

Analysis on the Integration of National Singing and Bel Canto in Vocal Music Teaching

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Abstract: With the development of the Internet and globalization, the integration of multiculturalism has promoted the continuous development of modern vocal music art. Especially under the integration of national singing and bel canto, more outstanding singing skills and expression effects are demonstrated. Against this background, this paper deeply discusses the artistic characteristics of national singing and bel canto, understands the connection, intercommunication, and integration application value between national singing and bel canto in vocal music teaching, and proposes integration strategies and methods for national singing and bel canto in vocal music teaching from the aspects of singing skills, artistic cultivation, breath control, vocalization methods, and articulation.

Keywords: Vocal music teaching; National singing; Bel canto; Integration

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1. Introduction

The development of multiculturalism has promoted the close intersection and deep integration of the same fields in different regions, providing important momentum for technological creation and cultural innovation. In the field of vocal music teaching, both national singing and bel canto are based on improving singing ability. Although they have different cultural backgrounds and technical characteristics, they have certain commonalities in singing application. Therefore, in vocal music teaching, teachers should deeply analyze the respective advantages and disadvantages of national singing and bel canto, learn from and compensate for each other, and guide students to flexibly use different singing skills, so as to improve their comprehensive musical literacy and vocal expression skills.

2. Cognitive deconstruction: Characteristics analysis of national singing and bel canto

2.1. Characteristics of national singing

National singing is a vocal music concept and singing technique with unique Chinese characteristics. It is a

scientific and standardized vocal singing method system based on the traditional music cultures of various ethnic groups such as folk songs, operas, and folk art, showing the musical aesthetic characteristics of the Chinese nation. However, there are also diversified expression skills and singing differences within national singing, forming rich singing forms and vocal skills ^[1]. For example, the national singing in southern regions focuses on a sweet and light style, while that in northwestern regions has an uninhibited characteristic. Therefore, national singing is a macro-concept with the characteristics of dynamic development and rich connotations, and its core characteristic is “correct pronunciation and round tone”, emphasizing the correct consonant and vowel pronunciation mechanism, while paying attention to the cooperation effect of articulation and singing, so as to achieve the effect of clear lyrics expression and smooth singing, and further highlight the importance attached to emotional expression by national singing ^[2].

2.2. Characteristics of bel canto

Bel canto is a singing style based on the Italian classic vocal music system, emphasizing science and art, highlighting beautiful voice, precise skills, and emotional balance. Singing pursues bright and pure timbre, coherent and unified range, free breath control, and improves voice penetration and persistence through the mobilization of the whole resonance cavity, while also paying attention to showing flexibility and lyric characteristics through ornamentation ^[3]. Overall, bel canto also emphasizes clear articulation and enunciation, and highlights the beauty through the overall control and coordination of music singing. In terms of sound performance, bel canto can make better use of various resonance cavity organs, and can adjust the volume and emotional characteristics through controlling the resonance effect, so that the singing effect is more coordinated and balanced ^[4]. In addition, bel canto is also used to integrate trills in the extended sound, which can express richer emotions and make the song sound lively.

3. Multidimensional resonance: Integration and intercommunication of national singing and bel canto

3.1. Breath intercommunication

The foundation of vocalization in both national singing and bel canto lies in breathing. The two respectively emphasize “cavity roundness” and “resonance”, and adjust the singing characteristics with the help of breathing skills to achieve the purpose of controlling the vocalization effect ^[5]. National singing and bel canto also have similar breathing skills, both of which are based on the mobilization and resonance of the chest cavity and abdominal cavity to achieve timbre transformation. The difference is that national singing emphasizes “qi chen dantian” (breath sinking to the dan tian), focusing on the depth, smoothness, flexibility, and stability of breath; while bel canto usually adopts the “thoraco-abdominal combined breathing” method, realizes breath control with the help of the diaphragm, and supports the gradual increase and decrease of sound to ensure the continuity of long phrases ^[6].

3.2. Resonance intercommunication

In terms of resonance presentation, national singing is quite different from bel canto. National singing mainly combines oral cavity, nasal cavity, and head cavity resonance, focusing on the pursuit of centralized, bright, and distant sound presentation, that is, “sweet, bright, smooth, crisp, and soft.” In comparison, it uses less chest cavity resonance. National singing also has different resonance skills in the expression of different high and

low registers. Among them, the head cavity resonance is generally used in the high register, and the nasal cavity resonance is used in the low register. The resonance application of bel canto emphasizes the cooperation of the whole cavity of the chest, pharynx, and head. By lowering the laryngeal position, it shows a bright, plump, and round timbre effect, especially able to emit a sound quality with a strong resonance effect, and can be adjusted in a timely manner according to the needs of emotional expression ^[7]. Therefore, in vocal music teaching, teachers can guide students to master the two resonance skills respectively and use them in combination and integration in singing.

3.3. Register intercommunication

National singing has relatively strict requirements for register control. The high register should maintain stable timbre and flexible tone quality; the middle register should pay attention to being slow and stable; the low register should ensure roundness and strength. When converting registers, the skill of combining true and false voices should be used, but it has a clear hierarchical characteristic for the performance effect of the register. Bel canto generally uses the skill of true and false mixing to achieve register conversion, but it also needs long-term and solid training to achieve better singing effects and gradually eliminate the hierarchy of register conversion ^[8]. Therefore, teachers should also actively carry out daily training in vocal music teaching to exercise students' register conversion skills.

4. Value purpose: Integration significance of national singing and bel canto

4.1. Promoting the international development of national music

Bel canto not only has a mature and scientific vocalization system, but also its musical art form has been gradually recognized by the vocal music field in China. In modern vocal music teaching, the integration of teaching national singing and bel canto also has a perfect curriculum system, teaching repertoire, and teaching paradigm, thus providing a new path for China's national music to go to the world. It can not only help students learn more vocal music skills, but also allow students to bring national music to the world stage through integration skills.

4.2. Improving students' interest in bel canto

In the context of cultural integration, the development of bel canto in China tends to be popular. However, in the education related to bel canto, it shows the characteristics of being too formal and monotonous in style, which is not only difficult to effectively integrate into China's music culture system, but also cannot arouse students' attention and preference. For most music major students, bel canto belongs to classical music, which is not only obscure and difficult to understand, but also does not conform to their aesthetic concepts, resulting in insufficient students' learning awareness ^[9]. The integration teaching of national singing and bel canto can broaden the integration path of bel canto and China's vocal music culture and arouse students' attention and love.

4.3. Enriching the teaching content of national singing

Similar to the situation faced by bel canto, national singing is also in a weak position in vocal music education, and more students prefer pop music, so they choose to learn popular singing. The integration of national singing and bel canto can deeply combine the advantages of the two, bringing different sensory experiences to students, not only bringing an international style to national singing, but also presenting bel canto in a localized way.

Thus, it not only enriches and fills the teaching content of national singing, but also lays a foundation for the development of students' comprehensive musical literacy.

5. Paradigm transition: Integration strategies of national singing and bel canto in vocal music teaching

5.1. Paying attention to singing skills and changing students' attitudes

In vocal music singing, without flexible and superb singing skills, it is impossible to correctly express touching emotions. Before promoting the integration teaching of national singing and bel canto, teachers must let students pay attention to the importance of singing skills and recognize that factors such as emotions, personality, timbre, and language all need to be expressed and realized through singing skills. Only by mastering different skills proficiently can they better serve the works and roles and show the charm of musical art ^[10]. In this regard, teachers can carry out special activities for students in the first lesson of the integration course. On the one hand, they should change students' cognition and attitude towards national singing and bel canto. On the other hand, they should transmit the concept of artistic commonality, so that students can have a deeper understanding of the two singing skills.

5.2. Based on local culture and highlighting the integration effect

In the integration teaching of national singing and bel canto, teachers should distinguish the primary and secondary, avoid blind worship of the Western vocal music system, but establish the basic idea of "learning from the West and using it in China", integrate the scientific technology of bel canto into national singing, and achieve the effect of using its skills to serve the development of local culture. In this regard, teachers should first deeply analyze the characteristics and advantages of bel canto, carefully select the skills or contents beneficial to national singing, and integrate them into the national singing system. Secondly, teachers should be based on practice. First, form an independent singing style through their own integration practice, and then carry out teaching and demonstration, guide students to learn from each other's strengths and weaknesses, and push national music to the world stage ^[11]. Finally, in the selection of singing works, teachers need to screen out works with both musical styles, but at the same time highlight the characteristics of local culture, so that students can experience the effect of integration skills in presenting local music culture and improve students' learning initiative.

5.3. Paying attention to the combination of breaths and drawing on breathing experience

National singing attaches great importance to the use of breathing, but it mainly focuses on showing the compactness of the voice and achieves a better sound effect through the vibration of the throat and vocal cords. The emphasis of bel canto on the use of breathing and breath is different, and it pays more attention to the coordination among breath, sound, and resonance. Therefore, in the integration teaching, teachers can use the training mode of bel canto to strengthen students' waist and abdomen strength and breath stability, so as to provide sufficient and long-lasting breath support for students when singing national singing ^[12]. Specifically, teachers can start from the aspects of diaphragm expansion training, breath conversion, and sentence breaking, and design corresponding training plans and teaching contents.

5.4. Promoting the combination of vocalization and training resonance ability

The vocal music training of national singing is based on language training, focusing on the emotional expression of lyrics, resulting in slightly defective audio-visual effects. Integrating the vocalization skills of bel canto into national singing and carrying out resonance training can effectively make up for students' ability defects. Teachers can design special training programs to specifically strengthen students' chest cavity, abdominal cavity, and head cavity resonance, so as to bring the relaxed and natural state of bel canto into national singing, and can also effectively reduce the negative impact of sound on the throat, vocal cords, etc., so that students have a more scientific vocalization method and obtain a longer career^[13].

5.5. Paying attention to articulation and improving penetration effect

Correct pronunciation and round tone are the basic requirements of national singing. Therefore, teachers require students to master accurate vocalization skills and the singing ability to master rhyming and closing, so as to ensure that each word can be sung and expressed accurately and clearly. Because bel canto and national singing have different vocalization positions, their true and false voices and register conversion have more flexible advantages, creating space for the roundness and fullness of sound. Therefore, teachers can integrate the two methods in teaching. On the one hand, they help students accurately articulate and pronounce. On the other hand, they use the effects of true and false voices and register conversion to improve the coordination of sound and further improve the clarity of sound^[14]. In addition, teachers can also use the resonance advantage of bel canto to further exercise the coordination between students' breath and sound, enhance the resonance effect of singing, and highlight the thickness and roundness of lyrical expression.

5.6. Expanding teaching resources and reasonably selecting repertoire

In integration teaching, teachers should reasonably select teaching repertoire. They should not only select foreign songs for the demonstration of bel canto, but also select traditional national music for demonstration to highlight the integration effect. Generally speaking, Chinese characters have a certain complexity in bel canto expression. The composition of consonants and vowels is complex, and different tones will produce differences in word meanings, which makes it more difficult to sing Chinese songs in bel canto^[15]. But teachers should further highlight the integration effect of national singing and bel canto, and use national singing to avoid the difficulties faced by bel canto in Chinese character expression, so as to achieve the effect of coherent pronunciation and highlighting beauty. In this regard, on the one hand, teachers should expand teaching resources in integrated teaching. They should not only use English or Italian songs to show the characteristics and advantages of bel canto, but also select Chinese songs to highlight the characteristics of national singing, and more importantly, show the integration effect of the two. On the other hand, teachers should further emphasize the service status of singing technology, so that students can understand national singing and bel canto from the perspective of artistic essence, and then truly achieve the deep combination of breath, vocalization, articulation, and resonance, so that students' singing skills can be further improved.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, in modern vocal music teaching, teachers should continue to promote the integration of national singing and bel canto, and continuously improve students' musical cultivation and singing skills through mutual integration and skill reference. In teaching, teachers should focus on using the advantages of bel canto to make

up for the defects of national singing, so as to continuously enrich and improve China's national singing vocal music system and promote the sustainable development of China's vocal music education.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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