

Research on Practices of Experiential Teaching in Music Courses of Elementary Schools

Yingying Xian^{1, a,*} and Libo You²

¹School of Art, Bohai University, Jinzhou, China

²Liao-ning Polytechnic Vocational College High School, Jinzhou, China

^axianyinying1980@126.com

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Abstract. Experiential teaching means teachers actively create various scenarios to guide students to actively get involved in pleasant teaching activities. This paper discusses the practices of experiential teaching which is particularly apply to the singing teaching, appreciation teaching and instruments teaching of the elementary school music course.

“Experiential teaching, orienting towards people’s lives and growth, respects, cares about, expands and improves lives, implying great life value and significance.” [1] Concerning experiential teaching, Mr. Tao Xingzhi, a famous Chinese educationist, proposed that “life is education” and “teaching shall be integrated”. In his opinion, students shall combine their learning with their life experiences. Through practices, children can take initiatives in teaching to gain personal experiences. [2] Then, how to practise experiential teaching in music courses of elementary schools?

Practice Strategies Based on Singing Teaching

The central parts of singing teaching are mainly as follows: Learn about writing background of songs; understand emotions and styles of songs; sing songs with emotions. In short, students are born with talent for singing and children’s singing with joy is a unique part of music classes, in order that students can enjoy and gain pleasure from singing. All teachers are supposed to make every effort to meet these standards.

Applications of Body Rhythms in Experiential Classroom Teaching of Music in Elementary Schools

Dalcross, who is a well-known Swiss composer and music educator, thinks that natural emotional responses are essences of music. Body rhythms are essential for Dalcross’s musical education system. This system aims to enable students to perceive music via body rhythms and motivate students to have natural feelings about music so that feelings of all their body parts can be effectively coordinated with their brain functions to train students’ overall capabilities.

To master body rhythms, students are required to personally feel and experience musical changes. Students’ brains are inspired by musical movements; feedbacks are offered via the comprehensive process of brain judgement, correction, memorization, imagination and comprehension, in order that bodies will move and musical notations will be presented through body movements. “Body rhythms” comprise of in-situ and spatial movements. In-situ movements include hand clap, command, sway, stoop, speaking and singing; spatial movements contain walking, running, crawl, bouncing, jump and sliding. Movements shall be coordinated with bodies to show different rhythm, melody and tempo.” [2]

With the application of body rhythms in classroom teaching of music in elementary schools, students can actively take part in classroom activities, while music teachers can pay attention to all students in the process of teaching and flexibly employ appropriate teaching methods according to students’ performances. In teaching music in elementary schools, teachers ought to fully consider students’ individual differences. Through body rhythms, all students’ musical abilities can be effectively improved. By virtue of their body languages, students can not only acquire deeper

understanding of music, but also can actively show their abilities.

Applications of Language for Teaching in Experiential Classroom Teaching of Music in Elementary Schools

“Teaching is not only a discipline, but also an art; classroom teaching is an integral part of teaching arts, and language for classroom teaching is one of important means for smooth teaching.[4] Classroom language intuitively reflects teachers’ overall qualities and abilities, while music teachers impart and discover beauties, so more attention shall be paid to beauties of classroom language than the discipline. Therefore, apart from conscientiously and intensively studying teaching, music educators shall also attach importance to language accomplishments and keep on making classroom language more literary and artistic, so as to make classroom teaching impressive, cultivate students’ aesthetic interests, stimulate their imaginations and constantly foster students’ musical qualities. Only in this way will it be possible for highlighting that music is a critical way for delivering aesthetic education, in order to give play to roles of musical disciplines in talent training.

According to concepts on new courses, teachers have to promptly adjust their teaching strategies in line with students’ learning state. In the meantime, they shall utilize heuristic classroom language for dealing with different problems of classroom teaching and some of students’ unstable issues in order. It is fairly necessary to design a classroom language. Most importantly, teachers are supposed to improve their abilities to solve problems more responsively in complicated and changeable classroom teaching. Therefore, it will be better for creating a scenario in line with emotions of musical works for students by properly guiding students by proper expressions, to help students better understand and strike chords with the works.

Practical Strategies based on Appreciative Teaching

Music appreciation is an integral part of classroom teaching of music in elementary schools. Moreover, it is feasible for cultivating students’ interests in music, expanding art horizons and enhancing aesthetic abilities. By teaching students how to appreciate music, it is helpful for students to really feel, understand and deepen beauty to beautify their soul, in order that students can grow up healthily and happily. Hence, music appreciation must be taught based on features of students’ psychological and physiological growth in elementary schools. In the course of teaching, various musical activities shall be appropriately designed so that students can personally experience and feel music. Making innovations in appreciation courses is indispensable. It is favorable for effectively stimulate students’ imagination and creativity, in order that students will gain more aesthetic experiences in appreciating music.

Applications of Audio-Visual Synesthesia in Experiential Classroom Teaching of Music in Elementary Schools

“Synesthesia” means that changes to certain feeling of a human body causes changes to another feeling or several feelings. Audio-visual synesthesia refers to coordinated development of visual and audio arts; by promoting development of both arts, benign interactions are facilitated between recipients and what they’ve received, recipients can understand key points more deeply and achieve overall understanding about what they’ve received.

In teaching courses about music appreciation in elementary schools, pupils’ psychological development and comprehension skills are limited owing to their special psychological and physiological development status. Their thinking is mainly developed based on analysis and inference of specific graphic materials. Students are easily distracted and disturbed by the external world.

Audio-visual synesthesia fully mobilizes students to effectively improve their visual and auditory perception in appreciating music. Promoting coordination between students’ thinking and body, it enhances students’ skills for art appreciation. Furthermore, audio-visual synesthesia enables students to strike auditory and visual chords during music appreciation. Students can independently

develop good music thinking, improve their abilities to memorize musical knowledge and foster complete skills for reserving knowledge about music. At last, audio-visual synaesthesia promotes development of students' cognitive skills, cultivates students' skills for artistic appreciation and auditory arts, and effectively enhances students' cognitive skills throughout development of music appreciation.

Applications of Spectral Graphs in Experiential Classroom Teaching of Music in Elementary Schools

Spectral graphs vividly present abstract artistic elements of musical works such as images, notes, melodic motion, strength and rhythmic variations using pictures and symbols such as points, lines and planes. Spectral graphs are classified into six categories, namely latticed, point/line-based, coloured, image-based and structural graphs. In music teaching, spectral graphs combine vivid and intuitive visual effects with abstract auditory effects. They guide students to understand and convey music by visual images such as colours, shapes and lines. Being apparently intuitive, interesting and specific, they make up visual and linguistic deficiencies of musical arts. In a word, spectral graphs simplify complicated music into graphic symbols with acoustic features. Diverse symbols are designed based on musical elements of musical compositions such as tempo, strength, characteristics of melodies and intensity, in order to clearly present music structures and create definite spectral graphs.

Above all, students are easily distracted and their interests are variable owing to students' physiological and psychological features. Students, who are instinctively lively and active, will become unenthusiastic for learning if their teachers purely impart and teach knowledge. Therefore, it is quite favourable for solving this problem by using graphs as means of assisted teaching in music classes, Spectral graphs, which are helpful for students to understand, experience and express music more deeply, are beneficial for training students' overall musical skills. They motivate students to show interests in music, acquire knowledge about music and master musical skills, so as to efficiently teach music in elementary schools.

Practical Strategies based on Instrumental Teaching

Instrumental teaching, which stimulates students' interests in learning music, improves students' understanding, expression and innovation of music. It plays crucial roles in giving full play to aesthetic functions of music education and enriching students' extracurricular musical lives. Meanwhile, teaching on instrumental performances is an indispensable part.

Application of Rhythmic Training in Experiential Classroom Teaching of Music in Elementary Schools

"Rhythmic training" is a key teaching method put forward by the German composer and music educator Orff in instrumental teaching. Rhythms are important elements of music, and different music rhythms contribute to varying auditory effects. Therefore, it is effective for improving students' musical perception and qualities by strengthening training about students' music rhythms. Orff has also pointed out that music education shall be delivered based on rhythm teaching to cultivate students' musical consciousness and stimulate their learning interests for the final purpose of improving teaching. Thus, it is clear that rhythmic training is of great significance for instrumental teaching.

Pursuant to their age characteristics, Grade 1 to Grade 3 pupils are easily distracted and engage in petty actions in music classes. As a consequence, students' learning efficiency in classes can't be increased. By performing rhythmic training in classes, it is helpful for improving overall classroom atmosphere, in order that classroom teaching can be lively, vivid and funny. Diverse teaching methods can be adopted to attract students to be attentive in classes. Grade 4 to Grade 6 students are a bit more attentive than lower-grade students, but there are new problems. For instance, these students are not especially interested in songs of textbooks. For this situation, popular songs with similar tempos of textbook songs can be taught in classes to increase students' thirst for knowledge,

and then stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning music by rhythmic training.

Applications of Situational Teaching Methods in Experiential Classroom Teaching of Music in Elementary Schools

“By situational teaching methods, teachers create some specific vivid scenarios with certain emotional characteristics and related to teaching content during classroom teaching to help students understand knowledge of textbooks and facilitate students' psychological growth.” [6] Situational teaching is essential for enhancing students' emotional experiences. To effectively facilitate students' learning, teachers create vivid scenarios in language. Situational teaching is mainly performed according to several steps as follows in instrumental teaching:

(1) Introducing scenarios.

Teachers shall perform instrumental teaching with appropriate methods to positively guide and encourage students to concentrate on learning musical instruments wholeheartedly, fully mobilize their learning interests and enthusiasm, and enlighten their creative thinking. In conventional instrumental teaching, students usually feel monotonous and bored to learn musical instruments, because teachers only teach students about fingering and skills. In traditional classroom teaching, teachers impart knowledge, while students listen to classes to passively receive knowledge. Therefore, in instrumental teaching, teachers shall highlight guiding students to learn through scenarios and enhancing their teamwork.

(2) Creating vivid scenarios.

Likewise, students are subjects of instrumental teaching, guided by teachers. To teach students theoretical knowledge with vivid and interesting expressions, teachers shall pay attention to students' personalized development, actively know about students' characteristics and learning situation, teach students by proper methods according to their personalities, arouse their learning interests in musical instruments to the greatest extent and stimulate their curiosity. Only in this way can teachers continuously improve students' enthusiasm for learning while boosting their courage for making innovations and attempts.

(3) Combining teaching with practices.

For situational teaching, teachers have to improve students' actual performances in teaching activities as per actual situation apart from strengthening research on theoretical knowledge about musical instruments. They can organize students to cooperate and communicate with each other to cultivate their consciousness of performances and teamwork, practical skills, overall and musical qualities. To this end, teachers are supposed to fully mobilize students' learning enthusiasm and learning, constantly improve teaching quality and efficiency of musical instruments by appropriately utilizing situational teaching methods.

Experiential teaching attaches great importance to students' roles as subjects, guide students to actively acquire knowledge from their participation, master learning methods and accumulate emotional experiences. If students take initiatives to learn music in the process of teaching, they will acquire deeper understanding of knowledge and become more enthusiastic for learning. Therefore, music courses of elementary schools shall pay more attention to students' emotions, in order to promote students' all-round development.

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