

# Reflection on the Application of Self-Created Picture Books in Orff Music Education Methodology

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## Abstract

**This study systematically explores the application of self-created picture books in Orff music pedagogy and its educational effectiveness. By analyzing the theoretical basis and practical advantages of the Orff music teaching method, the study demonstrates the compatibility between picture books and the method in enhancing children's creativity, expressiveness and aesthetic quality. The article builds a framework for the implementation of the teaching method, covering music selection, picture book design, rhythmic movement creation and instrument arrangement, and evaluates teachers' professional skills and teaching effectiveness in the light of teaching reflections. The results of the study show that the integration of picture books and Orff music pedagogy can effectively stimulate children's learning motivation and promote their overall cognitive and emotional development.**

## Keywords

**Self-composed Picture Books; Orff Music Pedagogy; Reflections on Practice.**

## 1. Introduction

Orff music activities aim to cultivate students' musical feeling and expression ability through creative ways, and to promote children's physical and mental development by combining music with vocal, rhythmic, singing, language, storytelling, painting, drama, Orff instruments and other art forms. Mr. Chen Heqin, a famous children's educator, has put forward the idea of "musicalization of children's life". Innocent and lively children have a natural affinity and longing for music, and children's music should accompany children's life and growth [1]. Combining Orff music activities with picture books can better stimulate children's interest and creativity, and at the same time, it can also help children better understand and memorize music knowledge, and it is easier for them to learn from games and interactions. In Orff pedagogy, picture book stories can be used as part of the teaching content to stimulate young children's interest and imagination through reading picture book stories for interactive experience.

## 2. Theoretical Foundations and Principles of Conducting Orr's Music Pedagogy

### 2.1. Theoretical Foundations

Orff music education, founded by the famous German composer Carl Orff (1895-1982), is one of the three world-famous and far-reaching music education systems [2], which integrates music, dance and other art forms, promotes comprehensive sensory involvement, and helps young children better understand and experience music. This unique music education has been handed down intact and developed to a certain extent. Orff music education is a teaching

method that must be personally involved in which young children participate not as listeners but as players.

## **2.2. Principles of Implementation**

### **2.2.1. Originality**

Orff music activities begin with simple movements such as clapping hands and legs, and end with both singing songs and doing some improvised cooperative dance movements. This is the first characteristic of Orff music education, the original nature.

Orff once pointed out that “the original music is never just music, it is closely integrated with movement, dance and language, and it is a kind of music that people must participate in themselves.” The original character is to return to the human nature, resort to sensibility, based on children's physical and mental growth characteristics, using the most simple, simple elements of music as the entry point for teaching, and then naturally triggered the learners to participate in the process of activities to experience, performance and creation of music, close to the body, the earth, nature, and everyone is able to experience and try to the music suitable for children. Orff music will be taught using the most original rhythmic approach, bouncing on the ground a few times, swinging the body slightly to the left and right a few times, accompanying with vocal gestures (clapping, patting the legs, stomping the feet, twiddling the fingers), or directing the rhythmic progression, all of which are rhythmic [3].

To summarize, the original music is a comprehensive art that develops the comprehensive ability of students. The original music of the trinity of music, dance and language requires people to personally practice and participate in feeling the emotions of music, and only in practice can they truly appreciate music.

### **2.2.2. Synthesis**

Orff music activities are not just singing, not just doing a variety of movements, but a combination of movement and singing, which is another characteristic of his comprehensive.

Orff music education system is a highly integrated whole, its educational content is the language, singing, appreciation, rhythm, vocal, instrumental, painting, storytelling, drama and so on a variety of art forms together to show, learning music is never just music itself, it provides preschool children with a comprehensive stage performances and opportunities to demonstrate artistic performance skills [4], its unique teaching style and method allows children to dabble in the purest way. Its unique teaching style and methods allow children to engage in all areas of music in a pure and authentic way, and to gain a full and complete sense of music, thus achieving the fullest and broadest journey of music [5].

### **2.2.3. Creativeness**

Creativity is embodied in the Orff music activities all the time, its basic process is to guide the observation→induced imitation→full experience→personality creation, and gradually make the students' creative ability to obtain great development. Creativity throughout all aspects of the content of Orff music activities, it also has a basic law, can not start to let the students to create, must be based on a good input, and then effective output, young children at the beginning of the action are imitating the teacher, when the song is repeated a few times after the teacher to do the action, young children know that the teacher is to let the child at a fixed rhythm to create a way of patting the body, and then can have an effective creative experience. Orff music teaching creation is the process of noticing - observing - imitating - creating.

In a nutshell, the Orff teaching method stimulates students' interest in learning and creative potential through a comprehensive, diversified, interesting, free and personalized learning approach, and promotes students' physical and mental health and all-round development.

### 3. The Relevance of Illustrated Stories and Orff Pedagogy

In terms of educational targets, both Orff music activities and illustrated stories are in line with the cognitive characteristics of young children and are suitable for students of lower ages. The Orff teaching method mainly promotes young children's learning through a variety of senses, while young children are in the preoperational stage and are able to internalize the sensory-motor behavioral patterns acquired in the perceptual-motor stage into representational or image patterns. Orff music activities use a step-by-step teaching strategy to adapt to the learning rhythm of young children and improve the learning effect.

In terms of teaching objectives, both Orff teaching method and picture book stories can enable young children to better develop their creativity and expressiveness. Picture books provide a story background for young children, and through Orff music activities, they can better express young children's emotions and imaginations after reading picture book stories, and they can also better strengthen young children's memories and understanding. Both focus on the creativity and expressiveness of young children, encourage young children to express their emotions, imagination and creativity through music, and improve the expression and communication skills of young children.

Strengthening young children's memory and understanding, Orff pedagogy is used in picture books, and while expressing music, it constantly and repeatedly recalls picture book elements such as storyline, character characteristics, environmental atmosphere and thoughts and emotions, which on the one hand can make young children strengthen their memory of picture book contents and experience emotions; on the other hand, young children can master the knowledge of rhythms as well as the use of musical instruments in rhythm and music.

To sum up, both Orff music teaching method and picture books are suitable for young children, mainly because they are in line with the cognitive characteristics of young children, promote the all-round development of young children, cultivate their creativity and expressiveness, strengthen their memory and understanding, as well as adapt to the learning rhythm of young children and other advantages.

### 4. Design and Implementation of Teaching and Learning Activities

#### 4.1. Music Selection

When conducting Orff music activities, it is necessary to choose music that is suitable for children's age and interests. The rhythm and melody of the music should match the plot of the picture book, while also emphasizing the educational and artistic aspects of the music.

The teaching content chosen is "Jingle Bells", a familiar American song with a smooth tune and cheerful mood. The vivid lyrics depict a group of children sitting on a horse-drawn sleigh in a blizzard, their laughter echoing in the wilderness along with the crisp ringing of the horses' bells, which expresses the children's enthusiastic and exuberant character, and the sincere feelings of love for a better life.

Overall, the lyrics of Jingle Bells let children feel the festive atmosphere and joyful mood by depicting the sleigh ride in the snow.

#### 4.2. Self-directed Picture Book Production

Picture books should be produced in a way that is appropriate for the age and interests of the children. The content should be consistent with the theme of the music activity, and attention should also be paid to whether the storyline of the picture book can arouse children's empathy and interest.

### 4.2.1. Anatomy of a Screen

Title: Jingle Bells, the title font is young and rounded, with a fun, bright color that echoes the colors on the main character.

Main character: snowman with bells i.e. Tinker Bell, boy i.e. Dang Dang.

Styling: mittens, cotton coat, decorative buttons on the belly.

Colors: red and yellowish colors for clothes and hats, colors echo each other between characters.

Scene: small village by the forest, heavy snow, field, river, village, city, terraces.

Main colors: yellowish, red, white.

Other colors: white, green, blue.

### 4.2.2. Storyline Analysis

The story mainly describes Tinker Bell the snowman and Dang Dang the boy skiing and sledding through a blizzard, fields, a river, a village, a city, and terraces. The picture book shows a variety of scenarios, and concludes with the question, "Where else can they go?" The final question is "Where else can they go?" to stimulate children's thinking.

### 4.2.3. Problems and Reflective Improvements in Picture Book Production

Character image is the most important factor in a picture book, and its image features throughout the whole picture book, reacting to the storyline and requiring the characters to be as unified as possible. Therefore, in the process of making the picture book, the teacher first designs the characters of the picture book, discusses their images, accessories, clothes, looks and colors, and determines the character images. However, since the color aspects of the two character images did not echo each other, adjustments were made to echo the red on the edge of the snowman's hat with the boy's clothes, and the color of the gloves was unified to finalize the character image.

The storyline in the picture book emphasizes on the beginning and end, and a childish story will make the children feel and learn from it. Secondly, the storyline was designed, at first it was designed to be a story about a boy who tied a bell to give life to a snowman, had a snowball fight, skied, rode a sled and traveled through many places in the snow, and gradually built up a deep friendship with the boy. However, the story did not respond to the lyrics of "Jingle Bells" and was detached from the song itself. Moreover, the scene was set too singularly and the ending did not arouse children's thinking. After discovering the problem, the teacher made timely adjustments, setting rich scenes, and the text of the picture book corresponded to the lyrics of the song, and the end of the picture book asked questions to stimulate children's thinking.

After designing the characters and storyline, the teacher designed the title, cover, ring liner and title page. At first, the title was in black, which was too rigid, so it was fine-tuned to a young circle and a color that corresponded to the character's color. The cover is a picture of a snowman and a boy having a snowball fight, which is vivid and interesting and can attract young children to read. The ring liner was initially designed as a sequence of snowflakes and stars, but it was not in line with the Orff music curriculum, so after the design was completed, the elements in the ring liner were replaced with instrumental percussion charts, which was more creative and reflected the Orff teaching content.

The left half of the title page features the bell on the snowman, the title and the group members, who were initially in black, but later adjusted to red, corresponding to the bow on the bell.

Finally, the form of drawing, the first use of markers on paper for drawing, auxiliary tools also used colored pencils, but the picture effect is not good, so after listening to the advice of the instructor to change to the form of electronic drawing, more colorful, and the scene, the characters are more beautiful, full of interest.

### 4.3. Design of Teaching Activities

When conducting Orff music activities, it is necessary to design appropriate forms of activities according to the content of picture books and the age of children. The content of the activity should echo the storyline of the picture book, while also focusing on children's participation and interaction.

#### 4.3.1. Establishment of Teaching Objectives

According to the Child Development Guidelines for 3-6 year olds, "to be able to express one's own emotions or scenes in nature through rhythmic movements or simple dance movements" and "to be able to tell the main contents of the literature for young children that one reads", the following objectives have been designated for the program:

Observe the picture book of "Jingle Bells" and understand the content of the children's song.

Through observing the picture book and singing activities, hit the melody of "Jingle Bells" with musical instruments.

Participate actively in classroom activities and feel the cheerful rhythm of the children's song. The objectives are suitable for the age development characteristics of older children, including the dimensions of knowledge, skills and emotional attitude, and the teaching objectives are specific and feasible.

#### 4.3.2. Teaching Preparation

The teaching materials are well prepared, including teaching PPT, Jingle Bells music, picture books, charts, triangles, tambourines, double rattles, string bells, clapper bells, aluminum pianos, and other musical instruments. The children have experience with rhythm and musical instruments, and have listened to Jingle Bells before this class.

#### 4.3.3. Creation of Rhythmic Movements

Since the target audience is Chinese children, the rhythms are based on the lyrics of the Chinese version of the song, line by line. "Breaking through the snow and wind" is designed as a 'push the door' movement to show that it is not difficult to face the snow and wind; 'sitting on the sled' is designed as a sled with arms stacked and swaying from side to side; "Running across the field" is designed as a horseback riding action; 'Laughing and singing' is designed as a smiley face action; 'Horse bells are ringing, we are in high spirits' is designed as a right and left hand ringing action; 'We are really skiing tonight' is designed as an action; 'We are really skiing tonight' is designed as an action; 'We are really skiing tonight' is designed as a 'snowboarding' action. "We're happy skiing tonight, we'll sing the ski song." Cross your arms for skiing and sing the ski song. "Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells" clap your legs according to the rhythm, then do the left and right hand ringing movements; 'We're having so much fun skiing tonight, we're sitting on a sled' repeat the left and right hand crossing, arm stacking left and right swaying.

#### 4.3.4. Selection and Arrangement of Instruments

According to the cheerful rhythmic characteristics of the song "Jingle Bells" and the emotions expressed, when choosing the musical instruments to be used in the Orff music activities, the main instruments used were the aluminum piano, triangle, tambourine, double rattles, stringed bells, clanging bells and other musical instruments, which are clear and simple to operate, and can be used in the Orff music activities, and they can symbolize the ringing of the bells, which is in accordance with the theme of the piece of music. The double bells represent the sound of the pony's hooves, which is also in line with the "horse" in the song.

In the arrangement, firstly, the aluminum piano was used for the intro performance, and secondly, the triangle, tambourine, and double-baritone were played with the rhythm of the music, which was able to respond to the lyrics of the song and the combination of the three sounds was pleasant to the ear. Because of the group performance design in the teaching process, the second part of the song was performed with stringed bells and clanging bells, and

the clear sound of the stringed bells and clanging bells matched the lyrics of the song, "Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells".

## 5. Teaching Reflection

### 5.1. Teachers' Skills

In terms of teacher's skills, the teacher has strong organizational and teaching skills and is able to guide children step by step to feel the characteristics of the song "Jingle Bells". Teaching motivation is timely, which stimulates the enthusiasm of children and mobilizes the classroom atmosphere. Teaching posture is good, the voice is loud, and the image is decent, but there is still a need to strengthen the educational and teaching skills such as voice intonation. The Orff teaching method requires teachers to have high musical and performance ability, to be able to skillfully use teaching tools and methods, and to have the ability to innovate and design teaching activities, in which teachers' teaching skills need to be improved.

### 5.2. Performance of the Orff Method

Rhythmic movements and musical instruments in the Orff teaching method are utilized to carry out teaching activities. In the rhythmic link, all of them are able to create and perform according to the lyrics and the rhythmic tunes of the songs to stimulate the interest of the children, focusing on attracting the attention of the children through music, games and other activities, so that the children can learn in an enjoyable atmosphere, thus stimulating the interest and motivation of the children. Enhance memory through physical sensation, and help students better memorize and understand the contents of picture books and lyrics songs through multi-sensory stimulation. For example, in the rhythm section of Jingle Bells, the movements created correspond to the lyrics of the song, and the movements are in line with the age of the target group, and the rhythm is compatible with the rhythm, and the rhythm is displayed as a preparation for the experience of the previous lesson, which will not lead to too many classroom elements and fail to achieve the teaching objectives.

But there are also inadequacies in the introduction, for example, the rhythmic introduction of "Little Girl Who Picks Mushrooms" is based on the existing sound to move rhythmically, and there is no creation; "Guess Who I Am" uses the rhythmic introduction "This is my left side, clap your hands. This is my right side, stomp your feet. This is my front, bend over. This is my back, please sit down. Teacher: Today my teacher has brought a nice song for the children, but before we learn the song, let's listen to a little story related to the song, the children should listen carefully." There is also no correlation with the critters in Guess Who I Am, which is a worthy improvement.

In the process of arranging music, the Orff method encourages children to work together in groups to accomplish tasks, promotes communication and cooperation among students through collaboration and interaction, and cultivates students' teamwork and social skills. For example, in "Little Red Riding Hood", the children are divided into two groups, the music is segmented, and different instruments are used to play, the choice of instruments respects the independent choice of the children at the same time, the teacher guides and helps the children to choose the appropriate instruments to play, and through the instrumental performance, the children's musical literacy and aesthetic ability are cultivated.

The drawing ability of Orff music teaching is mainly shown in the drawing of charts, and it is innovative to combine the children's picture book ring lining with the percussion of musical instruments. Young children are in the stage of concrete image, very interested in brightly colored charts, charts are mainly composed of the sketch of each instrument, vivid image, young children can hit the music according to the charts, in line with the age characteristics of young children.

### 5.3. The Use of Picture Book Storylines

In the use of picture book storyline did not make good use of picture book stories, just a simple explanation of the picture book story, and did not give children the opportunity to express as well as create picture books, story extension and other aspects of the activities, picture book utilization rate is small. To increase the frequency of using picture books in actual teaching, teachers can increase the frequency and scope of using picture books in curriculum planning, make picture books an important part of teaching activities, further enrich the content and form of teaching, and put picture books into the reading area for children to watch repeatedly.

In addition, the curriculum should be divided into several lessons, namely, the learning of musical songs, reading picture books, creating rhythms according to songs, using Orff musical instruments and playing musical instruments according to songs, etc., so as to guide the children step by step to gain a deeper understanding and deepen their comprehension of musical songs and picture books.

## 6. Conclusion

Through the discussion in this paper, it can be found that the use of self-created picture books in Orff music pedagogy is an effective teaching strategy, which can combine the interests and cognitive characteristics of young children, stimulate the enthusiasm of young children for reading and music learning, cultivate their creativity and expressiveness, and promote the harmonious development of young children's body and mind. Some problems and difficulties have been encountered in the study, which require continuous reflection and improvement to enhance teaching skills and levels. Through this teaching strategy, it can provide an interesting and aesthetic music learning environment for young children, so that they can feel happy in music and harvest growth in happiness.

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