

The Innovation Mechanism of Curriculum about the Voice Major in Popular Songs in Southwest Normal University

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to analyze the problems in voice major in popular songs in Southwest Normal University from the perspective of cultivating innovation mechanism, including the curriculum structure, curriculum content, construction of teachers and evaluation methods. The study employs the qualitative research methods and data from the fieldwork. The results are as follows. 1) It is excessive proportion of general education courses and low proportion of professional development about compulsory courses. 2) General education courses lack contacts with the knowledge of arts, and most of professional basic courses and professional development courses lack contacts with the popular music. 3) It is lack of full-time professional teachers about popular music, and single evaluation methods. And then, the author discussed the methods of innovation. Through this kind of rational and objective analysis of voice major in popular songs, we hope to promote the better development of the major in Southwest Normal University and another from the perspective of cultivating mechanism innovation.

Keywords: Innovation mechanism, voice major in popular songs, curriculum, Southwest Normal University

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Introduction

From the introduction of popular music into China, after more than ten years of efforts, a number of domestic conservatories and universities have opened popular music major: However, with the popular music major set up in various conservatories and universities, the connotation, concept and category of department name, major name or professional direction name, has not formed a consensus in the academic community. Southwest Normal University, renamed Southwest University, located in Chongqing city in China, is a university directly under the ministry of education of the People's Republic of China, which still have the characteristics of normal university. It is one of the seven universities offering free education for normal university students. College of music in Southwest Normal University consists of four departments: music education department, musicology department, music performance department and dance department.

It is only 8 years since the establishment of the voice major in popular songs in Southwest Normal University. Many students go out to study from the other teachers for competition, because of deficiency in the curriculum. In this article, the author looks at the problems of voice major from an innovative perspective and puts forward corresponding suggestions. In order to ensure that the research is based on truth and objectivity, the author went to the music performance department of Southwest Normal University in March 2019 to carry out a series of course research activities related to voice major in popular songs.

Objective

The objective is to analyze the problems in voice major in popular songs in Southwest Normal University from the perspective of cultivating innovation mechanism, including the curriculum structure, curriculum content, construction of teachers and evaluation methods.

Methodology

This is a qualitative investigation adopting the fieldwork. Data for this investigation were collected from both field study and document analysis in Southwest Normal University in China. There are 2789 universities, including 143 normal universities, I chose Southwest Normal University from the top rated universities under the ministry of education in China.

The author concludes the curriculum design in voice major of popular songs by collecting data interviewing the teacher and the students questionnaire for the students. The details of course classification and the credits distribution are showed in the curriculum program. The curriculum program consists of curriculum objectives, curriculum requirements, graduation credits and degree granted, core courses and practice teaching requirements.

Result

Research and efforts have been made on the curriculum in the voice major of popular songs in Southwest Normal University, and some teaching results have been achieved. But there are still some aspects to be improved, and the results of the study were found as follows.

1. Excessive proportion of general education courses and low proportion of professional development about compulsory are showed in Table 1. From the table, it can be clearly seen that the total credits of the training courses of popular songs are 152, among which, general education courses with 46 credits, accounting for 30.2% of the total credits. Among them, the total credits of compulsory courses are 40, accounting for 26.3%; the total credits of elective courses are 6 credits, accounting for 3.94%. The total credits of professional basic courses are 14, accounting for 9.21% of the total. Professional development courses with 63 credits, account for 41.4% of the total credits, among which, the credits of compulsory courses are 24, accounting for 15.8%; the credits of elective courses are 39, accounting for 25.6% of the total credits. Comprehensive practice courses with 29 credits, account for 19% of the total credits, among which, professional practice with 8 credits, accounts for 5.26%; art practice with 16 credits, accounts for 10.5%; graduation concert with 4 credits, accounts for 2.63%; social practice with 1 credit, account for 0.65%.

Table 1. Curriculum structure and credit distribution

Course category	Credits
General education courses (Compulsory course)	40
General education courses (Elective course)	6
Professional basic course (Compulsory course)	14
Professional development courses (Compulsory course)	24
Professional development courses (Elective course)	39

Course category	Credits
Comprehensive practice course (Professional practice)	8
Comprehensive practice course (Art practice)	16
Comprehensive practice course (Graduation design)	4
Comprehensive practice course (Social practice)	1

2. General education courses lack contacts with the knowledge of arts, and most of professional basic courses and professional development courses lack contacts with the popular music.

General education courses include ideological and moral cultivation and legal basis, outline of modern and contemporary Chinese history, an introduction to the basic principles of Marxism, introduction to MAO Zedong thought and theoretical socialism, situation and policy, military training and military theory, sports, college foreign language, computer basis, career development and employment guidance for students, entrepreneurship foundation of students.

The compulsory courses of the pop singing program in Southwest Normal University mainly include music skills of pop singing, stage performance of pop singing, which are offered for 7 semesters, 45 minutes per week. Moreover, Chamber music appreciation and music education are opened in the last semester. About the elective courses, the different students will select different elective courses of professional development. The author interviewed a student, who selected courses including Chinese music history, College Chinese, Chinese phonetics, solfeggio and ear training, foreign music history, fundamentals of music form analysis, music appreciation, Chinese traditional music, general knowledge of instrument, music of world nationalities, small band rehearsal, dance course. Most of the courses are the same courses with the voice major in Bel canto, which lack contacts with popular music.

3. The preset teaching effect is showed in curriculum objectives and curriculum requirement, which cannot be the lack of full-time professional teachers about popular music, single evaluation method.

Conclusion

Through comprehensive observation of curriculum program in Southwest Normal University, the author formed the relative systematic understanding. However, there are still some deficiencies that may affect the benign development of voice major in popular songs in Southwest Normal University.

(1) The curriculum structure is imbalanced and lack of innovative integration. On the one hand, proportion of period about the professional development courses is low. Pop singing vocal skills course period is too few, only one period per week. And there is no group vocal singing course, which is very important for the practice of singing on stage. The art practice course is about the band rehearsal every semester, which can be integrated into a group of several students, and in which the lead singer can be rotated every semester. In this way, the students in group can not only get familiar with the band's singing, but also be proficient in a musical instrument in the band. On the other hand, proportion of general education courses is excessive. The compulsive course in general education course is 40 credits following the government stipulation. In this part of the course, we can add some related art content, such as, music software application content can be added in computer course, and music professional articles and vocabulary content can be added in English course. More courses about artistic quality can be added in the elective list of general education course.

(2) The curriculum content is out of the comprehensive singing talents and makes it difficult to sustain the benign development of Innovative talents. The voice talent of popular songs according to the market demand is comprehensive. But the curriculum associated with popular music in Southwest Normal University related only vocal skills course, stage performances course and small band rehearsal, while other courses follows classical music education curriculum. The course of music creation as well as the course related popular music industry management is not opened, such as song writing course, lyrics writing course and music software application course. Dance class should be modern dance, popular dance and hip-hop dance as the main teaching content, so as to be able to be proficient to sing in dance group.

(3) There is a big gap between curriculum innovation and preset teaching effect. There are 28 students in pop singing program in 2019, including 5 freshmen, 8 sophomore, 11 junior students and 9 senior students, following 1 fulltime pop singing teacher and 2 part-time popular singing teachers, and the teaching period of professional skills training courses for the program is low. Moreover, most of the theory course and basic knowledge course is about classical music. Moreover, pop vocal skills course only have mid-term exam and final exam. And about the other theory course evaluation, the performance in class is 20% score, the ordinary grade is 20% score and the final examination is 60% score. Therefore, the preset teaching effect cannot be reached fully.

Discussion

In curriculum theory, scholars often discuss the basis of curriculum from three aspects: knowledge factor, social factor and student factor. The three aspects respectively reflect three different attributes of the logical starting point of curriculum design: Cultural factor -- taking the logic of subject knowledge as the starting point of curriculum design; Social factor -- taking social factors as the starting point of curriculum design; Humanistic factor -- the logical starting point of curriculum based on students. Based on this, the author puts forward the value orientation of comprehensive curriculum of pop singer talents training in normal universities, as follows: Firstly, it is to take social development and industry demand as the target. Secondly, it is to take the individual development of the students as the core.

About the innovation of voice major of popular songs in Southwest Normal University, showed in Table 2, based on the excellent foreign teaching method, and according to Chinese culture, and realities of Chinese people, we should make corresponding adjustment and innovation, in order to help students release nature, enhance the perception and absorb knowledge, and help teachers broaden the teaching vision, improve the teaching vitality. According to the characteristics of music market about popular songs, the innovation of curriculum program and curriculum implementation should be compatible with the development reality of pop music industry. The mission of cultivating innovative talents depends on the innovative curriculum mechanism.

Table 2. Methods of innovation

Category of innovation	Methods of innovation
Idea innovation	Integration of related ideas.
	Integration of related resources.
Contents innovation	Teaching materials innovation.
	Teaching environment innovation.
	Practice process innovation.
	Teaching evaluation innovation.
Teaching forms and means innovation	Keep consistent with the education development.
	Meet the psychological characteristics and personality characteristics of different students.
	Give the individual space and imagination of the practice.
	Interactive exploration is created in class.
	Emphasize that the course is not isolated in the theory course.
	Combine of this skill and other professional skills in professional courses.

(1) Idea innovation of curriculum design in voice major of popular songs. The cultivation of creative talents needs the idea innovation of curriculum in Southwest Normal University. Nowadays, higher education often fails to adapt to the social market. The cause is that there is traditional training mechanism widely prevailing in contemporary colleges and universities, and this traditional talent training mechanism has not been able to meet the needs of the market. There are many complicated reasons why the universities face such an educational situation. Among them, one of the important reasons is that the idea of innovative talent training curriculum has not been updated and changed. The updating of innovative talent cultivation curriculum is not simply to put several new ideas and viewpoints together at random, but to innovate a curriculum program by the integration of related ideas\related resources. For example, about the practice teaching of voice major in popular songs in Southwest Normal University, junior and senior students can be encouraged to participate in the selection of various voice competitions in popular songs. If students cannot complete the rehearsal course on time due to their participation in off-campus practical activities, the school will give students the results and credits of relevant courses according to the evaluation of practical activities, so as to promote the practical teaching process to be implemented.

(2) Contents innovation of curriculum system in popular songs in Southwest Normal University. Firstly, the most important channel for the cultivation of innovative talents is reflected in the content and teaching of courses. Innovative content refers to innovation in curriculum standards, curriculum objectives, relevant teaching materials and resources, examination, evaluation and other aspects, which is a complex curriculum system. In the modern social environment, teachers and students are not only the implementer and receiver of curriculum, but also the developers of curriculum resources. The curriculum should follow the integration of various elements in the curriculum construction, including the dynamic process of continuous development and innovation of teaching materials, teaching environment, practice process, and other elements. For example, teachers of voice major in popular songs in Southwest Normal University can edit some teaching materials suitable for popular singing talents in normal university, and make innovations in content, combining Chinese songs with foreign songs, slow songs with fast songs, and integrating various popular music styles Secondly, it is necessary to establish a new curriculum evaluation system for the cultivation of innovative talents. The innovation of teaching process cannot be restricted by the traditional examination and evaluation system in the past. For example, evaluation system should include results evaluation\teaching process evaluation\feedback evaluation after graduation.

(3) Innovation of teaching forms and means about voice program in popular songs in Southwest Normal University. The teaching form innovation is the important link in the teaching innovation system. To carry out innovative talents training, the staff should attach importance to the innovation of teaching form and means, take the initiative to adapt to the needs of innovative talents training, and keep consistent with the education system. Therefore, the innovative curriculum system and teaching forms should be implemented to meet the psychological characteristics and personality characteristics of different students. In addition, the curriculum system aims to cultivate innovative talents, to ensure the direct or indirect theoretical knowledge communication, and to give the individual space and imagination of the practice. In the process of learning, students' traits should be cultivated and developed, and the interactive exploration is created in class. Teachers should pay more and more attention to the innovation of teaching form and means. The performance forms of popular songs are rich, which also determines that the popular songs talents market needs to cultivate versatile performers who can sing for a solo, sing in dance group and sing in a musical. Therefore, in professional theory teaching courses, the teachers should emphasize that the course is not isolated. In teaching a professional course, teachers should not only cultivate students' relevant professional skills, but also make students understand and pay attention to the combination of this skill and other professional skills.

Recommendation

The author put forward suggestions on the curriculum of voice program of popular songs in Northeast Normal University, and further research could be explored about the curriculum comparison of pop singing major between Thailand and China, the curriculum of pop sing major in conservatory of music, etc. If the research results are used to solve the problems of voice major in popular songs in other universities, the characteristics of the program in other universities should be combined.

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