

# Constructing the Solfeggio Teaching Plan Using Orff Method for Teaching Students at College of Art, Henan University of Economics and Law, China

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## Abstract

This article aims to explore the application and effect of Orff method in solfeggio courses in colleges and universities. Sight-singing and ear training is a basic course in music education in colleges and universities, which is of great significance for cultivating students' musical skills and literacy. However, traditional solfeggio teaching methods often focus too much on skill training and ignore students' subjectivity and creativity. As an advanced educational concept, Orff method emphasizes the originality, comprehensiveness, creativity and improvisation of music, and provides new ideas and methods for solfeggio courses in colleges and universities. More and more teaching methods are being used. Introduced into music education, Orff method has been widely welcomed for its unique ideas and methods. Through empirical research, the results show that the Orff method has a significant effect in improving students' solfeggio abilities and cultivating music perception and creativity.

In order to verify the actual effect of Orff method in solfeggio courses in colleges and universities, this study was explored through qualitative research methods and quantitative research methods. In the qualitative research part, the researcher conducted interviews with experts in the field of Orff method to summarize and analyze the benefits of Orff method in college music teaching and how to use it in solfeggio classes. Then, relevant teaching plans were created by summarizing the opinions of experts. In the quantitative research part, a 16-week experimental teaching was carried out for the students participating in the study using teaching plan. Through comparative analysis of the students' scores before and after, it was concluded that the students' solfeggio scores improved after the study ( $M=87.5$ ). It is better than before learning ( $M=65.23$ ), and the paired T-test proves that there is a significant difference in the data, which is statistically significant ( $p<0.001$ ). This shows that the Orff method has a significant effect in improving the teaching quality and students' solfeggio courses in colleges and universities. Orff method has important application value in solfeggio courses in colleges and universities. By using Orff method, teachers can better stimulate students' interest in learning and creativity, and improve students' music skills and literacy. In the future, the researchers recommend further promoting the application of Orff method in music education in colleges and universities to provide strong support for cultivating more talents with innovative spirit and artistic literacy.

**Keywords:** Constructing; Solfeggio; Teaching Plan; Orff Method; College of Art; Henan University of Economics and Law; China

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## Introduction

Music is a special art, which can reflect human emotions delicately and accurately as well as open students' intellect and brain thinking. And while presenting excellent musical works to students, it is the process of internalising them into students' own personality, temperament and cultivation, which become their relatively stable inner qualities, through the process of education such as knowledge transfer and environment cultivation. And by appreciating the characteristics of music under various different styles as well as different cultural traditions, students can also get to know the similarities and differences of music under different cultural backgrounds and cultural forms, as well as expanding their humanistic knowledge and strengthening their cultural heritage. Nearly half a century of China's Universities has been growing and developing in a planned, organised and overall delineation of the educational ideology and management mode (Yan, 2019), and the characteristics of China's universities music education are mainly reflected in the following aspects. First of all, music education in colleges and universities has a more rigorous subject system and professional education system. Students receive specialised music education in colleges and universities, and through systematic curriculum learning, theoretical lectures and practical activities, students are comprehensively cultivated in music literacy and professional ability. Secondly, music education in colleges and universities pays attention to cultivating students' creativity and performance ability. In addition to mastering basic music theory and skills, students also need to have the ability to create, interpret and express musical works. However, under the flood of today's socio-economic development, both teachers and students have rejected the diversified education model, and they are obsessed with the cultivation of professional abilities, such as piano and singing, aiming to improve their musical skills so as to get better employment opportunities (Chen, 2019). Under that status quo, educators should deeply recognise the role of Orff method as a teaching philosophy, method and tool. Most of the traditional conservative music teaching styles compared to the Orff method gives less benefit for personal development (Silsbury, 1968). The Orff method has a complete music education system, focuses on practice, and puts more emphasis on the learner's emotional stimulation and experience of music, as well as more emphasis on the learner's subjectivity, initiative, and creativity, etc., when participating in music learning, compared with the current traditional teaching model in China, which is mainly based on the learning of singing and music theory. According to Orff point of view, in music education, music is only a means, and educating people and cultivating talents is the end (Silsbury, 1968, 40-43). Orff believes that music is the art of listening and that listening is the main way in which people engage in musical activities. The function of music listening is mainly expressed in the agile responsiveness, memory and overall perception of various basic elements in music. Music is the natural expression of human thoughts and emotions, and everyone has a potential musical instinct (Tong, 2019). Based on this viewpoint, the Orff method formed currently has an important influence and wide application in Chinese music education, aiming to improve students' music literacy and promote their comprehensive development. The integration of Orff method with music teaching in universities enables teachers to start from the origin and essence of music production, thus guiding music students to express their thoughts and emotions through music, and achieving the purpose of appealing to the sensibility and returning to the human nature (Silsbury, 1968). In this context, this study explores the application of Orff method in music education in colleges and universities, which will help to enhance students' music perception,

especially their solfeggio ability, and further promote the development and improvement of music education in colleges and universities.

China's Universities has gradually tended to be internationalised, diversified and professionalised after undergoing reforms over and over again. In the 1980s, Orff method was introduced into China and gradually promoted and applied, and especially in recent years, the application of Orff method in music education has attracted more widespread attention. Nowadays, Orff method has become a popular music teaching mode, which has been fully used in music teaching in colleges and universities by virtue of its own distinctive characteristics. However, in the specific education carried out in schools, although many colleges and universities have opened the Orff music course, but there are great limitations in its curriculum, and nowadays, although it has gradually accumulated more successful teaching experience, but from the overall teaching reality, there has not been a fundamental change in the music education of Chinese colleges and universities, paying great attention to the use of the teacher's demonstration and students' repetition of the training to cultivate the students' professional skills in music, and relatively neglecting students' learning interest and comprehensive quality, resulting in low motivation for learning, lack of innovation, and weakened career development ability (Zhang, 2020). Therefore, the education of Orff music is still at the level of theoretical teaching, letting students know Orff and Orff method by telling the teaching methods in the book, and setting a paper exam at the end of the term to test students' knowledge accumulation. Although this traditional teaching mode also has more advantages, but it focuses more on teaching students the knowledge of the exam, the essence are passive learning, students' independent learning ability is completely inhibited. Not only that, the current dissemination of Orff method is more about the dissemination of teaching concepts and its application in primary and secondary school music education, while it has not been well integrated and practiced with music professional disciplines in college music education. It should not be overlooked that the use of Orff method in college music teaching is faced with many problems, which has a negative impact on the effectiveness of the use of Orff method. Therefore, it is necessary to change the single teaching mode of music education in colleges and universities, to solve the problem of disconnecting theory and practice to improve the overall effect of Orff method, and to combine the Orff method with the current curriculum.

Although the Orff music course has been set up in college music majors, the actual development is not smooth. Due to various reasons, although Orff music teaching has been opened at this stage, it has not made substantial progress. The curriculum arrangement of the music major does not pay enough attention to the Orff music teaching, the value of the development process is not clear, and the relevant courses and training are not targeted. On the other hand, the teaching mode is just a formality, students do not get enough knowledge in the actual classroom learning, the practical application of the knowledge is narrow, can not really apply what they have learned. In the Orff music teaching process, teachers are too cautious and dare not try many contents in the Orff music teaching system, which has a great impact on the actual teaching quality. From the actual teaching situation, the piano teaching, vocal music teaching, music theory and solfeggio lessons have great limitations, and the curriculum teaching is not enough to help students really understand. Generally speaking, there are many deficiencies in the Orff music teaching of college music majors at this stage, and the quality of classroom teaching needs to be improved.

In China, solfeggio is not only a core course in music education in universities, but also one of the ways to rapidly improve students' musical literacy. It plays an important role in the improvement of students' musical ability and the cultivation and perfection of their musical literacy (Davies-Splitter & Splitter, 2006). Therefore, solfeggio is particularly important in the teaching of college music teachers and students' learning. At present, because students have a certain playing ability before entering school, but the basic music literacy is generally weak, so many colleges and universities in the music major of the solfeggio course teachers adopt the mode of teaching singing. Teachers teach one line and students follow one line until they can sing it complete. In this kind of teaching, students cannot feel the beauty of music, and even feel boring in the repeated teaching and singing, which produces the psychology of boredom. The use of Orff method in the music professional solfeggio course can increase the effectiveness of the practical part of the teaching process. Compared with the traditional teaching mode, it not only enriches the body's ability to perceive music, but also achieves the enhancement of the sense of music and improves the ability to read music in solfeggio. Helping students to achieve a comprehensive and efficient level of music can not only increase students' interest in learning, but also change students from being taught to being participants, thus achieving the expected goal of teachers' music teaching (Zhang, 2014). The integration of Orff method into solfeggio teaching and the application of Orff method in universities music classroom improves the shortcomings of the traditional teaching mode and helps the learning and mastering of important and difficult points, which means that Orff method has a good value of application in universities music education, and it is worthwhile for us to carry out in-depth research and systematic practice.

## Research Objectives

1. To study Orff method from experts.
2. To construct a solfeggio teaching plan using Orff method.
3. To use Orff method solfeggio teaching plan in experimental group.
4. To find out the teaching effectiveness by using the Orff method solfeggio teaching plan.

## Research Methodology

This study adopted the mixed research method, quantitative research method and qualitative research method, are adopted in this study. In the part of qualitative research, the expert interview method was used. Three professors of the Orff pedagogy in the field of music were interviewed in China. In the quantitative research part, descriptive analysis and comparative analysis are carried out on the results of the subjects.

### Population and Sampling

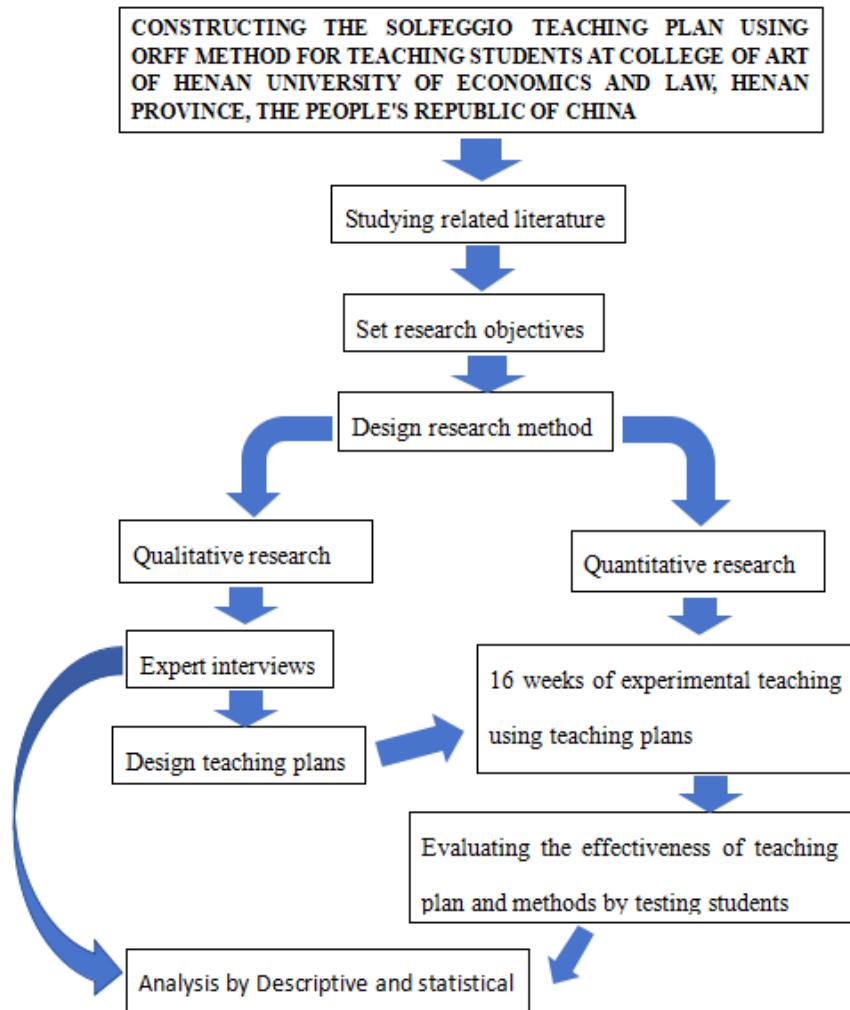
#### Population

320 students majoring in music, College of Art, Henan University of Economics and Law.

#### Sampling

This study adopts a systematic random sampling method. Among 320 students in eight classes in four grades of the college, one class was selected for research. The study invited 40 students in the class of sophomore year of the College of Music.

## Research Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1** Research Conceptual Framework

## Research Findings

### 1. To study Orff method from experts

Through interviews with three experts and summarizing and analyzing the contents of the interviews, the conclusion is as follows:

- 1) In the solfeggio teaching in colleges and universities, Orff method can bring a lot of positive influence and help.
- 2) The Orff method is helpful to deepen the reform of college music education.
- 3) Orff method is conducive to cultivating students' creativity and autonomy.
- 4) Orff method is conducive to the development of popular music.
- 5) Orff method can be divided into four modules: voice training, movement training, instrument training and Orff music.
- 6) The concept of music education in Chinese universities lacks innovation, teaching conditions and the level of teachers is not high.

## 2. To construct a solfeggio teaching plan using Orff method

The experts' views from Orff theory combined with solfeggio teaching methods provided support for the creation of teaching plan, and led the researchers to create 16 teaching plan and use them in practical teaching. The teaching plan combining Orff and solfeggio is a unique teaching design, which aims to improve students' ability of music perception, expression and creation by combining Orff method and solfeggio training. The creation of the teaching plan is divided into four parts: Sound gesture, Voice activity, Orff instrument and Orff game, which fully reflects the comprehensiveness of Orff method. Music is not only melody and rhythm, but also includes movement, dance, drama, language and other elements. Solfeggio ear training focuses on students' listening and singing ability of pitch, interval, rhythm and melody. The combination of the two enables students to develop comprehensively in the learning process and improve their overall quality in the field of music.

**Table 1** The outline of the teaching plan and the theme of each lesson

| Teaching plan outline        |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Part1:Sound gesture</b>   | Week 1:<br>1. Get to know Orff's music teaching method - Bluff<br>2. Master the 2/4,3/4,4/4 beat and have a basic sense of rhythm through the Orff bluff practice.<br>3. Have the ability to create a bluff action. |
|                              | Week 2: Orff "classical sound gesture" training   |
|                              | Week 3: Orff "classical bluff" training   |
|                              | Week 4: Learn Orff music - Orff's body movement   |
| <b>Part2:Voice activity</b>  | Week 5:<br>1. Know the Orff music pedagogy - Voice activity<br>2. Multi-part arrangement using voice  |
|                              | Week 6:<br>1. Learn more methods of multi-part voice training and master<br>2. Improve students' intonation and rhythm control  |
|                              | Week 7: Learn free voice modeling activities  |
|                              | Week 8: Learn voice modeling activities for language  |
|                              | Week 9: Learn singing voice modeling activities   |
|                              | Week 10: 1. Train students to establish a stable sense of rhythm<br>2. Use your voice for situational creative activities   |
|                              | Week 11:<br>1. Learn to play Orff instruments<br>2. Play multi-instrument ensembles   |
| <b>Part3:Orff instrument</b> | Week 12: Learn the knowledge about Orff instrument  |
|                              | Week 13: Learn the Orff ensemble-Play multi-instrument ensembles  |
|                              | Week 14: Learn the Orff ensemble-Play songs   |

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
|                         | Week 15:Learn the Orff ensemble-Play songs  |
| <b>Part4:Orff Games</b> | Week 16:Master Orff music and improve your intonation and rhythm through Orff voice games, body games and instrument games. |

In general, the teaching plan combining Orff and solfeggio is an effective teaching method, which can improve students' ability of music perception, expression and creation, and will inject new vitality into music education.

### **3. To use Orff method solfeggio teaching plan in experimental group**

In the course of teaching, 40 sophomore students majoring in music of Henan University of Economics and Law were given a 16-week experimental teaching based on expert opinions and teaching plans. Each lesson is divided into three parts, first, homework check, followed by theoretical teaching, and finally practical teaching. In the course of homework check, the teacher will ask the students to combine the Orff method of the previous lesson to sing solfeggio. In the theory teaching section, the teacher will talk about the Orff method that will be taught in this lesson and how this method is combined with solfeggio to strengthen the relevant theoretical foundation for students. Through practical teaching, research deeply experienced the charm of Orff method. Music is not only a combination of sounds, but also a combination of natural, emotional and other elements. In the solfeggio course, students need to understand the relationship between sound and sound, the ups and downs of melody, and feel the rhythm of rhythm in life, so as to better integrate into music and feel music, so as to improve their musical literacy. The Orff method encourages students to express their feelings and thoughts through improvisation. In the solfeggio course, students can express their musical feelings through improvisation or singing, which is helpful to cultivate students' creativity and expressiveness. Music activities in Orff method need everyone's participation and cooperation. In the solfeggio training course, students can experience the cooperation and communication of music through chorus, ensemble and other forms, which is helpful to cultivate students' teamwork spirit. To sum up, Orff method has significant application value in solfeggio teaching in colleges and universities. It not only improves student concentration and engagement, but also enhances students' musical perception and creativity. Through this training, students' music perception ability has been effectively improved, and has laid a solid foundation for future music learning and performance. In addition, the Orff method also emphasizes the creativity of music. In traditional solfeggio teaching, students often just imitate and repeat, but Orff teaching encourages students to create and adapt music. This teaching method helps to stimulate students' creativity and cultivate their innovative thinking. Therefore, colleges and universities should further promote Orff method to provide students with more comprehensive and creative music education. At the same time, teachers also need to keep learning and exploring to combine Orff method with other teaching methods in order to achieve the best teaching effect.

### **4. To find out the teaching effectiveness by using the Orff method solfeggio teaching plan**

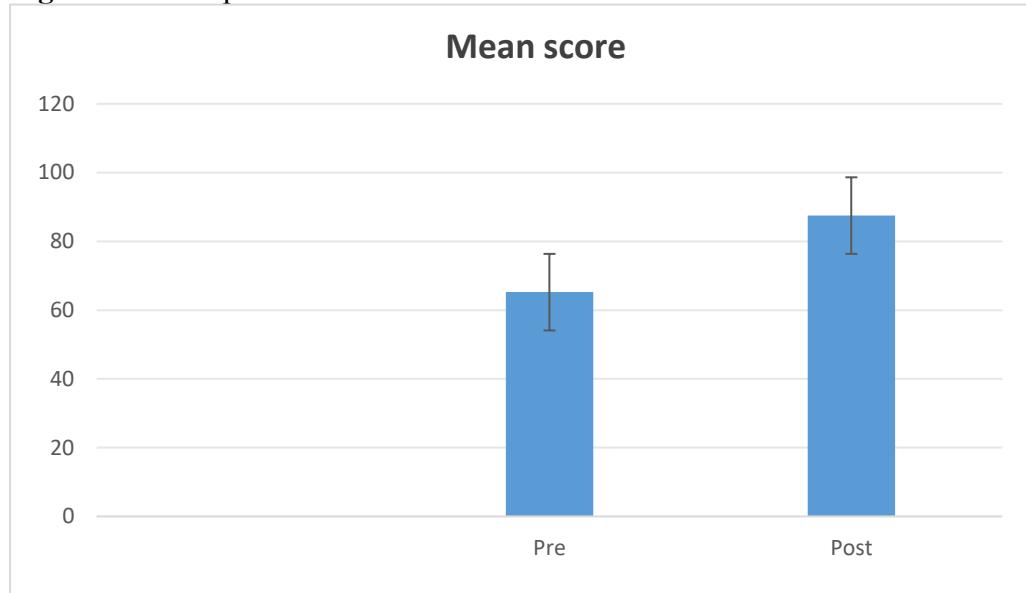
In this part, the researchers conducted 16 weeks of experimental teaching on 40 sophomore music majors with teaching plan, and drew the conclusion that:

1) Orff method is helpful to the improvement of solfeggio performance of college music majors.

2) The teaching plan has a positive impact on the teaching results.

As shown in Figure 2, according to the descriptive statistics, the students' solfeggio score before learning Orff method was 65.23 (standard deviation 4.532), the average score after learning Orff method was 87.5 (standard deviation 4.997), and the score difference before and after learning Orff method was 22.27 (Figure 2).

**Figure 2** Participants' mean score.



Note: Error bars denote standard error of the mean.

As the results shown in Table 3, the paired T-test result demonstrates the significant difference between participants' scores before and after learning Orff method,  $t=-18.188$ ,  $p<0.001$

**Table 3** Paired T-test results

|          | Mean  | t       | P       |
|----------|-------|---------|---------|
| Pre-Post | 22.27 | -18.187 | <0.001* |

Note: Paired T-test (two-tailed) result that demonstrates the significant difference between participants' scores before and after listening to the music. \*= significant at .050 alpha-level.

In the form of a questionnaire survey, three experts were collected to evaluate the feasibility of the Pre-Post Test (IOC). The results show that for this test report, the average IOC score of all experts on the teaching plan is higher than 0.8, and the overall average score is 0.89, indicating that the feasibility of this pre-post test is consistent.

Overall, according to the paired T-test, there was a statistically significant difference in solfeggio scores before and after learning the Orff method for 16 weeks, and the average score after learning was higher than that before learning. Therefore, it can be concluded that the introduction of Orff method and related teaching plans in solfeggio classes can effectively help music majors improve their solfeggio performance.

## **Discussion**

In the field of college music education, Orff method is widely used, especially in solfeggio course. This teaching method not only emphasizes the learning of music theory, but also emphasizes the cultivation of music practice and creativity. The quantitative part of this study supports the view that Orff method is helpful to the improvement of solfeggio performance of college music majors. The study process of the participants was rigorous and fair, and the experiment was carried out with the attitude of respecting all possibilities of the results. However, there are still some limitations. For example, the participants selected in the participant sampling process have a consistent feature, all of them are students in the second year of university. If students in the fourth year of university can be introduced into the study in the future, the research results will be more beneficial (Li, 2018). In addition, before the study began, the researchers told the participants about the process of the study and the desired benefits, so the participants were more motivated and focused during the study than usual, so such results may have a placebo effect. Later studies could be attempted without notifying the participants. In the part of qualitative research, the researchers standardized the selection criteria of experts, and all the invited experts met the established criteria. In the process of interview, there was no deliberate guide to the experts, and the information obtained was only from the experts' oral. In the process of summarizing the questions answered by the experts, the views of the experts are fully respected and there is no fiction. Based on the opinions of experts, the teaching plan was created, and the content of the creation met the teaching requirements of the university, and was fully used in the subsequent teaching (Tian, 2019). However, this teaching plan also has some shortcomings. For example, it may place too much emphasis on students' improvisation and self-expression, while neglecting the teaching of music fundamentals and skills. In addition, because such teaching plans require a lot of time and energy to prepare and implement, the requirements for teachers are also high. Finally, research pointed out that the Orff method has had a profound impact on solfeggio training courses. It not only improves students' learning effect, but also stimulates students' learning enthusiasm and creativity. In the future teaching, research will continue to use Orff method to train more excellent music talents.

## **Recommendation**

### **1. Practical Recommendations**

Solfeggio is a very important basic course in college music teaching. It plays an irreplaceable role in cultivating students' musical perception, rhythm sense, pitch sense and musical expression ability. As an advanced teaching idea and method, Orff method can provide useful reference for solfeggio teaching. Through the application of Orff method, it helps students to establish a good sense of rhythm and rhythm as well as the improvisation and creativity of music. This teaching method can improve students' participation and enthusiasm, and also can better cultivate students' music perception ability. It can also stimulate students'

creativity and imagination, and cultivate students' musical expression ability and self-confidence. The Orff method is of great significance and value in the application of solfeggio in colleges and universities. It can provide new ideas and methods for the teaching of solfeggio, and improve students' ability of music perception, creation and expression. Therefore, the researchers recommend that the Orff method should be actively applied in the solfeggio classes in colleges and universities to make positive contributions to the cultivation of musical talents with innovative spirit and practical ability.

## 2. Recommendation for future research

The application of Orff method in colleges and universities will promote the reform of music education. Orff method breaks the traditional way of music teaching, emphasizes the integration of multiple art forms, and pays attention to the active participation and experience of students, all of which help to promote the innovation and development of music education. In the future college music education, we expect to see more innovative and practical teaching methods appear. The Orff method has the potential to extend its reach even further. At present, although Orff method has been applied and studied at home and abroad, its scope of influence needs to be further expanded. We expect that more universities will introduce Orff method in the future, and carry out in-depth research and practice to promote its development in the field of education. This study has limitations, such as a small sample size. It is expected that future research can expand the thinking, expand the scope of research, and find the universality of related problems. At the same time, we also look forward to seeing the integration of the Orff method with other educational ideas. With the diversified development of education, various educational ideas and methods are learning from each other and integrating. We look forward to seeing the Orff method combined with some new educational concepts such as "project-based learning" and "flipped classroom" to produce more creative and effective teaching methods. The application of Orff method in colleges and universities has broad prospects and far-reaching significance. It can not only improve the comprehensive quality of students, stimulate students' interest in music learning, but also promote the reform and innovation of music education. We hope that more universities will introduce and apply Orff method in the future, so as to cultivate more outstanding talents with innovative thinking and practical ability.

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