

# ***Construction of the "Three Steps Seven Links Four Progressions" Teaching System for the "Vocal Fundamentals" Course in the Art Education Major of Higher Vocational Colleges***

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**Abstract:** In order to meet the demands of societal development for talents with core competencies and the contemporary trend of interdisciplinary development in the arts, this study follows the important discourse of General Secretary on "strengthening aesthetic education, adhering to moral education, and following the characteristics of aesthetic education." Based on the needs of art teachers in rural primary schools, this paper focuses on the teaching of foundational vocal courses in higher vocational art education. The approach centers on students, emphasizes morality, technique, and aesthetics, integrates training with education, reconstructs teaching content, focuses on core competencies, highlights the aesthetic education function, organizes work tasks, and comprehensively applies knowledge and skills. The goal is to enhance aesthetic and humanistic literacy, define teaching objectives with the purpose of skill development, and accumulate rich materials and teaching methods in music education, all while keeping students at the center and fully utilizing multimedia information resources. The implementation involves a three-step, seven-segment, four-level teaching process that seamlessly integrates ideological education throughout, fostering craftsmanship and forging artistic souls.

Vocal music, as a performative art, creates aesthetic situations using organized musical sounds over time, utilizing human voices as materials with the aim of expressing aesthetic emotions. It possesses strong expressive capabilities, requiring performers or observers to engage both mind and body in experiencing, imagining, and associating. Aesthetic sensitivity is crucial for invoking emotional imagery and shaping musical expressions within individuals. Foundational vocal education is a mandatory course in higher vocational art education, characterized by a knowledge system that is highly specialized, technical, and aesthetic. The expertise conveyed in this course needs to be explored within specific aesthetic contexts to fully engage students' aesthetic sensitivity, enhancing both vocal performance skills and aesthetic and humanistic literacy.

In October 2020, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Work of Aesthetic Education in Schools in the New Era," emphasizing the adherence to the socialist direction of education. It underscores the cultivation of moral character, the guidance of core socialist values, and the goal of improving students' aesthetic and humanistic literacy. This directive integrates Chinese aesthetic education spirit, aiming to nurture individuals with moral integrity, aesthetics, and

creativity, integrating aesthetic education into all levels and types of schools, across all educational stages, cultivating well-rounded socialist builders and successors.[1]

In response to the developmental needs of the times, the cultivation of well-rounded individuals, and the implementation of aesthetic education, the Ministry of Education has promulgated and implemented the "Art Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2022)." This curriculum integrates music, fine arts, dance, drama (including traditional Chinese opera), and film and television (including digital media arts) into a comprehensive "art curriculum." [2]This emphasizes the central position of aesthetic education, focusing on competency-oriented, holistic education, highlighting the educational function and value orientation of aesthetic education courses.[3] It strengthens the key points of aesthetic education work in the new era and provides guidance for the development, design, and implementation of aesthetic education courses in the new era. Fundamental to all these changes is the development of teachers' aesthetic literacy.[4]

The higher vocational art education program aims to cultivate art teachers for rural primary schools, with the foundational vocal course designed to meet the needs of the teaching position. The course primarily trains singing skills to adapt to the guidance and teaching of music activities in rural primary schools, cultivating students' professional abilities. However, historical emphasis on skill development over aesthetic competence has led to a lack of aesthetic and humanistic literacy among students. Therefore, addressing how to transform vocal courses into effective teaching tools that not only develop singing knowledge and skills but also significantly enhance students' aesthetic and humanistic literacy is an urgent issue.

For universities, in order to fulfill the fundamental mission of art education, carry out the essential task of moral education, and enhance students' aesthetic and humanistic literacy, the foundational vocal course adopts a "1+1+1" model: "Learning basics + Practicing skills, strengthening abilities + Emphasizing improvement, matching positions + Emphasizing practical experience." Courses such as "Basic Music Theory," "Sight-Singing and Ear Training," "Dance Basics," and "Color Basics" are included in the curriculum. The teaching design follows the mainline of "Scenario Introduction - Learning Singing Knowledge - Singing Skill Training - Comprehensive Expansion," incorporating throughout the course the professional qualities of "focusing on literacy, moral education, aesthetic education, artistic experience, and comprehensive subject development." This is aligned with the core competencies of art courses, ideological elements of the curriculum, artistic aesthetic sense, laws, and characteristics of music education, ensuring a seamless connection with other art forms. The goal is to explore the musical connotations, forming interpretations and expressions with musical significance.

## **1. Comprehensive Teaching Design of the "Three Steps Seven Links Four Progressions" Teaching System for the "Vocal Fundamentals" Course in the Art Education Major of Higher Vocational Colleges**

This course is designed based on the professional needs of the vocational position, aiming to cultivate the professional abilities required for rural primary school art teachers' job tasks. The teaching process integrates the "Initiate - Reflect - Explore - Learn - Practice - Expand - Elevate" seven segments within the three steps of pre-class exploration, in-class internalization, and post-class reinforcement. It adopts a comprehensive teaching model of "Knowledge Learning - Skill Training - Practical Application - Qualitative Expansion," creating an efficient classroom that emphasizes morality, technique, and aesthetics, integrates training with education, reconstructs teaching content, focuses on core competencies, highlights the aesthetic education function, organizes work tasks sequentially, and ensures the consistent cultivation of professional abilities and qualities, embodying the fundamental task of moral education.

### **1.1 Pay attention to moral education, skills and aesthetic education, combine training with education, and reconstruct teaching content**

Following General Secretary's important discourse on "strengthening aesthetic education, adhering to moral education, and following the characteristics of aesthetic education," and in response to the contemporary societal demand for talents with core competencies and the trend of interdisciplinary development in the arts, this course is designed based on the needs of rural primary school art teachers. It aligns with professional learning documents such as the "Compulsory Education Art Curriculum Standards (2022)," "Elementary Education Major Teacher Professional Ability Standards (Trial)," and other professional standards. The course divides thematic units based on vocal works, genres, and integrates curriculum content. It explores the ideological elements, humanistic content, and artistic aesthetics contained in the works. By combining with the comprehensive expansion segment based on the work process in the new curriculum standards, students learn in the process of autonomy, cooperation, inquiry, and creation within the (music, fine arts, dance, drama) artistic connections. The goal is to develop students' ability to transfer knowledge and skills, flexibly apply them, and promote the formation of correct values, essential qualities, and key capabilities.

### **1.2 Focus on core literacy, highlight the function of aesthetic education, and orderly work tasks**

Based on the characteristics of music classroom teaching in China's compulsory education, emphasizing "moral education first, competency-oriented, curriculum integration," highlighting the aesthetic education function, the course divides units based on song genres and themes. It consists of three parts: foundational vocal skills, vocal enhancement, and children's song singing. These include vocal works of folk songs, creative works, hometown folk songs, creative works, ancient poems, ethnic opera vocal works, as well as children's songs on hometown folk rhymes, daily life themes, fairy tale themes, and natural themes. The work process follows the "Situation Introduction - Singing Knowledge Learning - Singing Skill Training - Comprehensive Expansion" teaching flow, focusing on teaching tasks. After mastering basic knowledge and skills, students are guided to enhance aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice, cultural understanding, and other core artistic literacy. This is done to implement specific professional qualities.

### **1.3 To comprehensively apply knowledge and skills, improve aesthetic and humanistic quality, and determine teaching objectives**

Based on the Ministry of Education's professional teaching standards, school professional talent training programs, and curriculum standards, along with the requirements of vocational position abilities, teaching objectives are detailed in terms of knowledge, abilities, and qualities. The goals include mastering the basic theory of song singing, understanding the historical and cultural background, thematic ideas, and other knowledge aspects of singing work creation; being able to sing songs, perceive, experience, understand, and express music styles and emotions well, demonstrating the ability to independently, cooperatively, inquisitively, and innovatively apply interdisciplinary knowledge and skills. The objectives also involve inspiring students' feelings for the party, patriotism, and hometown, guiding the conscious inheritance and promotion of outstanding traditional Chinese culture, advanced socialist culture, revolutionary culture, and local culture, cultivating a love for rural education, and strengthening cultural confidence. The overall aim is to educate through aesthetics and culture, enhancing students' aesthetic and humanistic literacy [5].

## **1.4 Grasp relevant skills during the task, enrich the accumulation of music teaching materials and methods, and implement teaching strategies**

Utilizing a four-level progressive teaching model of knowledge learning, skill training, practical application, and qualitative expansion, the course adopts a task-driven teaching method. It flexibly integrates various teaching methods, consolidates complex singing knowledge into typical cases, implements standardized singing skills into occupational roles, and incorporates the latest curriculum standards into practical experiences. Emphasizing student-centric positions, the teaching approach stimulates students' exploration consciousness and actions. Students grasp relevant skills during the process of completing specific tasks, enhancing artistic and humanistic literacy. This approach constructs a theoretical knowledge system, forms a comprehensive ability to cultivate rural primary school art teachers, and achieves the thoughtfulness, artistry, and professionalism of classroom teaching.

## **2. Teaching implementation process of the "Three Steps Seven Links Four Progressions" Teaching System for the "Vocal Fundamentals" Course in the Art Education Major of Higher Vocational Colleges**

### **2.1 Carry out teaching with "learning knowledge, practicing skills, expanding application and improving quality" as the main line**

Each thematic unit is centered around outstanding vocal works, following the main line of "learning knowledge, practicing skills, expanding application, and elevating qualities." Modern standards, technologies, techniques, and equipment are integrated, with a progressive structure emphasizing key teaching points and overcoming difficulties. For instance, in the twelfth thematic unit focusing on children's songs about daily life, students engage in singing and learning four different styles of "children's songs about daily life." This incorporates singing games, traditional opera, and musical theater to better express children's songs. The goal is to foster students' initial understanding of and connection with primary school music classes, enhancing their aesthetic and humanistic literacy.

### **2.2 Moral education and aesthetic education are in the same direction, emphasizing curriculum ideological and Political Education**

Moral education runs through the entire curriculum, aligning it with aesthetic functions and values. Integrating ideological education into the entire teaching process of vocal courses, the curriculum ensures alignment between moral and aesthetic education, guiding values alongside professional education [6]. To achieve this, practical activities such as summer and winter break visits to rural areas and music field trips are organized. These activities aim to encourage students to explore their hometowns, collect local folk songs and rhymes, and cultivate a deep attachment to and appreciation for their roots, contributing to the cultivation of a sense of rural education.

### **2.3 Three steps and seven links to promote teaching implementation**

Emphasizing the organic integration of digital teaching resources with course instruction, the teaching approach enhances students' initiative and enthusiasm for learning. With a student-centered approach and the goal of skill development, the curriculum maximizes the use of multimedia information resources, implementing the three-step, seven-segment teaching process:

Pre-class: Using the learning platform, teachers assign tasks to students, utilizing online resources for "initiating thoughts, posing questions, and exploring methods." Students engage in

group discussions, inquiry-based learning, and research, entering the classroom with questions and guided values.

**In-class:** Teachers employ a combination of online and offline methods for "learning knowledge, practicing skills, and expanding qualities." Modern teaching tools like multimedia and VR are used to create immersive scenarios. Students experience and understand works deeply, engaging multiple senses to enhance artistic aesthetic experiences, emphasizing key teaching points, overcoming teaching challenges, and improving students' classroom learning effectiveness.

**Post-class:** Utilizing knowledge and skills for artistic practice, students participate in activities to enhance their abilities. Through assignments, review tasks, literature reviews, and online course learning, students expand the depth and breadth of their knowledge. Skill exercises and group presentations reinforce knowledge and skills, improving students' practical abilities. Students conduct self-assessments, complete extension tasks, and achieve further development, promoting knowledge optimization, skill internalization, and quality enhancement.

## **2.4 Strengthen the foundation, focus on practice, expand the vision, and break through the key and difficult points**

The curriculum prioritizes foundational knowledge and skills in vocal singing, emphasizing the basic characteristics of compulsory education. Using outstanding vocal works, students enhance their perception of musical aesthetics, focusing on aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice, and cultural understanding—the core artistic qualities. Artistic practice governs the course, highlighting the practical nature of vocal training. Comprehensive artistic activities, including performances and musical creation, elevate students' ability to express musical beauty and experience emotional content. The curriculum links artistic activities and works with personal viewpoints and relevant culture, breaking disciplinary boundaries, establishing connections between music and other arts and subjects, and designing comprehensive artistic practice activities. This connects the curriculum content with artistic practice and students' lives, emphasizing students' central role and changing the traditional isolated and one-sided approach to knowledge and skill learning.

Simultaneously, the curriculum is designed to facilitate student communication, cooperation, inquiry, problem-solving abilities, and the expression, analysis, and resolution of issues. Through avenues such as aesthetic perception, artistic expression, and creative practice, students understand the humanistic content of art in different cultural contexts, expanding their artistic horizons and improving their cultural understanding.[7]

## **2.5 Construct multi-dimensional assessment mechanism**

In terms of course assessment, a multidimensional evaluation approach that combines process assessment with results assessment is adopted.

**Process Assessment (70%):** This covers attendance, pre-class preparation, in-class interaction, post-class practice, and completion of video assignments. Corresponding to knowledge objectives, assessment methods include reading, discussions, surveys, and answering questions, evaluating students' grasp of foundational theoretical knowledge related to vocal singing, sight-singing, and singing children's songs. For ability objectives, assessment involves teacher-student interactions and assignment submissions (in video or audio format), evaluating students' proficiency in pitch, rhythm, singing foundational vocal works, and expressing emotions. Addressing professional qualities, post-class extension tasks related to learned songs are submitted to assess students' music aesthetic and expressive abilities, achieving a multidimensional course evaluation.

**Results Assessment (30%):** This involves a skills test to evaluate students' mastery of vocal skills.

Utilizing a dual-tutor system, with both internal and external tutors, and collaborative evaluation by students themselves, individuals, groups, and teachers, the course employs a process-focused evaluation. Both school teachers and industry professionals jointly evaluate students, achieving a multidimensional course assessment.

### **3. Summary**

#### **3.1 Integrate into the ideological and political education of the course, cultivate ingenuity and cast the craftsman's soul**

Integrating moral education into the entire teaching process, with a focus on the aesthetic function and values of vocal courses, aligns moral and aesthetic education. This convergence guides values alongside professional education, achieving the integration of knowledge, skills, and qualities. Each teaching task emphasizes the emotional, aesthetic, humanistic, practical, and creative aspects of musical art. Following the principles of student mental and physical development and the laws of music learning, elements from dance, fine arts, and drama are organically integrated with music. Rooted in moral education, guided by socialist core values, and aiming to enhance students' aesthetic and humanistic literacy, the curriculum centers around the principles of "educating through beauty," "beautifying individuals," "nourishing hearts through beauty," and "cultivating individuals through beauty." This approach promotes the spirit of craftsmanship and forges an artistic soul[8].

#### **3.2 Highlight literacy orientation and promote the transformation and implementation of core literacy**

Emphasizing a transformative teaching approach based on literacy orientation, the focus is on four core artistic literacies: aesthetic perception, artistic expression, creative practice, and cultural understanding. Efforts are concentrated on building the inherent connection between artistic core literacy and vocal courses, consistently integrating the cultivation of artistic core literacy throughout the curriculum. This integration is evident in specific course objectives, content, and assessments. The curriculum transformation emphasizes the shift towards an art literacy-oriented teaching approach, establishing three major practical platforms: skills competitions, innovation and entrepreneurship, and artistic activities. Initiatives include participation in May Innovation Studios and citizen school activities, monthly concerts, annual graduation art performances, and skills competitions. Diverse artistic practices are employed to assess student learning outcomes continually, reinforcing the curriculum's educational function.

#### **3.3 Strengthen the students' main body, pay attention to the integration of information means and traditional teaching**

Adhering to the holistic, continuous, and phased characteristics of students' mental and physical development and art learning, the focus is on the presence and embodied participation of the learning subject. With art core literacy as the guide and artistic practice activities as the carrier, information technology is utilized to create guiding and inspiring learning scenarios. Students engage in task-oriented learning, project-based learning, in-depth learning, authentic learning, and interdisciplinary learning through the application of information technology resources. This shift, facilitated by information technology, integrates pre-class, in-class, and post-class into a unified space. Students, within this new learning structure and environment, experience enhanced teacher-student and peer-to-peer interactions, breaking away from traditional classroom models. Encouraging students to actively participate in various artistic practices and exploratory activities strengthens their independent experiences, confidence in expression, and proactive creativity. This

continuous effort aims to enhance students' artistic practice and creative abilities.

### 3.4 Optimize the course content and improve the innovation, high-level and challenge of the course

Centered around vocal music and leveraging the advantages of comprehensive art education, the curriculum focuses on core literacy, integrates related content, relates to real scenarios, and incorporates basic vocal learning into specific tasks. This transformation addresses the traditional fragmented learning of knowledge and skills, promoting innovation, advanced learning, and challenging aspects within the curriculum. Adhering to the laws of students' mental and physical development and learning characteristics, the curriculum highlights the emotional, aesthetic, humanistic, practical, and creative aspects of vocal courses. Students are encouraged to flexibly transfer, transform, and apply learned knowledge and skills, developing their ability to comprehensively apply knowledge and skills in arts disciplines through independent, collaborative, exploratory, and innovative learning approaches. The goal is to elevate the curriculum's innovativeness, advanced learning aspects, and challenges.

## 4. Reflection

The higher vocational art education vocal foundation course is designed based on the needs of rural primary school general art teachers. It aligns with professional learning guidelines, refining core learning tasks and skills. The curriculum's teaching standards are developed, delineating all typical work processes involved in primary school singing activities. This involves further decomposition and analysis of the tasks implied, identifying all required knowledge and skill points to support the completion of typical work tasks. The corresponding ideological and political education goals, elements, and resources are explored and integrated, forming a combination of ideological education with the teaching of typical work processes. The aim is to achieve a seamless integration of education and talent development throughout the entire process. Establishing a digital teaching platform and continually improving the teaching evaluation mechanism are emphasized. The evaluation includes assessing pre- and post-class literature reading, enhancing the depth and breadth of learning, employing diverse evaluation methods such as skills demonstrations and defense-style assessments, and promoting comprehensive student development. Additionally, considering the rapid evolution of information technology, continuous supplementation, accumulation, and enrichment of teaching resources are essential.

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