogs as an example to illustrate the importance of slogans in collective labor, and naturally introduce and explain dockers' work songs. Dock workers need a strong sense of tacit understanding and teamwork ability in high-intensity physical labor. To unify their steps and coordinate their actions, they have created unique dockers' work songs. Dockers' work songs have distinct and short rhythms and simple structures, and are widely used in labor scenes such as ship loading and unloading, cargo carrying, and pushing and pulling. There are many types of them. Among them, the Shanghai Port dockers' work songs were included in the national intangible cultural heritage list in 2008. Teachers can select fragments of classic Shanghai Port dockers' work songs (such as Nie Er's "Song of the Dock Workers") for students to listen to, so that they can feel their characteristics and rhythm; then select the rhythm of measures 39-44 of "Zhan Tai Feng", guide students to imitate singing, experience the imitation of dockers' work songs by the rhythm patterns of the piece, and introduce the heroic image of workers shouting work songs to rescue goods in the typhoon.

4.2. Teaching methods

Drawing on the four teaching methods proposed by Peng Lanlan, this paper specifically discusses their application in the teaching of "Zhan Tai Feng":

- Intra-disciplinary creative practice: Focus on the expansion of knowledge points within the music discipline. For example, "Orange" and "Song of the Dock Workers" mentioned earlier enrich the teaching content from the perspectives of "typhoon" and "dockers' work songs" respectively; in terms of guzheng techniques, it is necessary to explain in detail the innovations of off-bridge glissando compared with traditional glissando, and hooked vibrato compared with long vibrato, helping students understand the relationship between the inheritance and innovation of techniques.

- Multi-disciplinary creative practice: Emphasize the connection between music and sister arts, and cultivate students' interdisciplinary learning ability. For example, assign dance scene creation tasks around "Zhan Tai Feng" in groups, allowing students to feel the artistic charm of the integration of music and dance, and at the same time cultivate their cooperative ability and team spirit.

- Interdisciplinary creative practice: Promote the combination of music and technology. Teachers can guide students to record their own performance fragments or choreographed dance works, learn video editing skills, and then publish the works on Internet platforms such as the "Music Video" of the DingTalk music learning system, expanding the display channels of artistic practice.

- Transdisciplinary creative practice: Guide students to use the knowledge they have learned to connect with social life and strengthen the connection with reality. With the working class as the object of description, "Zhan Tai Feng" has distinct practical significance. Teachers can organize students to participate in activities such as the May Day Gala held by the school or community in various forms such as guzheng ensemble and dance performance, transforming the knowledge learned in class into social practice achievements.

5. Cultural understanding in "Zhan Tai Feng"

As an important part of core artistic literacy, cultural understanding focuses on guiding students to learn excellent traditional Chinese culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture, feel China's profound cultural heritage, and strengthen cultural confidence. As a representative work of Zhejiang guzheng music, "Zhan Tai Feng" is not only deeply rooted in the soil of Chinese music culture but also embodies the fearless spirit of the Chinese nation.

5.1. Cultural connotation in "Zhan Tai Feng"

"Zhan Tai Feng" was composed in 1964, when Chinese society advocated collectivism and honored labor. Literary and artistic creations closely focused on the theme of eulogizing the heroes of workers, peasants, and soldiers, aiming to show the strength and wisdom of the working people through artistic forms. Against this historical background, Wang Changyuan actively responded to the call of "literature and art serving workers, peasants, and soldiers". Under the leadership of her teacher, she went deep into the Shanghai Port wharf to experience life. Deeply touched by the magnificent scene of dock workers uniting as one to resist the typhoon, she created this work. With the working class as the theme, the work eulogizes the heroic image of dock workers fighting natural disasters and has distinct characteristics of the times.

While depicting the scene of dock workers fighting typhoons, "Zhan Tai Feng" conveys the optimistic mood and firm belief of "man can conquer nature". "Man can conquer nature" is the

positive spiritual core in traditional Chinese culture, reflecting the indomitable will of the Chinese nation in the process of adapting to and transforming the environment. From the fable of "Yugong Moving Mountains" in The Liezi·Tang Wen and the myth of "Jingwei Filling the Sea" in The Classic of Mountains and Seas: The Northern Mountains Section to the practical practice of the whole nation consciously preventing and controlling the epidemic and medical workers marching forward bravely during the COVID-19 pandemic, this spirit runs through ancient and modern China, as well as literature and practice, and is a precious spiritual wealth accumulated by the Chinese nation through long-term practice. This spirit of daring to overcome difficulties and taking positive actions is centered on giving full play to human subjective initiative on the basis of understanding the laws of nature, and creating a better life with collective wisdom and hard work. Teachers can further expand around this spirit, guide students to discuss how to achieve harmonious coexistence between humans and nature from the perspective of the relationship between humans and nature, and deepen their basic understanding of "man can conquer nature" and "harmonious coexistence".

5.2. The origin, representative figures, and important significance of the Zhejiang guzheng school

The formation of various guzheng schools in China is closely related to local traditional operas, folk arts, and folk music. As one of the nine major guzheng schools, the development of the Zhejiang guzheng school is deeply rooted in Hangzhou Tanhuang and Hangzhou Sizhu.

Hangzhou Tanhuang originated in the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty. Under the influence of the popular storytelling arts in the north and south at that time, it evolved from the Nanci storytelling popular in the Hangzhou area [5]. Hangzhou Tanhuang developed rapidly and was deeply loved by the people. Later, artists would play short pieces of music before performances, gradually forming Hangzhou Sizhu. Because Hangzhou was historically known as Wulin, the guzheng popular in the local area was also called "Wulin Guzheng". The popularity of Hangzhou Tanhuang and Hangzhou Sizhu nurtured many Wulin Guzheng artists, among whom Wang Xunzhi made great contributions to the inheritance and development of the Zhejiang guzheng school.

Wang Xunzhi studied guzheng from Jiang Yinchun, a master of Hangzhou Sizhu music, in 1921. In 1956, the Department of National Music of the East China Branch of the Central Conservatory of Music (later renamed the Shanghai Conservatory of Music) was established, and he was hired as a teacher of guzheng and sanxian. With the assistance of his students, Wang Xunzhi began to systematically sort out, enrich, and develop the scores and performance techniques of the Zhejiang guzheng school. In teaching, he encouraged young students to bravely innovate and cultivated a large number of outstanding guzheng performers. These disciples formed a unique style in long-term performance practice, and at the same time absorbed and drew on Western composition techniques for creation, promoting the continuous development of the Zhejiang guzheng school. Classic works such as Wang Changyuan's "Zhan Tai Feng", Liu Yan's "Liuyang River", and Xiang Sihua's "Wen Ji Returning to Han" emerged.

Zhejiang guzheng music is deeply rooted in the Wuyue music culture, with both traditional charm and modern characteristics. It is an important part of the Wuyue music culture and a pioneer in the active innovation and modernization of traditional Chinese guzheng schools. By telling the development history of the Zhejiang guzheng school, teachers can guide students to establish cultural confidence, give full play to their subjective initiative and innovate actively while adhering to the foundation of traditional Chinese culture, and further think about the new development models of other traditional Chinese art forms.

6. Conclusion

Core artistic literacy is the core content of middle school music education to achieve the goal of educating people through aesthetics. As the main position of middle school music education, music appreciation courses have guzheng music appreciation courses as an important part. Taking "Zhan Tai Feng" as a case, this paper explores the teaching strategies of junior high school guzheng music appreciation courses from the four dimensions of core artistic literacy. Through methods such as creating an atmosphere, language rendering, and multi-disciplinary integration, it helps students quickly feel musical emotions, understand musical backgrounds, clarify musical images, and comprehend musical connotations. The four aspects of core artistic literacy are not isolated but interrelated and synergistically coexistent. Therefore, teachers need to pay attention to the connection and transition between "aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice, and cultural understanding" in the teaching process, so as to better guide students to strengthen cultural confidence and realize the effective inheritance of traditional national music.

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