

# **The Creating of a Western Listening Guidebook for Music Education Major at Hubei Second Normal University**

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## **Abstracts**

The purpose of this study was (1) To study the problems existing in Western music appreciation courses. (2) To create a Western music listening guidebook for learning activities in the music appreciation course (3) The experimental listening guidebook for Hubei students at Hubei Second Normal University. Using a mixed research method, gathered target group data by interviewing five experts. The results were used to create a Western music listening guide, and the effectiveness of the guide was demonstrated by collecting listening test data from a 15-week teaching experiment with 31 students. The study will be conducted between October 2021 and February 2023. The results of the research are (1) The researchers discovered the basic problems of Western music listening: 1) listening is the basis and focus of course teaching, 2) learning related knowledge, 3) choosing suitable music works, 4) the level of listening to music, 5) Method of listening to music, 6) Music listening level test. (2) The consulting literature and interviewing five experts. Create Western music listening guidebook, with 7 chapters in total, and formulated a 15-week teaching plan, and (3) the listening results found that the test scores of learners' listening results were higher than the criteria with statistical significance at the 0.01 level.

**Keywords:** Creating of a Western Listening Guidebook; Music Education Major; Hubei Second Normal University

## **Introduction**

According to the National Standards for the Teaching Quality of Music and dance in Colleges and Universities, the basic courses of music majors should include music history and appreciation courses.

Music appreciation is inseparable from listening. The crisis of contemporary listening is actually a variation and extreme manifestation of "text listening". The important reason behind the seemingly inattentive "listening" phenomenon besides modern digital technology is the excessive pursuit of sensory stimulation by commercialization shields the aesthetic meaning of music (Chen, 2017). Those who are interested will definitely find that there is a hidden listening crisis in our current social music life, especially in the music world of young people, and this crisis directly affects music appreciation and listening in school music education (Chen, 2022).

The teaching method of music appreciation course in colleges and universities is relatively closed and traditional, that is, the teacher plays the music to the students once, and then introduces the composer, historical background, performance content and historical significance of the music. The teaching method of "one word" causes students to be busy recording the main points of the works, ignore the artistic conception of the music, and have a vague cognition of the music they hear. In the teaching process, there are obvious traces of

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exam-oriented, emphasizing the mastery of knowledge content, ignoring the acquisition of ability content such as perception, appreciation and screening. The single teaching method makes students lose interest in learning, the assessment method cannot correspond to the educational goal, or tends to be exam-oriented, ignoring the aesthetic education goal, which affects the improvement of students' comprehensive ability of music appreciation (Wang Qiusha, Li Guisen & Yan Tuoshi, 2021).

Judging from the situation of music appreciation teaching, there are still many problems, such as only attaching importance to the imparting of knowledge and the training of skills, ignoring the cultivation of students' interest, emotion, will and attitude; Only attach importance to the authority of teachers, ignoring the subject status of students' learning; Students' experience and perception should be replaced by teachers' explanation and analysis. These problems have been affecting the development of music appreciation teaching (Song, 2012).

Teaching methods of music appreciation in music education majors are to first let students listen to a certain piece of music once, and then the teacher will introduce the author, works, historical background, expression content, etc., according to the textbook, and then carry out some structural analysis of the music. The result is that in the classroom, either students listen sleepy, or students are busy remembering the teacher's analysis of the music, and they do not feel the artistic conception of the music, let alone aesthetic appreciation (Li, 2006).

Hubei Second Normal University is a provincial general undergraduate university with teacher education as its main feature and supported by disciplines such as law, education, literature, science, engineering, management, and art. The school adheres to the school motto of "high learning, integrity, sincerity, and perseverance", adheres to the school-running philosophy of "integrity-based, student-oriented" and the spirit of "persistence, pursuit of excellence", and unites to overcome difficulties. Committed to building Hubei Second Normal University into a high-level normal university that is needed by the country, recognized by the society, satisfied by the people, and has distinctive teacher education characteristics, providing stronger talent and technical support for basic education and regional education. Therefore, how to improve the teaching effect of music appreciation courses for students majoring in music education in our school has become an urgent problem to be solved.

## **Literature reviews**

### **The method of music listening**

#### **Listening and Music listening**

Ji Yeye (2012) pointed out that listening is an important way for people to perceive the outside world. Hearing is the perception of sound characteristics produced by the auditory organ under the action of sound waves. To listen means to concentrate and listen carefully. It is generally used for reports, speeches, lectures, recitations, stories, and other activities related to people, and it can also be used for specific things, such as the sound of wind, rain, and singing.

Christopher Hastie & Zheng Yan (2016) put forward: listening is the actual musical experience that goes hand in hand with musical activities such as playing, listening, writing, or even thinking about music. Listening is dynamic, momentary, and subjective. Listening implies subjectivity and mobility in perceiving and revealing new things to which one is preoccupied. One of the directions of "learning to listen" is to develop sensitivity to complex sounds such as pitch, Tempo, Rhythm and Melody.

Cheng Zhiyi (2013) pointed out that the most direct way to get in touch with music works is to "listen to music". When experiencing a piece of music, people will have a wonderful feeling of change. Not only that, when performing music works in different ways and environments, there will also be different interpretation results.

Qian Lijuan (2005) pointed out: From the perspective of music psychology, the listener's emotional response to music is a material phenomenon. Music arouses a strong reaction in the body and then makes the individual have a subjective experience. From the perspective of social psychology, the listener's emotional response to music is a social and cultural phenomenon—listening to music is one of the ways for individuals to construct their identity and convey their emotions. Individuals make themselves better as a socialized existence through the aesthetic medium of music. The emotion induced by music can be divided into extrinsic emotion and intrinsic emotion according to different sources of emotion. Intrinsic emotion is the emotional experience associated with specific structural features of music (such as syncopation, dissonant transitions, apposure, etc.). External emotions are more related to the individual's historical experience and are influenced by the social and cultural background in which the individual lives.

Wang Daqiao & Liu Yang. (2023) proposed: Body listening uses the whole body as a listening organ, and the body as a resonator is open to the situation, and it is mutually generated with the situation, so that the sensibility is in a fluid and uncertain state, showing a variety of characteristics. While the body listening is open to multiple senses and situations, it also expands to the field of cognition and thinking. Through the body thinking based on physical sensibility, sensory criticism is endowed with immersive resistance.

### **The listening method**

Shan Sanya and Wu Zuqiang (2003) pointed out: 1) Music is an abstract art, and what can be seen and touched is not the music itself. The audience's response ultimately depends on listening. 2) Listening while looking at the score is a way. 3) Music reading is connected with listening. The reading of music is auxiliary, indirect, but also very important. 4) Without listening to music, no matter how much you read, you will not get what you expect. 5) The purpose of reading music is to help understand music and get into music.

Ye Lihui (2013) proposed how to listen to music: listen to the structure of music first, then listen to the level of music. In the process of listening to the level of music, you can listen to rhythm and pitch horizontally, and you can also listen vertically and deeply.

Shan Senquan (2013) let students form a good way of thinking about listening to music has become an important topic for music educators. The new measures in exploring and cultivating students' thinking methods of listening to music are as follows: in the teaching design, the teaching objectives and teaching content are directed to the method of listening to music. The methods of listening to music stated in the teaching content are: 1) Listen to the music structure, such as introduction, theme, connection, and ending. 2) Listen to thick music levels, including: horizontal listening, vertical listening, and deep listening. The above content is arranged in the order of first small and then large, and in the order of first plane and then three-dimensional. As a result, not only the teaching content covers a wide range, but also has a clear context and a strong structure.

Chen Xiaoyu (2015) proposed that music cannot be separated from listening, and music and listening are interactive. Acoustic text is the main form of listening in normal music teaching, and the significance of listening lies in the acoustic level. From the standpoint of teaching, listening to music requires cultivating students' listening awareness and paying attention to students' musical intentions. The former is the foundation, and the latter is the deepening. To achieve this kind of music intention setting, it is necessary to take into account the students' music experience, music preference, and even cognitive level and other factors. The existing educational methods, strategies, and language means that support music listening also involve teaching students in accordance with their aptitude, including teaching materials for music content and teaching target students. Comprehension of music or the degree of listening depends on the level of understanding of music and the familiarity with musical language, including stylistic language, regional language, and technical language. For music listening, it is an effective way to know something about the composer and the title, style or period of the music. It is necessary to maintain a keen sense of hearing and a correct judgment on the beauty of music. This paper argues that, from the perspective of pedagogy, effective music listening should theoretically have dual structural connotations, that is, relational structure and hierarchical structure. Effective music listening is an aesthetic state, which is a three-dimensional fusion state composed of listening relationships and listening levels. Music, listeners, and listening methods constitute the relational structure of music listening, and the hierarchical structure formed by perception, experience, and understanding. Effective listening is only possible when there is a rapport between the music, the way of listening, and the listener. Effective listening can only be accomplished when the perception, experience and understanding of the music is achieved.

## **Research Objectives**

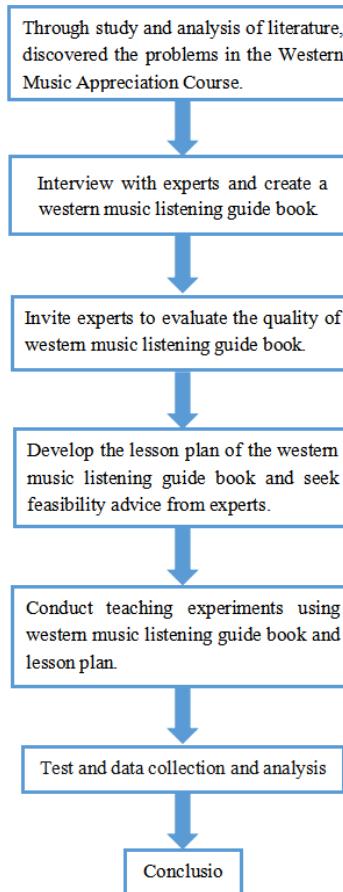
By clarifying the above research questions, the purpose of this paper is:

1. To study the problems existing in western music appreciation course.
2. To create a western music listening guide book for learning activities in music appreciation course
3. The experimental listening guidebook for Hubei students at Hubei Second Normal University

## **Research Methodology**

This research is a mixed research method. Qualitative: Research and review music appreciation teaching in music education majors, clarify teaching problems, consult papers and research, find and learn domestic and foreign achievements in solving music appreciation teaching problems, focusing on self-determination theory. Quantitative: According to the self-determination theory, construct a western music listening guide, pass the professional review, and use it for the experimental teaching of students majoring in music education in Hubei Second Normal University.

## Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1** Conceptual Framework

## Research Findings

### The problems existing in Western music appreciation course

- 1) Listening is the most important content of music appreciation courses. Teachers should carry out teaching around listening to music.
- 2) To listen to Western music, you need to learn relevant music knowledge, but pay attention to time control.
- 3) Western music composers and works suitable for students majoring in music education include: Antonio Vivaldi La Primavera, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K. 550, Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67, Franz Schubert Die Forelle, Frédéric Chopin: Nocturne in E-Flat Major, Claude Debussy: Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun
- 4) Select high-definition videos of excellent orchestra performances for students to listen to and watch, read scores and listen to music, and use self-determination theory.

5) Listening to music is a process from shallow to deep, 1) feel and experience music emotions. 2) understand and recognize the morphological characteristics of music. 3) comprehend and explore genre characteristics and musical styles.

6) The evaluation method of western music listening is listening test with multiple choice questions. The content of the listening test includes listening to identify elements of music expression, typical characteristics, music genre, music expression form and music development technique, music style and genre. Specifically include: musical mood, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, timbre, theme, melody, syntax, playing instruments, performance forms, etc.

### **Creating a Western music listening guide book for learning activities in music appreciation course**

The western music listening Guide book is the accumulation and summary of years of teaching experience, literature research by researchers and discussions with experts. It is suitable for the Western Music Appreciation Course for undergraduate students majoring in music education. This Western Music Listening Guide presents the whole process of music listening with 6 pieces of music by 6 representative composers in the Baroque period, the Classical period, the Romantic period and the 20th century. The Western Music Listening Guide book compiled by the researchers includes the following 7 units:

Unit 1 Overview of Music Appreciation

Unit 2 Antonio Vivaldi Concerto for Violin and *String Orchestra La Primavera*

(Spring)

Unit 3 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart *Symphony No. 40 in G Minor*

Unit 4 Ludwig van Beethoven *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor*

Unit 5 Franz Schubert *Lied "Die Forelle"*

Unit 6 Frédéric Chopin *Nocturne in E-Flat Major*

Unit 7 Claude Debussy *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*

### **Experimenting the listening guidebook for Hubei students at Hubei Second Normal University**

The researchers set up 5 in-class listening tests in the 15-week course, at the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th, and 12th weeks. The researchers analyzed and evaluated the test results after using the western music listening guide book. The analysis and results of the test scores are shown in Table 5-1.

	listening test					Total score (25)
	W3 (5)	W5 (5)	W7 (5)	W10 (5)	W12 (5)	
S1	4	4.5	3	3.5	4	19.000
S2	4	4.5	4	4	3.5	20.000
S3	4	4.5	4.5	3.5	4	20.500
S4	4	4	4	3	4	19.000

S5	4.5	4	4	4.5	3.5	20.500
S6	4	4.5	4	4.5	3.5	20.500
S7	4	4	4	4	4	20.000
S8	4	4	4	4	4.5	20.500
S9	4.5	4	4.5	3.5	4	20.500
S10	4	4	3.5	4	3.5	19.000
S11	4	4.5	4	4	3.5	20.000
S12	3.5	4	4	4.5	4	20.000
S13	4	4	4	4	4	20.000
S14	4.5	4	4	4	4	20.500
S15	3.5	4	4	4.5	4.5	20.500
S16	4	4	4	4	4	20.000
S17	4	3.5	4	4	3.5	19.000
S18	4.5	4	4	4	4	20.500
S19	4	4	4	4	4	20.000
S20	4	4	4	4	3.5	19.500
S21	4	4	4.5	4	4	20.500
S22	4	4	4	4	4	20.000
S23	4	4.5	4.5	3.5	4	20.500
S24	4	4.5	4	4	4	20.500
S25	4.5	3.5	4.5	4	4	20.500
S26	4.5	4	4.5	3.5	3.5	20.000
S27	4	4.5	4	4	4	20.500
S28	4	4	4	4	4	20.000
S29	4	4	4	4	4	20.000
S30	4	4	4	4	4	20.000
S31	4.5	4	4	4	3	19.500
Average						20.05

Table 5-1: Listening test score

Table 5-2: Listening test results

One - Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
listening test	31	20.05	0.506	0.091

Table 5-3: Listening test results One - Sample Test

	Test Value =17.5					
	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	99% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
listening test	28.048	30	0.000	2.548	2.299	2.798

Table 5-3 Mean, Standard Deviation: t-test statistic and the level of statistical significance. In the test, comparing the 100 percent criterion with the student's listening test scores.

Table 5-4: t-test statistic and the level of statistical significance

	N	Full	Mean	S.D.	% of Mean	t	Sig. (1-tailed)
listening test	31	25	20.05	0.506	80.19	28.05**	0.0000
t-table.01 = 2.750							

From the table, it was found that the learner's listening test had an average score of 20.05 points. representing 80.19 percent and when comparing the criteria with the test scores of the learners. The listening results found that the test scores of learners' listening results were higher than the criteria with statistical significance at the 0.01 level.

There were six components of Western music appreciation courses "listening to music" which consisted of 1) Listening is the central part of music appreciation courses. 2) Listening to music requires learning related music knowledge. 3) Listening to music requires choosing the right composition. 4) Levels of listening to music: feeling and experience, understand and recognize, comprehend and Exploration. 5) The method of listening to music: listening to music, listening to music + reading music scores + learning related knowledge, listening to music + reading music scores + thinking about problems. 6) Evaluation method of music listening: multiple choice questions.

The major findings were revealed as such because: 1) Music appreciation cannot be achieved without adequate listening. 2) The individual response to music is closely related to the listener's inner world. 3) Music works suitable for different groups and needs are different. 4) The understanding of the level of music listening determines how the listener enters into the music. Feeling and experience, understanding and understanding, understanding and exploration form the levels from shallow to deep, from surface to interior, which embodies perceptual music listening. 5) The method of listening to music affects the effect of listening. 6) The test of music listening ability needs an objective evaluation method. In the course plan of using Western music listening guidelines for teaching, teachers use self-determination

theory to stimulate students' interest in learning, improve the effectiveness of music listening, and improve students' ability to listen to music.

## Discussion

Based on the research objectives, the discussion will be presented as follows:

Discussion about major findings of problems existing in western music appreciation course.

There were six components of Western music appreciation courses "listening to music" which consisted of 1) Listening is the central part of music appreciation courses. 2) Listening to music requires learning related music knowledge. 3) Listening to music requires choosing the right composition. 4) Levels of listening to music: feeling and experience, understand and recognize, comprehend and Exploration. 5) The method of listening to music: listening to music + reading music scores + learning related knowledge, listening to music + reading music scores + thinking about problems. 6) Evaluation method of music listening: multiple choice questions.

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This research finding was in accordance with the research of Chen Xiaoyu (2017) proposed that "the most basic thing in music appreciation teaching is to listen to the music itself. Listening is the central link of music appreciation". This research finding was in accordance with the research of Chen Xiaoyu (2015) "For music listening, it is an effective way to know something such as the composer and the title, style or period of the music.". The inner emotion caused by music is the emotional experience associated with the specific structural characteristics of music. The outer emotion caused by music is more Linked to the individual's historical experience and influenced by the individual's sociocultural background." This research finding was in accordance with the research of Chen Xiaoyu (2022) put forward that "From the perspective of effective listening, listening to music requires some preparations, namely ear preparation, knowledge preparation and music experience." Also, the findings were in the same direction with Shan Sanya, Wu Zuqiang (2003) and Shan Senquan (2013) proposed "listening while looking at the music score", "In the teaching design, the teaching objectives and teaching content are directed to the method of listening to music." However, the research of Chen Xiaoyu (2022), it was found that "Music elements, emotions, genres and styles are all within the scope of listening, and they are the four levels to be listened to. The new curriculum standard has clear regulations and requirements, which can be used as our teaching reference." which was different.

Discussion about major findings of create a western music listening guide book for learning activities in music appreciation course

The major findings were revealed as such because: the Western Music Listening Guide can run through the whole process of teaching music appreciation courses. According to the three steps of music listening, combined with the three combinations of listening to music, the formation of listening to music runs through learning activities. In the course plan of using Western music listening guidelines for teaching, teachers use self-determination theory to stimulate students' interest in learning, improve the effectiveness of music listening, and improve students' ability to listen to music. The results of this research are consistent with Shan Senquan's (2013) "In the teaching design, the teaching objectives and teaching content are directed to the method of listening to music." Moreover, it is consistent with Chen Xiaoyu's (2017) "Music cannot be separated from listening. Listening is the basic way of music perception and the main way of teaching music appreciation." However, the Music Curriculum Standards for General High Schools issued by the Ministry of Education of China (2017 edition revised in 2020) puts forward in the teaching suggestion section: the way of entering into music works through individual cognition, experience, comprehension, perception, association, imagination, etc. in listening, But it has become an important basis for instructing teachers to carry out music listening activities. Liu Lihong (2010) pointed out that "the satisfaction of human beings' pursuit of competence, autonomy and sense of belonging in engaging in activities is the three basic psychological needs of human beings." It has become an important basis for promoting the learning activities of listening to music.

Discuss the main results achieved using western music listening guide book.

This main conclusion was drawn from the results of teaching experiments conducted by the researchers using Western music listening guides to demonstrate the effectiveness of the guides. The research results are consistent with Xu Wanmin's (2008) theory that "music appreciation class should not only enrich students' knowledge, but also guide students to grasp the thinking methods and methods of the subject". The study found that taking music listening as the basic method and central link of music appreciation courses, and exploring the combination of listening methods and steps with teaching methods can improve the effect of music listening. It is consistent with Song Qian's (2014) "change concepts, clarify goals, innovate teaching. Comprehensively understand students and deepen interest in exploration." Moreover, consistent with Liu Lihong's (2010) statement that "the satisfaction of human beings' pursuit of competence, autonomy and sense of belonging in engaging in activities is the three basic psychological needs of human beings", self-determination theory has a good effect in learning activities of listening to western music.

## **Recommendation**

### **1. Practical Recommendations**

Due to the large number of universities enrolling music education majors in our country, the music literacy foundation of students in different regions is different, resulting in many teaching processes and methods that cannot be implemented.

1) Teachers can use some examples of music listening in this study in the teaching process to help students accumulate music listening experience and master music listening methods.

2) Teachers can use the teaching steps and process of western music listening designed in this study to design teaching content suitable for students.

3) Western music appreciation can be assessed through listening tests, and teachers can find appropriate musical works and teaching methods through reflection and discussion.

## 2. Recommendation for future research

- 1) It is hoped that more teachers will research and develop western music appreciation teaching materials and guides suitable for music education majors.
- 2) It is hoped that future research will increase the style and number of musical compositions included in Western music listening guides.
- 3) It is hoped that future research will focus on the differences in music literacy among student groups in different regions and schools at all levels.
- 4) It is hoped that researchers will have breakthrough research on how to help students improve their music listening ability and master music listening methods.
- 5) It is hoped that future research will focus on experimental research on listening and teaching methods of different music such as Chinese music, pop music, and Thai music.

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