

Develop a curriculum for first-year students at Aksu vocational and technical college's school of humanities and arts, focusing on teaching Chinese folk songs



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ABSTRACT

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This research investigates the integration of Chinese folk songs into the curriculum at Aksu Vocational and Technical College, situated in the culturally diverse Aksu region of Xinjiang, China. This study identifies significant gaps in current music education methods, particularly the disconnect between theoretical learning and practical application, which hinders students' ability to engage deeply with the material and develop employable skills. Employing a mixed-methods research design, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to develop, implement, and evaluate a teaching package specifically designed for first-year students. The package aimed to enhance students' understanding and appreciation of Chinese folk music, thereby improving their cultural competence and engagement with the academic content. The findings suggest that the new curriculum significantly boosted the students' knowledge of and connection to folk music traditions. It also facilitated a better understanding of the music's historical, cultural, and social contexts. Moreover, the teaching package fostered essential skills in cultural awareness and academic involvement, contributing effectively to vocational music education in a multi-ethnic setting. This approach not only bridges the gap between theory and practice but also enriches the students' educational experience by embedding cultural appreciation into the learning process, making a substantial contribution to the field of music education.

Contribution/ Originality: This study introduces an innovative teaching package for first-year students, uniquely integrating Chinese folk songs with vocational education in Xinjiang, enhancing cultural competence and employability through a mixed-method approach not previously applied in this context.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Aksu region is situated in central Xinjiang, at the southern foothills of the Tianshan Mountains, and to the north of the Tarim Basin. Multiple ethnic groups inhabit this region. The Bayingolin Mongol Autonomous Prefecture borders Aksu to the east, Kyzylsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture to the west, Kashgar Prefecture to the southwest, Hotan Prefecture to the south, Ili Autonomous Prefecture to the north. Aksu is located in northwest China, within central Xinjiang. It lies in the southern foothills of the middle section of the Tianshan Mountain Range and to the north of the Tarim Basin. Aksu Prefecture comprises 36 ethnic groups, with the Uyghurs forming the predominant ethnic group (Jiang et al., 2023; Yüceol & Göktürk, 2023).

Throughout history, the Aksu region has served as a crossroads of Eastern and Western civilizations, providing fertile ground for studying the integration of folk music into vocal music pedagogy within the region. Vocal music research in the Aksu region can delve into its distinctive musical culture and vocal tradition. The Aksu region is home to multiple ethnic groups, including Uyghur, Han, Kazak, and others (Pan et al., 2023). The musical

artistry here showcases the unique styles and rich, diverse cultural connotations of various nations. Examine the vocal music styles of the Aksu region, understand the modes of vocal expression, and identify the distinctive tunes of different ethnicities. Gather and categorize the traditional repertoire and lyrics of the Aksu region, analyzing vocal compositions with distinctive themes, literary traits, and emotional expressions. Explore the cultural, historical, and social significance embedded within the lyrics. Investigate the societal impact of vocal music art in the Aksu region, as well as the organization and development of performance initiatives. Analyze the role of music performance in students' lives, cultural exchange, and social cohesion, thereby fostering the prosperity and preservation of musical culture.

The Aksu region's school-based curriculum recently underwent a reform due to historical factors. 1. The disconnect between theory and practice is evident: teachers impart knowledge, students test theories in practice, yet learning progresses incrementally with limited impact. Consequently, students' grasp of Chinese folk songs remains rudimentary, hindering their ability to apply music theory effectively and demonstrate educational outcomes. 2. Practical learning does not integrate with employability. The primary aim of higher education is to impart and cultivate practical skills for the nation. However, many school-based courses fail to align with employment needs, posing a significant challenge. The disconnect between training and industry requirements undermines the educational value of these courses.

Under the current teaching mode of Chinese folk songs, colleges and universities carry out the training and teaching of Chinese national vocal music courses. Many teachers teach the teaching materials according to the students' learning progress to guide the students in learning the skills of folk music and vocal music. Therefore, with the increasing demand for high-quality talents in China, teachers must integrate the concept and content when carrying out Chinese folk song teaching in colleges and universities, and truly integrate the traditional music culture into the national vocal music teaching, which requires a complete and scientific training system and supporting vocal music teaching materials. Improve students' actual learning efficiency, improve the quality of learning, and lay a foundation for students to deepen music learning. Ethnic music culture is the soul and inexhaustible driving force of Chinese national culture, and an important part of China's excellent traditional culture. As a vocal music teacher in universities in Xinjiang, Chinese ethnic music culture has a strong atmosphere, and has unique advantages in integrating ethnic music culture into the vocal music teaching of music majors. In the daily education and teaching process, integrating Chinese folk music culture into the vocal music teaching in colleges and universities can not only make the teaching content more interesting, but also inherit the traditional Chinese folk music culture. In recent years, the Ministry of Education has vigorously promoted quality-oriented education. In this context, university vocal music teaching is becoming increasingly important. Under the current teaching mode of Chinese folk songs, colleges and universities carry out the training and teaching of Chinese national vocal music courses. Many teachers teach the teaching materials according to the students' learning progress to guide the students in learning the skills of folk music and vocal music. Therefore, with the increasing demand for high-quality talents in China, teachers must integrate the concept and content when carrying out Chinese folk song teaching in colleges and universities, and truly integrate the traditional music culture into the national vocal music teaching, which requires a complete and scientific training system and supporting vocal music teaching materials. Improve students' actual learning efficiency, improve the quality of learning, and lay a foundation for students to deepen music learning. Ethnic music culture is the soul and inexhaustible driving force of Chinese national culture, and an important part of China's excellent traditional culture. As a vocal music teacher in universities in Xinjiang, Chinese ethnic music culture has a strong atmosphere, and has unique advantages in integrating ethnic music culture into the vocal music teaching of music majors. In the daily education and teaching process, integrating Chinese folk music culture into the vocal music teaching in colleges and universities can not only make the teaching content more interesting, but also inherit the traditional Chinese folk music culture. In

recent years, the Ministry of Education has vigorously promoted quality-oriented education. In this context, it is more and more important in university vocal music teaching.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The goal is to create a Chinese folk song teaching course for first-year students of the school of humanities and arts at Aksu vocational and Technical College.

Survey on Satisfaction of First-Year Students in Teaching Classes of Chinese Folk Songs at the College of Humanities and Arts, Aksu Vocational and Technical College.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a mixed research method (qualitative and quantitative research methods). The researcher conducted a survey on the production of Chinese folk song lessons for first grade students and students' satisfaction with the teaching practice of Chinese folk song lessons. Relevant information was collected.

3.1. The Research Process

Selected research site and key informant. Aksu City is located in the west of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, adjacent to Shaya County in the east, Keping County and Wushi County in the west, Awati County, Luopu County, and Cele County in the south, and Wensu County and Xinhe County in the north. The urban population of 228,000 has 30 ethnic groups, including Uygur, Han, Kirgiz, Russian, Mongolian, Kazakh, Uzbek, Zhuang, Manchu, Xibe, Buyi, Tujia, Miao, and so on. It has a strong folk music foundation and different regional cultural characteristics. Aksu area has been the intersection of east and west civilizations since ancient times, so there is a unique soil for making folk song teaching packages for the first-year students of the Humanities and Arts College of Aksu Vocational and Technical College.



Figure 1. The picture shows me demonstrating the singing of classic Chinese folk songs for the students.

Figure 1 illustrates me demonstrating the singing of classic Chinese folk songs for the students.

The production of a Chinese folk song teaching package and students' feedback and evaluation on the teaching effect of the teaching package. Training objectives for creating Chinese folk music teaching courses for first-grade

music major students. According to Aksu vocational and technical college of humanities music teaching and research section of music teachers research and music performance professional three years of course planning, this course is for first grade music professional, music professional training goal is: this professional training and meet the needs of socialist culture construction, morality, intelligence, physique, beauty, comprehensive development, has good professional ethics and cultural accomplishment, master the corresponding professional post necessary knowledge and ability, competent to develop Chinese folk songs, let the students become a career development foundation and lifelong learning ability of technical skilled music talents.

3.2. The Role and Value of this Course

This is a required course for the first-grade music major. This course cultivates students' ability to engage in vocal music singing, chorus acting, instrumental music performance, accompaniment, acoustic instrumental music training, music creation, and other working abilities in cultural enterprises, art watch groups, training institutions, and other institutions or fields. In the process of choosing Chinese folk songs to enter the music education in colleges and universities, the researchers must highlight the characteristics of the region in the music professional curriculum, and have a more systematic inheritance and study of the folk song culture and singing methods in the region. This is the correct way to integrate folk songs and college education.

3.3. Study Situation Analysis

(1) Analysis of student characteristics.

1. The overall Mandarin level is below average.
2. The physical function state has been basically finalized, and the best training age has been missed.
3. Ideological and moral character, discipline compliance, collective concepts, and other aspects need to be strengthened.

(2) An analysis of individual characteristics.

1. Some students have poor self-control and lack of interest in learning.
2. Low level of knowledge.

(3) Measures for improvement or promotion.

1. Pay more attention to the best students and keep them stable.

Encourage more middle students; to a certain extent, you can let them and the top students go one by one. Help the downstream students more! Try to minimize the polarization!

2. As always, embrace the study style. Frequently say (every day often remind), frequently ask (every day can communicate with individual students), frequently check (check the completion of homework every day), increase management, so that students can learn in a good environment.

3. Do a good job of students' ideological work, let students have a sense of danger, so as to mobilize the enthusiasm for learning.

4. Contact teachers of all subjects, timely understand students' dynamics, and accept the suggestions of teachers of each subject. Communicate with the head teacher more, form a joint force, and jointly urge the students to learn, and make their progress.

5. Continue to carry out mutual learning and education activities, so that the excellent students can drive the poor students to learn and make progress together.

6. Students should have a profound self-reflection and put forward specific requirements for their own learning.

7. Hold a learning exchange meeting every month to encourage each student to form a learning method suitable for them.

3.4. Research Tools

The research objective of this paper entails a thorough investigation of each question. The researchers used mobile phones, computers, training teachers, piano, and other instruments, and studied them through literature analysis, course practice, and questionnaire survey.

By making a Chinese folk song teaching package for the first-grade students, we can learn about the students' singing skills and knowledge of folk songs during the class.

Through the feedback and survey of the first grade students in the Chinese folk song teaching class, we know the degree to which students accept the inheritance of Chinese folk songs. The investigation by the students gives us a deeper understanding of the development of the research object.

How to develop a Chinese folk music teaching curriculum Creating a curriculum for teaching Chinese folk music requires selecting the content and emphasizing the combination of theory and practice. The curriculum should cover all kinds of folk instruments and songs, and through explanation, demonstration, and interaction, students can experience the charm of folk music. At the same time, students are encouraged to participate in performances to deepen their understanding and practice, so that Chinese folk music can be passed on and carried forward.

The study focuses on the principles and methods of selecting Chinese folk songs for pedagogical research.

3.4.1. Principle

Representativeness: The folk songs chosen should be broadly representative and be able to reflect the characteristics of different regions, ethnic groups, and styles.

Educational: Folk songs should be rich in educational value and be able to help students understand Chinese history, culture, and traditional values.

Aesthetic: The melodies, rhythms, and lyrics of folk songs should be beautiful and touching, and be able to arouse students' empathy and interest.

3.4.2. Methods

Classification and selection: According to the teaching objectives and the actual situation of the students, choose suitable types of folk songs, such as labor songs, love songs, festival songs, etc.

Comparative analysis: compare and contrast folk songs from different regions, ethnic groups, and styles to find out their commonalities and differences and help students better understand the diversity of Chinese folk songs.

Fieldwork: organize students to go on a folkwork trip to experience live singing and performance of folk songs, so as to enhance students' perceptual knowledge and understanding of folk songs.

Interdisciplinary integration: Combine folk songs with other disciplines such as history, literature, art, etc., to form interdisciplinary teaching content and forms, and to improve students' learning interest and comprehensive quality.

How to analyze the content of Chinese folk songs, analyze learners, analyze the content of teaching to develop into a lesson series plan.

When analyzing the content of Chinese folk songs, it is important to dig deeper into the historical, cultural, and social background behind the songs to understand the deeper meaning and emotional expression of the lyrics. When analyzing learners, their age, cultural background, musical foundation, and learning interests need to be taken into account so that teaching can be tailored to their needs. Select representative folk songs for the teaching content, and design a progressive learning path based on the learners' actual level. When developing a series of lesson plans, it is important to ensure the systematic and coherent nature of the teaching content, while emphasizing the diversity and interest of the teaching methods to stimulate the learners' interest and motivation in learning.

3.5. Data Collection

Between March 2022 and September 2023, the researchers prepared teaching packages for first-year students in the College of Humanities and Arts, such as the selection of folk songs and the adaptation of teaching methods.

In March 2023, the researchers designed a preliminary model of the teaching package of Chinese folk songs through a large number of practical courses and materials, such as the teaching syllabus, teaching design, teaching content, and teaching plan.

From April to May 2023, the researcher opened the eight-week Chinese folk song teaching course in the music rehearsal hall on the fifth floor of the School of Humanities and Arts, Aksu Vocational and Technical College.

In June 2023, a questionnaire survey was conducted on the first grade students to further understand the survey and learning results of the first grade students' satisfaction with the Chinese folk song teaching class.

In July 2023, the collected information was collated and briefly summarized.

3.6. Data Management

All of the collected data has been classified and organized. We recorded the eight-week lesson plan records, the video and questionnaire records from the actual class in writing, and classified and managed the photos based on the research objectives. Folk song materials based on the relevant research literature, many documents, original music audios, theses and dissertations, statistics, and regularization of student satisfaction questionnaires have been organized and stored.

3.7. Data Analysis

The study's two objectives guided the collation and classification of the collected data. In the process of making folk song teaching packages for first-grade students, the researchers used a descriptive analysis method to analyze the data derived from folk song teaching. In the part about music education, the researchers analyzed and evaluated the course of the theory of music education and the teaching of Chinese folk music. Researchers collect and sort out the existing literature and books of Chinese folk songs in Aksu region, look for audio-visual materials, music scores, texts, and other research materials on the main musical elements of Chinese folk songs, and highlight the diachronic perspective and comparative analysis. At the same time, the relevant concepts are tracked through online databases, libraries, and other channels. The researchers collected photos, videos, interview materials, and other data through qualitative research and field practice operation course survey, and interviewed the performers, artists, and related personnel with representative elements of folk music in Aksu area.

On the basis of field practice classes and survey materials, this paper makes a Chinese folk song teaching package for the first-grade students by using the combination of music education, musicology, ethnomusicology, and Chinese traditional music analysis.

3.8. Data Presenting

Through the above analysis, I have a clear understanding of the process of making a lesson on teaching Chinese folk songs and the research on students' satisfaction with this lesson, and it has helped me to complete this research project.

4. RESEARCHSCOPE

4.1. Scope of Content

In this paper, we will study the importance of teaching Chinese folk songs to the first-year students of the College of Humanities and Arts at Aksu Vocational and Technical College, and the students' satisfaction with the practice of teaching Chinese folk songs in the classroom will be investigated.

4.1.1. Scope of Research Site and Reasons

The School of Humanities and Art, Aksu Vocational and Technical College, Aksu Region, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China, will be selected as the research site. China is a multi-ethnic country, each ethnic group has its own cultural traditions and characteristics, Aksu area is a multi-ethnic settlement, and ethnic folk songs are a characteristic cultural symbol of ethnic areas that people love. If the folk songs of various nationalities in Aksu can be summarized and reasonably added to my Chinese folk song teaching course, it will be conducive to improving the quality of music professional education in the School of Humanities and Arts of Aksu Vocational and Technical College, and also conducive to the inheritance of folk songs.

Figure 2 illustrates the location of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, with red indicating its position.



Figure 2. Red represents the location of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous region.



Figure 3. Red represents the location of the Aksu region.

Figure 3 illustrates the location of the Aksu region, indicated by the red arrow.

4.2. Scope of Time

The researcher conducted a field teaching and student satisfaction survey of the program from March 2022 to September 2023 in the College of Humanities and Arts, Xinjiang Aksu Vocational and Technical College.

5. CONCLUSION

Passed Research Objective 1: Create a Chinese folk song teaching course for first-year students at Aksu Vocational and Technical College's School of Humanities and Arts.

Following a series of meticulously planned and executed teaching experiments, the "Chinese Folk Song Teaching Kit" developed for first-year college students has yielded remarkable outcomes. This teaching kit aims to foster students' understanding and appreciation of traditional Chinese music culture while nurturing their musical aesthetic sensibilities and cross-cultural communication awareness. Presented below is a comprehensive analysis of the outcomes and impacts of this teaching experiment.

Students have significantly enhanced their knowledge and understanding of Chinese folk songs. Utilizing the teaching kit, students not only acquired knowledge of the distinctive features of folk songs from various regions and ethnic groups, but also delved deeply into the social, historical, and cultural contexts underlying these songs. They learned to appreciate and analyze various musical elements of folk songs, including melody, rhythm, and harmony, thus acquiring a more comprehensive and profound understanding of traditional Chinese musical culture.

Students have developed and enhanced their musical aesthetic ability and cross-cultural communication awareness. Through listening to, singing, and analyzing Chinese folk songs, students gradually cultivate their musical sensitivity and aesthetic ability. They learn to understand and appreciate music within diverse cultural contexts, thereby enhancing their awareness and proficiency in cross-cultural communication.

Furthermore, the implementation of the teaching suite promotes students' independent and collaborative learning skills. Within the teaching suite, a range of independent and cooperative learning activities, including group discussions and singing competitions, have been devised to invigorate students' enthusiasm and motivation for learning. These activities not only facilitate students' mastery of knowledge but also foster their collaborative spirit and self-directed learning capability.

Passed Research Objective 2: Investigate students' satisfaction with the practice of the created Chinese folk song teaching package.

We conducted a survey to comprehensively assess student satisfaction with the practices of the newly developed Chinese folk song teaching package. The survey collected students' opinions and feedback on the curriculum, teaching methods, resources, teacher performance, and overall learning experience through questionnaires. The survey results indicated that the majority of students expressed satisfaction with the content and practical approach of the teaching package.

Students found the exercises in the teaching package to be rich and varied, including basic singing and folk song appreciation, as well as in-depth analysis of music and discussion of cultural background. These exercises are challenging and engaging, stimulating their interest and motivation in learning.

Students are content with the organization of exercises within the instructional suite. Various practice modes, including singing, listening, analysis, and group discussion, are employed in the teaching suite to cater to diverse student learning needs and interests. Students have the freedom to select exercises based on their individual learning progress and situation, thereby enhancing the flexibility and efficacy of the exercises.

Survey results indicate that students are highly satisfied with the practice activities included in the Chinese folk song teaching package I developed. Students appreciated the rich and diverse content of the teaching package, the flexible and effective exercises, and the ability of independent and cooperative learning activities to enhance their interest and motivation in learning.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1. Discussion on the Chinese Folk Song Teaching Package Developed for First-Year College Students

Discussion on the Chinese folk song teaching package developed for first-year college students. During the design and implementation of the teaching package, we encountered various challenges, notably the delicate balance between the complexity of teaching content and students' engagement. When structuring the package, it's crucial to align content and time allocation with student needs and the curriculum. Overly intricate content risks disengaging students, necessitating a careful equilibrium between content complexity and student interest (Barker, 2022).

How can we ensure the effective implementation and quality of teaching packages? During the implementation process of the teaching package, it's essential to closely monitor students' learning progress and challenges, offering timely guidance and support. Nevertheless, unexpected problems and challenges may emerge due to variations in musical literacy and cultural backgrounds among first-year students. How can we integrate the Chinese folk song teaching package with other course content? The teaching package primarily emphasizes the instruction and appreciation of Chinese folk songs. Nevertheless, Chinese folk songs are integral to traditional Chinese culture, necessitating a blend of independent and cooperative learning, utilization of modern teaching technology, and implementation of effective feedback mechanisms (Bećirović, 2023). Additionally, it's crucial to balance the difficulty of teaching content with students' learning interests, ensuring effective implementation and quality of the teaching package, and integrating it with other course content.

6.2. Evaluation and Discussion of Students' Satisfaction with Chinese Folk Song Teaching Package Exercises

To gauge their satisfaction with the Chinese folk song teaching package exercises I devised, we conducted a satisfaction survey among students. Survey findings indicated that the majority of students expressed satisfaction with both the content and format of the teaching package exercises. Students perceive the teaching package as encompassing rich and diverse content, featuring flexible and effective exercises, and enhancing their interest and motivation in learning through independent and cooperative learning activities.

Responding to students' feedback and suggestions, we recognize the potential for further refinement and enhancement of the teaching package's content and design. Firstly, we can incorporate more challenging and in-depth practice content to cater to the learning needs of certain students. Secondly, we can introduce practical practice activities like folk song singing competitions and field trips to facilitate students' deeper understanding and immersion in Chinese traditional music culture. Lastly, we can enhance feedback and guidance on student learning to assist them in achieving better mastery of knowledge and enhancing learning outcomes.

Students expressed high satisfaction with the exercises in the Chinese folk song teaching package I devised. Nevertheless, there remains room for further enhancement and refinement of the teaching package's content and design to address the learning needs of a broader student demographic and enhance teaching quality.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Recommendations for Further Research

This study centers on developing a Chinese folk song teaching package tailored for first-year students at Aksu College of Arts and Sciences, and assessing student satisfaction regarding its implementation. We expect future researchers to continuously update the content of the Chinese folk song teaching package to meet the needs of the students and explore its artistic significance. Throughout the design and implementation process of the teaching package, we gathered valuable experiences and insights. Below are suggestions for developing a Chinese folk song teaching package tailored for first-year college students. Ensure the logical arrangement of teaching content and schedule adequate time, considering students' needs and the teaching plan. Within the teaching package, it's imperative to organize teaching content and time judiciously, aligning with students' circumstances and the curriculum. It's essential to ensure students acquire a thorough understanding and knowledge of Chinese folk

songs, while avoiding overwhelming them with overly complex or abundant content, hindering their comprehension and mastery. Incorporate a diverse range of practical methods and activities into the teaching package to enhance students' interest in and enthusiasm for learning. To foster students' interest in and enthusiasm for learning, the teaching package should encompass an array of practical methods and activities. Apart from fundamental singing and appreciation, incorporate activities like listening analysis, group discussions, and singing competitions to cater to diverse student learning needs and interests. Emphasize a blend of independent and cooperative learning in teaching packages. Teaching packages should underscore the integration of independent and cooperative learning approaches. Independent learning activities allow students to select practice methods based on their individual learning needs and progress, thereby enhancing practice flexibility and effectiveness. Cooperative learning activities facilitate student interaction, foster teamwork, and cultivate independent learning skills. Utilize modern teaching technologies extensively. Within the teaching package, leverage modern teaching technologies like multimedia instruction and online learning platforms to offer students richer, more engaging, and more accessible learning resources and methods. This approach can heighten students' interest and motivation in learning, consequently enhancing teaching effectiveness and quality. Establish an effective feedback mechanism. A sound feedback mechanism within the teaching package is crucial to monitor students' learning progress and address any challenges promptly, offering timely guidance and assistance.

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