

The Musical Idea of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

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Abstract—The world's language is divided into two categories: tone language and non-tone language. The melodic tone of Chinese is the main feature that distinguishes it from other languages in pronunciation, so it is also the difficulty and emphasis of teaching Chinese as a foreign language. Based on the full analysis of the characteristics of Chinese tone music and the summary of predecessors' teaching experience, this paper puts forward the idea of using music as a bridge to assist tone teaching. The four tones of Chinese have the sense of melody and rhythm of music. By using the melody art of music to teach Chinese phonetics as a foreign language, we can get twice the result and make the teaching of complex tones lively, interesting, clear and effective. Meantime, "student-centered" teaching idea can be embodied.

Keywords—Chinese as a foreign language; tone; teaching method; music

I. TONE AND MUSIC

A. Chinese as a tonal language

There are more than two thousand languages in the world, and the phonetic forms of different languages are different. A syllable must include a certain pitch, intensity and length, in addition to a series of tone quality units arranged in sequence by vowels and consonants. These supersonic elements are not only indispensable physical factors in speech, but also have the same semantic characteristics as the phonetic elements. Among them, the tone is to distinguish the pitch of meaning by means of the rise and fall of the tone.

According to the presence or absence of tones, the world's language can be divided into two categories: tone language and non-tone language. The most prominent feature of the Sino Tibetan language is tone. Tone language can be divided into two types, one is high and low, and the other is melody. In melodic tone languages, tones are distinguished according to the pitch of the tone, and in addition to the pitch of the tone, tones are also distinguished according to the change of the tone. The pitch of a melodic tone is a function of time. The pitch of a melodic tone falls or flats, or rises or falls, or arches or wave forms over time. It is very similar to the melodic lines in music, and it tones more musical. The tones of the Sino-Tibetan languages are generally melodic, and there are only four tones in Beijing dialect, including tone, drop, high, low, flat and melodic, which is a kind of musical language.

B. Musicality of Chinese tones

The four tone of Chinese has a strong musical nature, which is not available in other languages. Its characteristics are as follows: inside the syllable, the rising and falling amplitude of the high and low tones is large, except for the high and level tone, the other three kinds of high and low tones are interlaced, forming a certain melody. Each tune has high-pitched components, such as high and level tone 55, rising tone 35, falling-rising tone 214, and falling tone 51, which are high and crisp. Again, the tone length of each tone is proportional, the falling-rising tone is the longest, the rising tone is second, the falling tone is the shortest, the high and level tone is the second, and the length of the tone is interlaced to form a harmonious rhythm. It can be said that Chinese is the melody of music, and it is artistically loaded with communicative information. In Huang Borong and Liao Xudong's editor-in-chief, Modern Chinese, they clearly pointed out that Chinese phonetics have "clear syllable boundaries, more music, plus falling-rising tone to adjust the high and low changes and the tone of the tone, so it has the characteristics of musicality." [1]

II. THE APPLICATION OF MUSIC IN THE TEACHING OF TONE IN TEACHING CHINESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

A. The Method Used in Traditional Tone Teaching

1) The Proposal of "Half Upward" and Its Application in Tone Teaching

Falling-rising tone is one of the most difficult to learn for Chinese learners and is easily confused with rising tone. The falling-rising tone of the word and the falling-rising tone in the stream are inconsistent. So many researchers have suggested that the focus of teaching should be on the shifting of the falling-rising tone, especially on the teaching of the half. That is to say, the concept of "half up" is introduced in the teaching of Chinese tones. High and level tone, rising tone, half up, falling-rising tone and falling tone are taught in tone teaching. As early as the 1940s, Zhao Yuanren used the teaching method of putting together the half up and the unique tone. Zhao Jinming also proposed the first teach of half up, then teach full third tone, and proposed the tone teaching order of high and level tone, half up, falling tone, rising tone and full third tone. [2] If you don't learn the half up first, you will be confused with the rising tone when you learn to pronounce full third tone later.

2) "Tune Feature Teaching" and Its Application in Tone Teaching

Influenced by the theory of distinctive characteristics of tone, Lin Biao believes that "learning tones should mainly be to learn to distinguish the types of tones and as for the tone value, it is not necessary to be too strict, and it must be exactly the same as the standard adjustment." For the international students to learn the two types of tonal biases in Chinese: the confusion of rising tone and falling-rising tone, and the confusion of high and level tone and falling tone, Wang Anhong put forward the idea of "tune feature teaching" and practice in teaching. The tonal feature refers to the pitch characteristic that is not easily affected by the intonation. She classifies the four tonal features as: high level, rising (medium or low), low falling and high falling. Teachers can consciously enhance the difference in tone characteristics between tones when performing tone exercises. She first introduced the five concepts of "high, low, ascending, falling, and flat" in the tone-correction class. Then in the demonstration exercises of "high, low, ascending, falling, and flat", students are allowed to understand that the "high and low" of Chinese tones is only a relative difference and there is no fixed tone value. And the tonal characteristics of each tone are clarified, and the tone pronunciation and positive tone training are performed.

3) The Application of "Controlling the Vocal Cord Tightness" in Tone Teaching

Cheng Meizhen and Zhao Jinming believe that tones can be explained physically and physiologically.[3] Physically, "the change in tone depends mainly on the pitch", and physiologically, the change in tone is the vocal cord tension change. When the vocal cords are loose, the pronunciation is low; when the vocal cords are tight, the pronunciation is high. "According to the tone, which is determined by the pitch, the change in pitch is the principle of the tone pronunciation determined by the tension of the vocal cord. Guanjian teaches students how to control the vocal cords tightness and instructs students to issue four tones to prevent tone errors in his tone teaching.[4] To pronounce the vocal cords before the high and level tone, you can feel the position of the vocal cords increased, and then pronounce the flat tone. The the falling tone is pronounced, you can first tighten the vocal cords and relax the vocal cords like the pronunciation of high and level tone. The tone pronounced is the falling tone. With the high and level tone adjustment and down adjustment as the basis, the rising tone tone can be taught. When the pronunciation is adjusted, the vocal cords are gradually tightened, and the tone is a low-to-high rise. Finally, the falling-rising tone can be taught, and the vocal cords should relax first. This process is very short. Then, the vocal cords should be tightened, the vocal cords are loosened first and then tightened, first ascended and then raised, the degree of vocal cord tension does not affect the tone of the tone, only affecting the value of tone. As long as there is a movement to tighten the vocal cord after relaxing the vocal cord, the tone can be distinguished from the rise of the rising tone and the fall of the falling tone.

B. The Idea of Using Tone to Teach Music

1) The Necessity of Music-assisted Tone Teaching

Combining music with Chinese tonal teaching is a more effective way to help foreign students learn Chinese. In foreign language teaching, students who have a starting point are often concentrated in three weeks for tone teaching. However, in practice, the effect is always unsatisfactory. Some students take a long time to master the tone correctly. Although more students have mastered the tone of a single word or phrase, once they read the sentence, they are affected by the syllables before and after, and the tone characteristics change and the type changes. The tone of Chinese is the most subtle component of the phonetic structure. Since the scope of the tone is relative, different people, even if the same person, speaks at different times, the width and width of the tone are different. Moreover, each of the Chinese tones has its own frequency range. For example, the high and level tone [55] is a flat tone, and the flat tone close to [55] is also heard as a high and level tone; the rising tone [35] is a rising tone and the rising tone close to [35] is also heard as rising tone, etc. (Lin Wei, Wang Lijia 1992). The complexity of tone perception makes it difficult for students whose native language is a tonal language to learn.

Language and music, although fundamentally different, are all related to pitch. Language uses pitch and its variations to distinguish meaning, and music uses pitch and its variations to form a melody. We know that everyone can sing, and it is not easy for students whose mother tongue has no tone to learn tone. Why is it so difficult to make a tone? The key question is not that they can't make a variety of pitches, but that they don't use pitch to distinguish semantics. When scholars summed up the characteristics of Chinese speech, they first proposed the "musicality" article. The "musicality" of Chinese is largely brought about by the tone. Mr. Zhao Yuanren was also inspired by music, creating a "five-degree tone method" to explain the tone of the tone. Music is something common to human beings. Therefore, before teaching the tone, the music is first used as a brick to attract the students, and the students realize that the tone is also a high and low tone, which can eliminate the strangeness and reflect the beauty of Chinese.

2) The Practice of Music Teaching

Some scholars have conducted this teaching experiment on 32 students from more than 10 countries including the United States, Australia, Ireland, Scotland, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Nepal, India, Fiji and Zambia. Among them, the oldest is 47 years old and the youngest is 19 years old. The specific approach is as follows.[5]

(1) First convert the relative pitch of the tone marked with the five-degree system to the staff. According to the principle that the highest tone of the four tones differs from the lowest tone by about octave, the corresponding tone of the "3" of the rising tone 35 on the score is calculated. First find out that the high and level tone is "5" and then calculated by the conversion formula of the fundamental frequency and the semitone, the "3" of 35 is about "1".

(2) Teaching method: 1. draw a five-line spectrum on the blackboard and set it to C; 2. Let the students use the four tones marked on the staff, and try to lengthen the high level tone and the low level tone; 3. Then remove the music and

practice it again according to the feeling of the vocal cord activity when singing four tones.

(3) Teaching results: Most of the students' experience of each tone has basically reached the point where they are in place. The basic correct rate of hearing: high and level tone 100%, rising tone 84%, low level 84% and falling tone 50%. One of the students with inaccurate pronunciation can only issue high and level tone more accurately, and the other three errors are larger. After the end of the speech phase, all students except the one student can basically make the correct tone.

(4) Result analysis: when using the staff to perform tone teaching, the "Low level" has a great improvement on the difficulty of tone teaching. Students can quickly find the vocal sensation when the pronunciation is low level. The high level and low level positions are determined, and the tuning field is also determined. This is undoubtedly very beneficial for "forming and fixing the relative pitch system of beginners themselves". At the same time, students are easy to have self-confidence time, using the familiar music knowledge to learn new knowledge by means of thing, which is more convenient for after-school practice. After the students have mastered the

method of four tones, they can judge the right and wrong and consciously correct the tone. Fifty percent of students are still having difficulty with falling tone. From the tone point of view, when the falling tone is emitted, the vocal cords will suddenly tighten and then gradually relax. When we used the "55" tone to learn the falling tone, there was no such thing as "suddenly tightening the vocal cords", and students naturally could not understand it. It is better for students to learn the rising tone since the vocal cord is never loose or tight when the rising tone is pronounced, then the student can understand the pronunciation process from the "15".

3) Specific Implementation Assumptions

a) Learn four tones with the Staff

Using music to learn tones, the first is to use the 12345's vocal name to sing the basic melody of four tones and practice the basic melody of four tones. The teacher takes "a" as an example, pronounces a tone, and then asks the student's initial impression on the hearing, mainly focusing on the rise and fall of the tone. The first line is lined up to indicate the first tone. After the four tones have been heard in turn, the teacher can draw Figure 1 on the blackboard.



Fig. 1. Four notes on the staff

Here, the falling-rising tone pronounced by the teacher is a full third tone. According to this picture, we can naturally explain to students the Chinese tone, because they are almost identical to the above picture. The teacher then goes into the supplementary explanation of the falling-rising tone, telling

the students that in the actual pronunciation, because of the connection problem of the stream, the third tone often only needs to be sent half, that is, as long as it is lowered, there is no need to go up. Based on this, we can change the tone map to get Figure 2.

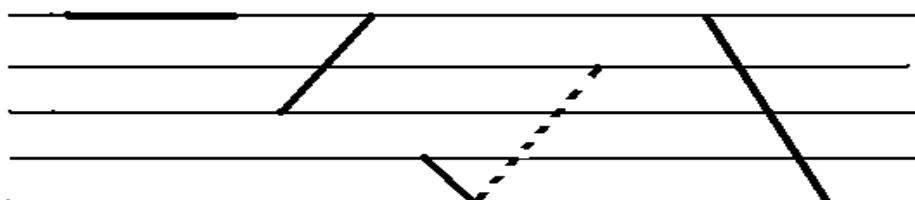


Fig. 2. Four notes changed on the staff

This is the tone that should be intensified in early tone training. Incidentally, the teacher should summarize the rhythm of the falling-rising tone at the appropriate time, that is, change the rising tone before the falling-rising tone and the half up before the other tones.

b) Practice Singing with four tones

The four tones are the communication information of the music melody. After familiarizing with the four melody, you can enter the stage of singing and singing, and use the melody of music to bring out the semantic information. The method is

to first use the "a" to sing four times, and sing the words, such as:

a(55) a(55) — chūntiān (Spring)
a(35) a(214) — píngguǒ (apple)
a(55) a(51) — yīyuàn (hospital)
a(35) a(55) — míngxīng (celebrity)

"Singing with words" can accurately combine the four musical melody with the meaning of words. The learner learns the tone of Chinese as easily and happily as learning to sing, and at the same time lays the foundation for practicing singing for the difficult melody such as modified tone and soft tone.

c) Practice to Sing Modified Tone

After practicing with the words, the learner can freely spell the four Chinese tones, and then he can practice the modified tone. "Modified tone practice" is mainly used to practice the modified tone of the third tone. The third tone (214) is a tortuous pattern. When it is composed with other syllables, it is either shorted or straightened, and cannot be pronounced, but still is written as the original tone when spelling. This kind of phonological phenomenon in which the spelling is inconsistent with the pronunciation is quite difficult for European and American students, but it is easy to use the melody of the music to sing the modified tone. The solution is to first practice the modified tone melody, and then take the words to practice singing.

There are two kinds of third-tone melody, one is that the two third tones are connected, and the third tone in front becomes 35, which is unchanged afterwards; Second, the third tone is connected with the other three tones. The third tone in the front becomes 21, and the latter is unchanged. The vowel is still sung with the vowel "a":

a(214)a(214)-a(35)a(214)
a(214)a(55)-a(21)a(55)
a(214)a(35)-a(21)a(35)
a(214)a(51)-a(21)a(51)

Of modified tone, the "21" melody is not easy to grasp. After singing from the half-bass 2 degrees, the vocal cords should be relaxed as much as possible, until the lowest note is

sung until the vocal is sung. The tone-changing practice is also applicable to the tone of "one" and "no".

d) Practice Strong and Weak Tone

Strong and weak tone practicing refers to a strong tone and a weak tone sing, which is suitable for the practice of light tone festival. Soft tone is the weakening phenomenon of syllables in the flow of words. It turns from the original tones to a light and short tone. The light tone festival is attached to other syllables, forming a distinct rhythm of alternating strengths and weaknesses, which embodies the musical beauty of Chinese speech. If the previous syllable sings a beat, the light tone can only sing half a beat. The so-called transfiguration of the light tone is so simple that the complex problem can be simplified by four tones of the soft tone. The method is to sing four tones with a soft and strong melody first with a beat of front syllable and sing a half beat of the back light with a distinct strong and weak rhythm.

III. CONCLUSION

Mr. Lu Bisong has long said: "Students learn tones, first by imitation, and second by memory." The music teaching method is designed to allow students to rely on concepts that are internalized in their consciousness when they imitate and remember. They correspond to the four tones respectively, and make use of human's synaesthetic effect to make students more vividly understand, more accurately imitate, more effectively remember and more easily self-correct, so as to master Chinese tones completely and easily.

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