

Constructing the Cantonese Pop Music Singing Guidebook for Teaching Students at Xinghai Conservatory of Music

Feng Shanshan,
Jinsinee Reogkwanyongmee and Mingkhwan Nakhiransakun
Bangkokthonburi University, Thailand
Corresponding Author, E-mail: nicha.pat@btu.ac.th

Abstract

Canto-pop songs are popular songs written and sung in the Cantonese (Hong Kong) vernacular dialect. The entry on Canto-pop songs in the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians explains: "Canto-pop is commercial entertainment music with a pop style that originated in Hong Kong in the late 1970s, with melodies influenced by contemporary Japanese music, but still with Chinese characteristics." Hong Kong is the birthplace of Cantopop, which is widely popular outside the Cantonese-speaking region, which is a cultural phenomenon worthy of great attention. Generally speaking, dialects, as a local language, have distinct regional colors and regional restrictions, and songs sung in dialects are difficult to spread in areas other than dialects. However, Cantopop songs are an exception. Dialects not only did not affect the spread of Cantopop songs, but also made Cantopop songs unique and highly respected. Even under the drive of Hong Kong pop culture, learning Cantonese and singing Cantonese songs once became a fashion for people to chase. Such cultural phenomenon is worth thinking and exploring.

Keywords: Constructing; Cantonese Pop; Music Singing; Guidebook; Xinghai Conservatory of Music

Introduction

The 1980s and 1990s were the heyday of Cantopop songs, and its rise was the result of many factors. The promotion of *The Times*: In the golden age of Hong Kong TV series, a large number of Cantonese TV series appeared, and the high audience rating made the emergence and rapid popularity of Cantonese theme songs, and Cantonese songs became synonymous with Hong Kong pop music; Local identity: As Cantonese songs continue to be known by Hong Kong people, Canto-pop songs are gradually widely recognized and loved, and Hong Kong people's confidence and identity of local culture are increasing, which makes the development of Canto-pop songs more supportive; Market promotion: The development of business culture is also a very important influencing factor, such as award mechanism, rookie competition, star packaging, entertainment media, karaoke and so on (Wang, 2024). Among the television and radio media in Hong Kong, the most important award program is the annual Top 10 Chinese Songs Award organized by RTHK in collaboration with the International Federation of Phonographic Music (HKIA), the Composers and Songwriters Association of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Recording Industry Association. During this period, Hong Kong's entertainment industry developed rapidly, and young people's growing love for outstanding singers brought the rapid promotion of the entertainment industry (Zhang, 2024). Various talent shows, variety shows and concerts received high attention from people and became the direct

force accompanying and promoting the development of Cantopop songs. In line with the spiritual needs of the people, suitable for public singing: the content of Cantonese songs is fresh and comfortable, light and soothing, and the lyrics are realistic, showing the real life of the people, and more in line with the aesthetic needs of the public; Cantopop songs are sung in a "popular singing style", with a catchy melody and a singing style that is more acceptable to the public, suitable for both young and old, and easy to be widely accepted by the masses.

The lyrics of Cantopop songs generally include realistic life, inspirational, home-country feelings, natural scenery and so on, which have positive energy. The way of singing is diversified, both sincere emotion catharsis, but also the expression of singing skills. During this period, the rapid development of the media industry also played an important role in promoting the widespread popularity of Cantonese pop songs. The spread of music by CD instead of tape, the emergence of large-scale concerts, and the rise of entertainment packaging companies all provided favorable conditions for the development of Cantopop songs (Xia, 2024).

Cantopop songs, due to their different use of language, also have a more prominent feature: the lyrics rhyme. The lyrics of Canto-pop songs pay attention to the principle of rhyme, Cantonese (also known as Cantonese) has a total of 52 songs, divided into 33 groups, of which 11 groups are universal rhymes. In the early Cantopop lyrics, "one rhyme to the end" and "interval rhyme" were frequently used; By the line. The lyrics and melodies of Cantopop songs are composed first, then lyrics. The Cantonese language follows the system of "nine tones and six tones" : Yin flat, Yang flat, Yin up, Yang up, Yin away, Yang away, Yin in, Yang in, and middle in. Each of these tones has a different tuning value, making the Cantonese language much more complex and rhythmic than Mandarin, which has only four sounds (Yin ping, Yang ping, up and out).

Therefore, the mastery of Cantonese dialect has become the key to singing Cantonese songs. When you want to sing Cantonese pop songs, you can better reflect its style and characteristics, and it is the most important to grasp its language characteristics. This is the most important teaching of Cantopop singing. Dialect mastery is not an advantage for native speakers of Cantonese. In the course of teaching, the reaseacher found that students with Cantonese dialect as their mother tongue would also have the problem of enunciation when singing Cantonese songs. Students who are not native speakers of Cantonese dialect can also master the articulation and singing of Cantopop songs through teaching. Therefore, the construction of Cantopop singing teaching guidelines is mainly aimed at exploring the excellent model of Cantopop singing teaching, and summarizing a set of guidelines conducive to Cantopop singing teaching by means of questionnaire interview, method experiment and student achievement analysis. So that it can better serve the cultivation of popular singing talents in colleges and universities (Chen, 2024).

At present, the teaching mode of Cantopop singing has not been fully explored. There are not many teaching papers on Cantopop singing. Therefore, it aims at the development of Cantopop songs and the current research status. The researcher think it is necessary to explore the teaching mode of Cantopop singing.

Research Objectives

1. To study Cantonese pop music from key informants
2. To construct the Cantonese pop music singing guidebook for teaching students at Xinghai Conservatory of Music
3. To experiment the teaching by using Cantonese pop music singing guidebook for teaching students at Xinghai Conservatory of Music
4. To evaluate the teaching by using Cantonese pop music singing guidebook for teaching students at Xinghai Conservatory of Music

Research Methodology

This research used mixed method research which collect from interview key informants and use the experimental research for evaluate the guidebook.

Conceptual Framework

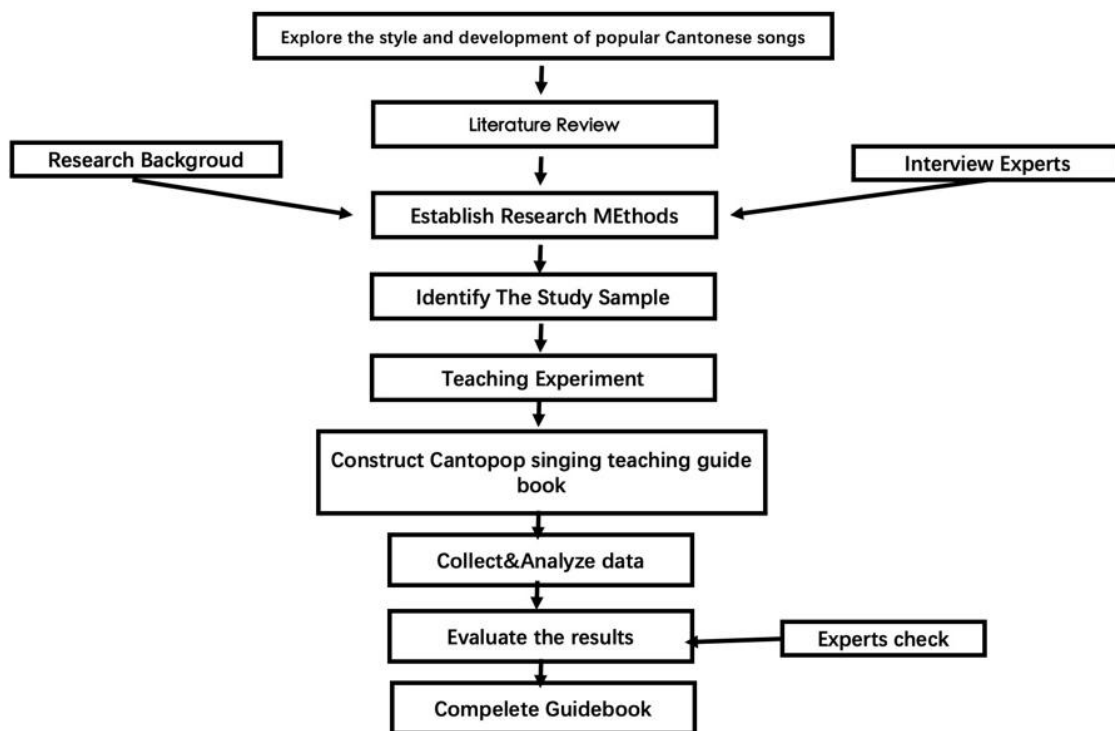


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Findings

The teaching guide for Cantonese song singing trains students from basic skills training to song singing and other aspects. Among them, the basic training includes standing posture, vocal method, breathing method, enunciation and true falsetto conversion method and so on. In the standing posture, students are required to maintain balance, straighten the spine, and keep their feet flat on the ground, shoulder-width apart, and maintain a stable standing posture. Relax your shoulder and neck muscles to avoid a stiff voice caused by tension. In terms of vocal methods, students are required to be able to control their different cavity positions and feel different sound resonance areas. In addition, students are also required to control the size and intonation of the voice, and improve by practicing scales and enunciation. In terms of breathing methods, there are a variety of breathing methods to help students vocalize. The selection of Cantonese songs is based on the release time of the songs, and the classical Cantonese songs of each period are selected for teaching. It includes works of different styles and singers. The main purpose is to require students to master works of different styles and gradually form their own singing and performance styles by feeling the singing styles of different singers.

Studying Cantonese pop music from key informants

The author interviewed Cantopop singing teachers who have a good reputation in the conservatory, and they have a solid theoretical foundation and rich practical experience. They proposed to conduct teaching and training in the following aspects.

The first is the basic training: from the basic Cantonese pronunciation and intonation to learn, master the pronunciation rules and intonation of Cantonese. Tutors can help students establish correct pronunciation habits by demonstrating and correcting pronunciation.

Second, music theory: Learning music theory, such as rhythm, melody, harmony, etc., is essential to understanding song structure and singing technique.

Thirty singing skills: master the basic skills of popular singing, such as breathing control, vocal position, the use of resonating cavity, etc. Through repeated practice, gradually improve the fluency and expressiveness of singing.

Repertoire practice You can choose representative Cantopop music repertoire to practice, and gradually master the singing style and characteristics of Cantopop music by imitating the original singing.

Constructing the Cantonese pop music singing guidebook for teaching students at Xinghai Conservatory of Music

Xinghai Conservatory of Music, as the only professional institution of higher music in South China, should reflect the following principles in the construction of its Canto pop Music teaching and singing guide:

Clear teaching objectives: To develop comprehensive and specific teaching objectives aimed at cultivating students' Cantopop singing ability, musical analysis ability and cultural accomplishment.

Curriculum: Set up corresponding courses according to the teaching objectives, including Cantonese pronunciation and intonation training, basic music theory, pop singing skills training, repertoire analysis and singing practice.

Compilation of teaching materials: Organize experts to compile teaching materials suitable for Cantopop singing, including pronunciation guide, repertoire, analysis of singing skills, etc.

Teaching methods: Adopt a variety of teaching methods, such as demonstration teaching, individual guidance, group discussion, etc., in order to stimulate students' learning interest and initiative.

Practice: Strengthen practice, through stage performance, recording production and other ways, so that students can improve their singing ability and comprehensive quality in practice.

Experimenting the teaching by using Cantonese pop music singing guidebook for teaching students at Xinghai Conservatory of Music

In order to verify the effectiveness and feasibility of the Cantopop singing guide, a teaching experiment can be conducted in Xinghai Conservatory of Music. The specific steps are as follows:

Experimental design: Determine the experimental subjects, experimental time and experimental content. Select a certain number of students as experimental objects, according to the guide to carry out the teaching experiment.

Teaching implementation: Teaching implementation according to the requirements of the guide, including Cantonese pronunciation training, music theory learning, singing skills training, etc. At the same time, pay attention to the individual differences of students, carry out targeted individual guidance.

Effect evaluation: Through tests, questionnaires and other ways to evaluate the learning effect of students. The evaluation included Cantonese pronunciation accuracy, singing skills, repertoire performance ability and so on.

Feedback and adjustments: Make necessary adjustments and refinements to the guide based on evaluation results and student feedback. At the same time, the teaching experience is summarized to provide bibliography for future teaching.

Evaluating the teaching by using Cantonese pop music singing guidebook for teaching students at Xinghai Conservatory of Music

The teaching evaluation of the Cantopop singing Guide of Xinghai Conservatory of Music should be carried out from the following aspects:

Achievement degree of teaching objectives: Evaluation of whether the guide has achieved the predetermined teaching objectives and whether the students' Cantopop singing ability has been significantly improved.

Applicability of teaching content and methods: Evaluate whether the teaching content and methods in the guide are suitable for students' actual situation, and whether they can stimulate students' learning interest and initiative.

Discussion

After interviewing three excellent teachers, their valuable opinions on the basic skills of singing and the choice of song teaching have undoubtedly added rich experience and insights to the field of music education. The following is a summary of the content based on these comments:

Breath control:

All three teachers emphasized the fundamental role of breathing in singing. They point out that proper breathing methods not only provide steady momentum to the voice, but also help the singer better control the pitch and volume. It is recommended to practice abdominal breathing to ensure that the breath is deep and even (Si, 2024).

Sound position:

Teachers agree that finding the right vocal position is crucial to singing. This usually involves focusing the sound at the junction of the throat and chest cavity, using resonating cavities (e.g., head cavity, mouth cavity, chest cavity) to amplify and beautify the sound. By practicing simple vocal exercises, such as scaling up and down, vowel lengthening, etc., students can find and stabilize the vocal position.

Intonation and rhythm:

Accurate intonation and steady rhythm are the basic requirements of singing. Teachers recommend ear training for solfeggio to improve students' sense of intonation, as well as metronome or rhythm practice repertoire to enhance rhythm training.

Emotional expression:

In addition to the technical requirements, the teachers also stressed the importance of emotional expression in singing. They believe that only by truly understanding the connotation and emotion of a song can they accurately convey it to the audience through sound. Therefore, it is recommended that students have a deep understanding of the background and the meaning of the lyrics of the song before singing, and pay attention to emotional input and expression during singing (Song, 2023).

Song teaching choice

Suitability:

Teachers suggest that students' age, gender, voice condition and singing level should be fully considered when choosing teaching songs. Choosing songs that are in line with the actual situation of students can help stimulate students' interest in learning and self-confidence, while avoiding frustration caused by excessive difficulty of songs.

Diversity:

In order to broaden students' musical vision and singing ability, teachers suggested introducing a variety of styles of songs into the teaching. This includes music from different regions, different eras and different genres. Through diversified song teaching, students can get access to more musical elements and expression techniques, so as to improve their comprehensive singing ability (Gao, 2022).

Educational significance:

The teachers also emphasized the educational significance of the songs. They believe that choosing songs with positive values and positive themes for teaching can not only cultivate students' aesthetic taste and humanistic quality, but also convey positive energy and social responsibility in a subtle way.

Step by step:

In the arrangement of song teaching, the teachers suggest following the principle of step by step. From simple to complex, from easy to difficult to arrange the teaching repertoire, to help students gradually master singing skills and improve singing level. At the same time, it is also necessary to flexibly adjust according to the actual situation and learning progress of students to ensure the maximum teaching effect.

Recommendations

1. Practical Recommendations

Standing posture training is an indispensable part of vocal music learning. Correct standing posture not only helps to improve the singer's stage image, but also promotes smooth breathing and sound projection. The following is a summary of the singing posture training: First, the basic posture requirements. It involves keeping your body upright: Keep your body naturally upright, with your head, spine, and hips in a vertical line and avoid bending or leaning forward. Feet apart: feet parallel to the shoulder width, or slightly wider than the shoulder width, the tip of the foot can be slightly turned outward, forming an "eight" shape of about 30 degrees to increase stability. Legs upright: Legs upright, knees tucked in, kneecaps in the same direction as toe, hip lift makes the legs rise and elongate. Shoulder relaxation: Keep the shoulders naturally sinking, do not lift or over-stretch, so that breathing is more free and smooth.

2. Recommendation for future research

Compared with the previous research results, the author has added more breathing methods and corrected the pronunciation of Cantonese words.

Increase the training of multiple breathing methods. In addition to abdominal breathing and chest breathing, there are side breathing, lip and teeth breathing and spinal breathing.

Side breathing involves inhaling breath from the side so that more breath can be drawn into the lungs. This breathing method is especially suitable for high-pitched parts, which require more breath support to maintain the stability and penetration of the sound. Side breathing provides a flexible way for the singer to breathe, which can be adjusted and distributed according to the needs of the song.

Lip and tooth breathing controls breath by opening the lips or biting the lips, giving the singer greater control over breath and sound transitions when singing music that requires rapid transitions, such as pop and jazz music.

This breathing method helps the singer to achieve more accurate breath control, improve the accuracy and expressiveness of singing.

Spinal breathing stretches the spine to allow breath to enter the lungs better. This breathing method is often used in music that requires more vocal control and expression (such as classical music and opera). It helps the singer to achieve a more delicate and rich voice performance.

Enhanced resonance: Spinal breathing can also promote the resonance effect of the sound, making the sound more full and penetrating.

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