

# Revealing Pedagogical Insights: National Elements in the Vocal Education of Contemporary Chinese Popular and Classical Music Performers

## Revelando Insights Pedagógicos: Elementos Nacionais na Educação Vocal de Intérpretes de Música Popular e Clássica Chinesa Contemporânea



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**Abstract:** The exploration of vocal training within the sphere of modern Chinese popular and classical music offers a distinctive perspective on how national traditions shape music education and performance. This research seeks to highlight the specific teaching approaches applied in Chinese vocal instruction, particularly those that integrate traditional elements. Data were collected through online surveys and questionnaires, followed by systematic organization and analysis. Statistical techniques, including comparative evaluation of mean values and t-tests, were used to process and interpret the findings. According to the experimental results, the average score in the experimental group, which supplemented standard education with the study of national vocal techniques and melodies, was higher (82.1) than in the control group, which received standard vocal education (75.4). The application of the t-test showed that the difference between the average scores in both groups is statistically significant. Thus, the research results confirm that using national elements in vocal education significantly improves vocal skills and adaptation to various music styles among students compared to traditional approaches. Such approaches will be able to improve the quality and effectiveness of vocal education, as well as increase students'

interest in learning, helping them to become familiar with various musical traditions. Educators will have the opportunity to create educational programs that will contribute to the development of students' musical potential and mastery in various musical directions and styles.

**Keywords:** national music, cultural influences, teaching methodologies, performance diversity, Chinese pop tunes, vocal training.

**Resumo:** O estudo da educação vocal no contexto da música popular e clássica chinesa contemporânea oferece uma oportunidade única para explorar a influência de elementos nacionais na educação musical e na arte performática. Esta pesquisa visa identificar as peculiaridades dos métodos pedagógicos utilizados na educação vocal chinesa, com ênfase no domínio dos elementos nacionais. O estudo foi realizado por meio de pesquisas online, questionários, análise e organização de dados. Métodos estatísticos e análise comparativa de valores médios e testes t foram empregados para o processamento e análise dos dados. De acordo com os resultados experimentais, a pontuação média no grupo experimental, que complementou a educação padrão com o estudo de técnicas vocais e melodias nacionais, foi maior (82,1) do que no grupo controle, que recebeu educação vocal padrão (75,4). A aplicação do teste t mostrou que a diferença entre as pontuações médias em ambos os grupos é estatisticamente significativa. Assim, os resultados da pesquisa confirmam que o uso de elementos nacionais na educação vocal melhora significativamente as habilidades vocais e a adaptação a vários estilos musicais entre os alunos, em comparação com as abordagens tradicionais. Tais abordagens poderão melhorar a qualidade e a eficácia da educação vocal, bem como aumentar o interesse dos alunos pela aprendizagem, ajudando-os a se familiarizarem com diversas tradições musicais. Os educadores terão a oportunidade de criar programas

educacionais que contribuirão para o desenvolvimento do potencial musical e do domínio dos alunos em diversas direções e estilos musicais.

**Palavras-chave:** música nacional, influências culturais, metodologias de ensino, diversidade de performance, melodias pop chinesas, treinamento vocal.

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## 1. Introduction

Vocal training is an integral part of music education and directly influences the formation and development of students' singing skills (Wang and Webb, 2024). Vocal teachers play a key role in this process, imparting the knowledge and techniques necessary to unlock vocal potential. Their responsibilities include working on breathing, articulation, intonation, and expressiveness—the key elements of successful performance (Chen, 2017). Teachers also encourage students to find their own musical style and individuality in their performance. They carefully analyze and correct technical shortcomings, ensuring the gradual improvement of vocal skills (Brackett, 2015). Through an individual approach and professional experience, teachers take into account the characteristics of each student, providing both technical and emotional support (Xie, 2025). Understanding the personal characteristics and needs of the performer allows for the development of flexible teaching methods that facilitate the development of creative potential (Joseph et al., 2018). The acquisition and practical application of vocal technique are crucial factors in the quality and expressiveness of musical performance (Wei, 2023). A diversity of methods and approaches expands the pedagogical toolkit, enriches practice, and stimulates innovation in music education, creating conditions for the development of young talent and the training of a new generation of musicians (Zhou et al., 2024).

Musicians from China not only actively incorporate Western influences in creating and teaching music but also creatively integrate them with national musical elements, thereby enriching the global music scene. This synthesis enables them to produce a significant number of musical compositions that impress with their originality and expressiveness (Yang and Welch, 2014). Moreover, through this approach, they contribute to the development of numerous musical talents, nurturing a new generation of musicians capable of competing on the international stage. However, despite this success, there is a shortage of educational recommendations

regarding the traditional characteristics of Chinese culture in the field of vocal education in China (Zhu, 2023). The integration of national musical culture into vocal instruction is a key aspect of shaping musical art and the identity of students (Chen, 2020). Engaging young people in the study of folklore traditions, including folk music and national opera, plays an important role in forming their conscious connection to the cultural heritage of their people (Bai, 2017). This integration contributes to the expansion of the musical repertoire and fosters students' respect and appreciation for their national traditions. It raises students' awareness of the importance and uniqueness of their nation's cultural heritage on a global scale (Zhang, 2021).

In the context of university vocal instruction, it is important to consider that the use of national musical elements helps students to develop a deeper connection with their country's culture and to reflect its unique musical character in their performance practice. This enables students to develop their musical skills within the context of their national heritage, which in turn contributes to the formation of their artistic expression and performance style (Wang, 2017). Mastering the traditional components of national musical culture helps to broaden students' artistic outlook, allowing them to discover various musical traditions and deepen their own aesthetic perception (Qu, 2020). Consequently, this approach not only contributes to the formation of highly skilled musicians but also fosters culturally aware and creative youth who value their cultural heritage and can express it in their music (Wang, 2018).

### 1.1. Literature review

Liu and Zhou (2021) investigated the role of innovative approaches in achieving aesthetic vocal performance. The results of a sociological survey confirmed that 89% of participants who utilized the new methodology achieved high results after two months of training, compared to 77% of participants who used a traditional approach. Additionally, a conducted SWOT analysis

helped identify the strengths and weaknesses of each method, as well as the opportunities and threats associated with their use. The study of innovative approaches in aesthetic vocal performance is relevant to our topic, as its findings may reflect specific challenges and prospects in vocal education in China and contribute to the development of the national vocal artistic tradition among young performers in both popular and classical music genres. Thus, the study reflects current pedagogical challenges and insights in vocal education aimed at improving students' skills and performance mastery in Chinese musical culture.

In their examination of China's music education landscape, Yang and Welch (2023) observe that reforming the education system, fostering aesthetic appreciation, and protecting the heritage of traditional Chinese music and cultural identity are central goals from primary through higher education. They argue that increasing state investment, maintaining rigorous national standards, and embracing new, creative teaching strategies are essential measures for resolving the sector's ongoing difficulties.

However, comparing these findings with actual national statistics reveals a gap between research and societal context, indicating the potential divergence of academic communities from real educational and social issues. This study examines the extent to which academic approaches meet the real challenges of contemporary music education in China. An analysis of the Chinese music education system has allowed us to trace the influence of national and cultural factors on vocal teaching methods. The identification of key areas such as educational reform, aesthetic education, the preservation of traditional Chinese music, and the support of cultural identity demonstrates how these elements are combined with the process of teaching and forming vocal skills in Chinese performers.

The study by Sun (2019) examines the impact of Western classical singing on Chinese national vocal music in the 21st century. The author analyzes the singing methods used by the renowned Chinese performer Wu Bixia, as well as her approach

to integrating Western classical techniques into Chinese vocal music. This research helps to uncover the relationship between different musical traditions and contributes to the development of vocal music in China by considering it in the context of the influence of Western classical singing methods. Zhou (2019) investigated the development and influence of national vocal music in China. He analyzed the role of this music in Chinese culture and its impact on society. Scientific exploration explored the transmission and evolution of traditions, scientific research, the exchange of musical works, innovations in pedagogy, and popularization through the media. The result of Zhou's (2019) research establishes that Chinese national vocal music has significant potential for development and innovation.

Hu's (2023) study aimed to examine the influence of music genre on vocal performance, particularly in the context of Chinese popular and traditional music. The results showed that traditional music enjoys greater advantages compared to pop music, while revealing different approaches to performance and technical aspects of each genre. Pop music is characterized by the extensive use of various musical elements and vocal techniques, rhythmic stability, and complex vocal techniques. In contrast, traditional music is characterized by a harmonious combination of musical components and timbre features of the voice. Performing traditional music contributes to the improvement of intonation, sound quality, and the development of the vocal range, while pop music is characterized by the mixing of different musical styles and elements. Hu's (2023) work has practical significance for understanding the characteristics of different musical genres and the specifics of vocal technique.

Le and Soon (2023) examine the challenges of teaching popular music, especially in terms of mastering different vocal styles. The analysis showed that the importance of individual components depends on the genre: in pop music, the geographical distribution of the music plays a significant role, while in traditional music, the educational component. The authors also note that teaching



traditional music helps to improve intonation, sound quality, and expand the vocal range, while pop music is characterized by a mixture of musical elements and different styles of performance. The overall conclusion is that the conceptual framework of the research and the thematic approach provide valuable recommendations for improving the curriculum and methodology of teaching vocals in popular music.

Guo (2018) examines the relationship between musical culture and music education and the role of multicultural music education in inheriting and developing national musical culture. The author examines the challenges of teaching national music within a multicultural environment and proposes corresponding solutions. It is noted that a deep understanding and consideration of cultural aspects in music education will contribute to its vitality and development. The initiative of multicultural music education is crucial for effectively transmitting national musical heritage and deepening students' knowledge of Chinese culture through the study of the characteristics of Chinese folk music and its significance.

Liu (2019) investigated the creation of a national vocal method in contemporary China. The author utilized documentary sources to analyze the political, social, cultural, technical, and educational forces and elements that collectively contributed to the development of the New National Vocal Method. It was argued that the evolution of Chinese national vocal music was determined by a shared desire to modernize China and create a new Chinese identity among the Communist Party of China (CPC), musicians, and vocal performers. The analysis of the creation of the national vocal method sheds light on how these national elements and traditions are integrated into the pedagogical process of vocal training, which can be beneficial for contemporary performers in developing their vocal skills and identity. Therefore, this study can provide valuable insights into understanding the influence of national elements in the vocal education of Chinese musicians, operating in both the realms of popular and classical music.



Zheng and Thoard (2022) investigate the influence of musical trends from different countries on the formation of Chinese popular music. The authors note that Chinese pop music attracts significant attention from young audiences and demonstrates high potential for high-quality and long-term development in the context of global popular culture.

The researchers emphasize that this area has become a subject of interest for many specialists in the field of musical culture, as it reflects the dynamics of modern cultural life and the impact of music on society. Thus, the results of the study contribute to a deeper understanding and support for the development of the popular music scene in China, enriching the cultural space of the country.

This research is highly relevant to our topic context as it examines the influence of popular music culture on the development of the music sphere in China, which is pertinent to studying elements of Chinese vocal education within the framework of contemporary trends. Understanding how popular music affects vocal education and performers in China helps identify and elucidate the national elements in their artistry and education.

Li (2025) proposed a computational model for the automated characterization and segmentation of vocal pitch contours aimed at the comparative analysis of vocal styles. The author identified three types of pitch elements (sustained, modulating, and transitional) and developed a model based on hidden Markov processes, which demonstrated high effectiveness in classifying elements in traditional Chinese Jingju opera, Georgian polyphony, and Alpine yodeling. The study showed that the proposed model works effectively with different stylistic systems, in particular in the recognition of vibrato, portamento, and tonal features of language, which indicates the existence of culturally specific characteristics in vocal technique.

Wang (2024b) devoted his work to studying the difficulties that Chinese students face in mastering Western classical singing. Based on his own experience of studying in the UK, the author

compares the pedagogical approaches of Manuel Garcia and Xiaoyang Zhou. Using methods of autoethnography and remote observation, Wang emphasizes the importance of an adapted approach to vocal teaching that integrates national traditions with elements of Western vocal pedagogy.

Against the backdrop of these studies, which address both the technical and cultural dimensions of vocal art, particular attention is warranted by the analysis of Zhang and Chonprirot (2024), devoted to the performance of Chinese songs in the Gu Shi Ci genre. The authors highlight that achieving authentic sound in this genre requires not only technical mastery (e.g., breath control and tone modulation) but also a deep understanding of the poetic content underlying the compositions.

An analysis of contemporary scientific approaches to the integration of national identity, cultural heritage, and multicultural pedagogy in vocal education reveals significant conceptual differences between Chinese and Western research. While Chinese researchers mainly focus on preserving national traditions through vocal education (Liu, 2019; Yang and Welch, 2023; Zhou, 2019), Western research increasingly focuses on deconstructing static notions of cultural authenticity (Crowdus, 2023). This is especially true for the challenges of teaching national identity in multicultural classrooms, where traditional approaches are proving insufficient for the contemporary educational context. A problematic aspect remains the understanding of the concept of “national identity” in vocal pedagogy. Chinese studies often interpret it as a static set of technical and aesthetic characteristics (Li, 2025; Zhang and Chonprirot, 2024), while international sources emphasize its dynamic, constructivist nature (Gwerevende and Mthombeni, 2023). Contemporary studies of a globally interconnected society demonstrate a growth in the volume of musical works from different cultural traditions, including a variety of styles, which challenges monocultural approaches to vocal training. The concept of cultural heritage in vocal education also requires critical reevaluation. Studies by Hu (2023) and

Le and Soon (2023) demonstrate a dichotomous opposition between “traditional” and “popular,” reflecting an essentialist approach to culture. In contrast, the Western ethnomusicological tradition is increasingly inclined to understand cultural heritage as a process of constant reproduction and transformation (Jekayinoluwa and Adeowu, 2024), opening up new opportunities for innovative pedagogical approaches. Multicultural pedagogy in vocal education faces fundamentally different challenges in Chinese and Western contexts. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented new challenges for higher education, requiring the development and implementation of new types of multicultural approaches, which have made the issue of adapting pedagogical strategies particularly relevant. While Guo (2018) proposes the integration of national elements into a multicultural environment, contemporary Western research emphasizes critical pedagogy and the decolonization of music education (Song, 2025).

The original contribution of this study lies in its critical analysis of these paradigmatic differences and its proposal of a synthetic approach that combines the preservation of cultural traditions with innovative multicultural strategies. Unlike previous studies that focused on technical aspects (Li, 2025; Wang, 2024a) or cultural nationalism (Liu, 2019; Zhou, 2019), the proposed approach takes into account global trends in ethnomusicology and critical pedagogy, adapting them to the specifics of the Chinese vocal tradition.

## 1.2. Research tasks

This study aims to identify the characteristics of pedagogical methods used in Chinese vocal education with a focus on mastering national elements.

The objectives include:

1. Analysis of national traditions, cultural values, and elements influencing the vocal expression and interpretation of Chinese musicians in popular and classical music.

2. Investigation of various methodologies and techniques employed by Chinese vocal instructors in the context of teaching popular and classical music.
3. Analysis of the effectiveness of incorporating national elements into vocal education curricula in China and their impact on the development of students' vocal skills.

## 2. Methods and Materials

### 2.1. Study design

**In the initial stage of the study,** an analysis was conducted on national traditions, cultural values, and elements influencing the vocal expression and interpretation of Chinese musicians in popular and classical music. Various methodologies and techniques used by Chinese vocal instructors in teaching popular and classical music were also examined to ascertain their impact on the development of students' vocal skills.

**The second stage involved experimenting.** The experiment compared the influence of national elements on vocal education between two groups of students with similar baseline skills. The control group received standard vocal education without consideration of cultural aspects, while the experimental group supplemented this education by studying Chinese vocal techniques and melodies.

**The third stage** encompassed surveying to gather detailed information from participants after the completion of the experiment. At this stage of the study, a survey was organized to collect additional information, opinions, and detailed feedback from participants about their experience of participating in the experiment. The data obtained allowed us to record the individual impressions of the respondents and highlight key aspects necessary for a comprehensive analysis of the results and the development of recommendations for improving music education in higher education institutions.

The survey was conducted via the online platform Google Forms. Participants received a link to the questionnaire via corporate email and could complete it from any device with Internet access — a computer or smartphone. The questionnaire contained questions for self-completion, which ensured the ease and efficiency of information collection. This method of organization allowed us to organize the responses, save them for further analysis, and use them to formulate practical recommendations in the field of music education.

## 2.2. Sample selection for the experiment

The experiment was conducted among 154 undergraduate students (65 men, 89 women; aged 18–25) studying at the Vocal Arts Department of the China Conservatory of Music (Beijing) in the 2024 academic year. Participants were recruited through announcements in compulsory vocal technique courses for second- and third-year students. The inclusion criteria were official enrollment in the bachelor's program in vocal arts, completion of at least one year of academic vocal training, and the absence of diagnosed hearing impairments or vocal cord pathologies. Students who were undergoing treatment for acute respiratory diseases or had chronic vocal disorders were excluded from the study.

After the initial selection, students were stratified by gender and previous vocal exam results to ensure a balanced level of training. Within each stratum, participants were randomly assigned using computer-generated random numbers to an experimental group ( $n = 77$ ) and a control group ( $n = 77$ ). This approach minimized the potential influence of teacher or schedule biases. A preliminary statistical power calculation (G\*Power 3.1) for a mixed ANOVA model with two groups and two measurements (before and after training) showed that at least 128 participants were needed to detect a medium effect size ( $f = 0.25$ ) at a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  and a power of 0.80. Taking into account possible dropouts, at least 150 people were planned; as a result, 154 students completed the study. After

the completion of the four-week experiment, participants from both groups completed questionnaires designed to examine their impressions, observations, and emotions (see Appendix A: *Student Questionnaire*). The questionnaires were structured to assess the influence of national elements in vocal education on students and their attitudes toward new teaching methods.

Clear instructions and explanations regarding the purpose and nature of the experiment, as well as confidentiality and protection of personal data, were provided to the students. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions, seven of which (Nos. 1–4, 6–8, 10a) were closed-ended and rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – “strongly disagree/not sure” to 5 – “strongly agree/very sure”). At the same time, three (Nos. 5, 9, 10b) were open-ended and allowed participants to provide detailed comments and examples, thus ensuring a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The tool was created based on previous research in music pedagogy and psychological and pedagogical methods for assessing emotional and aesthetic experiences. Its validity was confirmed through pilot testing on a separate group of 20 students, and the internal consistency of the closed items was high (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = 0.84$ ). The original questionnaire was written in Chinese, and a forward-backward translation procedure was employed for publication in English. A professional translator prepared the English version, followed by an independent bilingual specialist who performed a reverse translation. The research agreed on terms to preserve the content and cultural nuances.

This study employed a qualitative, interpretative-analytical approach aimed at examining the influence of national elements on vocal education and performance practice within the context of contemporary Chinese academic and popular music. Four types of vocal repertoire were selected for analysis: a traditional folk song in academic arrangement (“Jasmine Flower”), an aria from Peking opera (“The Drunken Concubine”), a patriotic aria in academic style (“Yellow River Cantata”), and a song with ethnic coloring (“Song from the Tibetan Plateau”). Each piece is considered a case study



for analyzing how national characteristics—such as pentatonic melodies, distinctive pronunciation techniques, vocal timbre, ornamentation (melismas), glissandi, and microtones—influence vocal sound, phrase construction, and performance style.

Particular attention is given to vocal techniques specific to Peking opera, including refined falsetto, rich vibrato, symbolic declamation, and stylized intonation, which collectively shape its unique performance manner. The research methodology also includes a comparative analysis of audio and score materials, as well as an investigation into vocal training schools and interpretative strategies.

### 2.3. Statistical analysis

Statistical data processing was performed in SPSS 29.0 (IBM Corp.) using a significance level of  $p < 0.05$ . To compare the results between the experimental and control groups at two time points (before and after training), a mixed two-factor ANOVA was used, with the factors Group (experimental/control) and Time (pre/post). For individual paired comparisons, a two-tailed t-test for independent samples was employed. In addition to determining p-values, effect sizes were calculated: Cohen's d for paired comparisons and  $\eta^2$  (eta squared) for ANOVA models, which allowed us to assess not only the statistical but also the practical significance of the results obtained.

### 2.4. Ethical issues

The article refrains from any form of plagiarism, including the reproduction of others' expressions or ideas, and maintains the confidentiality of the participants who underwent the survey. All data obtained during the research process were processed and presented as anonymized results. The research was conducted ethically in accordance with the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki. The study was approved at the meeting of the Ethics Committee of [BLINDED] University (Protocol No. 957 dated from 22.02.2023). Informed consent was signed by participants.



## 2.5. Study limitations

The limitations of the study included a small sample size of students involved in the experiment. The sample size may limit the overall representativeness of the results and the universality of the conclusions, as it does not encompass the full diversity of instructional perspectives. It is important to consider that the selected sample's specific context and characteristics may influence the research findings' external validity.

## 3. Results

In the context of teaching popular and classical music, Chinese vocal instructors employ diverse methods and techniques. These methods are focused on breath control, developing vocal resonances, and enhancing vocal expressiveness. They include the study of Chinese melodies and rhythms to acquaint students with culture and integrate them into performance practice, specialized exercises for vocal development aimed at improving technical skills and performers' mastery, phrasing, and interpretation of text to enhance emotional performance and understanding of musical material, as well as visual performance through body movements and facial expressions for effective communication of musical ideas and emotions (Table 1 in Appendix B ). These diverse methods consider profound cultural influences and the variety of approaches in vocal education, contributing to the development of students' musical abilities.

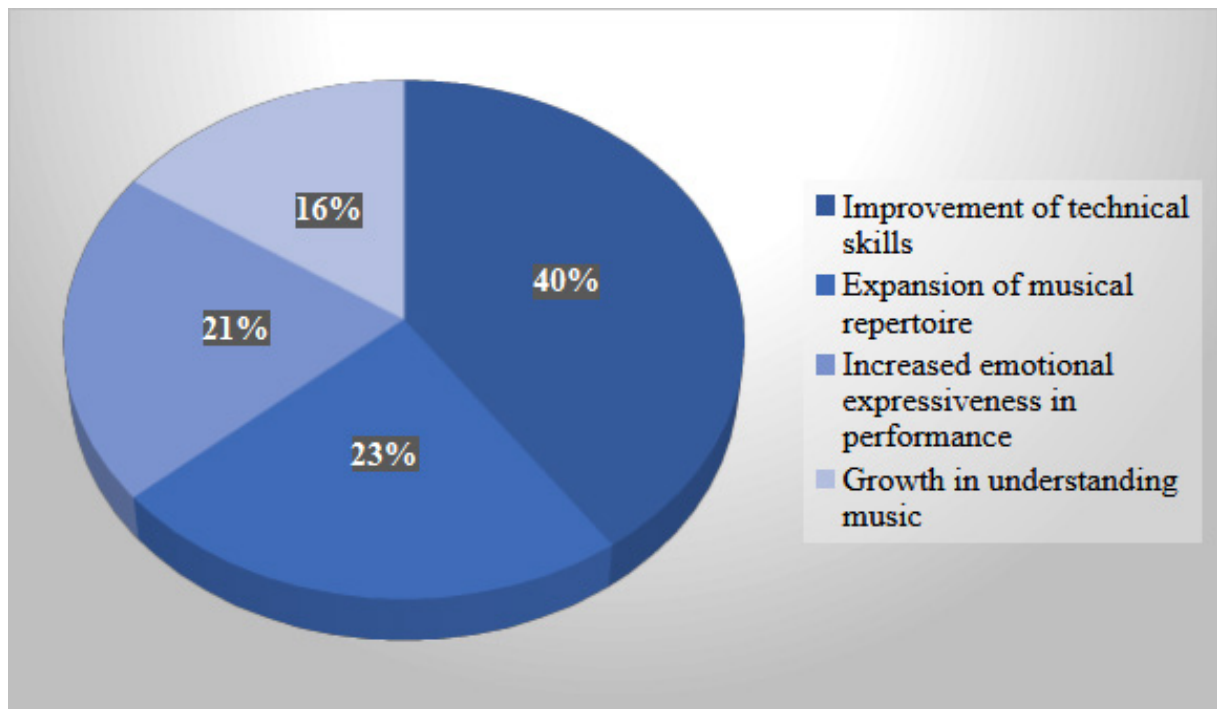
Table 2 (Appendix B) reveals interesting features of how cultural traditions influence Chinese classical and popular music. In classical music, composers rely on ancient melodies, use traditional instruments and philosophical ideas, creating a harmonious sound. Popular music does not reject these roots either - musicians combine ancient elements with modern styles, thanks to which a unique sound emerges that preserves Chinese flavor. This is especially noticeable in the lyrics of songs, where the authors express their reflections on society and spirituality, relying

on centuries-old wisdom. This approach helps to understand how deeply cultural heritage penetrates musical creativity and how it contributes to the development of various genres within the Chinese musical tradition.

Students who participated in the extended training program noted several key changes in their musical performance (Figure 1). Firstly, 44% of the participants experienced significant improvement in their technical skills, including better control of breathing, intonation, and expressive performance. This indicates the effectiveness of an approach to education focused on developing fundamental musical skills essential for high-quality performance. Another important aspect was the expansion of musical repertoire (22%), providing participants with the opportunity to study and perform various genres and styles of music. This underscores the importance of developing a broad musical repertoire among performers, contributing to their cultural diversity and adaptation to the diverse challenges of the contemporary music scene.

In addition, students noticed that it became easier for them to convey emotions during performances - 19% of participants felt more openness and a deeper connection with the songs. This shows how important it is to develop emotional intelligence in musicians, because this is what makes their performances more vivid and memorable for the audience. 15% of respondents noted that after the program, they began to understand music better. They learned to understand musical structures and feel the composers' intention. This suggests that the training works not only at the level of technical skills - students become more thoughtful listeners and performers who truly understand what they are playing.

Figure 1. Positive changes in students' performance



According to the results of the experiment, the conducted t-test showed that the difference in mean scores between the control and experimental groups is statistically significant (Table 1). The t-statistic value is -6.978, which exceeds the critical value for a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  when using a two-tailed test. This indicates that the inclusion of national elements in vocal education has a significant impact on the development of vocal skills and adaptation to various styles of music among students. The results of the experiment confirm that students who were exposed to national elements in their educational program achieved higher mean scores in vocal skills compared to those who received traditional vocal education. This suggests that the study and integration of culturally specific elements into vocal training help students better understand and appreciate the musical traditions of their country, thereby enriching their performance and strengthening their ability to adapt to diverse musical genres and styles.

Table 1. Statistical significance testing using student's criterion between two data groups

	Control Group	Experimental Group	t-statistics	p-value
Sample size	77	77		
Mean value	75.4	82.1		
Standard deviation	5.6	6.3		
t-statistic			-6.978	
p-value				<0.05

Therefore, the results of the experiment indicate a positive impact of the training program on students in all aspects of their musical performance. Improvement in technical skills, increased expressiveness in performance, expansion of musical repertoire, and enhanced understanding of music are all key indicators that the program has achieved its goal of enhancing musical skills and developing students. The responses indicate that the training program was successful in stimulating various aspects of musical development among participants.

Table 2. Stylistic and Intonational Features of Chinese Vocal Compositions

Title of the work	Pentatonic Structures	Vocal Timbre	Articulation	Phrasing	Melismaticity	Expressiveness
« <i>The Drunken Concubine</i> »	Distinctly pronounced, based on the traditional pentatonic scale	Nasal, metallic timbre	Clear, glottal	Rhetorical, with pauses	High	Contrasting, expressive
« <i>Yellow River Cantata</i> »	A combination of pentatonic and Western tonal systems	Lyrical, mixed	Soft, vocal	Symmetrical and Eastern	Moderate	Wide dynamic range

« <i>Jasmine Flower</i> »	Pure pentatonic	Bright, natural	Simple, precise	Flowing, natural	Minimal	Subtle intonational expressiveness
« <i>Song from the Tibetan Plateau</i> »	Pentatonic and diatonic structures with the use of throat ornaments	Powerful, high register	Prolonged, melodic	Arch-shaped phrasing, centered on climactic points	Present, especially at climactic moments	High

Having considered these vocal works, one can see how Chinese composers combine ancient traditions with modern approaches (Table 2). “The Drunken Concubine” (Figure 1) is a typical Peking opera with all its features. Here, one can hear a pronounced pentatonic scale, a metallic tone of voice, complex melismas, and sharp emotional transitions in intonation. All this creates a dramatic tension characteristic of this genre. “The Yellow River Cantata” (Figure 2) demonstrates an interesting combination of styles. The composer used traditional pentatonic structures together with Western diatonicism, a soft lyrical timbre, and symmetrical phrases. The result is something between national and European sounding. “Jasmine Flower” (Figure 3) retains an authentic folk character - a bright natural voice, simple articulation, without complex decorations. This is true folk thinking in music. But “Song from the Tibetan Plateau” (Figure 4) shows how pentatonic and diatonic scales can be mixed while preserving ethnic intonations. The performer sings powerfully, in a high register, with long, arched phrases that create a gradual build-up of emotions to a climax.

All these examples show that in Chinese vocal culture, there are different ways of combining tradition with innovation - from complete preservation of authenticity to creative adaptation to modern aesthetic demands.

Figure 2. Musical Score of The Drunken Concubine

**贵 妃 醉 酒**  
(红 霞首唱) 晓 城词 冯晓泉 曲

1 = C  $\frac{4}{4}$

6 6 6 5 3 3 - | 2 2 2 2 3 6 - | 1 1 1 6 5. 2 |  
西 边 日 落 去, 明 月 楼 外 楼, 风 吹 花 瓣 飘 满

3 - - - | 1 1 3 2. 1 | 2 2 2 3 6. 6 |  
头, 寂 寞 的 心 冷 却 了 温 柔, 你

1 1 1 3 2 3 2 5 | 5 6 6 - - | 2 2 2 1 6 1 6 |  
让 我 朝 朝 暮 暮 空 等 候。 说 红 颜 娇 羞, 爱 能

1 1 1 5 3 - | 6 6 6 5 3 2 1 | 2 6 6 3 5 - | 5 - - - |  
缠 绵 几 春 秋, 原 来 情 如 水, 美 人 莫 把 富 贵 求。

5 - - 1 6 | 5 1 6 5 3 5 | 6 6 2 5 3 1 3 |  
为 谁 痴, 为 谁 痛, 一 生 一 世 为 谁 愁, 几 分

2 2 1 6 6 1 6 | 1 6 6 6 5 5 1 6 | 5 1 6 5 6 1 |  
心 醉 呀, 摇 摇 晃 晃 这 杯 酒, 为 谁 哭, 为 谁 笑, 只 求

2 2 2 1 6 6 1 6 | 5 5 5 6 2 3 3 5 6 | 6 - - - ||  
它 醉 眼 朦 胧, 今 朝 把 红 尘 看 透, 何 日 再 风 流。

Source: <http://www.yueqiziyuan.com/yuepu/1334586911.html>

Figure 3. Musical Score of Yellow River Cantata

**黄 河 怨**  
纪念抗战胜利七十周年! 不忘国耻!  
光未然词 冼星海曲

1 = A  $\frac{3}{4}$   $\frac{6}{4}$   $\frac{3}{8}$   
慢速

(3 - 2 | 1 - - | 2 2 3 2 1 2 1 | 6 - - | 5 - 6 | 5 - - | 3 2 3 6 2 |  
1 - 10 | 3 - 2 | 1 - - | 1 1 1 1 6 | 5 - - | 5 - 6 | 2 - - |  
风 啊, 你 不 要 叫 喊! 云 啊,

1 1 1 2 7 | 6 - - | 3 4 5 - | 5 - - | 3 2 1 2 3 | 1 - - | 1 - - |  
你 不 要 躲 闪! 黄 河 啊, 你 不 要 呜 咽!

1 1 - | 1 1 2 1 7 | 6 - - | 2 2 2 1 | 5 - 6 | 1 - - | (3 2 1 2 5 6 |  
今 晚, 我 在 你 面 前 哭 诉 我 的 愁 和 冤!

1 - - | 3 2 1 - | 1 6 6 6 - | 3 3 2 - | 1 6 5 - | 3 5 4 - |  
命 啊, 这 样 苦! 生 活 啊, 这 样 难! 鬼 子 啊,

3 2 1 1 3 | 2 - - | 2 - - | 6 6 1 | 6 - - | 5 6 5 3 5 3 |  
你 这 样 没 心 肝! 宝 贝 啊, 你 死 得 这 样

2 - - | (2 3 6 1 | 2 - -) | 1 2 3 - | 5 6 5 3 | 2 - - |  
惨! 我 和 你 无 仇 又 无 冤,

3 2 3 1 2 6 | 3 2 1 7 | 6 - - | (5 6 5 3 | 2 1 6 2 | 1 - -) |  
偏 让 我 无 颜 偷 生 在 人 间!

本曲网上传于 中国音乐网

Source: <https://www.krzzjn.com/show-589-101215.html>



Figure 4. Musical Score of Jasmine Flower

**茉莉花**

Traditional  
Arr. Peyton Mills

$\text{♩} = 80$

好 一 朵 美 丽 的 茉 莉 花 好 一 朵 美 丽 的 茉 莉 花  
5 hǎo yì duǒ měi lì de mò lì huā hǎo yì duǒ měi lì de mò lì huā

芬 芳 美 丽 满 枝 桠 又 香 又 白 人 人 夸  
9 fēn fāng měi lì mǎn zhī yā yòu xiāng yòu bái rén rén kuā

让 我 来 将 你 摘 下 送 给 别 人 家  
13 ràng wǒ lái jiāng nǐ zhāi xià sòng gěi bié rén jia

茉 莉 花 啊 茉 莉 花  
mò lì huā a mò lì huā

Source: <https://ling-lingchinese.com/2022/11/07/chinese-song-%E8%8C%89%E8%8E%89%E8%8A%B1-jasmine-flower/>

Figure 5. Musical Score of Song from the Tibetan Plateau

**青 藏 高 原**

1=E  $\frac{4}{4}$   $\frac{3}{4}$   $\frac{2}{4}$  (5 2) 弦 电视剧《天路》主题歌  
(韩 红 演唱) 张 千 一 词 曲

$\text{♩} = 59$  明朗的慢板 高亢 山歌风格

(6 3 | 2 - 2 3 1 6 5 | 6 - - 2 1 | 5 - 5 3 1 6 5 | 6 - - - )

3 3 6 7 6 6 - | 7 6 7 5 3 3 2 3 - | 3 3 5 6 7 5 3 2 |  
1. 是谁 带 来 远 古 的 呼 唤, 是 谁 留 下 望  
2. 是 谁 日 夜 遥 望 着 蓝 天, 是 谁 渴 渴

3 2 3 1 6 6 5 6 - | 6 1 6 2 2 3 6 . | 6 . 7 5 3 3 2 3 - |  
千 年 的 祈 盼。 难 道 说 还 有 无 言 的 歌,  
永 久 的 梦 幻。 难 道 说 还 有 赞 美 的 歌,

0 2 2 3 5 . 5 5 3 | 6 3 2 1 . 2 3 2 3 1 6 6 5 |  $\frac{2}{4}$  6 6 1 2 3 |  
还 是 那 久 久 不 能 忘 怀 的 眷 恋。 哦  
还 是 那 仿 佛 不 能 改 变 的 庄 严。

$\frac{4}{4}$  6 - - 3 . 7 |  $\frac{3}{4}$  6 - 5 6 6 5 | 3 3 3 5 6 . 7 5 2 |  $\frac{4}{4}$  3 - - 3 7 6 |  
我 看 见 一 座 座 山 一 座 座 山 川, 一 座

$\frac{3}{4}$  6 - 5 6 5 | 3 3 . 5 6 7 5 2 |  $\frac{4}{4}$  3 - - 6 3 2 |  
座 山 川 相 连 呀 啦

$\frac{3}{4}$  2 - 2 1 1 2 |  $\frac{2}{4}$  3 3 2 1 5 |  $\frac{4}{4}$  6 - - (3 7 | 6 - 6 7 5 3 2 |  
嘿, 那 就 是 青 藏 高 原。

3 - - 6 3 | 2 - 2 3 1 6 5 | 6 - - - ) || 6 - - 6 3 2 | 2 - 2 1 1 2 |  
原。 呀 啦 嘿 那 就 是

3 3 5 . 3 5 6 1 2 | 3 - - - 5 | 2 1 5 - V | 6 - - - | 6 - - - | 6 0 0 0 ||  
青 藏 高 原。

Source: <https://www.21qupu.com/jianpu/20402.html>



## 4. Discussion

Based on their academic expertise in multicultural music education and ethnomusicology, Zhuang and Pan (2022) investigated the perceptions of Chinese music teachers regarding contextual issues and methods of knowledge transmission in teaching world music. The results revealed that Chinese music teachers predominantly focus on the formal, institutional environment in the transmission of world music, with less attention to informal, community aspects. It was also found that the influence of Eurocentrism is significantly more pronounced than the influence of ethnomusicology and multicultural music education on their perception. The results contribute to understanding the influence of national cultural elements on approaches and methods of teaching musical art in China, in the field of vocal training.

Wang and Khomkrich (2021) conducted a study on the pedagogy of Chinese singing style and its influence on the vocal music technique of students and cultural qualities in China. Their research helped uncover the characteristics of vocal pedagogy in the Chinese singing style and its impact on students. They identified breathing techniques and intonation exercises that contribute to improving learners' vocal technique and cultural qualities. The research findings also included recommendations for optimizing educational programs and teaching methods for Chinese singing for future generations of students. Our study identified a series of techniques for teaching traditional Chinese singing, including vocal techniques, familiarity with melodies and rhythms, voice development exercises, interpretation of text, and visual performance.

Tan and Conti (2019) conducted a quantitative experimental study aimed at investigating the influence of Chinese popular music on students' familiarity with its traditional version and their preferences towards it. The research findings indicated that participation in a world music course contributes to favoring traditional Chinese music. However, the short-term impact of

popular versions of Chinese traditional music does not promote a preference for traditional Chinese music. This may be attributed to popular music's culture and characteristics may not always translate to music in other genres (Cortens, 2021; Cui, 2021). It was also found that a person's personality traits influence their musical preferences – more open natures gravitate towards traditional music, while more closed natures gravitate towards popular music. These findings may be helpful for Chinese music teachers, helping them to better understand how cultural and national characteristics influence music education. Overall, this study expands our understanding of how national musical traditions are reflected in modern education. Wang's (2024a) study on the integration of vocal education in universities with traditional musical culture is directly relevant to our topic. The author proposed new ways of analyzing musical characteristics and classifying compositions, which may be useful for teaching traditional Chinese music in university programs.

The study's findings also demonstrate how the fusion of traditional musical culture with modern vocal music education methodology can enhance the understanding and teaching of Chinese musical heritage. Thus, Wang's (2024a) research within the context of our topic helps to uncover and develop pedagogical approaches to vocal instruction, considering the national peculiarities of Chinese musical culture.

Xia (2023) found in his study that traditional vocal styles predominantly use falsetto (58%), as well as combined techniques, vibrato, overtone singing, and glissando. In contrast, the leading technique in popular vocal music is vocal distortion (33.6%), supplemented by subtone, drive, vocal fry, vibrato, and other elements. Correlational analysis revealed a relationship between traditional and contemporary vocal techniques, with a coefficient of determination of 33.5%. Furthermore, the study established that each musical genre in China is associated with a distinct set of vocal techniques—from scat singing and slides in jazz to growling in rock music—highlighting their pedagogical and cultural relevance.

Tang (2021) focused specifically on the influence of state policy on the development of musical culture in China. The author emphasizes that television and radio broadcasting, print media, publishing, and concert activities are state-regulated, and the commercial success of a genre or performer largely depends on centralized policies. This regulatory approach directly impacts which vocal techniques gain recognition and dissemination, as the study illustrates how unified cultural narratives are constructed under such conditions, integrating ethnic traditions into the national musical heritage. At the intersection of vocal technique and state regulation emerges the broader question of how ethnic musical heritage is preserved and developed in the contemporary context.

The study by Siwen and Jamnongsarn (2024) explores the representation of ethnic culture in contemporary Chinese pop music. The authors found that Chinese performers actively combine traditional elements with new technologies, commercial strategies, and global trends. Special attention is given to how musicians maintain cultural authenticity while navigating tensions between artistic self-expression and market demands, and how music functions as a tool for both preserving and reinterpreting ethnic heritage amidst rapid sociocultural transformation.

Comparing the results of our study with other scientific research in this field, several key differences and similarities in approaches and conclusions can be noted. Our work meticulously investigates the influence of national elements in vocal education on the formation and development of students' vocal skills. In contrast to other studies focusing on the formal aspect of transmitting world musical culture or studying the influence of popular Chinese music on students, our work complements these approaches, as we analyze the specific impact of national elements on the development of students' musical skills in the context of vocal education. Such a deep analysis enables the

expansion of understanding of the influence of cultural and national aspects on music education. It indicates possible avenues for further improvement of teaching and pedagogy in the field of vocal music education.

The findings of this study demonstrate the multifaceted influence of cultural factors and methodological approaches on the development of vocal art in China, reflecting the integration of tradition and innovation in music education and performance.

The results of a detailed analysis of the expanded curriculum showed that the students' technical skills improved significantly, their repertoire expanded, their performances became more expressive, and their understanding of music deepened. In general, their musical training reached a new level.

Analysis of the stylistic and intonational features of Chinese vocal works ("The Drunken Concubine", "Yellow River Cantata", "Jasmine Flower", "Song from the Tibetan Plateau") revealed various ways of combining traditional elements - pentatonic structures, national timbre, specific techniques of articulation - with modern musical trends. This demonstrates the development of vocal practice in the context of cultural change. Such a dynamic combination creates a holistic system that allows preserving cultural heritage and, at the same time, adapting to new requirements.

## 5. Conclusions

The study showed that when national elements are added to vocal training, students do indeed begin to sing better and have a deeper understanding of musical culture. The participants of the experiment themselves noted improvements in their performances and understanding of music after including national traditions in the program.

However, it is worth remembering that all people are different - some people like this approach more, some less. Therefore, in future studies, it would be useful to take into account the individual characteristics of students and choose for each their own way of

including national elements in training. This will help to make such programs even more effective. The results of the study also show how the cultural context affects the development of classical and popular music in China.

It was determined that traditional Chinese elements in classical music contribute to achieving balance and harmony in performance, while in popular music, they are integrated with modern genres, preserving a distinctive national sound. Additionally, philosophical and cultural ideas are reflected through song lyrics, facilitating the expression of profound thoughts and the perception of social and spiritual aspects. The study of stylistic and intonational characteristics in Chinese vocal works (The Drunken Concubine, Yellow River Cantata, Jasmine Flower, Song from the Tibetan Plateau) revealed an interaction between authentic elements (pentatonic structures, ethnic timbral coloration, traditional approaches to articulation) and innovative musical practices, reflecting the transformation of vocal art in the context of cultural change.

The proposed pedagogical model provides an optimal balance between preserving national cultural identity and adapting to global musical trends. This model demonstrates the mechanisms of influence of cultural factors on the creative process and their role in shaping the genre diversity of the Chinese vocal tradition. Prospects for further research include expanding the analysis to other cultural contexts in order to deepen the understanding of the influence of national elements on vocal education. The results obtained can serve as the basis for the development of adaptive and culturally-oriented methodologies of vocal training that take into account various cultural contexts and contribute to the development of students' musical abilities in the international educational space.

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