An Investigation of a Student-centered Education-based Implemented Music Curriculum in Guangdong Public Elementary Schools

by

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Statement of Originality

I, ZHANG, Lexuan, hereby declare that I am the sole author of the thesis and the material presented in this thesis is my original work except those indicated in the acknowledgement. I further declare that I have followed the University's policies and regulations on Academic Honesty, Copyright and Plagiarism in writing the thesis and no material in this thesis has been submitted for a degree in this or other universities.

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Date:

Abstract

The development of a curriculum is a complex educational process which involves a series of planning, teaching, learning, evaluating and other detailed teacher-student related components. In the past, Goodlad's three-dimensions curriculum representation, the intended curriculum, the implemented curriculum and the attained curriculum, has been applied to explain diverse educational phenomena, particularly to understand the curriculum theory in a school setting. Theoretically, each dimension of the curriculum should involve a tight connection and mutual-supportive relationship to each other to maintain a balanced educational system. However, in practice, the issues caused by giving inadequate attention to implemented curricula are evident in many regions of the world and are also present in the Chinese context.

Although a popular western learning approach, Student-Centered Education (SCE), has been applied in the latest China's curriculum reforms since 2000, its effective adaptation and application to Chinese school music education is underexplored. Without observing actual practice, the success of SCE, which features new educational perspectives that rely on knowledge being explored and learned actively, cannot be proven to support China's educational goals. It is possible that flaws might have entered the process between theory and practice. Therefore, this research aims to address the shortage of investigation into implemented curriculum in the Chinese context. Five research questions about general lesson implementation and the specific application of SCE were answered in two independent but consecutive studies to support the understanding of implemented curriculum from a primary music educational perspective.

In the first study, 19 music demonstration lessons were used as models of quality and explored by content analysis. This provided an insight into China's music demonstration lesson implementation and its adaptation to SCE from a demonstrational aspect. Over 760 minutes

were examined, using both a systematic observational method and a qualitative thematic method to look at in-class behavior and interaction. The second study applied a multiple case study research method. Three music teachers were studied through observation, interview, and inspection of written documents to understand the implemented curriculum with SCE adaptation from a regular school educational aspect. SCE has mostly been reported on from Western perspectives and its successful implementation has been noted in smaller-sized class sizes. China has a context of large music class sizes. Therefore, a set of qualitative lesson instructional training was designed to explore the possibilities generated by implementing SCE in a large number of student environments.

Findings were illustrated from the following aspects. An analysis of data from both studies reveals that: (a) direct content-driven activities are still the dominant mode in classrooms, (b) student individuality is seldom promoted, (c) activity-based lesson structures have become prevalent, (d) behavioral sequential patterns can still be observed in Chinese demonstration lessons and regular school music lessons, and (e) SCE could be implemented into large class sizes but still require contextual support for long-term application. Rather than simply concluding whether or not SCE was being implemented successfully, this doctoral thesis offers a new perspective in interpreting SCE operating within different contexts. Contextual considerations with multiple interpretations might make SCE more adaptable in a broader perspective.

Keywords: Curriculum, Student-centered, Music Education, China Education, Implemented Curriculum

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

How teachers should teach and how students should learn has been a continuing discussion among music researchers and educators with reference to curriculum implementation (Akker, 2004; Cui, 2019; Schweisfurth, 2013; Ye & Cheng, 2018). Since the development of cognitive psychology in the early twenty century, many educators start realizing that learning could naturally and actively occur from internal self-development. The external stimulation such as teacher-directed instruction and fact memorization might shape what students could learn in a short amount of period, but the authentic understanding of the knowledge in a long run requires thinking, exploring, reflecting, and presenting in a highly autonomous independent way (Windschiltl, 2002). Thus, following educational reforms away from the traditional focus on teaching ability and towards attention to student individuality, a growing number of researchers have contrasted direct instructional teaching pedagogy with alternative student-centered learning approaches to explore how the new perspective might be applied in a classroom setting (Garnett, 2013; Ji, 2013; Shively, 2015).

Teacher-directed instruction is rooted in behaviorism and based on objectivism, the belief that knowledge is pre-structured and exists independently of experience. Because of this knowledge pre-existence, teachers acted as instructors to transmit content facts to the students directly (Shively, 1995). In contrast, Student-centered Education (SCE) is based on the philosophy of constructivism, the belief that people understand the world differently, depending on how they experience and self-construct knowledge (Shively, 1997; Windschitl, 2002). SCE contains an initial educational purpose of developing a mutual, interactive, and supportive relationship between teachers and students, and it is inquiry-based, project-based, and activity-based pedagogical practices which are focused on student autonomy, individuality,

and creativity. SCE is given much praise in contemporary curriculum pedagogical studies (Biase, 2019; Mtika & Gates, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2013; Sin, 2015).

1.1 BACKGROUND

In China, the development of school curriculum has gone through a series of changes since the early 20th century (Wang & Shan, 2020). From borrowing from the west between 1919 and 1949, China's newly formed school curriculum was influenced by American pragmatism, to the 1980s and 1990s, the didactic teacher-centered and content-driven education were learned from Soviet Union, the teaching philosophy and pedagogies of China school curriculum during that time were mostly rely on other countries' mature curriculum system and to learn from them. Even though Soviet Union's teacher-centered pedagogy continued influencing China's education cross the period from 1980 to 1999, China started developing its local educational system since early 1980s. A change in China's official educational guidance from a teacher-centered/educating-centered to student-centered education has also been announced and published since 2000. This change not only made China align its educational emphasis with the international educational trend by switching the attention from teaching to learning, but also allowed teachers to focus on students' whole-person development but not merely content acquisition (Liu, 2011; Wang & Shan, 2020).

Positive reports from China about SCE have reflected those received from around the world (Cui, 2009; Chai, 2009; Luo, 2005; Yang, 2018; Zi, 2018). SCE is praised for supporting student autonomy and engagement (Luo, 2005), enhancing student comprehensive abilities (Chai, 2009), and creating an effective learning environment (Li, 2017). .

The updated 2011 edition of the curriculum guiding publication, *Music Curriculum Standards of full-time compulsory schooling* (2011 edition) (hereafter, *Curriculum Standards*) officially announced that student-centered teaching philosophy should be built into teaching practices (Committee of Experts on Basic Education Textbooks of the Ministry of Education,

2012). As in the West (Shively, 2015), SCE has been used to advance student learning experience, perception, communication, and cultural recognition and has also been introduced as China's basic music curriculum concept in the updated Curriculum Standards. Some literal guidance was added to *Music Curriculum Standards of full-time compulsory schooling (Trial)*, which was the first *Curriculum Standards* version published in 2001. For example, in the old version of 2001, the overall guidance for teaching practice is to follow "education/teaching-oriented learning" (Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China, 2001, p. 11), whereas in the *Curriculum Standards*, published in 2011, this term has changed to "student-oriented" (Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China, 2011, p. 26) .

In other words, the philosophy behind SCE matches China's educational policy in Core Competency (Liu, 2011) and Quality Education (Dello-Iacovo, 2009), by promoting individuality and holistic education for the purpose of fostering well-rounded people (Lyu, 2018). Therefore, following the new instructional guidance embedded in the National Curriculum Standards, China's school music teachers have been increasingly encouraged to implement SCE into their classrooms (Li, 2017).

1.2 CURRICULUM ISSUES

However, the implementation of SCE was not a teaching and learning circumstance limited to lesson hours. Instead, lesson implementation is embedded in a curriculum theory with tight connections to national curriculum intentions, teacher perceptions, operation, and student perceptions and understanding (Cui, 2009; Cui et al., 2018). Therefore, while SCE has become a popular educational proposition in the Chinese context, it is still necessary to understand SCE application from theory to practice (Cui et al., 2018; Yu & Leung, 2019).

To understand whether teachers understand the guidance within the national music Curriculum Standards, Yu and Leung (2019) conducted a study involving 2,206 Chinese music

teachers as survey participants to investigate teacher perceptions of the updated Curriculum Standards. The results suggested that most teachers did not understand or implement the suggestions and requirements within the curriculum standards. This exposed a significant issue of possible inconsistency between the national intention and teacher lesson implementation. A meta-analysis by Yang, Yin, and Guan (2021) revealed concerns in studies about lesson implementation that examined 3,257 Chinese research articles published between 2007 and 2019. The findings revealed that there were only 16 empirical studies within China's music education domain that reported lesson implementation at a primary school level. This raised the practical issue of whether lessons were being operated with realistic in-class lesson implementation and its relation to other curriculum components that might not be comprehensively understood.

Goodlad, Klein, and Tye (1979) used a broad curriculum representation to explain how vital lesson implementation is to curriculum theory and how tightly lesson implementation relates to many other components in the curriculum theory. Akker (2004) used the metaphor of each part of the elements within lesson implementation as akin to a spider web. Any vulnerable parts featuring inconsistency or ignorance damage the entire curriculum and further take it apart and destroy its original inner connections and relationships. An inadequate exploration of lesson implementation might hinder a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the implemented curriculum and its relation to other curriculum representations. To open up the "black box," a metaphor applied to the implemented curriculum (Cui et al., 2018; Fullan & Pomfret, 1977), it is necessary to fill the gap in empirical studies of implemented curricula and investigate how the new educational concept, SCE, is being implemented in China's music classrooms.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The educational purpose of the current research study can be described in detail from three aspects.

First, this research aims to enrich empirical studies investigating the implemented curriculum, especially under an SCE-based learning era in China. As mentioned previously, even though China's school curriculum has followed the international educational trend from a teacher-centered to a student-centered emphasis, there was still a lack of understanding of how the lesson is being conducted from an implemented curriculum perspective (Guo et al, 2021; Yang et al, 2021). As the promotion made by Goodlad, Klein & Tye (1979) and Akker (2004), each representation of the curriculum, either intended, implemented or attained curriculum, is equally important to support a positive and sustainable educational system and they also tightly connected to each other. Therefore, to keep a relatively balanced system of the school curriculum in China, it is necessary to fill in the gap of the inadequate empirical evidence in the implemented curriculum in China context.

Second, this study about the investigation of how SCE is being implemented in China also provides a perspective on a western-based SCE's adaptation in China's local context. To be more specific, SCE was based on constructivism which is rooted in western philosophies promoting individuality (Schweisfurth, 2013), whereas China has a long history of learning from the western education and developing its local school curriculum to foster students' collective understanding, to educate students as a "whole" that was capable of contributing the country's construction (Wang & Shan, 2020). Therefore, when a relatively standardized western-based learning approach comes to China, would any differences in the implementation process be compared to its original intention? This study would enhance the understanding from this aspect.

Third, even though SCE's theory of fostering students' individuality and developing whole-person competencies has won many applauses internationally, SCE's contextual application was still being worried by many researchers, especially in the developing countries (Bremner, 2020; Brinkmann, 2015). For example, in the Western context, implementation of the constructivist theories of SCE have been reported to improve student in-class focus, studying interests, and learning achievements, especially in smaller-sized classroom (Alford et al., 2016; Lerkkanen et al., 2016; Windschitl, 2002). However, school music teaching in China typically features classroom sizes between 40 and 80 students. Therefore, this research study would also continue enriching the empirical evidence for the possibility of implementing a western SCE in developing countries especially from a perspective in large class size.

In sum, the revealed lesson implementation phenomena could serve for Chinese educators to think and reflect the authentic implementation of SCE as an international prevalent learning theory in its contextual application. The in-depth understanding of China's implemented curriculum could broaden international researchers' understanding of how music lessons are being conducted in China and prompt understanding and reflections of the adaptation of SCE with a global perspective.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In general, this chapter reviewed two aspects of the curriculum. One is the overall introduction to the curriculum including definition, theories, and pedagogical theories under the curriculum implementation. The other one is about how the curriculum developed in China and especially in the music subject domain. Two educational theories related to teaching and learning, teacher-centered education and student-centered education, have been carefully reviewed for raising the discussion in how student-centered functioned as contemporary education approach its advantages and concerns in implementation and adaptation under diverse contexts of the world especially in Mainland China.

2.1 CURRICULUM

2.1.1 Curriculum Defined

The word "curriculum" originally refers to a "course" or "track" in Latin (Pinar, 2012). This short etymology leaves researchers free to interpret its conceptual meaning from different perspectives.

Early, narrow views of curriculum as a set of subjects taught in school evolved to Bobbit's (1918) description of curriculum as a set of actions and experiences. It normally existed to support learning development from childhood to adulthood and applied mostly to a teaching and learning context. Similar views of curriculum as a school experience have also been given by other educators. For example, Taba (1962) and Inlow (1966) saw curriculum as a planned course with composite effort that plans for student learning outcomes. Neagley & Evans (1967) and Foshay & Beilin (1969) introduced their curriculum definition with a focus on educational outcomes but also gave an emphasis to planned study experience assisting student development of abilities and competencies under supervision. Stenhouse (1975) described curriculum as

essential principles and features for learners with an educational purpose and effective translation into practice. Oliva & Gordon (2012) interpreted the curriculum as a plan or program for all experiences which the learner encounters under the direction of the school.

Seeing "curriculum" merely as courses or subjects with an educational purpose in school has been challenged by researchers for its ignorance of many other social factors and features (Stenhouse, 1975; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018). An experience might mostly occur in a teaching and learning context, but its foundation might be a unique historical background and its influence might extend to human development and social construction beyond education and important to many other domains (Themane, 2011). Instead of seeing curriculum solely as a school product which benefits learners and their learning process, a broader view of curriculum's function of supporting social construction has also been raised. For example, from the perspective of knowledge usage, Tanner (1982) described curriculum as a developing process which starts with a planned and pre-structured knowledge and learning experience, encompasses an individual's expected learning achievements, and eventually supports the development of a consistent and purposeful society. From a holistic social construction aspect, Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman (1995) explained that because the actual activities of a curriculum are affected by social factors, economic status, political decision, and other complex factors and contextual situations, the definition of curriculum can go beyond educational institutions to include factors outside of the classroom. According to these considerations, there are many sub-conceptual definitions under a broader concept of curriculum, such as formal vs. informal (Ogunyemi, 2009), planned vs. unplanned (Modebelu, 2015), written vs. hidden curriculum (Johansen, 2021) .These approaches have attracted increasing attention due to their particular focus on single or multiple aspects of the broader curriculum definition.

2.1.2 Curriculum Theories

Whether curriculum is defined specifically within a school context or more broadly, as an individual's holistic participation in society, the concept does have an educational impulse with strong connections to educators and learners (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018). Pinar (2012) noted that "curriculum theory is the interdisciplinary study of educational experience (p. 2)". It contains an interdisciplinary field of studies, provides a strong influence on humanity, society, and the arts, and is a "distinctive specialization" in the broader educational domain. Curriculum theory might contain philosophical educational expectations for what needs to be taught and learned; psychological standards of how the knowledge and intention are constructed and transferred; a social intention in how the political decisions are made and processed; and a combined holistic purpose of how curriculum functions for the contextual services. But it is rooted in educational purpose and interacts with educational experience (Goodlad, Klein & Tye, 1979; Kelly, 2009). Broad curriculum theory might be broken down into diverse related propositions with theoretical support and related to educational purposes, but it also gives meaning in ever-changing historical and social moments and plays a significant role in the mutual development of self and society.

2.1.2.1 Curriculum as School Educational Theories

With a purpose of promoting education, curriculum theory is a complex field of scholarly inquiry shared with diverse subjects and disciplines. It contains an expectation that a thing which "manufactured outside the school to be directly transferred inside the school" by implementing general conceptual ideas, specific content knowledge, and anticipation of learning achievement, amongst other education-related components (Moore, 2014, p. 45).

For example, Tyler (1949)'s view of education was that learning takes place when learners experience and take action in education, and he believed the interaction and the problem-

solving process between learners was a reaction to external conditions and environment. Therefore, he focused on four foundational questions as his basis for curriculum understanding; what educational purpose should be attained, how learning experiences are selected, how learning experiences are organized, and how learning is effectively assessed and sometimes viewed as "a linear production model of curriculum development" (Wraga, 2017, pp. 246-247). Based on Tyler's theory, a linear curriculum model was created by Zhao (2005) to illustrate the significance of Tyler's contribution to curriculum development. Despite noting the accomplishment of Tyler's innovative curriculum emphasis from "educational purpose" to "educational goal", and from "learning result" to "learning experience", Zhao also pointed out that Tyler's theories lacked curriculum procedure in lesson implementation.

Tyler's student Goodlad (1979) described curriculum components as several stages of representations with an emphasis on the function of all three curriculum procedures; the goal, the implementation, and the assessment. According to Goodlad, curriculum intention was first planned and structured as the ideal curriculum, then documented as written curriculum. This was later perceived and operated as two different curriculum representations by teachers, and eventually experienced in the student learning process. Based on Goodlad's curriculum representation, Akker (2004) modified Goodlad's original typology of curriculum representation by adding the Learned curriculum to represent student learning outcomes. He further categorized the six dimensions into three broader dimensions: the intended curriculum, the implemented curriculum, and the attained curriculum (see Table 2.1). The intended curriculum refers to the policy and authoritative system, the implemented curriculum presents the real school life and classroom practices, and the attained curriculum illustrates the learner achievements and outcomes.

Table 2.1 The Typology of Curriculum Representation

INTENDED	IMPLEMENTED	ATTAINED

Ideal	Formal/Written	Perceived	Operational	Experiential	Learned
Vision (rationale or basic philosophy underlying a curriculum)	Intentions as specified in curriculum documents and/or materials	Curriculum as interpreted by its users (especially teachers)	The actual process of teaching and learning (also: curriculum-in-action)	Learning experiences as perceived by learners	Resulting learning outcomes of learners

Similar curriculum theory with four basic components, the intentions, the teaching components, the teaching methods, and the learning assessments, explaining the school education is found in Morris (1998)'s work. Unlike Goodlad's curriculum representations with a hierarchical knowledge transmission from the curriculum intention to curriculum acceptance, Morris described his three-dimensional pyramid view of curriculum as based on his study of Hong Kong's curriculum theory. Intentional aims and goals play a significant role in leading curriculum operation, but it involves four other equal essential elements; teaching objects, teaching content, teaching methods, and learning assessments to support its successful implementation. Figure 2.1 is an illustration of the framework Morris constructed for his curriculum theoretical interpretation. Even though the framework provided a fundamental understanding of a curriculum, how the curriculum should be planned, organized, reflected upon, and improved was also approached by Morris from a technical standpoint. He showed a number of social and political considerations should not be neglected when interpreting curriculum theory.
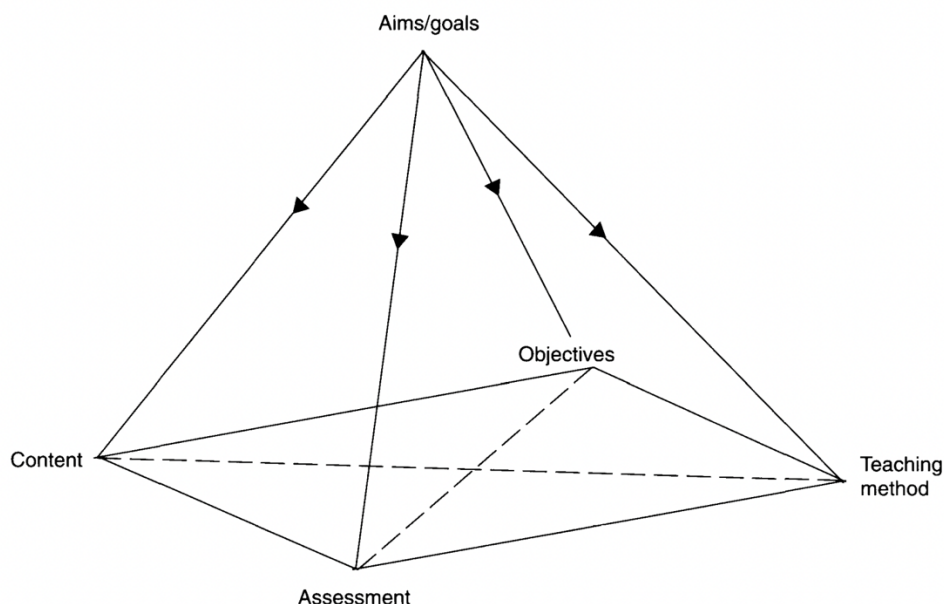
Figure 2.1 *The Components of a Curriculum (Morris, 1998, p. 4)*

2.1.2.2 Curriculum Theories beyond School Education

Apart from understanding curriculum as an educational function, other interpretations of curriculum theories go beyond a school teaching and learning context and introduce a holistic social perspective. Curriculum was interpreted from its "unique history", to the "complex present", and its "uncertain future" (Pinar, 2012, p. 2). This approach allows researchers to define appropriate levels of curriculum based on multiple philosophies, not only in teaching and learning, but also from a social development aspect (Pugach et al., 2020).

Stenhouse (1975) recognized curriculum as within-school content with "an intention, a plan or prescription, an idea about what one would like to happen in schools (p. 2)." He also viewed curriculum as an agency of teaching and learning process with anthropological or sociological value as to be "existing state of affairs in schools, what does in fact happen" (p. 2). Moore's (2014) interpretation, instead of understanding curriculum as "a product" which contains a body of pre-structured knowledge and content-related standards, views curriculum as "a process" of the in-class experience, "a praxis" of the specific teacher practices and their perceptions, and "a context" with a relationship connecting school to society beyond, "the

outside world" (p. 45). From Stenhouse's perspective, curriculum study should be analyzed more deeply than the surface learning content within school education and extend to its inner function from a social standpoint.

Pinar, Reynolds, Taubman and Slattery (1995) form an even more holistic perspective, interpreting curriculum with diverse theories and functions. In their view, by following a historical timeline, curriculum can be understood as historical, political, racial, gender, or phenomenological. Each kind of curriculum theory is based on independent curriculum interpretations, and their in-between related curriculum theoretical connections are presented to the public. Pinar and his team provided readers a comprehensive perspective of curriculum that goes beyond educational function and has a meaning related to social construction, economic development, scientific innovation, and humanistic moral improvement. According to Grimmett and Halvorson (2010), Pinar's work moves beyond the institutional text in school to a life-world texts which connects to a contemporary discourse to reconceptualize curriculum with its function in the humanistic and social.

2.1.3 Instructional Practices Embedded in Curriculum Theories

No matter how curriculum was understood and interpreted based on different theories, from an educational perspective, it always contains a pedagogical approach to turn theory into actual instructional practices of both human and social development (Schweisfurth, 2013). In other words, instructional practices, also called educational practices, commonly represent teaching behavior, pedagogy, and guides interaction in the classroom. It includes teacher intention, instructional behaviors, and acting outputs. Aside from how teachers perceive they should operate the lesson, the actual practices of teachers significantly influences how the teaching content is organized, how the knowledge is delivered, and how the student learns from a classroom environment (Akker, 1988; Ye & Cheng, 2018).

To understand what instructional practices are applied in the classroom in general and what effective ways are available to improve student learning, some previous researchers have preferred to base their work on the two psychological learning theories: behaviorism and constructivism. One is in line with the theory of teacher-centered education (TCE), and the other is student-centered education (SCE) (Stewart, 2012; Garnett, 2013). These two main streams of the educational theories influence implementation in a school setting. This makes the philosophies a significant educational perspective to discuss. In terms of how teaching and learning occur and how knowledge builds up in student minds, these two theories of learning have raised many debates and controversies regarding their different epistemologies and practical instructional pedagogies (Stewart, 2012).

2.1.3.1 Theories in Teacher-centered Education and Student-centered Education

In theory, TCE is rooted in Behaviorism, which is based on objectivism. It is the belief that knowledge is pre-structured and exists independently of experience. The philosophical epistemology concerns the real structure of the world that can be matched with the structure of learner behaviors (Shively, 1997). From the psychologist's point of view, behaviorists view an individual's behavior as observable and can be interpreted to understand the purpose of the target outcome. Regarding educational practices, behaviorists encourage teachers to apply reinforcement to strengthen student learning behaviors and target consequences because behaviorists think student behaviors can be managed under teacher instruction and control. This is why behaviorism leads to a teacher-centered classroom setting. When a class relies on a teacher decision to control the pace and content of the teaching process as well as allowing teachers to assess student learning results by merely observing their external behavior and performance, a class based on TCE is likely (Shively, 1997).

SCE is based on the philosophy of constructivism, which believes people understand the meaning of the world depending on how they experience and self-construct knowledge (Shively, 1997; Windschitl, 2002). If the focus for behaviorism is "what to know," the epistemology for constructivism is "how to know" and "how we come to know" (Shively, 1997). In other words, constructivism is a way to describe how people inquire about knowledge based on their previous experience and interaction. The philosophical contexts include many different definitions and explanations but, in educational contexts, two aspects are most important: "social constructivism" and "cognitive constructivism." The main difference between those two aspects is in the understanding of how knowledge is received. Social constructivism views knowledge as an interactive cultural product. Through social interaction and cultural influence, people build up their knowledge and understanding through connecting with others under different contextual situations (Windschiltl, 2002). In contrast, cognitive constructivism emphasizes the process of adapting, achieving, and constructing knowledge in highly individual ways. Learners maintain ideas, configure new information from the environment, then adapt themselves to the new environment with fresh knowledge, eventually creating a logical understanding of the updated circumstances (Piaget, 1985; Windschitl, 2002).

2.1.3.2 Teacher-centered Education and Student-centered Education in Practice

From a practical perspective, when students are studying with a teacher-centered mode, they have few opportunities to make decisions or claim ownership during the lesson. Instead of independently aquiring knowledge, a set of pre-determined teaching content is structured for students to gain a standardized learning achievement. In terms of the class flow, lessons are driven by teachers as the in-class leader, pre-determined teaching content requires learning materials and a series of systematic routines and planned activities. In other words, in a TCE learning environment, teacher behavior and content knowledge matters most to predictable

learning outcomes (Stewart 2012; Jones & Jones, 2004; Miltenberger, 2001). In a student-centered learning environment, students are provided with lots of opportunities to have ownership and autonomy with which to construct their learning. Instead of following a TCE way of passively absorbing knowledge from the teachers and content objectives, students are able to actively construct their conceptions and information by referral to the interaction between themselves and their living environment. To support student interactions with their surroundings, both independent inquiry and collaborative teamwork are also applied in a SCE classroom (Webster, 2011; Wiggins, 2015; Shively, 2015).

To specify the differences between TCE and SCE, Table 2.3 summarizes the details according to literature.

Table 2.3. A Comparison in Teaching and Learning between TCE and SCE

	Teacher-centered Education	Student-centered Education
Lesson Preparation	- Teaching lessons by using predetermined content knowledge - Preparing lesson plans and class activities according to teacher experiences	- Designing lessons based on student previous existing knowledge - Following student spontaneous learning progress to make adjustments
Teacher Behavior	- Responsible for making decisions for students - Deliver knowledge using a didactive teaching approach	- Responsible for providing opportunities to students - Encourage students to inquire independently and collaboratively
Student Behavior	- Act as teacher follower	- Act as autonomous thinker and inquirer
Learning Approaches	- Students follow teacher instructions	- Multiple grouping strategies for collaboration and peer learning
Assessment Types	- Value students by mostly standardized assessments	- value student independent critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity

2.2 STUDENT-CENTERED EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY CURRICULUM STUDIES

2.2.1 Positive Comments

According to Ellis (2004), a curriculum structured based on individual's needs with specific interests on the educational context for human learning effect can be regarded as a learner-centered curriculum or student-centered curriculum. It is a curriculum based on student-centered education (SCE) to promote student individuality and their learning experiences (Wiggins, 2015). In recent decades, SCE has started spreading from its original Western context to the entire world (Schweisfurth, 2013). The concept and its related pedagogies have been adopted in many local educational curriculum reforms in territories such as Europe (Sin, 2015), Africa (Mtika & Gates, 2010), the Maldives (Biase, 2019), Singapore (Bautista et al., 2018), the United States (Wiggins, 2015), and China (Ministry of Education, 2011). With the increasing positive reports detailing the stimulation of student active thinking, inquiring, and creating, SCE is confidently applied in multiple subject domains (Bremner, 2020).

2.2.1.1 Evidence across Multiple Subject Domains

In Mathematic domain, Eronen and Karna (2018) designed a research study by using grounded theory to investigate 23 middle school student conceptions of mathematics teaching content and the teacher supporting styles. When students were involved in a student-centered learning environment with teacher authority minimized and student autonomies increased, student satisfaction was enhanced as they were empowered by more self-guided opportunities to be independent and collaborative. Thus, SCE was encouraged in mathematic subjects because of its benefits for student development in autonomies and authorities by Eromen and Karna.

In the Visual Arts domain, Chisti and Jehangir (2014) collected 150 college student questionnaires and analyzed the influence of early years' SCE experiences on later life visual art learning outcomes. Using detailed quantitative analysis, their results indicated that students that received SCE visual art at primary school level had significantly higher thinking skills, especially in terms of being able to generate multiple solutions, and their divergent and convergent thinking abilities were better than those who had studied in a TCE learning environment. Therefore, based on Chisti and Jehangir's analysis, a long-term positive effect of SCE on student thinking skills was concluded from their visual arts perspective.

In Language Arts classes, Simpson and Park (2013) conducted a quasi-experimental research study with one hundred and ten middle school students settled within two groups and these students and their lessons were used to investigate the effectiveness of a technology integrated SCE lesson. Based on their results, a student-oriented learning environment, especially when students had opportunities to use technology, benefitted Language Arts achievement. Since technology provided student autonomy to do research and work independently, Simpson and Park highly recommended a technology-oriented SCE for Language Arts domain.

A SCE-based inquiry-driven curriculum was also implemented by Karpudewan, Roth, and Sinniah (2016) for 150 secondary students' chemistry classes, to investigate their communication skills. Using a quasi-experimental research study, researchers discovered that students who experienced inquiry-based activities were significantly better at applying argumentative skills and constructing conceptual understanding than those who did not. A positive view of the way SCE-based learning environments support student thinking and communication skills can be seen in Karpudewan, Roth, and Sinniah's conclusion.

2.2.1.2 Evidence from Specific Music Education

From a general perspective of music education, especially from a Western perspective, SCE helps students become active musicians through the interactive process of listening, responding, creating, and performing (Wiggins, 2015). The strategic pedagogies of SCE promote actively constructing knowledge both individually and collaboratively, and they supports the nature of music education, which further provides a positive outcome to develop student music competencies (Scott, 2011; Shively, 2011).

More specifically, Weidner (2015) designed a qualitative case study by observing an eight-week band rehearsal cycle adapting SCE in 15 teaching sessions and concluded that an SCE learning environment could support student thinking and independent working skills. Musical independence could be significantly improved when teachers could build up a varied and scaffolded learning environment. Similarly, Bautista (2018) and his team described how lessons could be taught student-centric in the classroom. They concluded that a student-led, open-discussion-oriented, and co-construction learning environment could improve multiple student competencies, especially musical thinking and expression. The improvement in student reactions would further benefit by the forming of a mutual learning and understanding relationship between teacher and students. Coss (2019) prepared exploratory experiences based on previous researchers' SCE studies that required his students to make decisions during a music composition lesson. The successfully implemented explorational experience led him to recommend this strategy to other educators because the open-ended learning experiences could increase student ownership, musical thinking, and decision-making in many aspects. White (2021) applied a grounded theory, a mixed-method study that involved 50 teachers sharing their experiences of music teaching. By analyzing the interview data, SCE-related authentic learning was found to have a positive relationship with high-achieving music programs for

senior secondary students. It allowed students to inquire about knowledge and skills and enriched their musical experiences and explorations.

2.2.2 Debates

However, when many applauses are raised for SCE in diverse subject domains, the effectiveness in adaptation also caused many practical concerns (Schweisfurth, 2013). In terms of SCE application in education, any situations like unrealistic assumptions towards the theory, limited physical resources, inadequate theory-related training, unsupportive cultural environment, and remaining educational tradition might easily turn the ideal assumption of SCE into unsuccessful adaptation (Cleaver & Ballantyne, 2014; Schweisfurth, 2013; You, 2019). Therefore, except for the growing numbers of positive comments on SCE theory, a number of controversial discussions have also been raised for its actual application.

For example, teachers that have appropriately applied SCE demonstrate a positive change from the passive instilling of facts to stimulating students into active thinking, inquiring, and creating. The reports of successful implementations featuring increasingly engaging learning environments and effective learning outcomes enhance confidence that adopting SCE across diverse grade levels and multiple subject domains is a positive step (Bremner, 2020; Brooks & Brooks, 2001; Schweisfurth, 2013). However, SCE works more effectively with well-trained educators in smaller class sizes, no matter the subject or grade level. Without teacher appropriate support guidance, students might stick to invalid knowledge exploration and ineffective discussion. Similarly, when forced to implement SCE in a classroom with more than 50 students, student active discussion and hands-on activities might turn quiet learning environments into loud and noisy classrooms. This leaves teachers with the singular choice of returning students to passive learning in class (Mtika & Gates, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2020).

Other discourses argue about the application of SCE. For instance, when discussing the development of individuality, Elena (2015) encouraged educators to implement SCE as it offers plenty of opportunities for students to express themselves and be respected for their variety. But Komatsu, Rappleye, and Silova (2021) argued that even though individuality from a surface level may seemingly benefit an individual's conception and motivation, an overemphasis on individuality might extend a belief in ontological individualism, which might further stymie any "interdependent-collective social benefit" and "sustainability."

When exploring whether SCE is adaptable to all teaching situations, Thompson (2013) noted that, even though SCE started as a Western approach and related experimentation occured in a Western teaching context, the benefit of empowering students with authority and autonomy could be effectively adapted internationally. Brinkmann (2015), on the contrary, used the example of Indian education to illustrate the difficulties of adapting SCE to the needs of developing countries. When cultural beliefs antithetical to SCE are rooted in teachers' minds, the application of SCE is much harder than might be imagined. Even though SCE might benefit students with empowerment, increased authority, and more autonomy in the long term, contextual difficulties might completely prevent its implementation.

2.3 CURRICULUM IN MAINLAND CHINA

2.3.1 A History of General Curriculum Development in China

China's modern curriculum started emerging in 1905 when the Qing Dynasty abolished imperial examinations and the "new schools" were started establishing to teach multiple subjects (Liu, 2011). Due to complex social circumstances including economic promotion and political movements for China's reconstruction, the educational purpose of curriculum was not systematically formalized until the first complete formal school system, "Guimao Xuezhi" (癸

卯学制), was established by the Qin Dynasty government in 1904. Influenced by the Western educational system, "Guimao Xuezhi" accelerated the promotion of formal school education in China and strengthened the existence of an educational curriculum with the purposes of both individual and social development. Since then, many subject disciplines, including Chinese language, French, English, Mathematics, and Music have developed independent teaching syllabuses for the school teaching and learning environment (Ma, 2002).

According to Wang and Shan (2020), the continuing development of Chinese general curriculum theory could be interpreted as four different stages that aligned with some of China's special political and social events. A process that moved from borrowing Westerners' curriculum theories to the establishment of an independent school curriculum system can be found identified within China's stages of curriculum development from Wang and Shan's discussion.

2.3.1.1 The Early Stage: A Western-Influenced School Curriculum

According to Wang and Shan (2020), the first stage in China's curriculum development was from 1919 to 1949 when Western curriculum theory started being recognized by Chinese educators and borrowed as an "import commodity" (p. 32). Due to China experiencing a period of complex political change as it transitioned from the monarchic Qing dynasty to the Republic of China in the early twentieth century, the urgent educational purpose of Chinese educators during this time was to establish a localized innovative school curriculum system and to foster younger generations capable of saving China from multiple threats in the future.

Since this was the beginning period of the "new schools" and education across multiple subject disciplines, much educational philosophy and teaching content written into early national-published syllabuses were still based on Western learning content (Liu, 2011). As well as inviting American educators such as Helen Parkhurst (1886-1973), John Dewey (1859-

1952), and Paul Monroe (1869-1947) to China for public presentations of their educational theories, a series of translated Western educational books, such as American educator John Franklin Bobbitt's *The Curriculum: a summary of the development concerning the theory of the curriculum*, published in 1918, and John Dewey's *Democracy and Education*, published in 1916, were translated into Mandarin for Chinese educators to read and explore. By learning from these western theories, the intention of structuring and forming a formal school curriculum influenced by American pragmatism was enhanced, and the function of education on training and gathering people together for saving and reconstructing new China was also increased accordingly. Consequently, these western educators and scholars' presentations and publications provided a large impact on China's understanding of how curriculum could function and operate in a school setting (Wang & Shan, 2020).

2.3.1.2 The Second Stage: A Soviet Union-Influenced Linear Teacher-centered Education

The second stage in curriculum development was from 1950 to 1979 when the newly established communist government led China (Wang & Shan, 2020). From a social political point of view, the Chinese government were facing many challenges such as consolidating political power, rebuilding society, restoring production, eliminating illiteracy, and developing the educational system (Ye, 2009). Therefore, the process of developing China's localized curriculum system was slowed and inhibited by many social and political events such as the "Cultural Revolution" (Wang & Shan, 2020).

Due to the similar social system and political ideology of the Soviet Union, China started importing many social aspects including the running of the school educational system (Argymbaeva, 2016; Ye & Cheng, 2018; Yang, 2005). For example, after Soviet educator Ivan Andreyevich Kairov's didactic-based textbook "Pedagogika" was introduced in the Mainland after 1956, the didactic method of teaching quickly spread through mainland China. It

developed to be one of the leading pedagogical theories which was used prevalently in Mainland China normal universities. In this didactic theory, the benefit of teaching in a classroom setting, the guiding function of an educational curriculum, and the importance of having a "teacher-centered" teaching model with multiple pre-determined subject-based teaching content as a "content-driven" learning style was emphasized. Publications like "Pedagogika" affected the teaching and learning process of Mainland Chinese school education (Ma, 2002; Cui, 2009). Teaching content and specific pedagogies were planned at a governmental level for teachers to implement in practice and for students to study statically. Wang and Shan (2020) described China's school curriculum of the time as similar as a "curriculum system chain", a linear educational transmission from governmental decision to student achievement (p. 38).

2.3.1.3 The Third Stage: A Localized Content-driven Education

The third stage of China's curriculum development was from 1980 to 1999 when China went through quick social, political, and economic reform and opening up (Wang & Shan, 2020). With the end of many social movements related to the Cultural Revolution and the re-concentration on the importance of education to China's government, curriculum studies resurfaced in academic research and educational development.

The Ministry of Education in China unified a series of teaching materials including curriculum syllabus and teaching textbooks across different subject domains, aiming to achieve a standardized high quality of education (Liu & Li, 2019). The first localized academic journal related to curriculum theories and studies, named *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*, was established in 1981. The purpose of having a curriculum-related journal was to strengthen school curriculum research, spread academic learning theories, and lead new curriculum reform for school education (Wang & Shan, 2020). A diverse array of educational conferences

related to school education, curriculum reform, improvement in teaching quality, and construction in teaching materials also expanded in the 1990s. Educators from different regions across China gathered to explore how to improve school education through selected teaching models and content materials (Liu, 2011; Ye, 2009).

Based on these new changes, China's curriculum focus has accelerated a switch from learning and borrowing from other countries to establishing its own localized independent curriculum system (Wang & Shan, 2020). "Curriculum Reform" began to be raised by local researchers by organizing "Class Demonstration" events across multiple subjects and aiming to present the "best" in-class teaching and learning as model lesson implementations for regular school teachers from across China. Even though linear "teacher-centered" and "content-driven" education was still dominant during this stage, a strong change in emphasis from "what should be taught" to "how should be taught" was the major curriculum development of the period.

2.3.1.4 The Forth Stage: A Curriculum Reformed Student-centered Education

After Wang and Shan (2020), the fourth stage of China's curriculum development can be said to span from 2000 until the present. The school curriculum has completely changed intention from a Teacher-centered Education (TCE) to a Student-centered Education (SCE). Following international educational trends, what should be taught to students from a TCE perspective has changed to what should be taught to students with a SCE consideration. Student previous experience, learning experience, and innovative creative ideas are now highly valued in China and can be found in many curriculum-related publications (Cui, 2019; Ye, 2009).

Within the *Outline of Basic Education Curriculum Reform (Trial)*, published by Ministry of Education in 2001, the original National Curriculum Syllabus with "Two Teaching Foundations (TTF)" was changed to National Curriculum Standards with a "Three-dimensional Goal (TDG)". The original educational attention solely focusing on content-driven

TTF with fundamental knowledge and fundamental skills has been redirected to student comprehensive development with TDG in three different aspects; knowledge and skills, process and steps, and emotional attitude and values (Cui, 2019, p. 77). At the teacher lesson implementational level, Zhang and Zhou (2017) wrote in their book *'Taught' Does Not Mean 'Learned': How School Should Develop Its Curriculum* with conceptual theories and practical stories to illustrate the urgent requirement to understand student needs and their learning progress as the educational focus of China's new future curriculum-related research studies. The innovative educational approaches guiding the philosophy of SCE such as inquiry-based learning (Gao, 2019), project-based learning (Cheng, 2019), STEAM (Wang, 2018), and interdisciplinary-based education (Wang, 2016) have all been advocated. Therefore, the most recent period could be characterized as the educational era of SCE in China's school curriculum.

2.3.2 The Current Curriculum Status in China School Music Subject Domain

For the subject of music specifically, research has reported that the Chinese music curriculum has also started emphasizing the importance of making students the center of the teaching and learning process (Cui, 2009; Lyu, 2018). Unlike China's long-lasting traditional teacher-centered and content-driven learning environment, Student-centered Education (SCE), with its benefit of supporting student autonomy and engagement (Luo, 2005), enhancing student comprehensive abilities (Chai, 2009), and creating an effective learning environment (Li, 2017), has been been highly recommended and further written into the national music Curriculum Standards (Liu, 2011).

2.3.2.1 Music Curriculum Standards

Curriculum Standards is a standardized official document for school educational purposes from a general perspective. Issued by the Ministry of Education, it covers the curriculum goals and philosophy, conceptualized teaching content, instructional teaching pedagogies, and the expectation of standardized educational quality. It contains a list of updated educational requirements and suggestions and is a guide for school-age teaching and learning implementation (Zhang, 2018).

According to Ma (2002) and Zhang (2018), the long history of *Curriculum Standards* in China can be traced back to the 1920s. Before the 1920s, music as a subject was subordinate to other subjects, and music teaching guidance was only provided with a broader national perspective. Until 1923, national educational intentions were issued as a written document for the specific music subject, which was officially called The Elementary Music Curriculum Syllabus. This official national document included detailed educational purpose, teaching content, instructional strategies, and music-specific elements making it the first Chinese curriculum designed specifically for music. The elementary school syllabus was augmented with middle school, and high school music teaching guidance known as The Middle School Music Curriculum Syllabus and The High School Music Curriculum Syllabus and used for instructional purposes until 2000.

In 2001, the Curriculum Syllabus officially changed its name to the *Curriculum Standard*s. Its rationale, aims and goals, content, and recommendations for curriculum implementation were well-developed and updated in 2011, allowing teachers to receive updated curriculum guidance (Ministry of Education, 2001; 2011).

In 2011, the updated edition of the curriculum guiding publication, *Music Curriculum Standards of full-time compulsory schooling* (2011 edition) (hereafter *Curriculum Standards*) officially announced that a student-centered teaching philosophy should be built into teacher

teaching practices. Similarly to the use of SCE in a Western context (Shively, 2015), emphasis was given to student learning experience, perception, communication, and cultural recognition. SCE has also been introduced as China's music curriculum concept in the updated *Curriculum Standards*. Some literal guidance made adjustments to *Music Curriculum Standards of full-time compulsory schooling (Trial)*, which was the first *Curriculum Standards* version published in 2001. For example, in the old version of 2001, ideal teaching practice is described as follows:

> To ensure the successful implementation of the "Curriculum Standards," teachers should deeply perceive and understand the basic educational concepts: following music subject-oriented learning, education/teaching-oriented learning, being open-minded and finding innovative approaches to achieve the curriculum value and goal. (Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China, 2001, p. 11)

In the *Curriculum Standards* published in 2011, one of the key terms changed from "educational/teaching-centered" to "student-centered" as below:

> To ensure the successful implementation of the "Curriculum Standards," teachers should deeply perceive and understand the basic educational concepts: following music subject-oriented learning, focusing on student-oriented teaching, to achieve the curriculum value and goal. (Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China, 2011, p. 26)

In other words, the philosophy behind SCE perfectly matches China's educational policy in its Core Competency (Liu, 2011) and Quality Education (Dello-Iacovo, 2009), as it aims to promote individuality and holistic education to foster well-rounded people (Lyu, 2018). Therefore, following the new instructional guidance embedded in *Curriculum Standards*,

China's school music teachers have been increasingly encouraged to implement SCE into their classrooms (Li, 2017).

2.3.2.2 Music Class Demonstration

Another important document that seeks to help teachers to understand what should be implemented in regular teaching and how lessons should be conducted is the Music Class Demonstration (MCD) (Li, 2017). It is a form of teaching demonstration that is often organized during teaching competitions and teacher training programs at all levels (national, provincial and district, etc.). It features "outstanding" examples of regular school lessons that often strongly align with the latest *Curriculum Standards*.

These "outstanding" lessons are originally conducted by elementary or secondary school teachers in their usual schools. When the demonstrational event starts, teachers have an opportunity to upload one videotaped music lesson to their local city or province for judging. A group of music experts representing the Bureau of Education select a limited number of the most effective and attractive music lessons as the "best" classes based on their personal criteria. The small number of selected lessons participate in a province-wide and, later, nation-wide educational event, the Music Class Demonstration Event (MCDE). Eventually, these demonstration lessons are given again on stage for other schoolteachers to observe and learn from (Qin, 2013; Xiao, 2019).

MCDE started in 1995 and is held every three years. It aims to improve the quality of lesson implementation, as well as advocate for the educational reform of arts-related subjects. The purpose of holding this event can be seen in two aspects. It aims to show school music teachers what an "outstanding" music lesson should be. MCD purposefully chooses its learning models to have a great impact on schoolteacher instructional practices and improve teaching qualities in a broad aspect (Wang, 2003; Xu, 2011; Zhang, 2012). It also functions as a form

of professional development for music teachers. Participating demonstration teachers experience the process of developing a model lesson through several phases of practice, and audiences build their perceptions in reference to these "best" lessons and comparison with their personal teaching experiences (Xiao, 2019).

Consequently, these demonstration lessons selected by MCDE serve as another document that not only guides Chinese music lesson implementation but also presents best SCE practice to the public (Qin, 2013; Xiao, 2019). As Li (2017) noted, the development of MCDE is also a witness to China's curriculum development from TCE to SCE. It helps educators and researchers to understand China's school curriculum from a practical perspective.

2.4. STUDENT-CENTERED EDUCATION IN CHINA SCHOOL MUSIC LESSON IMPLEMENTATION

While SCE has received lots of positive comments and caused many controversial discussions about its mismatching of the theory to the contextual practices, what is the situation in China's educational context? While SCE has been written into the National Curriculum Standards, how is it being implemented in real teaching and learning environments? To explore the local context, the literature related to SCE application in China has been reviewed.

2.4.1 Positive Attitudes towards Implementing SCE as a Theory

As Schweinfurth (2013) mentioned, SCE originally started in the Western world and quickly became popular because of its benefits to cognitive and social development. Borrowing Western learning approaches (You, 2019), different attitudes to SCE application emerged in the Chinese context.

Zi (2018) compared the changes in music curriculum and in-class implementation over the past 40 years and concluded that the current SCE matches well with the national expectation of fostering student core competencies and delivering quality education. The updated curriculum reform, changed from emphasizing the teacher to emphasizing students, enhances people's understanding of student cognitive development, increases teacher teaching confidence, improves student learning motivation, and further strengthens high quality teaching and research.

Another positive comment towards the new curriculum reform with SCE-based learning has appeared in Yang's (2018) paper. She first criticizes traditional musical educational mode of giving teachers and educators absolute authority, and argues that teacher-centered classroom management restricts the development of independent student development. Yang also comments that an SCE-based curriculum reform not only supports fostering the all-rounded students with multiple competencies but also respects student uniqueness and individuality which further benefits discovering student musical potentials.

Similar positive attitudes in promoting SCE in practice are also found in many other Chinese educators' comments (Chai, 2009; Liu, 2011; Luo, 2005). However, these educators share a common theme: they did not provide any empirical research to support their beliefs. Instead, they preferred to advocate theoretical ideas in SCE with its related national promotion as a "core competency" (Liu, 2018) and "quality education" (Dello-Iacovo, 2009).

2.4.2 Concerns about SCE in China's Contextual Practice

Scholars that have conducted empirical research have a relatively negative attitude to applying SCE in China's teaching situation. For example, Liu and Dunne (2009) conducted comparative case study research by examining three Chinese secondary schools by using diverse participants, including teachers, students, parents, local education officials, and others.

Amongst these groups, the examination-oriented educational mode was the major impediment to implementing SCE in China's local context. Liu and Dunne concluded that even though education reform efforts have been made in the past 20 years, there is still "no significant impact on school teaching and learning" (p. 472).

Similar practical concerns from different perspectives were found by Wang's (2011) ethnographic study. Wang investigated lesson implementation in a rural elementary school with most class sizes ranging between 60 and 80. His results not only supported previous concerns about the unsuccessful implementation of SCE in China but also pointed out that teachers did not prefer adopting SCE because the strategies and methods were "more time-consuming and unpredictable than lecturing" (p. 163). The pressure to finish required textbook tasks and ensure student learning outcomes means a teacher-centered teaching mode is a better match than student-centered learning models in China's educational context.

Ji (2013), studied both Mainland China and America, researching the new educational trend of implementing student-centered approaches in China and concluded that "No one defines the way of teaching in music classrooms in China as from a behaviorist perspective. However, we could not deny the nature of behaviorism in music classrooms in China." (p.11). He noted that no matter how much student-centered pedagogy is advocated by the public, inadequate professional development means their actual instructional practices remain those of the past.

A similar conclusion was arrived at by two other Chinese music researchers, Yu and Leung (2019). Music educators designed a quantitative study to understand the implementation of *Curriculum Standards* by collecting 2206 questionnaires from school music teachers across 15 cities and provinces in Mainland China. The report reveals that most teachers found constraints hampered the implementation of new educational reforms. A large number of teachers maintained a teacher-centered instructional style because of a lack of study and knowledge of

the national documents. If teachers misunderstand the national curriculum, their teaching strategies and instructional practices will inevitably vary from the intentional documents. In other words, an SCE-based music learning environment can hardly be implemented within actual practice.

2.4.3 Inadequate Empirical Research on SCE in Music Education

The comparison between China educators announcing their beliefs in the positive effect on SCE and the negative findings of empirical research is another interesting and controversial phenomenon. On one side, it shows that the adaptation of SCE has been well-accepted in China's music educational domain. On the other side, like the worries from Western researchers, the complexity of a new curriculum might cause practical issues which further hinder turning theory into practice appropriately (Cui, 2009; Cui et al., 2018). Therefore, to get a realistic understanding of music lesson implementation in the SCE learning era, there is an urgent need to conduct more empirical research studies to explore how SCE is being implemented in the music education field.

With reference to China's curriculum studies literature, empirical research into the general lesson implementation in the music education domain is in extreme shortage, when compared to the literature from the West. Guo, Xu and Li (2021) conducted a meta-analysis comparing the proportion of empirical research studies contributing to the music education literature in China and in the West. By comparing 704 journal articles related to Chinese music education published between 2018 and 2021 and gathered in CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure - a database edited and published by the electronic magazine of Chinese academic journals), with the full-text database of Chinese academic journals (CD version) as the core (TsingHua University Library, https://lib.tsinghua.edu.cn/info/1184/3583.htm), it was found that only 95 (Rate = 13.49%) provided empirical evidence. However, when adding in

comparison with 395 journal articles in the four top international journals, *The International Journal of Music Education (IJME), Journal of Research in Music Education (JRME), British Journal of Music Education (BJME),* and *Music Education Research, MER,* it was found that there were 339 (Rate = 85.82) articles within these four journals conducting empirical research. The idea that the significantly different proportion shows an urgent need for new empirical research into the music education domain in China was noted explicitly by Guo and his team.

A similar finding was also reported by Yang, Yin, and Guan (2021). After a careful meta-analysis that used Chinese research articles published between 2007 and 2019 in CNKI, it was revealed that Chinese music educational research strongly emphasizes descriptive analysis over statistical analysis in the research paradigm, and there was much less empirical research than conceptual studies. Among the 3,257 selected journal articles, only 313 (9.61%) provided empirical evidence with both fieldwork data and research method information. The inadequate empirical research was reflected in the implemented curriculum for primary school level. Of over 3000 studies, only 16 reported details of fieldwork data and research methods (Yang et al., 2021).

These findings not only prompt concern about the inadequate empirical research in the music education domain but also point to an assumption that the implementation of SCE, with its practical issues, might still go largely unnoticed in public. Consequently, filling the gap in research findings for Mainland music implemented curriculum is an urgent task for future researchers and becomes the initial purpose for designing this research study.

2.5 PURPOSE OF STUDY

Based on the review of previous literature, it is noticed that the curriculum is a complex educational system with a tight connection and a mutual-supportive relationship embedded in each detailed curriculum component (Fullan & Pomfert, 1977; Goodlad, Klein & Tye, 1979;

Akker, 2004). In the past, several curriculum theories have been raised to interpret contextual education. Among them, Goodlad's (1979)' linear curriculum representations that were further modified by Akker (2004) were mostly applied to explain China's educational context (Cui, 2009; Wang & Shan, 2020). Akker's (2004)'s three broader curriculum components (see Table 2.1), the intended curriculum, the implemented curriculum, and the attended curriculum, therefore become significant terms to explain the educational phenomenon in China's educational context.

In reality, a balanced relationship between each component of the curriculum representations is not easy to maintain. When researchers investigated the curriculum from the broader aspect of an entire educational system, a lack of attention paid to lesson implementation was revealed in many different regions in the world (Cuban, 2013; Fullan, 2016). Early in the 1970s, Fullan and Pomfret (1977) described this implementation as a "black box." In the 2000s, Cui and his team (2018) used this metaphor to describe the wider ignorance of China's implemented curriculum. Despite the increasing international attention paid to the intended curriculum and the attended curriculum, the nature of the implemented curriculum in China remained mostly unknown and what was understood was based on researchers' review of Chinese literature (Guo et al., 2021; Yang et al. 2021). To this end, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the implemented curriculum in the China's music education context, especially on how teachers perceive and operate their teaching and learning under a SCE educational instruction. The findings from this research not only fill the gap left by the inadequate attention paid to the implemented curriculum but also supports maintenance of a balanced, consistent, and sustainable general curriculum.

Also, in recent decades, student-centered education that aligns with contemporary educational reform is not only regarded internationally as one of the most prevalent teaching and learning approaches (Schweisfurth, 2013), it is also written in the updated music

Curriculum Standards in China (Ministry of Education, 2011). When exploring China's implemented curriculum by understanding how music lessons are perceived and operated, it is also necessary to understand how SCE was applied in China's context. Since SCE has been embedded into the intended curriculum with many national documents, its application in practice has become another important way to understand whether a balanced curriculum system exists in Chinese music teaching.

The need to explore the "black box" of the implemented curriculum by examining teachers as the actors of the implemented curriculum, their perceptions of *Curriculum Standards*, their lesson implementations, and their reflections on the whole process of teaching and learning, has driven this present study. Figure 2.1 is a conceptual framework of the purpose of this research.
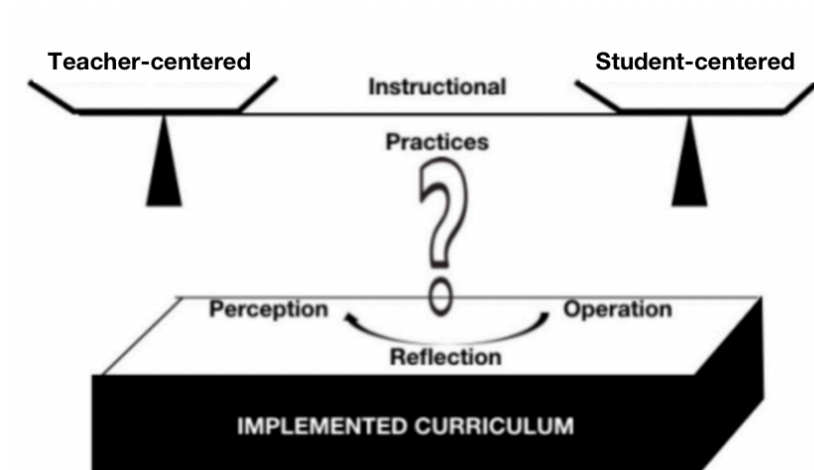
Figure 2.1. **Conceptual Framework for Exploring the Music Implemented Curriculum in China Public Schools**

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH STUDY DESIGN

In Chapter 2, practical concerns such as the lack of empirical studies exploring implemented curriculum in China music education domain and the disconnection between SCE theory and practice have been outlined. The focus on these practical concerns led to the decision to conduct two independent and consecutive studies.

The implemented curriculum should be investigated from a broader theoretical context, emphasizing the teacher as the implementer. Akker (2004) used the spiderweb as a metaphor to illustrate the interactive and the mutual-supportive relationship between each part of the curriculum representations. The maintenance of a balanced, consistent, and sustainable general curriculum system is comprehensive and complex. Findings derived from any part of the curriculum system should not be described in isolation or there is a danger of limiting the resultant information.

Therefore, the overall design of this study (see Figure 3.1) is intended to explore the implemented curriculum with a relationship to two other curriculum representations by using two studies. Although the focus of the general research is on the implemented curriculum, the decision was made to ensure a comprehensive perspective of curriculum reform in the Chinese music education context.
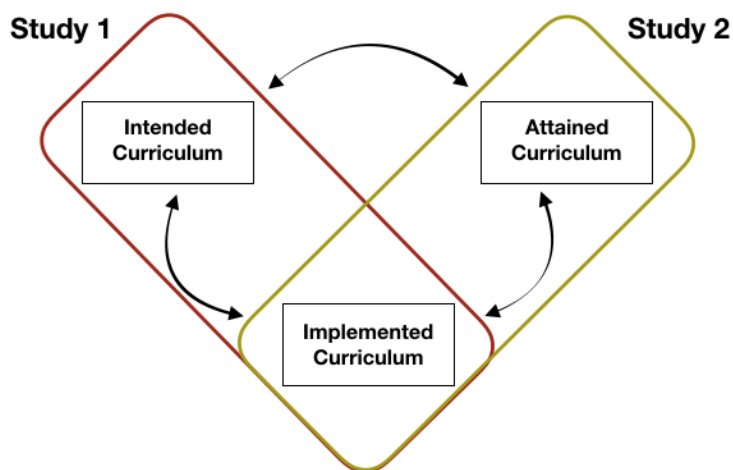
Figure 3.1. **Research Design of the Overall Study**

Fullan (2016) stated that teacher practices during the educational process, the implemented curriculum, function as mediation and connection between the intended curriculum and the attained curriculum. Teacher lesson implementation is dominated by their perceived intention and further benefit to student achievement. To understand how implemented curriculum functions in Chinese music classrooms, it is necessary to pay attention to both student learning activities and teacher instructional practices in the classroom.

Teaching practices vary among different regions, as well as among teaching and learning contexts. The teaching decisions and adjustments that teachers normally make during lessons rely on the contextual situation (Cui, 2009; Garnett, 2013; Shively, 2015; Webster, 2011). In China, lesson implementation in music subjects can be seen in the regular general classroom and in lesson demonstration events. Responding to educational reform from teacher-centered to student-oriented, the Outstanding Class Demonstration (OCD), organized at either province level or national level, provides a "performing stage" for expert-selected teachers to demonstrate "outstanding practices" that align with the intentional curriculum guidance (Li, 2017). Thus, the research focus for the two independent studies of this doctoral thesis is the

2018 Guangdong Outstanding Music Class Demonstration (GOMCD) and an ordinary school in Shenzhen.

The detailed research design for Study 1 and Study 2 is presented in this chapter. The results from both studies are analyzed and reported independently in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. The collation of the two studies by illustrating their connections and implication is further discussed in Chapter 6.

3.2 Study 1: Lesson Implementation in Demonstration Classes

This study uses classroom observation to investigate how Chinese music demonstration classes are presently conducted and in what ways SCE is embedded in these music lessons. It adopts content analysis methods (Krippendorff, 2018) to examine the pedagogy within video recordings of music education contexts. Sequential observational analysis (Bakeman & Quera, 2011) and qualitative thematic analysis (Miles et al., 2020) are the dominant data analysis methods used to explore the behavioral practices observed in 19 video-taped Music Demonstration lessons. The combination of both statistical data and descriptive vignettes provides a comprehensive picture of the implementation of SCE in China.

3.2.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of investigating lesson implementation in the Guangdong class demonstration event is two-fold. From a demonstrational aspect, all the lessons presented during the Outstanding Class Demonstration (OCD) events originally come from regular school classrooms. After being selected by a group of expert musicians and educators, a few lessons provide innovative significance for other music teachers to observe and study (Wang, 2003; Xu, 2011; Zhang, 2012). As Chinese music researcher Xu (2011) described, OCD, with its

educational intention of modeling the best teaching and learning for teachers to enhance their teaching skills, is very likely to influence schoolteacher teaching preparation and behaviors.

Guangdong province is in China's southern coastal area, a quickly changing province leading the reform policy, the economy, and education in China (Wang, 2003). In 2018, Guangdong province hosted its province-level Outstanding Music Class Demonstration (OMCD) event in early November and went on to host the national-level OMCD, gathering music teachers from across the country to observe the "best" teaching practices.

Consequently, as an indirect and secondary mediator between national level intention and implementational level practice, 2018 GOMCD was purposefully chosen for Study 1. It aims to understand what representative lesson implementation looks like and its alignment to the conceptual instruction within the 2011 China national music curriculum standards — student-centered education. The specific research questions proposed for Study 1 are as follows:

1. What are the observable practices and interactions in the video-recorded music demonstration class?

2. How do teachers and students interact with each other in shaping SCE in music lessons?

The findings are expected to offer a new perspective for academics, curriculum planners, school administrators, and music teachers and help them understand the implementation and interpretations of SCE in China's music demonstration classes.

3.2.2 Method and Design

The study adopted content analysis methods (Krippendorff, 2018) to examine the specific teaching practices in music education contexts using a two-phase research design. Elo & Kyngas (2008, p 108) defined content analysis as "a research method for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context, with the purpose of providing knowledge, new

insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action". It contains a quantitative feature in which the frequency of data can be identified and systematically collected, and can be interpreted by using an inductive coding system and deductive testing system of the qualitative method (Briggs, Coleman & Morrison, 2012).

Because Study 1 is to investigate implementation in demonstration lessons, content analysis through observational data is conducted. One of the leading measurements to help understand implementation procedure in the music classroom, observation within the music domain, started in the 1970s (Dorman, 1978; Forsythe, 1977; Moore, 1976; Wagner & Strul, 1979). It is regarded as a direct, reflective, and effective measuring tool that allows observers to capture the varying elements of the teaching process, and describe people's behaviour and the context through many categorized lenses (Cakir, 2010). In the past, observation as a method was usually designed to describe what happened during the music class but did not focus on the specific operational teaching process necessary for a correlation to be made between teacher preparation, instructional activities, and student development (Dorman, 1978). A systematic observation fills this gap by following logical scientific inference to arrive at a precise measurement by directly observing and recording events (Reiss, 1971). Allowing replication makes systematic observation a reliable instrument, especially when making a comparative study through the observation method (Yarbrough & Hendel, 1993; Yarbrough, Price & Hendel, 1994).

Sequential observational analysis (Bakeman & Quera, 2011) in tandem with qualitative thematic analysis (Miles et al., 2020) is the dominant data analysis method used to explore the behavioral practices observed in 19 video-taped Music Demonstration lessons. The combination of both statistical data and descriptive vignettes provides a comprehensive picture of the implementation of SCE in China's classrooms.

3.2.2.1 Subjects and Participant Selection

The research data comprised 19 (five Grade 1, five Grade 2, three Grade 4, five Grade 5, and one Grade 6) video recordings of elementary school music lessons in the 2018 Guangdong Music Class Demonstration Event (GMCDE). Required to be in alignment with *Curriculum Standards*, these lessons are originally selected as demonstration lessons by a group of music education experts who represent the Guangdong Education Bureau from a total of 109 participating lessons. During GMCDE, these demonstration lessons are given on a performance stage with a group of unfamiliar students and are videotaped for later public observation and research purposes (Guangdong Academy of Education, 2018). The non-participant observation method was adapted to observe the downloaded videos to "see what is there," rather than inferences being made by investigators (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997).

Krippendorff (2018) suggested using a census data collection strategy when the purpose of a study was to know something about the detailed coverage within an event. Census data collection is one of the data collection strategies that allows researchers to collect all kinds of texts. For this study, a census data collecting strategy ensured sampling validity and avoided bias (Krippendorff, 2018). A total of 19 video recordings with strong representations of primary level teaching practices in the 2018 Guangdong Music Class Demonstration event were collected as the census for Study 1's further data analysis.

The observed 19 teachers are from the 17 cities of Guangdong province, including northern, eastern, western, and the Pearl River delta areas. Fifteen female teachers and four male teachers were involved in the elementary lesson demonstration section, conducting 40 minute lessons with two to three minutes flexibility. Ten singing-based, six Music Appreciation-based, one instrumental-based, one creating-based, and one Music Perception-based lessons were selected to demonstrate the good practice in a general music setting. Participating students came from one primary school in the host city, Jiangmen, with an average class size of between 30 and 40 students.

3.2.2.2 Data Collection

All original videos are accessible from the Guangdong Department of Education's website. They were downloaded in May 2019 from the official Guangdong Department of Education website. Copyright permission allowing the use of the videos for research purposes is given on the website.

Two video cameras were used for the recordings of each of the lessons. One was located directly facing the teachers (See Figure 3.2), and the other was positioned in the center of the audience seats, providing a 90° side view of the lesson (See Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.2. **Example of the First Camera's Setting Angle in class Demonstration**

Figure 3.3. **Example of the Second Camera's Setting Angle in Class Demonstration**

The specific data collection method was non-participant observation (Creswell, 2016). The researcher acted outside of the demonstrational event. The data collecting process was completed through observing the video recordings without direct interaction with any of the lesson activities or teachers. In this way, any external interruptions of the observation could be avoided to keep the original educational status (Creswell, 2016).

3.2.3 Data Analysis

3.2.3.1 The Overall Status of Data Analysis

In total, 19 video recordings of music lessons, lasting 760 minutes, were analyzed. They were pre-categorized by music experts into five different types of lessons: ten singing-based, six Music Appreciation-based, one instrumental-based, one creating-based, and one Music Perception-based.

From a technical analysis aspect, all video recordings as data were examined by an analyzing application, MAXQDA. It is computer software for analyzing qualitative data (Kuckartz & Radiker, 2019). Like analyzing numerical data with statistical methods by using

SPSS as the software, MAXQDA is mainly applied to analyzing texts, photographs, audio, and video. It provides multiple tools for researchers to capture diverse codes and organize them according to both descriptive and statistical aspects (Kuckartz & Radiker, 2019). Therefore, 19 video recordings were imported into MAXQDA for coding and subsequent categorical analysis of classroom behaviors in this study.

The current study contains a "mixed-methods movement" (Bernard, Wutich & Ryan, 2017) with two phases in both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Bernard and Ryan illustrated the differentiation between qualitative and quantitative data analysis (See Figure 3.4). As they describe, the mixed-method can not only be defined as a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodological design, but also indicates both qualitative and quantitative data analysis within the nature of a qualitative research design. This study contains a sequential analysis from a statistical content analysis perspective and a thematic analysis from a qualitative descriptive aspect. Findings from both aspects enhanced the comprehensiveness of the data and further provided an in-depth understanding of the lesson implementation within the music demonstration lessons.

Analysis	Data	
	Qualitative (Texts)	Quantitative (Ordinal/Ratio Scale)
Qualitative	A	B
	Interpretive text studies (e.g., Hermeneutics, Grounded Theory, Phenomenology)	Search for and presentation of meaning in results of quantitative processing
Quantitative	C	D
	Turning words into numbers (e.g., Classic Content Analysis, Word Counts, Free Lists, Pile Sorts, etc.)	Statistical and mathematical analysis of numeric data

Figure 3.4. **Adapted from *Analyzing Qualitative Data Systematic Approaches* (Bernard, Wutich & Ryan, 2017, p. 2)**

Each data analysis method aims to answer one research question. The sequential analysis approaches the first research question *What are the observable practices and interactions from the video-recorded music demonstration class,* and the thematic analysis approaches the second research question *How do teachers and students interact with each other in shaping SCE in music lessons.* The detailed analyzing procedures are stated in the following passages.

3.2.3.2 Sequential Analysis

Sequential analysis of systematic observation (Bakeman & Quera, 2011) is a method applied to particular observational data. As mentioned previously, systematic observation is an approach to quantifying behavior. It allows researchers to capture the "sequential aspect of interaction" for any particular behavioral status. By conducting the sequential analysis, it provides lenses in not only " interactive social behavior " but also " how behavior is sequenced moment to moment," and this allows a combination of both humanistic and scientific perspectives (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997).

Coding Scheme

Developing a coding scheme is the first step in the data analysis. As Bakeman and Gottman (1997) mentioned, it allows a researcher to start distinguishing observable behavior based on the research design and questions from any personal perspective.

With the MAXQDA software, a list of five categories based on previous literature (Achen & Lumpkin, 2015; Alford et al., 2016; Zhang, 2017) was entered before the analysis started. Specific codes under each category were driven from the data during the analyzing process.

Teacher behavior and *student behavior* were first identified as they were reported as commonly observed in the class (Hendel, 1995; Alford et al., 2016). *Lesson structure* became the third category as standardized lesson organization is a critical assessment criterion in the Chinese teaching context (Zhang, 2017). *Learning approaches* became the fourth category

similar to setting (Alford et al., 2016) and classroom time (Achen & Lumpkin, 2015). The renaming was intended to emphasize how students work in class. *Activity types,* was added as the fifth category to explain the character of interaction between the teacher and the students.

A distinct working definition (see Table 3.1) was given to each coding category to ensure the first four categories were "mutually exclusive and exhaustive" (Bakeman & Quera, 2011). Mutual exclusivity requires only one code to be associated with any particular category, and exhaustive allows several codes for every category. The fifth category, activity types, was mutually exhaustive but not exclusive. One specific action might contain several types of activities. For example, while students were singing a song, they might also be dancing with body movements. This type of action was coded as both singing-based and movement-based. Although mutually exclusive and exhaustive is a common principle for developing the coding scheme, non-mutually exclusive behaviors occasionally occur in observable behavior (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997).

Table 3.1. Definition of the Complete Codes for the Five Analyses Sessions

Categories	Codes	Definition
Structure of the lesson	Begins greeting	Mutual respect between the teacher and students
	Leading-in	An activity/game which related to the teaching content but not necessarily delivers the knowledge
	Review existing knowledge	The teacher directly reminds students or asks their response to the previous familiar knowledge.
	Learning new content	Teacher guides/instructs students to explore/learn specific new knowledge through songs/games/activities which students are unfamiliar with
	Going further	Another activity/game related to the new content as extended knowledge
	Summary/ Reflection	A summary or reflection on the current, complete lesson
	Ends greeting	Mutual respect between the teacher and students
Teacher behavior	Give instruction	Providing general and/or specific guidance on theory and practice
	Background introduction	Introducing the background information for an event/activity
	Lead Q & A	Starting a question and leaving a period of time for student discussion
	Provide comments	Evaluating individual or groups' knowledge and made known to them
	Demonstrating	Showing a complete performing action in front of students

	Organize activity	Leading an activity for students to engage or participate
	Make summary	Providing/leading a summary about what this class content is about
Student behavior	Answering questions from the teacher	Responding/reacting/listening in Teacher-led Q&A section
	Passive listening	Quietly listening to teacher instruction/information.
	Active doing	Participating/engaging in-class activities
Learning Approaches	Whole class with teacher	All students follow the teacher instruction for learning content or participating in activities.
	Small groups work	Students work with peers or groups for activities or discussions.
	Individual work	Students work individually and independently for activities or self-reflection
Activity types	Watching-based	
	Movement-based	
	Chanting/Reading-based	
	Conducting-based	
	Listening-based	
	Singing-based	
	Instrumental-based	
	Presentation-based	
	Creating-based	
	Performing-based	
	Exploring-based	

Time-event Recording Units

It was also essential to define the video recording units (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997). The most common two ways of conducting units, the interval strategy and the time-event strategy, as differentiated in either code, were assigned by the successive time intervals or the particular event units.

For this study, the Time-event strategy was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, teacher countable physical behavior does affect lesson implementation. However, the comprehensive understanding of how a lesson is being conducted is embodied in a consecutive activity and event with multiple contextual behavioral interactions. When each recording was divided into several brief intervals, there was a concern that observers might focus on physical behavior but lose the perspective of contextual behavior. The time requirements were a second reason for choosing a time-event strategy. It allows observers to code units whenever this particular event

or activity occurs instead of counting every single interval (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997). Analyzing 760 minutes of video requires a lot of work and effort, so the time-event strategy saved time in the data analysis section.

After determining the units coding strategy, standardized coding criteria were made according to Yang and Welch's study (2016). Generally, each individual lesson was divided into consecutive sections. Any independent section that crossed two continuous minutes was determined by the proportion of the time. To be more specific, any event unit of less than 30 seconds between two minutes was counted as the previous minute; 1 minute 28 seconds counted as 1 minute. Any units of more than 30 seconds were added to another minute; a 1 minute 48 seconds' event counted as 2 minutes.

Trustworthy

To ensure the accuracy of the coding scheme and the reliability of the large data pool, two reviewers were invited to an "observer agreement" process (Bakeman & Quera, 2011). A set of codes with specific definitions derived from the 19 video recordings were proposed to the first reviewer, who is a university professor. The first reviewer viewed the first three video clips to verify the consistency of the coding definitions and provided his suggestions.

After determining the potential codes, a second reviewer, a school music teacher with more than 20 years of teaching experience, was invited to participate in an "interrater agreement" by applying Cohen's Kappa's point-to-point agreement (Bakeman & Quera, 2011) with the first author. In this process, three random videos, excluding the first three, were selected by the second reviewer. Following the standard of setting up the time intervals in minutes, each category with codes was displayed in an agreement matrix with both tallying agreement and disagreement for each minute (see Figure 3.5) and calculated by "Cohen's kappa agreement statistic" (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997, p. 62). The mean value of three lessons for each category

obtained an overall agreement of 83%, 70%, 80%, 88%, and 70% for codes within Lesson Structure, Teacher behavior, Student behavior, Learning approaches, and Activity types, respectively (see Table 3.2).

Figure 3.5. **An Example of an Agreement Matrix for Coding in *Lesson Structure***

Table 3.2. Cohen's Kappa Agreement for Each Lesson

	Lesson Structure	Teacher behavior	Student behavior	Learning approaches	Activity types
Lesson 1	74.19%	79.71%	84.84%	100%	60.24%
Lesson 2	80.56%	76.27%	68.25%	62.50%	69.35%
Lesson 3	93.10%	54.84%	87.18%	100%	79.66%
Mean Value	**82.65%**	**70.27%**	**80.09%**	**87.50%**	**69.75%**

3.2.3.3 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method (Guest, Macqueen & Namey, 2012). It allows codes to be identified by themes in either an inductive or deductive way. Organized raw data is applied, linked, and summarized in the process. To describe the in-depth and comprehensive findings, the method is commonly used to capture the "complexities of meaning" and "implicit and explicit ideas" by relying on grounded theory (Creswell & Poth,

2016), phenomenology (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), content analysis (Bernard, Wutich & Ryan, 2017), and applied thematic analysis (Guest, Macqueen & Namey, 2012).

Phase II aimed to understand the specific interactive phenomenon of teacher SCE application in demonstration lessons. Therefore, qualitative content analysis was applied to explore the specific SCE activities in practice.

Deductive Coding Analysis

To explore SCE interactive activities in practice, this study used the deductive coding method, a theory-driven data analysis (Bernard, Wutich & Ryan, 2017). Inductive and deductive coding methods are frequently applied to specific purposes in various research domains. A data-driven inductive analysis requires coders in an "exploratory phase" to discover themes within the raw data and establish the relationships between them. However, deductive analysis requires researchers to have "a priori coding" in the "confirmatory stage" to lead the following coding construction (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2020).

Following the explored findings of Phase I, this phase started digging for the specific teachers and student SCE interactions embodied in their in-class activities. Among the 11 types of activities in 19 video recordings, creation-based, exploration-based, presentation-based, and performance-based activities have particular characteristics representing SCE theory by encouraging students to express and create musical ideas (Kuhn et al. 2000; Shively, 2015; Wiggins, 2015; Williams, 2007). These four types of activities were predetermined, as the targeted theme, to begin the deductive findings of the stage.

The evolution of coding selection has been listed in Table 3.3. The four main themes derived from Phase I have been presented in the left column. The expanded codes were derived from the main themes through re-observing these sections of video recordings. The column on the right provides examples of how teachers stated or explained this activity.

Table 3.3. Evolution of Code List for SCE Activities

Original Codes	Expanded Codes	Examples of specific wordings
1. Creation-based	1. Creation-based	"Let's start creating something new…"
	a. Creation as Improvisation	"Can you try to make up some movements with the music?"
	b. Creation as Arranging and Composition	"Now it's time for us to write down some music ideas…"
2. Exploration-based	2. Exploration-based	"We need to think about this and find out the answer…."
	a. Exploration as an in-class exercise	"You will have a few minutes to practice and find out the answer by yourself?"
	b. Exploration as teacher follower	"You may follow my direction to find out the answer."
	c. Exploration as knowledge discovery	"Let's listen to a piece of music, can you define what musical elements you could find within this piece of music."
3. Presentation-based	3. Presentation-based	"Let's take a look on what you have prepared and practiced."
	a. Presentation as Demonstration	"Can anyone demonstrate this part?"
	b. Presentation as Performance	"Show me as a formal performance on what you have practiced."
4. Performance-based	4. Performance-based	"Okay, let's perform for the audiences/teachers."

Credibility for Coding

In the systematic analysis, the interrater agreement was checked by two reviewers. The Cohen Kappa Agreement for *Activity Types* was measured,, including the four main themes, as 70% (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997). Therefore, for this thematic analysis, a new round of code review was completed with the same two reviewers used in the systematic observation - the university professor and the experienced music schoolteacher. The detailed reviewing procedure included the following two steps.

A list of new expended codes from the original main theme *Activity Types* was derived from the data (see Table 3.2). Detailed examples of wordings for code selection are provided in a table list combining the main themes and expanded new codes. This complete table list was sent to the first reviewer, the university professor, to verify the qualification and validity of the codes.

All the video sections, including the SCE four types of activities, were then derived and written down with the specific time of occurrence on a table list (see Table 3.3). The second reviewer received both the *Evolution of Code List* (see Table 3.3) and the *Intercoder Checking List* (see Table 3.4) and followed the listed time slots to check for each of the four aspects of SCE activities. The second reviewer, the schoolteacher, purposefully assessed the expended codes by verifying whether these new codes could be found in any time slots in Table 3.4. Any extra codes suggested by the second reviewer were discussed and considered. After the second reviewer proof-checked the video sections, all the expended codes could be found with specific teaching examples in practice, and there were no more codes needing to be added.

Table 3.4. Intercoder Checking List

Lesson Types	Name	Exploration	Creation	Presentation	Performance
Music Perception	G1A	05:35-07:27 23:08-24:49		07:27-08:42 08:42-09:43 24:50-26:35	01:26-03:06 37:21-39:36 39:36-40:33
Instrument	G5C	03:01-03:57 10:34-11:57 12:49-13:28 21:16-25:30 32:08-32:41		14:26-14:56	36:55-38:19 40:13-41:47
Creation-based	G5D		11:57-18:28 18:29-21:13 29:51-33:39 33:40-35:36	21:14-23:56	35:59-38:37 41:31-42:39
Music Appreciation	G6A				35:15-41:50
	G2D		16:21-17:17 22:49-24:47		
	G1B				36:26-39:22
	G4A				
	G4B	27:57-29:49			
	G4C	33:05-37:43	26:37-29:37		
Singing-based	G2C				36:27-37:52 37:52-40:18
	G1C		34:54-36:14 36:15-38:57	38:57-39:59	39:59-41:29
	G1D		37:10-39:47	39:48-41:57	34:36-37:10 44:13-47:11
	G1E		10:54-11:29	11:29-12:30	19:22-20:35 25:15-26:41 28:22-35:51 35:51-39:34

G1F		18:28-19:04	21:33-24:26	27:01-28:56
		20:23-21:32	34:11-36:16	28:56-29:57
				29:57-32:54
				36:17-37:51
G5A				
G5B				
G4D	20:06-24:02	07:48-12:35		32:09-36:42
				36:43-38:00
G2A		12:18-13:27		
G2B	11:03-12:15	30:57-32:37	12:16-13:37	
			19:41-21:09	
			24:49-26:07	
			32:38-36:22	

3.2.4 Ethical Concerns

For ethical considerations, all video recordings were kept anonymous after downloading and stored safely in a separate file dedicated to this research. This strategy was also used during the analyzing and reporting process. This study has gone through an ethical review at The Education University of Hong Kong.

3.3 Study 2: Implemented Curriculum in School Classrooms

3.3.1 Purpose of the Study

There are two purposes to continuing to investigate lesson implementation at a public school in Shenzhen. Study 2 is a follow-up study of Study 1. As mentioned previously, the implemented curriculum in China can be found in two educational environments: the regular music classroom and the class demonstration event. The findings from Study 1 provided understandings of lesson implementation in a demonstrational education setting and its practical alignment with the concept of student-centered education. The current study continues to investigate the circumstances in a regular school setting. The combination of both demonstrational and regular teaching gives a more comprehensive understanding of the implemented curriculum in China.

Beyond the exploration of "what" and "how" teaching and learning happen in regular schools, the purpose of this study is to investigate "how possible" and "why" questions based on a constructivist training intervention. Researchers have reported that student-centered education can be more successfully adapted with positive learning effects in smaller-sized interactions and learning environments (Alford et al., 2016; Bautista et al., 2018). However, large classes have been a challenging issue for a long time in China (Wang, 2011). The feature has become an obstacle for teachers attempting to apply multiple teaching methods and strategies in view of curriculum reform (Ji, 2013). Therefore, the second reason for conducting this study is to investigate whether student-centered education from an international perspective applies to China's teaching situation. When facing the difficulties of satisfying a large number of individuals and managing the classroom with limited lesson space and time, teacher adaptability and perceptions of student-centered practice become the indicator of the successful implementation.

Based on these two research purposes, three specific research questions are designed for Study 2. They are:

1. In what ways do Shenzhen elementary school music teachers conduct their instructional practices?

2. How do participating teachers perceive and reflect on their practices regarding SCE?

3. What are the possibilities of implementing SCE based on constructivist instructional practices in regular music lessons with a larger class size from teachers' perspectives?

3.3.2 Method and Design

This study uses multiple case studies as an approach to answer the three research questions. The case study is a methodology that investigates, observes, interprets, analyzes, and interacts within a specific case or several cases by using a smaller, targeted sampling strategy to gain

in-depth understanding and facilitate reflection and solution (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). In this study, three music teachers were studied by examining lesson plans, observing lessons, interviewing teachers, and gathering their reflection journals. As researchers have emphasized, one reason for conducting multiple case studies is to get a cross-case comparison under a similar predictable logical result (Emmel, 2013; Yin, 2009). Within a similar contextual teaching situation, the phenomenon and results from the three multiple cases provide the significance and representativeness of the case study.

Observations in tandem with semi-structured interviews were the main research methods used in this study. Lesson plans and reflection journals were collected as complementary data to support understanding of the implemented curriculum in a regular music classroom setting.

Student-centered education has mostly been reported from Western perspectives of its successful implementation in smaller-sized classes with well-trained educators. However, student-centered educational instruction is also highly recommended at a national intentional level to be implemented into larger Chinese music classrooms. The different classroom sizes make the successful application of SCE controversial. Whether student-centered education can be used successfully in China's music classroom is the question for Study 2. Therefore, a set of interventional lesson instructional training was purposefully designed for Study 2, aiming through empirical research to explore the possibility of implementing SCE in a large number of student environments. Detailed information on the constructivist training design and data collection is stated in the following passages.

3.3.2.1 Participants

The selection of participants for this study applied a "purposive sampling" strategy, a purposeful sampling selection for a qualitative research study (Maxwell, 2012; Palys, 2008). Unlike quantitative probability sampling and convenience sampling, best used for general

representative purposes, purposive sampling allows researchers to investigate the typical settings, people, or activities that are particularly relevant to answering research questions and goals (Maxwell, 2012).

In the current study, the process of purposefully finding participants included two main stages: targeting the participating school and selecting participants within this school.

Selecting the Participating School

For the first stage, several procedures were used to select a participating school. A few public-school teachers were asked for their recommendations for schools in August 2019. Since the purpose is to explore the implementation of Western-driven SCE strategies and methods in Chinese music classes, public schools that had already mandated specific teaching strategies were not considered. Therefore, the requirement for school selection was that either the school had experience of participating in the curriculum reform as an experimental school, or it was open-minded about allowing teachers to apply multiple teaching strategies and methods. A shortlist of eight schools from three districts was compiled.

The schools' innovation was researched. Five out of eight schools published their news that focused on general subjects but excluded the arts. Only three schools emphasized their teaching performances for music subjects and their pride in encouraging teachers to focus on student achievement rather than on teacher personal skills. The participating school is one of the three. Eventually, School A (anonymous), a young public elementary school with six years of history in Shenzhen, was selected as the participating school for its unique experimental music curriculum and its fast response to my research proposal.

In School A, teachers were not requested to teach everything in the national official textbook like many other public schools. Instead, music teachers were encouraged to design their school-based textbooks with diverse teaching materials to improve student learning

motivation and achievement. School A allowed the music department to regularly invite teaching experts to give training on teaching approaches and strategies. The public-school teacher who had recommended this school was asked to contact the head of School A's music department. Later, the head of the department introduced her school vice-principal. After a meeting with the school vice-principal twice, the research purposes were comprehensively and clearly described along with the potential implications of the study. Permission to proceed was given within two weeks by the school, allowing for data collection and for the music expert to provide intervention training at the school in October 2019.

Selecting Participants

In School A, seven teachers taught music. The head of the music department described the total of seven teachers as belonging to three different groups. The first group included three full-time, experienced music teachers with more than five years of teaching experience. All of them came to the school in the same year the school was founded. The head of the music department is one of the teachers in the first group. The second group comprised three young full-time music teachers who joined School A with less than three years of teaching experience. One music teacher was in the third group. She did not major in music and works as a leader in the admissions office most of the time.

To select the appropriate participants for the current study, a series of considerations were drawn up. In general, because participants were expected to give their perspectives of SCE teaching and its differences to teacher-centered education, they should have music teaching experience and a strong familiarity with the guiding instructions in 2011 *Curriculum Standards*. Participants were also expected to implement interventional lesson plans and be able to reflect on their own practices quickly. Teaching experience is significant to helping teachers reflect

deeply and comprehensively on the differences in action before and after the intervention and the possibility of applying SCE to China's teaching environment.

Therefore, three experienced music teachers from the first group were invited to be research participants in the Study 2 project. Teacher A teaches Grade 1 and 2, Teacher B teaches Grade 5 and 6, and Teacher C is responsible for Grade 3 and 4. According to the 2011 *Curriculum Standards*, the compulsory educational goals and instructions for elementary school are organized into Grade 1 and Grade 2 (the lower elementary level) and Grade 3 to Grade 6 (the upper elementary level). Therefore, one teacher teaches at the lower elementary level, and two focus on the upper elementary level. Basic information the three music teachers is summarized in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5. Demographic Data (N = 3)

	Teaching years	Years in the current school	Age	Gender	Grade Level
Teacher A	26	6	50	Female	1-2
Teacher B	16	6	39	Female	5-6
Teacher C	7	6	30	Female	3-4

3.3.2.2 Constructivist Training

Besides observing participants' regular lesson implementation in music class, constructivist training as an intervention was also designed in this study for a specific comparative reason. Due to the previous research reported that one of the reasons for Chinese music teachers not understanding student-centered education precisely is inadequate professional training (Ji, 2013; Yu & Leung, 2019), this interventional training based on a western-styled SCE would help strengthen teachers understanding of this aspect and then to see whether there are any adjustments for in-class practices before and after training. Also, an interventional training provided another comparative perspective on teachers' perceptions of SCE before and after the

training. This comparison would support the understanding on how a western-based SCE is implemented and adapted in China context.

Training Materials

The training content and materials were based on Wiggins (2014)'s book *Teaching for Musical Understanding*. There were two reasons for choosing this book. The constructivist concept in education demonstrated in this book aligns with China's educational advocation as presented in Music *Curriculum Standards*. Concepts that are presented in the *Curriculum Standards*, such as encouraging teacher-student interaction, respecting student prior knowledge, encouraging student autonomous learning abilities, solving musical problems, and inquiring about concepts rather than teaching facts, are all emphasized in Wiggins book with detailed theoretical reasoning and practical planning.

For a practical consideration of training purposes, this book provides detailed teaching and learning instructional guides under a constructivist philosophy specifically for the music educational domain. Wiggins introduces constructivist theories in both cognitional and social aspects. She makes the connection through constructivist education to music subject and further explains how to implement the conceptual theory into the practical classroom setting. Detailed lesson plans with differentiation in grade levels and difficulties are also provided in the book. Therefore, this is an excellent training resource to help Chinese music teachers to perceive a constructivist student-centered education from theory to practice.

Any standardized-based theories applied in the local context might easily cause some contextual issues and challenges (Bremner, 2020), thus the application of Wiggins' book in China's music classroom would possibly raise similar concerns. For example, the first challenge is the difference in repertoire selection. In Wiggins' book, the teaching repertoire chosen was mostly based on American music such as "I Bought Me a Cat" (p. 121) and "The

Banshee" (pp. 142-143) or world children's songs like "Lo Peter" (pp. 133-134) from Ghana and "Parade" from *Divertissemment* (pp. 127-128) from France, whereas, in China, the repertoire was pre-determined from a national level and cannot be replaced by Wiggins' materials directly. To adapt with local teaching materials, teachers were allowed to communicate and discuss why the repertoire was chosen based on its music elements in Wiggins' and to find the similar music element in China's local music repertoire in the textbook. In short, they were provided opportunities to learn from Wiggins' lesson structure but apply in practice with local teaching materials.

Besides, in Wiggins' lesson plans, students have been empowered with many opportunities for applying music and creating music that goes beyond the repertoire learning but to solving musical problems. For example, when a Spanish song, *Riu Riu Chiu*, was introduced to students, the purpose was for students to analyze the "musical texture" by drawing a learning graph to show their understanding through the repertoire listening experience (pp. 156-157). Also, when students were introduced with Tchaikovsky's "Trepak" from The Nutcracker, it aimed for students to first understand the "ABA form" embedded in the listening repertoire and then create their own musical work in ABA format in the class (pp. 176-177). However, this was also different from China's context as the priority for China's music teaching is to appreciate and experience music rather than apply and create music (Ji, 2013, Liu, 2011). These differences might cause diverse time spent on their lesson emphasis. Therefore, to follow China's music teaching tradition on one side and implement Wiggins' SCE-based teaching concepts on the other side, participants would be encouraged to continue leading students to experience music but condense the time spent and add more opportunities for students to solve musical problems by applying and creating music.

Furthermore, Jacky Wiggins was an American elementary school teacher for more than 20 years and her lesson design was based on the American music classroom with a small size of

the classroom with less than 20 students. When implementing Wiggins' lesson plans for the small size class to China's regular elementary class with more than 40 students or even 60 students, especially in the rural area (Wang, 2011), this might become another adapting concern for its application. To ease this concern and make the following experimental lesson more practically authentic rather than superficially imitating whatever Wiggins' lesson plans suggested, participants would be encouraged to apply Wiggins' lesson structure (Aim - Music Problem – assessment, connect with previous knowledge – apply knowledge – create knowledge, etc.), the organization of activities (whole-group, small group, etc.), and type of activities (listening-based, creating-based, etc.) in their lesson but with their flexibility in reorganizing the teaching sequence and the type of combination for the local context.

Another reason to use Wiggins' *Teaching for Musical Understanding* is that it has also been translated into Chinese by two doctoral students and has been proofread by a professor from The Education University of Hong Kong. After a careful editing process, it was published by China's top music publisher, People's Music Publishing House, in 2019. Having the Chinese version of the book not only ensures the validity of training materials but also helps participants to perceive the theoretical and practical content more clearly and effectively in their familiar mother-tongue. This familiarity would also support participants to implement the SCE lesson structure easily and smoothly with their adaptation in practice.

Design of the Training

The original design of the training involved conducting face-to-face training three times in school during the middle period of this research (around April 2020). Each training session was designed to last one and a half hours; sharing book content, conducting in-book activities, and leading the group discussions. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all the schools in China, from January to August in 2020, either closed or refused non-staff access to campus

due to safety concerns. Therefore, the training changed its format from face-to-face to online meetings. All three participants agreed with the arrangement, and the final three online training sessions were conducted in June 2020. The adjusted online training design is presented as follows:

Time and geographical adjustment:

The online training was conducted on three consecutive Sundays in June 2020. Participating teachers were invited to electronically join the training while remaining in their homes.

Online meeting application:

The training was held by using the online application Tencent Meeting. It contains the same functions as the ZOOM meeting application, and it is a popular cloud platform in China for video and audio conferencing and webinars.

Training Procedure:

Each training session lasted one and a half hours. Due to the different formats, online communication limited most physical interaction. Therefore, content presentation and group discussions become the primary training structure. Any original plans to demonstrate activities based on the lesson plans within Wiggin's book were deleted due to the formatting limitation.

Before the training started, *Teaching for Musical Understanding* was introduced to all three teachers and they were encouraged to purchase a book. A question on "What is student-centered education?" was presented using PowerPoint presentations to evoke teacher reflection on the theme of the training.

The first training session focused on sharing Wiggins' book's content by giving a detailed introduction to constructivism in education. After a detailed presentation on the theory, applying constructivist teaching into practical settings becomes the key focus.

The second training session started with a review of theoretical knowledge in the first training session. By asking teachers to share their thoughts on the application of SCE in China, the second meeting introduced the lesson plans at diverse levels, a method Wiggins designed for her classroom. The focus of the second training session was in what ways Wiggins' lesson plans could apply to the participants' music classes. Discussions and reflections on personal teaching experience also took place in the second training session.

The third training session started with a discussion of how to combine constructivist educational concepts with Wiggins' lesson structure and replace the teaching content with the ones within the Chinese music textbook. The training content, which was shared in the first and second training sessions, was also briefly reviewed in the third meeting. Eventually, three types of lesson plans were introduced to teachers and they were asked to design their experimental lessons. Based on *Teaching for Musical Understanding* suggestions, participants prepared to apply the recommended lesson structures and teaching methods in combination with the original teaching content to design the following experimental lessons.

Three Experimental Lesson Plans

Wiggins recommends that teachers start by teaching musical concepts, which she described as the musical dimensions and metadimensions of Western music (See Figure 3.6). In her words, "No dimension or metadimension functions independently. Everything within a musical work (or any work of art) is interrelated and interconnected — with each quality intrinsically linked to the others and the whole." In China, influenced by western music in the early twenty century, musical concepts such as melody, texture, harmony, and others like the musical dimensions

are also applied in China music teaching for analyzing music (Liu, 2011). Thus, the elements within Figure 3.6 became participating teacher theme options when structuring the first lesson plan.

The first experimental lesson plan is a musical concept-based plan. Participants were required to choose one of the elements in Figure 3.6 to structure their lessons. Due to the elements in Wiggins' dimensions, influenced from western music theory, have also been taught in China's music classroom for a long time; these musical dimensions would be familiar to participants and just need different strategies to implement the teaching in practice. Therefore, teacher specific teaching practices leading towards teaching the concept were collected through observation. Semi-structured interviews collected their perceptions on the application of this type of lesson.
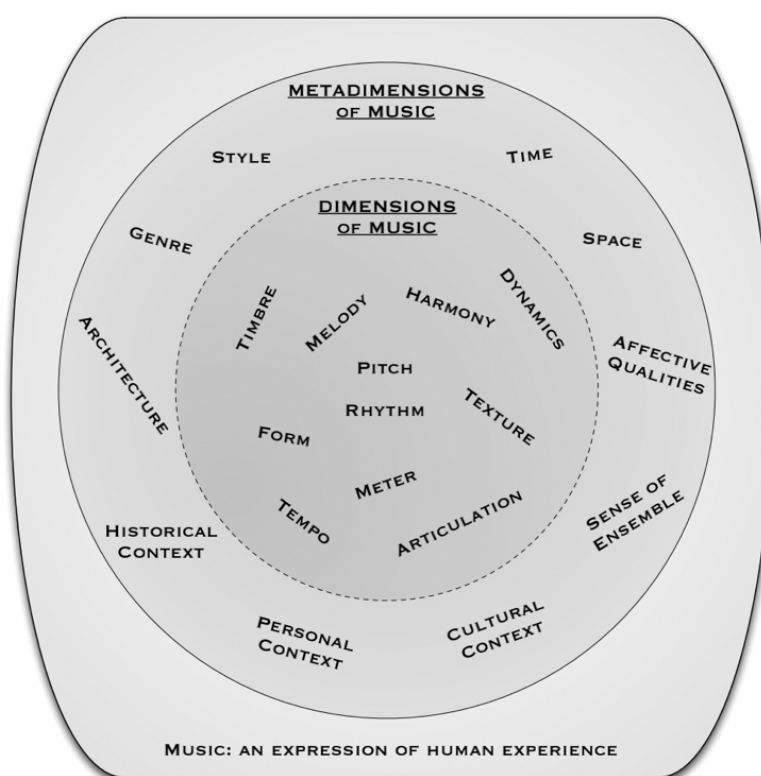
Figure 3.6. **Dimensions and Metadimensions of Western Music (Wiggins, 2013, p. 34)**

The second lesson plan was based on Wiggins' recommendation of "interdisciplinary connections" (Wiggins, 2013, p. 207). According to previous research, interdisciplinary

education not only provides opportunities to students to learn from multiple disciplines and reflect on real life (Beane, 1997) but also offers a perspective on how knowledge contain in the cross-disciplinary dimension and could be learned with some common explanations and practical solutions aligning with needs for students in a SCE era (Crisciuc & Cosumov, 2017). Wiggins recommended to apply "transdisciplinary" into music learning because: "asking 'bigger' questions makes it possible to seek solutions in a wider range of places" (p. 208). This "solving musical problems" from a bigger and wider connection was also the music teaching strategies Wiggins suggested when applying music dimension or metadimension to teach in practice. About more benefits of the transdisciplinary education, she stated that:

> Authentic connection between the ways people come to understand and engage in the various disciplines provide a strong point of departure for conceiving interdisciplinary work. Therefore, the most fruitful places to develop interdisciplinary connections are in the concepts and processes of the disciplines…Processes such as classifying, comparing, predicting, describing, representing, symbolizing, negotiating, applying, generalizing, extrapolation, inferring, interpreting, analyzing, synthesizing, theorizing, and evaluating are present in some way all fields. Concepts such as relationship, change, cause and effect, interdependence, conflict or tension and resolution, form, structure, shape, direction, pattern, hierarchy, value, intensity, power/force, equivalence/equality, and expression are also common across most fields (Wiggins, 2013, p. 208).

Aligning with Therefore, the second lesson plan is a general interdisciplinary concept-based plan. It requires teachers to choose one of the interdisciplinary concepts and develop student interdisciplinary thinking and working skills. Even though this was an experimental lesson that was independently designed only for one music subject, student feedback on having this kind

of lesson was also collected from teacher interview reports, supporting understanding of the implemental possibility of this type of lesson.

Differently from the first two pre-structured lesson plans, the third is a self-directed SCE lesson plan. It allows participants to design their own SCE-based lesson. Teachers chose the teaching methods or strategies which they thought were more effective for an SCE lesson. Similarly to the exploration of the two lesson plans above, the third round of lessons was also observed, and the teachers were interviewed to get an understanding of their perceptions and reflections of actual instructional practices.

3.3.2.3 Data Collection

This study used multiple data collection methods (Maxwell, 2012) for collecting data from participants. The data from observations, interviews, and written documents (participants' lesson plans and reflectional journals) were all collected to support the findings of this study.

Triangulation for Data Collection

Applying multiple data collection methods is based on the nature of a qualitative case study. As mentioned previously, the purpose of conducting a case or multiple case study is to get an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon and allow reflection and solution (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). For Study 2, all the collected data was used to understand the perspectives towards teaching and learning of teachers, as the curriculum implementers. Gaining information from merely one aspect of the phenomenon limits the comprehensive understanding of a general perspective, especially when exploring "theory-in-use" (Maxwell, 2012).

In general, each independent data collecting method contains its own advantages and disadvantages. Multiple data collection methods, however, provide diverse aspects to support

the final conclusion. In other words, the method enhances the credibility of the findings and strengthens the triangulation of data collection methods to check on one another. Also, while generating an interpretation of someone's perspective, researchers inherently take inference from the descriptions of that person's physical and verbal behavior (Maxwell, 2012). To this end, watching physical behavior through observation and interpreting verbal behavior through interviews and written documents provides stronger understanding of a person's perspective.

For this study, the first aspect of data comes from observations. It allows the construction of an objective perspective by observing participants' external physical behavior, teaching practices, and the implementation of SCE. The second set of data is from interviews. It is an efficient and valid way to perceive participants' internal understanding of their own instructional practices and their initial and later perceptions of SCE. The observations draw inferences about participants' perspectives within the interview's information. The third angle of understanding is data drawn from the written documents. They constitute the complementary information in this study. They offer understanding of the alignment of participants' lesson structures with their actual practices and the verification of their perceptions and reflections towards SCE interventions.

Adjustments of Data Collection

The original plan to collect Study 2's data involved being on-site in School A from March 2020 to May 2020. However, the sudden COVID-19 virus pandemic caused the majority of schools in China to change their teaching from in-school education to online teaching and learning. Most schools reopened for classroom learning from late April 2020. Non-staff were still not allowed to go to schools for safety reasons.

In response, a few adjustments were made to the data collecting process. Data collection was postponed. The actual data collecting time was May 2020 to July 2020, when teachers and

students were physically back in school having classes. The format of observations was also changed. Participants were asked to videotape their lessons instead of allowing a non-participant to observe and record their teaching. After recording their lessons, participants uploaded their lessons to a cloud drive, and they were later downloaded from the same drive. Interviews were also conducted through an online platform. Audio recordings were made, with the permission of the participants, for further data analysis. Last but not least, lesson plans and reflection journals were also gathered electronically from participants as complementary documents to understand teacher lesson perception, implementation, and reflection.

The procedure of Data Collection

The entire research period for Study 2 lasted nine weeks. Data from observations and interviews constituted the dominant data for answering the research questions. Lesson plans and reflectional journals were also gathered for triangulation of the data interpretation. The general working procedure for collecting data for this study is presented below (See Table 3.6).

Table 3.6. The Working Procedure for Study 2

Teachers	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3		Week 4-6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	
G1A	O1	O2	O3	I1	Three-times	O4	O5	O6	I2
G3B	O1	O2	O3	I1	Training	O4	O5	O6	I2
G6C	O1	O2	O3	I1	(Once in a week)	O4	O5	O6	I2

As mentioned previously, observation (O1-O6) was the primary research method for data collection for Study 2 during weeks 1-3 and weeks 7-9. The purpose of following the same data collection and analysis procedure as Study 1 was to understand the first research question, *in what ways Shenzhen elementary school music teachers conduct their instructional practices.*

As discussed in Study 1, observation allows observers to capture different elements of the process of teaching, describe people's behavior, and the context through many different categorized lenses (Cakir, 2010; Dorman, 1978; Maxwell, 2012). The observational data from the current study was collected through non-participant observational video recordings. Each participant was responsible for videotaping their own lessons. Due to the teaching space limitations, each participating classroom was allowed only one video device. Since teachers and their practices were the main subjects of observation, a camera was set up by participants at the back of the classroom, facing the teaching board (See Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7. **Example of the Camera's Setting Angle in the Regular Classroom**

Two rounds of interviews (I1 and I2) were also collected for understanding how teachers perceived their practices and reflected on the experimental lesson intervention. In this study, the first round of interviews was conducted after the three observations. The first round aimed to understand teacher perception of 2011 *Curriculum Standards*, student-centered education, and teaching practices. The second round was conducted in the last week of this study, after the last round of observational data collection. The purpose of this interview was to ask about teacher perceptions of SCE lesson plans and the possibility of implementing SCE in China's music classrooms.

As one of the essential qualitative research methods, the interview played an essential part in collecting human subjective perspectives. It was constituted "a conversation with a purpose" by collecting descriptive data to understand and interpret reality (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Although both structured and unstructured interviews are a means of collecting the participants' subjective information, the semi-structured design not only had a theoretical and thematic structure but also gathered participants' direct perspectives through open-ended questions (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

For Study 2, interview questions were designed based on the research questions: a) How teachers perceive and reflect on their practices regarding SCE, and b) is it possible to implement a 'constructivist' SCE in music lessons of a large class sizes of over 40 students. As Maxwell (2012) suggested, research questions formulate the understanding of the research study, and interview questions aim to gain this understanding through asking people. Therefore, interview questions were designed to be more practical than conceptual to be better understood by participants. The complete two rounds of interview questions (See Appendix A) were designed before the study began. All interview data was audiotaped and transcribed with the participants' permission for further data analysis in Chapter 5.

3.3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.3.1 The Overall Status of Data Analysis

Study 2 is a multiple-case research study. Three participants teaching in regular school music lessons were invited to join the study as three unique cases. For each case, two rounds of observations, interviews, and written documents (two reflection journals and two lesson plans) were analyzed. Similarly to the qualitative mixed-method design (Bernard, Wutich & Ryan, 2017) used in Chapter 4, the data in each of the cases was also a combination of quantitative (systematic observation) and qualitative data (interviews and written documents). In fact, in a case study, data collected from the mixed-methods design (see Figure 3.4) has been noted to

allow researchers to explore a "richer and stronger array of evidence" than any single method alone (Yin, 2018, p. 111). As such, the combination of quantitative and qualitative data can also be regarded as an "Embedded Case Study" for the holistic data collection and analysis strategies.

All participants in Study 2 experienced two stages of data collection and analyses, including a three-week training intervention.

In Stage I, the first set of data from the first three weeks (Week 1-3) was analyzed before the interventional training. Data from three different aspects supported the understanding of how teachers conduct their behavior and perceive their classroom practices. By reporting the findings, the first research question, *in what ways Shenzhen elementary school music teachers conduct their instructional practices*, and the second research question, *how do participate teachers perceive and reflect on their practices regarding SCE*, were both addressed.

Stage II started after the training weeks (Week 4-6). The second set of data (Week 7-9) of observations, interviews, and written documents were analyzed in this period. This stage aimed to explore what changes might be seen in interventional lessons with teacher perception and reflection on SCE. This addressed the third research question, *what are the possibilities of implementing SCE based on constructivist instructional practices in regular music lessons with larger class size*s.

Detailed data analysis processes are illustrated in the following passages by reporting each kind of data.

3.3.3.2 Observation

Observational data was analyzed by sequential analysis of the systematic observation (Bakeman & Quera, 2011). It followed the same analysis procedure as Study 1 but used a deductive data analysis method (Guest, Macqueen & Namey, 2012) based on the coding

scheme designed in Study 1. Since the GMODC event fulfills a demonstrative function for school music teaching, this design helped to ensure the same standards of examination of the different perspectives of lesson implementation in Study 2.

Basic Information of Observational Data

There were 18 video recordings lasting 687 minutes in total analyzed in Study 2. For the first nine video recordings, each participant provided three lessons that represented regular instructional practices in school. The other nine video recordings collected after the music training intervention represented the experimental practices for data analysis. The detailed information of these lessons, including lesson types and duration, is listed in Table 3.7 and Table 3.8.

Table 3.7. Basic Information of Lessons in Regular Teaching

	No. of Lessons	Lesson Types	Minutes
Teacher A	1	Singing-based	46
	2	Singing-based	42
	3	Singing-based	39
Teacher B	1	Singing-based	40
	2	Singing-based	38
	3	Singing-based	44
Teacher C	1	Singing-based	32
	2	Singing-based	39
	3	Singing-based	35
IN TOTAL	9		355

Table 3.8. Basic Information of Lessons in Experimental Teaching

	No. of Lessons	Lesson Types	Minutes
Teacher A	4	Dimension-based	39
	5	Interdisciplinary Skill-based	33
	6	Singing-based	44
Teacher B	4	Dimension-based	34
	5	Interdisciplinary Skill-based	39
	6	Singing-based	42
Teacher C	4	Dimension-based	36
	5	Interdisciplinary Skill-based	35
	6	Singing-based	30
IN TOTAL	9		332

As seen in Table 3.7, except for *Creation-based*, *Music Appreciation*, *Music Perception*, and *Instrument-based* lessons, *Singing-based* lessons were the only kind in Study 1 that was

collected and analyzed in the first round of data collection. The reasons for analyzing only one type was as follows.

First, among all kinds of lessons, the *Singing-based* lesson was the most common type (10/19) observed in Study 1. To understand regular music teaching and learning in class, it is necessary to select the most common kinds of lessons for the current research.

The three cases with similar lesson characteristics provided a cross-comparison of the same educational phenomenon. This strengthened the description of how the music curriculum was implemented in School A. To this end, the participants were asked to provide three *Singing-based* lessons for the first round of data collection.

In Table 3.8, it can be seen that the first two experimental lesson types were *Dimension-based* and *Interdisciplinary Skill-based* lessons. As these two types of lessons were given detailed theoretical explanations and lessons plans with SCE features, they were introduced to the participants during the training. Teachers followed the lesson structure concept and examples given in the book to design their regular class teaching. The last lesson allowed teachers to randomly select one kind of SCE lesson after the training sessions. All three teachers decided to choose singing-based lessons.

Procedure of Analyzing Data in Observation

The coding scheme applied in Study 2 was based on the same coding scheme inductively drawn from Study 1. The five main categories, *Structure of Lesson*, *Teacher Behavior*, *Student Behavior*, *Learning Approaches*, and *Activity Types*, with their sub-codes in Table 3.1, became the specific deductive observational codes for Study 2. In Study 1, the content validity for selected codes was verified by two reviewers. The Cohen's Kappa Agreement between the researcher and an experienced school music teacher obtained 83%, 70%, 80%, 88%, and 70% for codes within *Structure of the Lesson*, *Teacher Behavior*, *Student Behavior*, *Learning*

Approaches, and *Activity Types* respectively. To this end, the credibility of the coding scheme was ensured.

Time-event sampling (Bakeman & Gottman, 1997) was also applied for defining the video recording units. As described in Chapter 4, each recording, according to Yang and Welch's (2016) research study, was divided into consecutive sections by minutes. Any independent section that crossed two continuous minutes was determined by the proportion of the time.

The credibility of the coding scheme might ensure the validity and reliability of this deductive coding tool. The actual teaching environment and settings were taught as a demonstration on a stage and in a regular school class. The observable behavior and interactions might differ according to the change of educational setting. Therefore, during the deductive coding analysis process, open coding strategies (Creswell & Poth, 2016) were applied to any un-defined codes. Eventually, three new codes were derived from two main categories added into Study 2's observational data (see Table 3.9).

To ensure the content validity of the new codes, another round of code review was carried out by the second reviewer, the experienced school music teacher. Three random video recordings were sent to this teacher with a combined table list (Table 3.1 and Table 3.9). After reviewing, each of the new codes in Table 3.9 were found in the videos.

Table 3.9. The Added New Codes for Study 2

Categories	Codes	Definition
Teacher Behavior	Classroom Management	The teacher demonstrated specific behavior in managing the classroom (especially when students were chatting and un-behaved)
Lesson Types	Ear-training-based	Listening to a specific rhythm and melodic patterns for student improvement in ear training skills.
	Sight-reading-based	Singing specific rhythm or melodic patterns for students to enhance their sight-reading skills.

3.3.3.3 Interview

The second kind of data was derived from interviews. The purpose of collecting teacher interview data was to align what has been observed with what participants reported to get an

in-depth understanding of participants' lesson implementation and their perception of SCE in China.

MAXQDA (Kuckartz & Radiker, 2019), the data analyzing application, was applied to observational data and also used to analyze the interview transcriptions. All transcripts were inputted in MAXQDA by stages. By using this familiar software, data from different aspects became easier to organize and follow.

Basic Information of Interview Data

In total, there were six audio-recorded interviews, with each lasting between fifty minutes and one hour. They were all transcribed from the audio device into Microsoft Word documents. In alignment with the observational data, the interview data was also divided into two separate stages. As can be seen in Table 3.6, the first three interview recordings conducted in Week 3 were documented as belonging to Stage I. The last three interviews, which finished on Week 6, constituted Stage II's second round of interviews.

Procedure of Analyzing Data in Interview

The specific data analysis method for interviews was thematic analysis with both inductive and deductive procedures (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The detailed data analyzing process was similar to Bremmer's (2021) and is described as follows.

Data about Regular Lesson Implementation

The codes were selected directly from data using the open coding strategy (Creswell & Poth, 2016) but corroborated with the five main categories in the observations. A coding manual (see Table 3.10) was developed with a detailed explanation in three sections, the original categories from the observations, the description of codes, and their specific wordings in the interviews.

Table 3.10. Examples of Codes in the Code Manual

Code	Description	Examples in Data
Structure of the Lesson	The way/proportion of teachers structure their whole lesson	"Except for the beginning and ending class greetings, I usually use 50% of my time in teaching the new content, 20% of the time in Leading In, and almost 10% for reviewing existing knowledge, summarizing content information, and providing further knowledge to my students."
Teacher Behavior	The specific in-class behavior teachers might do to implement their lessons.	"I like to organize many activities for students to be active. This is also the requirement from the *Curriculum Standards*.
Activity Types	The impressive or important activities teachers mentioned when implementing their lessons.	"We did many singing practices during the lesson. The reason for that is because we want students to be able to sing in a choir."
Student Behavior	Any student behavior teachers mentioned during the class hours	"We do not want students to sit all the time quietly. They need to be active in class. That is why we conducted many activities for them to engage physically."
Learning Approaches	When teachers mention their class activities, this belongs to any formation of the activities they mentioned about.	"Group activity is the most difficult one to do. We have so many students in class."

After finishing the first round of three interviews coding analysis in this inductive manner, an intercoder agreement was also used. Specifically, the second coder, a school music teacher who has more than 20 years of teaching experience, was invited to re-code the same three interviews to verify the credibility of the existing codes and develop possible new codes. The researcher and the other code reviewer discussed whether there was a need for adjustment or to add to the code manual.

After coding was completed, the codes were clustered into subthemes, according to their shared characteristics, and became the guiding codes for deductively finding others in the other three interviews of Stage 2.

Each of the subthemes in the three interviews with shared characteristics were gathered into several main themes (Table 3.11). Results, including the five main categories found in

observation and the clustered themes in the interview, were synthesized and compared in the following report section.

Table 3.11. An Example of Subthemes Clustered into the Main Theme

Main theme: the multiple reasons of influencing lesson structure in school regular music class
Subtheme: Student Experience
Codes:
- Students want to learn Pop. music
- Students do not like songs in the textbook
Subthemes: Demonstration Lesson
Codes:
- Demonstration lesson as professional development
- Demonstration lesson provides good lesson structure and teaching strategies
- Demonstration lesson has strong individual character
- Demonstration lesson is different from regular school teaching
- Demonstration lessons provide the latest national requirement for the music curriculum
Subthemes: Textbook Requirement
Codes:
- Textbook limited the content to be taught
- The lots of information in the textbook pressurized the time to finish them
- Textbook content is the requirement for both demonstrational and regular lesson
Subthemes: Classroom Management
Codes:
- Classroom Management depends on how well the lesson is being implemented
- Classroom Management as a considering factor for lesson structure

Data about SCE Perception, Intervention, and Lesson Implementation

Codes based on the five main categories in lesson implementation were clustered to report lesson implementation status in China's music classrooms. However, the specific lens of teacher perception and application of SCE still needed to be derived from data as a separated report. Therefore, in the process of analyzing the data for understanding general lesson implementation, any particular codes towards SCE were also gathered to refer to three specific interview questions:

1. What is your understanding of SCE?

2. What are the differences between a teacher-centered and student-centered lesson structure?

3. Do you think it is possible to continue applying the interventional lesson plans in your class? Why?

In other words, any codes related to these three interview questions were clustered into subthemes and themes, following the same analyzing process as in the exploration of lesson implementation. Analyzing this part of data helped partially answer the second and the third research questions.

3.3.3.4 Written Documents

To cover complexity and context, a case evaluation should consider analyzing "multiple sources of evidence," including observations, interviews, and other relevant documents (Yin, 2018). In this study, the relevant documents collected were as follows:

1. Lesson plan — for each individual recorded lesson to support understanding of teacher lesson implementation.

2. Two reflective journals — for recording reflective teaching and thinking before and after the intervention training.

3. Researcher's memos during the interventional weeks — for documenting any confusion or misunderstanding of SCE or the training materials.

The specific data analysis method for these documents was documentary analysis. As Fitzgerald (2012) stated, it is "a form of qualitative analysis that requires readers to locate, interpret, analyses evidence presented" (p. 279). By reviewing this relevant evidence, a description of the case could be strengthened and corroborated.

3.3.3.5 Credibility

Similar to Shin (2019), the credibility of Study 2 was strengthened from three aspects, data collection triangulation, member reflection, and researcher expertise (Patton, 2002; Tracy, 2010). The combination of observations, interviews, and written documents reduced the chance of possible bias and limitations compared to any singular method. The three aspects of data

provided credible evidence to cross-check the consistency of the findings further. In addition, all three participants reviewed the final data analysis and were invited to share their feedback and questions. By doing this, more information was gathered during the discussions between participants and the researcher, which enhanced the validity of the data by making the participants collaborators in the research.

As a school music teacher, this researcher has seven years of teaching experience with primary school students. I have also worked as a teacher educator for two years training other music teachers. Therefore, I was familiar with school music teaching and wider information about the educational context.

3.4 Ethical Concern

In the first study, the Guangdong Music Class Demonstration is a public educational resource that provides researchers and educators with opportunities to conduct research. All video recordings were kept anonymous after downloading and stored safely within a separate file for this research. To keep the recordings confidential, a pseudonymous strategy was employed during the analyzing and reporting processes.

Before the second study, a consent form was sent separately to the school principal and the participants. Their teachers informed all students that they were participating in the research project. Even though the video device faced the backs of the students and focused on their teachers, student parents were allowed to stop their children participating. After collecting and analyzing the data, all the video and audio recordings were stored in an encrypted hard drive with anonymized file names. A permission form was signed by School A allowing the researcher to conduct research on campus. During the participants' self-videotaping process, students were told that their teachers were participating in educational research. The camera was set up to face teachers directly. Any student faces showing on the camera were digitally

obscured to protect their privacy. The ethical considerations and measures were approved by

the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Education University of Hong Kong.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY 1: LESSON IMPLEMENTATION IN GUANGDONG MUSIC DEMONSTRATION CLASS

This chapter contains results from Study 1 with two phases which were analyzed in a qualitative research structure with both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Phase I was carried out from a statistical perspective to explore how demonstration teachers implemented their lessons with their in-class behaviors. Phase II serves as a descriptive lens to understand how specific SCE behavior and interaction occurred in certain classroom activities. The specific findings of each phase will be detailly explained in the following sections.

4.1 THE OBSERVABLE BEHAVIOURAL PRACTICES

To answer the first research question, *what are the observable practices and interactions from the video-recorded music education class*, 760 minutes of the video recordings were observed and analyzed by sequential analysis to determine the proportion of the time spent in observable practices. Due to the varying student grade levels and different lesson types, the average means of data drawn from the 19 lessons is not fully representative. Therefore, the average means at different grade levels and diverse lesson types were analyzed with regard to the complementary perspectives in understanding the demonstration lesson implementation.

The following sections were illustrated under the first research question by answers in three specific dimensions; from a general perspective, how the lesson was being structured from a teaching perspective. The second examined how teachers conducted their behaviors and activities in class. The last examined how students behaved and studied during the lesson.

4.1.1 The General Aspect of Lesson: Lesson Structure

To get an overall conception of how teachers organized their lessons, seven codes were identified. From the average means of the 19 videos, the specific proportions of time spent can be seen in Figure 4.1. Regarding the single lesson structure in the average statistical mean, there are several findings listed below. First of all, *learning new content* (LNC) (29.56 minutes, 73.91%) was found in all lessons and had the greatest amount of time devoted to it. In contrast, *reviewing the existing knowledge* (REK), only occurred in two lessons with an average time of 3.07 minutes (7.67%). *Begin the class* and *end the class* were the other two common lesson sections that occurred in almost every lesson. Even though they both presented independently for short periods, it illustrated the traditional educational manner in China of displaying mutual respect between teachers and students. Last but not least, *leading-in* (LI), *going further* (GF), and *summary/reflection* (S/R) were almost discovered in all 19 lessons (one lesson does not have GF). A sequential pattern, LI – LNC – GF - S/R, was also noted among the videos.
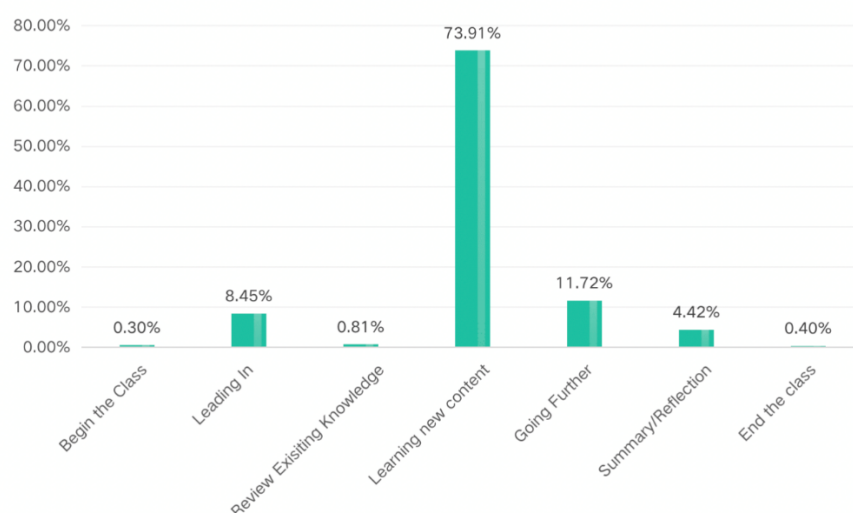
Figure 4.1. **The Average Proportion for Lesson Structure**

When differentiating the 19 lessons by grade levels in the 2018 Guangdong Music Demonstration Class event, ten lessons represented G1- G2 early primary level, and nine lessons were G3-G6 upper primary levels.

In general, except for the slight 10% differences in LNC and GF, teachers in both grade levels structured their lessons with great similarity. In common with the average mean for all 19 videos, LNC was still the section upon which most time was spent (69.56% in G1-G2, 79.89% in G3-G6). REK was the lowest for each grade level during the classroom hours (see Figure 4.2).
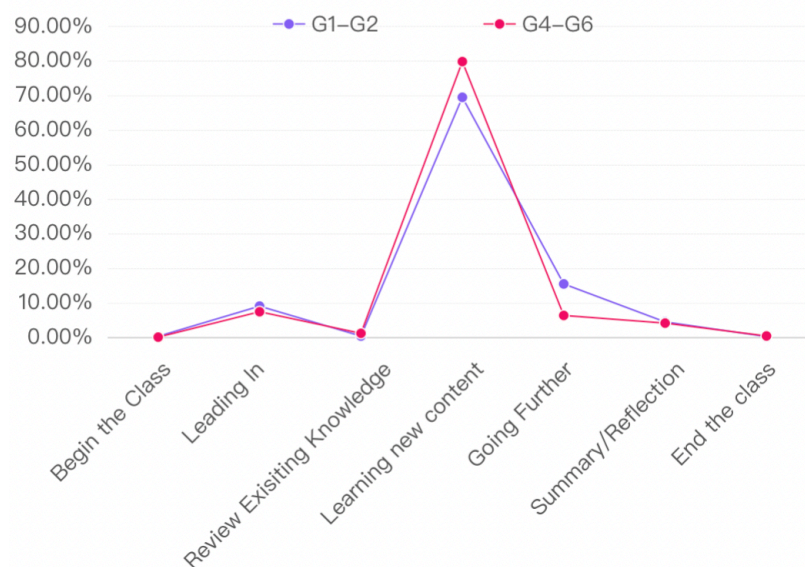
Figure 4.2. **The Average Proportion of Lesson Structure in Different Grade Levels**

In terms of the diverse types of lessons, the general tendency of structuring lessons was maintained. A content-driven lesson structure was found in all five types. Similar phenomena existed, such as less focus on reviewing student prior knowledge and rarely making summaries and reflections on current learning information.

Within most of the similarities occurring in the lesson structure section with a strong emphasis on learning the new content, some unique structural phenomena were also observed. For example, a Creation-based lesson actually spent four minutes (10.11%) reviewing existing knowledge. An Instrument-based lesson spent almost the entire lesson (37.28 minutes, 93.22%) allowing students to practice the learning content, demonstrating what a content-driven lesson looks like. The Music Perception lesson, with the purpose of helping students to perceive and feel the music by using multiple teaching strategies, did

illustrate teacher effort to facilitate activities with a focus on LI (6.18 minutes, 15.44%) and GF (8.13 minutes, 20.33), further supporting student learning experience.
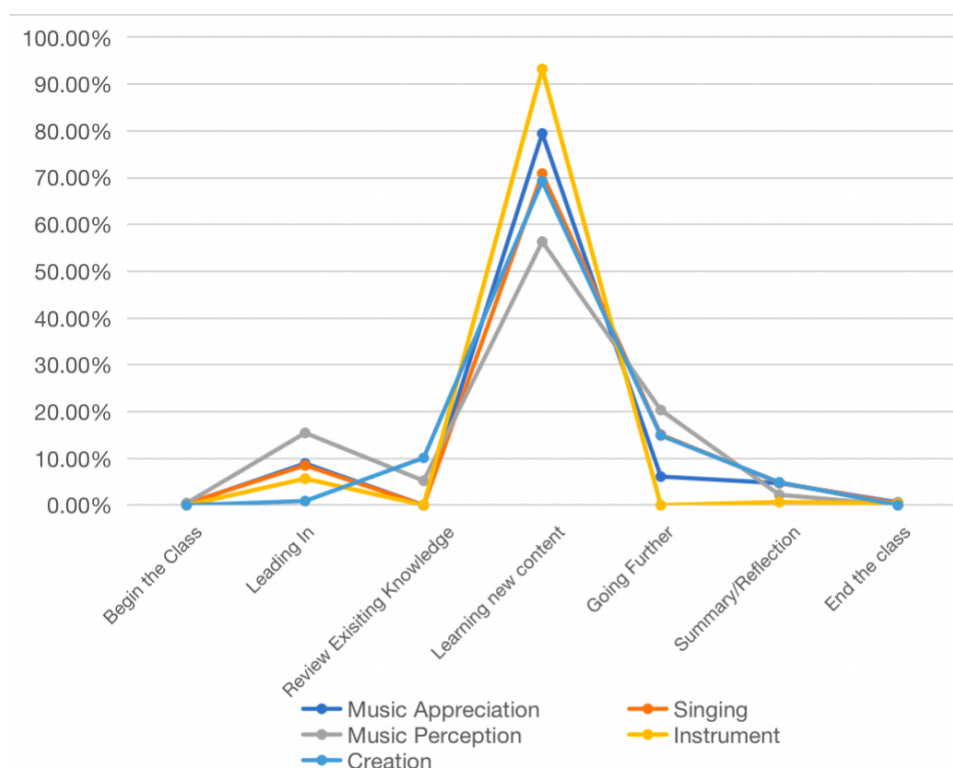
Figure 4.3. **The Average Proportion of Lesson Structure in Different Lesson Types**

So, except a few differences occurring when designing the different types of lesson, a fixed lesson structure pattern was strongly identified at the Guangdong Music Outstanding Demonstration Class (GMODC). The sequential pattern, LI – LNC – GF - S/R, was the general form of all teacher lesson structures. A content-driven lesson mode was also observed in all demonstration classes. Compared with constantly learning new information, the review of existing knowledge became much less important.

4.1.2 Teaching Aspect for Teachers

4.1.2.1 Teaching Behaviors

From a general perspective (see Figure 4.4), unlike teachers in the past spending a significant amount of time in providing instruction (Li, 2017), the findings from the demonstration lessons

revealed a tendency for teachers to *organize activities* (range 12.18-25.11 minutes, M=18.02). *Give instruction* (range 6-12.13 minutes, M=10.21) occurred as the second-highest amount, followed by *leading Q&A* sections (range 1.29-11.02 minutes, M=5.64).

Teachers conducted their behaviors by introducing background information, providing comments, demonstrating or modeling performances, and summarizing, with respective small proportions of 6%, 4%, 3%, and 3% of devoted time. Even though they took up much less time than other found behaviors such as organizing activities and delivering knowledge, these four behaviors occurred in the majority of the lessons. To this end, another interesting phenomenon revealed that, as well as a potentially fixed lesson structure, there might be standardized teaching behavior that teachers follow when participating in GMODC.
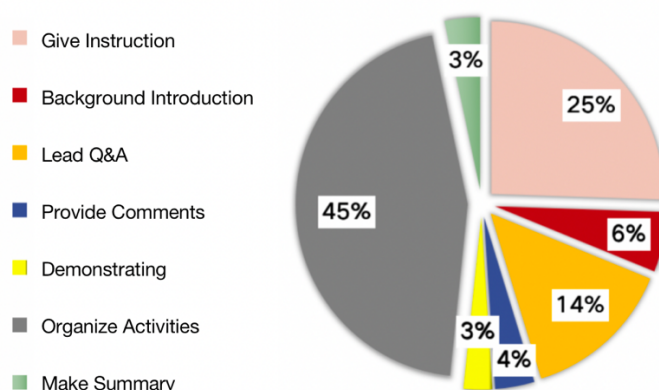
Figure 4.4. **The Average Proportion for Teacher Behavior**

To explore further, these tendencies were also analyzed at two grade levels and with different lesson types. The results showed that teachers presented similar behavior patterns. Organizing classroom activities (41.62% - 51.35% in two grade levels and 37.44% - 53.11% among five types of lessons) remained the dominant teaching behavior. Also, fewer oral evaluations provided comments for students, and a dearth of summaries and reflections on the learning content was found across grade levels and lesson types. This result shows that teachers increased the frequency of organizing activities for students, whereas they rarely provided their

personal opinions or content summary. Teachers acted as scaffolders (Shively, 2015) using themselves as a learning resource to support student knowledge discovery and when student understanding became inadequate.

4.1.2.2 Activity Types

Since teachers spent most time leading class activities, their specific activities became another essential element through which to understand their behaviors and lesson implementation.

To indicate what possible activities might occur during the lessons, the event organizer pre-determined five different types of lesson for all 19 video recordings. The five types were (1) singing-based (Singing) with an emphasis on song singing; (2) Music Appreciation-based (MA) with the focus on music listening; (3) Music Perception-based (MP), which is structured to encourage conceptual understanding; (4) Instrumental-based (Instrumental) with instrumental practices; and (5) Creation-based (Creation) for time spent on nurturing musical creativity. The name of each type of lesson was marked with other demographic information on the front page of each video recording.

In this way, to understand what exact activity occurred in class, the results would not be generated by calculating the proportion of time spent across 19 video recordings or across the different grade levels. Instead, the interaction results in activities were analyzed by the duration of the occurrence within these five pre-organized dimensions.

Descriptive data of the activities among five types of lessons showed that instrumental-based (30.00 minutes), watching-based (11.00 minutes), listening-based (21.60 minutes), singing-based (17.27 minutes), and creative-based (22.00 minutes) activities occurred more often when represented by pre-settled lesson characteristics (See Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Mean Duration of Activity Types Between Different Types of Lesson

Activity Types	Instrumental (n=1)		MP (n=1)		MA (n=5)		Singing (n=11)		Creation (n=1)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Watching	3.00	-	11.00	-	0.80	1.30	1.82	3.06	-	-
Movement	2.00	-	6.00	-	9.00	6.44	8.27	6.21	6.00	-
Chanting	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.45	4.28	3.00	-
Conducting	-	-	-	-	4.80	10.73	-	-	-	-
Listening	10.00	-	6.00	-	21.60	7.02	9.00	4.94	2.00	-
Singing	9.00	-	10.00	-	8.00	6.442	17.27	7.76	22.00	-
Instrument	30.00	-	-	-	-	-	1.55	3.01	-	-
Presentation	1.00	-	6.00	-	-	-	2.45	4.11	3.00	-
Creation	-	-	-	-	1.80	2.49	2.09	2.26	18.00	-
Performance	5.00	-	7.00	-	1.40	3.13	4.64	4.97	6.00	-
Exploration	11.00	-	5.00	-	1.60	2.30	0.64	1.57	-	-

Note. Activity Types in minutes per lesson: M = mean duration; SD = standard deviation.

A few unique phenomena were discovered by examining the duration of each activity. Figure 4.5 illustrates the information by showing an accumulative time stack for different activities within the five types of lesson. Singing, listening, movement, and performance were observed as the most popular activities as they occurred in every type of lesson. Second, the requirement of special musical skills for participating in the activities, such as playing instruments or learning conducting techniques, also increased the difficulty of implementation. Therefore, instrument use and conducting only appeared in the instrumental and Music Appreciation lessons. Activities like chanting, watching, creation, and exploration were all found to a certain extent within specific lesson types but made rare appearance in others. These quick activities might function as transitionary actions, either to evoke student learning motivation or as a showcase for more diversified forms of activity-based organization at the demonstration level.
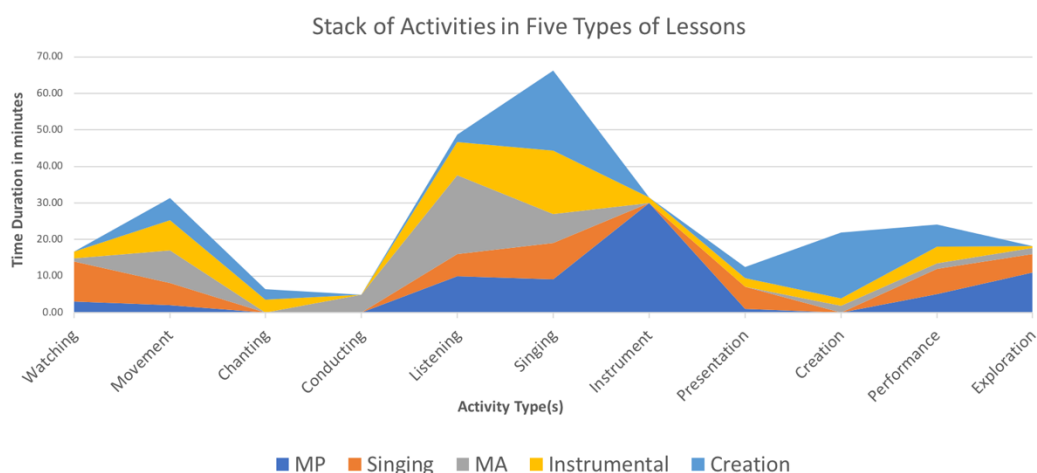
Figure 4.5. **Accumulative Activity Time Stack for Five Types of Lessons**

4.1.3 The Learning Aspect for Students

4.1.3.1 Student Behaviors

Responding to *Teacher Behaviors*, student behaviors were categorized into three broader aspects; passive listening, active doing, and answering teacher questions.

In each 40 minutes lesson, similar amounts of time were spent on student *passive listening* and *active doing*. To be more specific, when calculating the mean value, students listen passively (range 9.91-28.24 minutes, M=18.97) occurred slightly more often than actively participation (range 4.71-28.04, M=15.8). The extreme data occurred in the creation-based lesson, with 9.91 minutes spent listening to teacher instruction, and in the Music Appreciation lesson, with 4.71 minutes for students to work dynamically. Therefore, to decrease the chance of having extreme data between lessons, the strategy of counting medium was designed as a complementary result for the "listening" versus "doing" statuses. A reverse result showed that active participation (23.29 minutes, 58%) occurred more often than passive listening (19.16 minutes, 48%) when the medium value was counted. Based on both mean and medium values, a relatively balanced proportion of time spent on student static and dynamic learning circumstances can be assumed from the observations of demonstration lessons. The limited discussion time, with an average of 5.2 minutes (12.99%) for students to answer the teacher

questions, illustrated the concern that independent student voices have a lower chance of being heard during music learning hours.

However, students of different ages might behave differently. Also, the different types of lessons might affect how students behave in class. Therefore, continuing exploration of student behaviors was carried out in the subsequent data analysis for differentiation.

Students did not show a massive difference in behavioral levels based on their grades (see Figure 4.6). The younger primary students were given approximately 4.52 (11.29%) more minutes for active participation in class and 2.18 (5.45%) less minutes for answering teacher questions than the older primary students.

Some major differences were found among the diverse types of lessons (see Figure 4.7). In the instrumental lesson, students spent the majority of time listening and practicing their instruments but had almost no conversation with the teacher. Secondly, except for having less time devoted to talking to teachers in both Music Appreciation and Creation-based lessons, students acted in an opposite manner regarding their observable behaviors. Students in Creation-based lessons had 26.27 minutes (65.67%) spent on class activities, whereas only 10.04 (25.09%) minutes on average were given to students in Music Appreciation lessons to engage with themselves actively. Last but not least, although students in all five types of lessons had limited time (1.29-8.53 minutes, 3.22%-21.33%) to communicate with teachers, they were given the most time in the Music Perception lesson.
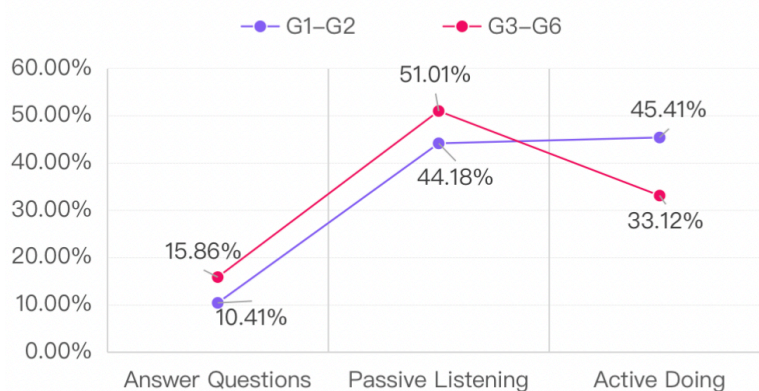
Figure 4.6. The Average Proportion of Student Behaviors in Different Grade Levels

	Answer Questions	Passive Listening	Active Doing
Music Appreciation	14.83%	60.07%	25.09%
Instrument–based	3.22%	48.22%	48.56%
Creation–based	9.56%	24.78%	65.67%
Singing–based	12.38%	41.96%	45.67%
Music Perception	21.33%	47.89%	30.78%
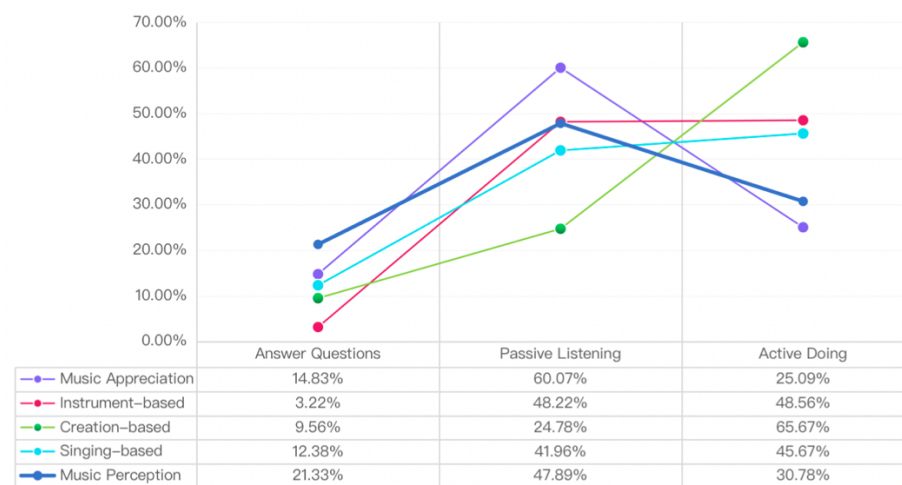
Figure 4.7. The Average Proportion of Student Behaviors in Diverse Lesson Types

4.1.3.2 Learning approaches

The ways students study in their learning environment was vital to understanding lesson implementation from a student perspective. Three learning approaches were found in demonstration lessons: whole-class learning with teachers, small group work, and independent work.

Independent working and collaborative learning have both been regarded as determining factors in an SCE class (Bautista et al., 2018; Wiggins, 2015). It provides students with the opportunity to think and work independently for self-reflection or collaboratively, to learn from peers. However, the findings from *Learning Approaches* illustrated a great contrast regarding SCE in how students work in the demonstration lessons.

In general, most learning approaches in these lessons involved the whole class working together (range 35.02-40 minutes, 97%). Because of this time working with teachers, student exploration, either independent or collaborative was seldom observed. Among the 19 lessons, six were featured group working, with each lasting an average of 6.58 minutes. It was only found in two lessons regarding student working time, with one 2.31 minutes and the other 4.98 minutes.

Whole-class learning played a significant role, with the proportion of time spent at 94.67% in Grade 1-2 and 97.44% in Grade 3-6. Among these, there was no independent working time observed for young primary students. Consequently, since less than 2% of classroom time is spent on group exploration and independent working at Grade 3-6, the effectiveness of evoking student thoughts to work and discuss remains in doubt and unsure as a practical concern.

Slightly different results have been found when interpreting the learning approaches among the five types of lessons. Music Perception and Singing-based lessons applied collaborative learning strategies for 2.44 minutes (6.11%) and 1.33 minutes (3.33%), respectively. Instrument-based lessons demonstrated a relatively high proportion in independent working (4.97 minutes, 12.44%), possibly due to its practice-based lesson nature. The creation-based lesson provided 2.31 minutes (5.78%) independent working time for students.

Consequently, in every kind of lessons and at any grade level, teachers preferred to employ whole class learning strategies. In this way, organizing group work or encouraging students to work independently, the common organizational features usually could be seen in a SCE-based, has seemingly become uncommon in China's music teaching.

4.2 SCE ACTIVITIES IN DEMONSTRATION LESSON

The statistically descriptive data in the above passages displays an overall status of lesson implementation in demonstration lessons but not a great insight of the application of SCE. As described in Chapter 2, Student-Centered Education has been officially announced as the educational goal and is a teaching instruction in China's 2011 Music *Curriculum Standards*. Therefore, the demonstration lessons are not providing a comprehensive understanding of how the lesson was implemented - especially based on the requirements of SCE in *Curriculum Standards*. The findings from the thematic analysis offer qualitative vignettes as

complementary documents to give an in-depth understanding of how SCE is embodied during teacher-student in-class interaction within the implemented curriculum.

The reports in Phase II focused mainly on the *Activity Types* within Phase I by providing detailed qualitative descriptions of specific SCE interactions. Therefore, an overall phenomenon of how SCE was observed to operate in China's demonstration lessons is stated in the following passages. According to the features of SCE, exploration, creation, presentation, and performance among each of the 11 observed activities were selected to report with the initial purpose of promoting student-oriented active participation and musical expression (Shively, 2015). Wiggins (2015) held similar views of these four kinds of activities. They offer in-class time and space for students to express themselves and further create new ideas to solve musical problems.

4.2.1 Exploration-based activities

Exploration-based activities are based on student-centered inquiry-based learning theory (Williams, 2007). This kind of activity has an initial teaching goal of allowing students to find musical information or problems by discovering and inquiring about learning (Kuhn et al., 2000).

Among the 19 video recordings, six of them featured exploration-based activity. Teacher specific instructional wording, such as encouraging students to "find out," "discover independently," "think and try," and so on, were further categorized into three expended codes, *exploration as an in-class exercise, exploration as teacher follower,* and *exploration as knowledge discovery.* The three different kinds of "exploration" were differentiated by teacher leading actions and time allowed for students to think and do.

4.2.1.1 Exploration as In-class Exercise

Conducting exploration-based activity as an in-class practice time was a commonly observed phenomenon. Teachers encouraged students to find out or practice specific content knowledge either independently or collaboratively with a clear pre-settled time allowance.

In this type of lesson, teachers did not work with students but provided verbal reminders to each group. Instruction and content information was provided before the activity began to guide students to find out and practice by themselves. Group presentation was expected at the end of the activity. One example in the Music Perception lesson is described below:

> The teacher firstly assigns students into four groups and asks students to assign the group leader for an exploration game quickly. Then, the teacher gives each group leader a melody card and a set of sound bells with different pitches. Before the activity starts, the teacher says, "Now, each group will be given two minutes to play the notes on the melody card with the sound bells. Everyone should practice this step, and when one is playing on the bells, others should try to use hand signs to sing the melody parts." After students begin their exploration, the teacher walks around and watches the working process of each group. Then, she stops at each group and listens to student dialogues with immediate feedback on the difficulties and problems. The teacher constantly asks that, "What is your group melody?" "How is your group going?" Eventually, the teacher asks each group to present their findings and practices.

Another activity in this lesson occurred when students had already learned rhythm patterns with several quarter notes and eighth notes as notations. Melody practices were also conducted a few times, leading the teacher to sing the numbered musical notation. Here is another example of how this teacher allowed students to discover content information by themselves.

> After students present their confidence in recognizing musical notations, the teacher shows a new picture (see Figure 4.8) on the screen with two familiar rhythm patterns in melody notation and hand signs for each note. "Okay, now you have a new task," says the teacher, "you will need to work in your groups for two minutes and find out how to combine the rhythm, melody, and hand sign together in singing these patterns and then practice them for a little bit. You may present your exercise when we have all done this activity, alright, let's start!" While students are practicing in groups, the teacher walks around and checks each group's exploring process. After two minutes, the teacher invites volunteers to present their exercises.

Figure 4.8. **Exploration-based Activity in Discovering How to Sing with Combined Rhythm, Melody, and Hand Signs**

4.2.1.2 Exploration as Teacher Follower

Differently from providing time for students to practice during the lesson, another kind of "exploration" occurred when teachers orally encouraged students to "find out" but did not leave any time or space for exploration. Most of the time, teachers dominated the exploration-based activity, acting like the "explorers." Students acted as "followers" to experience the teacher exploring paths and found out answers with the teacher. This occurred in a Singing-based lesson:

> After teaching how to define a dominant tone in a plain melody, the teacher informs students that the following task, defining the thematic tone, would be a complex music variation. "Can you try to define where they are? (the repeated dominant tones)." The teacher raises the question but continues his sentence after a few seconds of silence "No worries, let us find out together." Then, the teacher starts singing the melody out loud by pointing out each note on the board. Students follow him in singing with a relatively small volume. When it comes to the repeated melody, the teacher turns his volume down as a hint but continues singing. When finished, he does not provide time for students to think or practice again; instead, he asks students to point out the answer immediately. By following the teacher's singing and clear reminder (pointing notes and volume control), two voluntary students successfully point out the answer.

4.2.1.3 Exploration as Knowledge Discovery

Unlike the other two types of exploration, one teacher from the Music Appreciation lesson demonstrated what Shively mentioned about exploration-based activity. According to Shively

(2015), "students build an increasingly deep and broad knowledge base by having rich musical experiences that provide the opportunity to explore and consider music (p. 131)."

In this lesson, the teaching content was about *The Lion* from *The Carnival of the Animals* by French composer Saint-Saëns. The teacher first played on the piano to present the splendid lion's roaring sound. She also encouraged students to act out what they felt about lions while listening to the music recordings. Students described their feelings about diverse animals and the experience of listening to music representing a lion. After a few other kinds of activities had been completed, an exploration-based activity was prepared as follows:

> The teacher turns on a PowerPoint slide with a table list titled "A Comparison of the Musical Elements." The table has two columns and three rows. There is two sound tag on each top of the column representing the different audio clips. Melody, Instrument, and The Range of Sound were respectively listed on the left side of each row, aiming as reminders for students to find out the answer. "Okay, now the entire piece of Lion's music was separated into two small parts, one is about the lion coming to the forest, and the other one is about the lion roaring. I'm going to turn on each audio clip. Can you listen carefully and think about what you have listened to and recognized based on the reminding words for music elements?"
>
> Then, the teacher clicks on the first short audio clip. After giving students a little bit of time to listen and think, the teacher asks students to present their answers orally in front of the class. Students show their excitement in answering teacher questions. There are some discussions also happening in keeping the different ideas towards the answers. Eventually, after five minutes of listening, discovering, and discussing the answers for two audio clips, the teachers turned on to the next PowerPoint slide and showed the accurate answer. The teacher also tells students that their answers are much rich than the answers she presented on the board. "I am so happy to hear all of your ideas," says the teacher.

4.2.2 Creation-based activities

Creation-based activities engage students in solving musical problems through composing, arranging, and improvising. This kind of activity provides students opportunities not only to plan and evaluate musical elements but also to learn how to perform instantaneous creative ideas (Wiggins, 2015).

In total, ten lessons presented creation-based activities in GMODC. Except in the creation-based type of lesson, where half of the time was spent on arranging a piece of music, other creation-based activities were either rarely found in class or acted as a quick transition with a short period to support other activities. Composing was not found in any of the lessons but two different kinds of creative activities were clearly defined with interactive evidence. One activity was "creation as improvisation," with its characteristic of asking students to create something new to the music spontaneously. The other kind was "creation as arranging," which provided students extra time for thinking and presenting their musical ideas.

4.2.2.1 Creation as Improvisation

Improvising music in "musical dimensions" or "musical elements" was not found in any demonstration lessons. Instead, creating movements for a song was the most commonly observed in-class creativity with students spontaneously improvising physical movements. In other words, teachers were most often observed asking students to create rapid dance movements for the songs while they were singing.

As a specific class interaction, there were two kinds of improvisations. The first kind involved the teacher asking students to improvise movements independently by providing opportunities for students to improvise independently. Here is an example in one Singing-based class.

> Students just finished learning a new folk song, *Luo yu da* (落雨大), meaning raining heavily, with some movements taught by the teacher. While learning the song, a boy, as the main character within the lyric, carrying two bunch of firewood, is presented on the PowerPoint. When starting this creation-based activity, the teacher first goes to the piano and plays a little tune for students to warm up their singing position. Then, she stops playing and says, "okay, now I need to ask you to create your favorite movements while singing this song. You can use your imagination to do this." After saying this, she turns on the audio and starts observing students singing and creating. Students also start singing the song while they are listening to the soundtrack. However, instead of improvising their own movements, most

students choose to imitate what the boy presents in the PowerPoint and what the teacher just taught them before, lifting their hands to the shoulders and pretending they are carrying things.

After realizing students are not genuinely improvising but imitating, the teacher stops the music right away and goes to two students in the back of the rows. "I realized that you two created different movements than others," says the teacher, "could you please perform your movements in front of others?" Then, the two boys go to where the teacher stands, in front of other students. The teacher turns on the music again and invites everyone to improvise their actions with the two presenters together. Similarly, the majority of students still do similar movements until the end of this part of the song. The students in the front create two different movements than their classmates but quickly return to their seats with shyness. Then, the teacher moves on to another singing-based activity.

However, teachers providing opportunities for students to improvise their musical ideas did not always occur. In another kind, instead of creating independently, "Teacher-led creation" was found in some demonstration lessons with teachers' guiding words "to improvise your own ideas". Here is another example in a Singing-based lesson is given below:

In this lesson, before the teacher turns on an audio recording for students to listen. "Now, you may choose your own physical movements to represent how you feel about this music," says the teacher. "Are you ready? Let us start!" When the music starts, instead of merely observing student improvisation, the teacher also begins doing her movements in front of the whole class with students together. Rather than focusing on self-improvisation, most students start imitating the teacher movement. The teacher realizes this imitation but continues her movements with a smile on her face until the end of the song. When finished, the teacher does not ask students to do again with their creative thinking but instead giving an encouraging comment on "It is so great!"

In other words, in both two kinds of improvisation, the majority of students chose to imitate the movements by whoever stood in front of them rather than authentically thinking and creating their own spontaneous ideas. Since the demonstration teachers did not point out this issue, these actions in "imitation" but announcing in "improvisation" might not only mislead students' understanding of the concept in improvisation but also inhibit promoting students' creating skills by doing the fake "improvisation-based activity".

4.2.2.2 Creation as Arranging

Arranging, as a kind of compositional process, was dominantly observed in the creation-based lesson. The teacher prepared different kinds of activities and provided many short periods for promoting student positivity and engaging creative feelings.

> In this lesson, the teacher arouses students curiosity by sharing an imaginary dream of meeting a famous Chinese pop star who is excellent at arranging songs. The teacher firstly performs an arranged song in which students learned the original version in their previous lesson. Then, the teacher tells students that they would arrange the second half of the X as the pop star usually does. With student excitement, the teacher provides three given music sections with the same melody but different rhythm patterns. He asks students to select their favorite ones to replace the original sections in song X and then asks volunteers to present their "arrangements." After practicing this arranging step a few times, the teacher gives students two minutes of independent working time to free arrange the song X. In the end, a few students present their arrangements. With some adjustments by the teacher, the whole class eventually selected one kind of arrangement to perform as the ending of this creation-based lesson.

4.2.3 Presentation-based activities

Presentation-based activity is a student-centered teaching strategy that provides opportunities for students to express what they know about music through verbal or nonverbal means. In a constructivist learning environment, musical expression promotes student learning confidence and active engagement (Wiggins, 2015).

In this phase, Presentation-based activities appeared in eight classes among four different lessons, except in Music Appreciation. The analysis revealed that student presentations usually appeared after exploration, discussion, and technical practices. Selected individuals, or a small group of students, were invited to quickly present their work after practices represents the most common form of this kind of activity. Even though no formal presentation of multiple recourses supporting personal statements, judgments, and performance were observed in these lessons, two different presentation-based activities with the clear wordings "Let us present…" are listed below.

4.2.3.1 Presentation as Demonstration

For most Presentation-based activities, students either volunteered to present their practices to others or were invited to be the learning model demonstrating a musical section pre-instructed by the teachers. In this way, student presentations leaned more towards demonstrating specific learning content than expressing musical ideas. One of these instances happened in a Singing-based lesson. Students had finished learning a song about different animals on the farm. Because the lyrics in the song include many onomatopoeic words, sounds imitating the animal, students displayed excitement when singing this song.

> "All right, students," says the teacher, "Since you are singing so well. Now let us play a competition game and invite each group to present their beautiful singing voices." Then, the teacher gives a hand sign to the group of students sitting in front of her and says, "Your group go first, present your singing to others." Following the teacher's instruction, around ten students stand up and start singing while the teacher is playing on the piano as accompaniment. After presenting singing, the teacher asks all the students to give a round of applause to the standing group. "Sounds great!" says the teacher; I will give your group a sticker on the board! Thank you for your presentation". Then the teacher continues asking the other two groups of students and guides them to follow the same singing process to demonstrate their voices. Eventually, this teacher summarizes this activity by saying, "Thank you for all your demonstration. Each of the group has its advantage and present its best in singing this song."

4.2.3.2 Presentation as Performance

Teachers used another kind of presentation-based activity for the purpose of "performing on the stage." This kind of presentation was observed most often after independent student or group demonstrations. With the purpose of repeating the learning content and combining all of the independent musical elements together, this activity was held in a relatively formal way with students beginning their parts following direct teacher guidance. The following example appeared in another Singing-based lesson.

After singing the entire song by having each student read the musical scores, the teacher asks a few students to help move six xylophones to the center of the "classroom"/stage and put them down in assigned spots. Students follow teacher's direct instruction by also practicing a few times how to play the mallets on the xylophones by actually using their legs as the instrument first. "Okay, now let's invite some students to play on the xylophone," says the teacher, and at the same time she holds some students' hands to the xylophones. Then, she turns around to the other students and gives them a hand sign and eye contact to ask them to stand up. "Please stand up. They (the students who are playing on the xylophones) are our instrumental ensemble, and you are our singing ensemble," the teacher makes a simple rhythm "rap" to speak out this sentence, "gently smile and sing well, we are going to sing together." When finished, the teacher lifts his hands and starts conducting the instrumental ensemble to bring in the melody. All the singing students follow the teacher conducting to sing the song they learned in today's class.

This song lasts two minutes, with the teacher conducting both instrumental and singing ensembles like a formal performance rehearsal. Students in each position act as if they are performing on the stage, standing nice and tall. "Thank you for your performance," says the teacher at the end of this activity, "now let's discuss what we can improve when we are presenting our musical emotions and expressing our musical language on the stage."

4.2.4 Performance-based Activities

The traditional performance-based activity, with students following strict rules and performing without involving their own thinking or decision-making, has been criticized by Shively (2015). A constructivist student-centered performance-based activity aims to inspire students to think about their experiences, connect their prior knowledge to the performing process, and solve musical problems by expressing, organizing, and reflecting the dimensions of the music (Shively, 2015; Wiggins, 2015).

Because the GMODC event was held in a concert room with stages for teachers to demonstrate their lessons, Performance-based activities were differentiated from the *presentation as performance* as a Presentation-based activity with its purposeful function in "performing for the audiences." Among the 19 primary demonstration classes, eleven teachers stated their desire to perform to the student audience towards the end of the lesson. This phenomenon usually occurred after students had already demonstrated their learning content

and the teacher had confidence in levels of student singing or performing. Phrase used to start this activity were included "let's formally perform this song for other teachers (the audience sitting under the stage)," "here comes a performance, let's..." and "now it's a time for a formal performance..."

Actually, what the teachers named "formal performance" was a whole class of students demonstrating what they had learned and practiced during the demonstration lesson. It can be understood as a summative demonstration of the day's lesson through performance. Choral singing, singing while doing movements, and singing alongside instrumentation were all observed among other combinations of performance. Because the performances summarized and presented what has been learned, this kind of performance did not allow students to rehearse in advance. The performances happened naturally after a couple of informal practices of each part of the musical content. Therefore, none of the Performance-based activities failed in terms of the process. Students acted relatively professionally, stood nice and tall, and sang loudly and well.

To sum up, differently from what researchers have suggested about "performing as solving problems" (Wiggins, 2015) and "inspire musical thinking" (Shively, 2015), performance in the analyzed lessons leaned towards "performing as demonstrating learned knowledge".

4.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A brief summary of the findings of both phases is given below.

4.3.1 Answers for the First Research Question

Through a carefully sequential analysis of systematic observation, the first research question, *what are the observable practices and interactions from the video-recorded music demonstration class,* can be approached by discussion of the following observed phenomena.

1. The 2018 GMODC event presented lessons that were content-driven, new knowledge-focused, and of a fixed lesson design from a teacher lesson organizing perspective.

2. Multiple kinds of activities were organized in class, resulting in a diversity of lesson types and an increase in student active learning participation.

3. The learning position was primarily stationary, with the whole class working with teachers. Independent exploration did not usually take place in class, and group collaboration was very rare in lesson implementations.

4. The diversity of lesson types with unique leading activities played an essential role in the lesson environment across every observable domain. Creation-based lessons provided students with more opportunities to actively *do* and *discuss* in class. In contrast, with its listening-based nature, the Music Appreciation lesson preferred students to listen quietly during the lesson.

5. Teachers leaned on student active doing rather than their reflective thinking. Formative feedback and evaluation, which helps to foster student reflective thinking skills, seldom occurred in class.

6. Although students generally spent half of the lessons physically engaging themselves in class activities and events, their voices were still not heard enough. Teachers did not emphasize the classroom Q&A section, and in-class peer discussion and conversation were also seldom observed in any type of lesson.

4.3.2 Answers for the Second Research Question

Phase II continued the exploration of the specific SCE activities. Findings were illustrated with the question of how teachers and students interact with each other during lessons as the focus. The specific research question of *how did teachers and students interact with each other in shaping SCE in music lessons* was answered with the following findings.

1. Comparing what Williams (2007) described as the purpose for in-class exploration, only one lesson provided students with opportunities to discover knowledge independently. For the majority of lessons, although exploration-based activities were found by using specific guiding words "to explore," "to find out," and "to discover," the actual practice was to ask students to either spend time on content rehearsal or imitate teacher answers.

2. Creation-based activities were mostly found in the Creation-based type of lesson, presenting an appropriate alignment with the purpose of musical creativity in "Creating to stimulate musical thinking" and "creating to solve musical problems." Creation-based activities in demonstration lessons mainly took the form of asking students to improvise movements with music. Due to some teachers asking students to improvise their ideas and present their creations to their fellow students, it was observed that the creating process commonly turned into "following teachers" rather than "creating own ideas."

3. Presentation-based activities provide opportunities for students to express musical elements by demonstrating their learning by performing. Verbal and nonverbal expressions were found in formal musical presentations like the musical performances. It is uncertain whether student confidence and active engagement were authentically involved during the presentation process. Most presentations involved several practices and there is a possibility that students might see this kind of presentation as another round of regular practice but in a relatively formal way.

4. Wiggins (2015) suggests that performing should include the process of solving musical problems through expressing, organizing, and reflecting the dimensions of the music. Performance-based activities in Study 1 explored presenting as a summarised demonstration of what was learned in class to those watching. Due to the teaching

environment, demonstration lessons happened on a stage with a watching audience. This kind of performance-based activity was frequently observed in most of the lessons.

To sum up, each of the four types of SCE activities and their specific in-class interactions were found in the Chinese demonstration lessons. However, in terms of SCE from a Western perspective, these activities did not match a truly constructivist student-centered classroom, which provides students with opportunities to think, express, and create independent ideas. Although a few lessons provided space to foster student thinking and creativity, most activities were teacher-centered in actual practice.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY 2: IMPLEMENTED CURRICULUM IN THE SHENZHEN PUBLIC SCHOOL

5.1 THE OBSERVABLE BEHAVIOURAL PRACTICES

The answer to the first research question came from the three types of data collected in the first round of data collection. Three hundred and fifty-five minutes of video recordings, three interview transcripts, and participants' written documents are reported in the following passages with a detailed description of each case. To properly capture the observed behavior and documented voices in the research, the following reports take the form of three cases. Each case drew a picture of how each teacher structured and implemented her lessons. Three lenses on lesson implementation are illustrated in the following sections:

- General lesson structure

- Teacher behavior and practices in class

- Student behavior and learning status during the lesson

5.1.1 Case 1

Teacher A is the head of the music department and has 26 years of teaching experience. In School A, she teaches Grade 1 and Grade 2. She graduated from one of the top normal universities and majored in singing performance back in the 1990s. Over the past decades, she has experienced two major national curriculum reforms and multiple school-based innovative curriculum constructions. Therefore, she is very confident in her teaching, especially chorus training:

Because I have so many years of teaching experience, I am, to certain extent, quiet confident about my teaching. Nevertheless, I am most confident in choral teaching. I usually develop students' choir singing skills starting from their first grades. Since students need to follow the singing-based textbook to finish their musical tasks, they are basically following the musical learning sequence of singing five notes (pentatonic scale), six notes, and seven notes (whole scale) while growing up. I have the confidence that their choral singing skills developed pretty well in class. (Teacher A)

5.1.1.1 Lesson Structure

Regarding the general lesson structure (see Figure 5.1), Teacher A's three classes demonstrate a similar structural tendency with the most amount of time spent on *Learning New Content* (LNC). *Leading-In* (LI), as the second most common lesson element, is purposefully designed to support understanding of new content. Teacher A noted:

…an important teaching strategy during the lesson is to apply LI activity. The purpose of designing LI activities is to motivate students to later learn new content. From my understanding, when an activity relates to the new learning content and also evokes students to participate, effective learning would come true. (Teacher A)
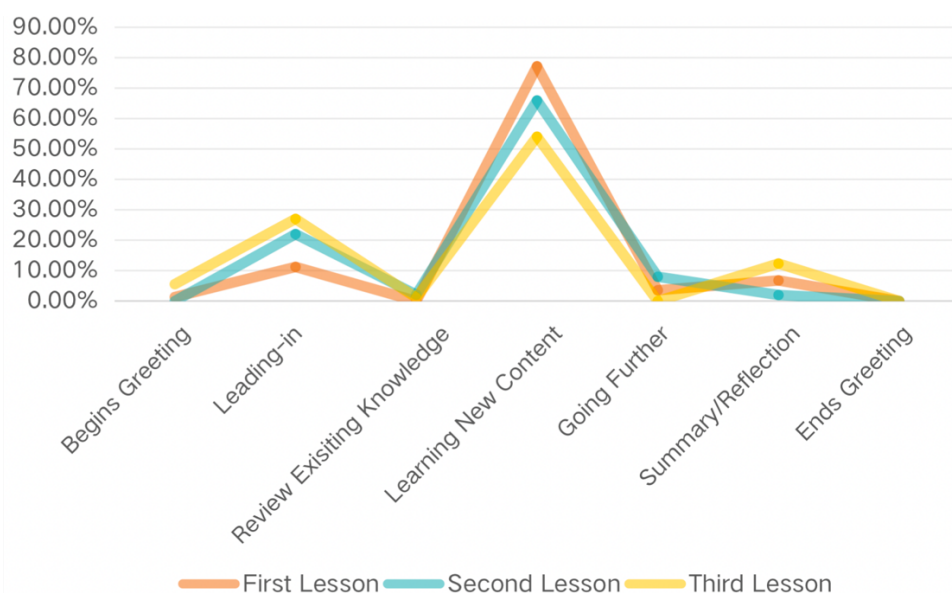
Figure 5.1. **Lesson Structure of Teacher A**

Actually, Teacher A's lesson plans reveal that lesson structures indeed used a fixed lesson structure with different teaching content. LI-LNC-GF-S/F was found in the general design of

her lessons. The teacher noted that the fixed structure was a recommended lesson design guided by the music inspectors. As teachers' instructors/leaders, music inspectors in China have been established since 1969 and their unique educational responsibilities involve conducting research in teaching and guiding school teachers' practices. The purpose of having this group of teacher leaders was to improve school teachers' teaching quality through a group of people who could work between higher education scholars and the ordinary primary and secondary teachers, following the national intention to regulate school education to provide specific suggestions, such as how much time should be spent on giving instruction and conducting activities, what kinds of activities should occur during lessons, and at what pace content knowledge should be delivered. (Wu, 2021). Therefore, they offer professional development to school music teachers, observe their teaching, and assess their teaching quality. By observing and assessing demonstration lessons, the music inspectors recommended teaching methods and strategies that they think will benefit regular class teaching.

However, as Teacher A stated in her interview, in reality, even though a regular music lesson's general structure is similar to a demonstrational lesson structure, the actual practices were still different. The proportions of time used, teacher preparation, classroom management, in-class behavior, and student learning status all needed to be reconsidered based on actual teaching contexts. From Teacher A,

> … we have much more time in regular music lessons to let students do their preferred activities but definitely not always work in a demonstrational lesson. For a demonstration lesson, there are much more activities, explicit teaching content, and specific music knowledge needed to be planned to show to other teachers as a teaching performance…A regular teaching needs to focus on whether we have completed the teaching tasks and how well our students understand the given new content. (Teacher A)

Therefore, even though Teacher A's lesson structure showed a similar fixed sequential pattern as the one that appeared in the demonstration lesson, she had also pointed to the limitations of a demonstration lesson as "teaching performance" as opposed to regular music

lessons which focused on the completion of the teaching tasks and how well students understand the musical content taught. Due to her regular teaching being guided under a musical inspector's instruction, the reason causing similar but different ways of conducting demonstration lessons and regular school lessons might also possibly depend on how the music inspectors provide instructions to school teachers.

5.1.1.2 Teaching Perspective

Teacher A mentioned that she witnessed the curriculum reforms from a traditional teacher-centered to a modern student-centered national instruction. By following the theoretical education change and adjusting her teaching practices, she had confidence in implementing current instructional suggestions from the updated *Curriculum Standards*:

> Student-centered education indeed become one of the most changing parts of the updated Curriculum Standards. For our teachers, the dominant adjustment was from merely focusing on singing quality to organizing multiple activities for students to participate. Singing is important, but now it is embedded in many activities for students to learn. This is much better than rote-teaching when teachers asked students to imitate singing word by word. (Teacher A)

As Teacher A stated, organizing activities were observed as her preferred teaching behavior in the observational data. Compared with other teaching behaviors, Teacher A spent almost half of the time (45.44% in the first lesson and 47.56% in the third lesson) in two lessons conducting multiple activities in class. Direct instruction still took up a significant amount of class time. Even though Teacher A mentioned that activity-based lesson structure was a critical element when designing teacher in-class practices, her direct guidance still played a significant role.

Review Existing Knowledge was not found at all in Teacher A's three lessons; neither was it found in her lesson plans nor reflectional journals. She was asked in her first interview about her attitude towards reviewing student knowledge. In her response, she seemed a little surprised

about focusing primarily on the new teaching content. By reflecting on that, she spoke about the possible reasons for not concentrating on previous student knowledge:

> To be honest, I did not realize that I lack making connections between the past knowledge to the new learned. Interesting finding! I should pay more attention on this. I think the main reason caused that was the precious time during the lesson. Time was so limited. If I extend too many things during the lesson, I will not finish teaching the new content. You know, we have to follow the textbook to teach. This is the requirement, and this sometimes can be annoying as well. It means we do not have much time during the lesson to bring extra knowledge, no matter it is the ones students learned before or the ones they are not familiar with. All student-required knowledge is pretty much in the textbook already. We just need to follow it to finish them. (Teacher A)

After providing the reason, she also continued to illustrate her concerns and how she usually structures her lessons and implements her practices:

> … Normally, I follow my structure and path to distribute the knowledge within the textbook to students. Many teachers are still using a teacher-centered way to deliver knowledge, strictly following the original teaching order listed in the textbook content. I prefer to rethink the content and restructure the knowledge for my classes. (Teacher A)

Aligning with what Teacher A discussed about her confidence in choral teaching, vocal practice-based activities with a specific focus on ear-training and sight-singing were found in her classes. More specific choral practices were shown on Teacher A's lesson plan. Teacher A started the class by singing "Good morning, students." Then, students imitate the exact melody with the wordings "Good morning, teacher." Teacher A continued to play a half-scale on the electronic piano and used the phrase to sing without stopping. Students imitated the pattern and sang back to the teacher. Teacher A then moved up another half-scale to continue the vocal practice until she thought the key was high enough for students to have exercised their voices. Besides using the greeting as vocal practice, Teacher A also conducted other singing exercises, such as singing a whole D major scale, initiating *Call and Response* melodic patterns singing, and imitating some phrases in the new teaching content. According to her:

Choral practice becomes a routine in student music class. Our school is building this choral atmosphere which provides opportunities for students to sing well. That is why you may see I normally lead many different kinds of choral exercises during my teaching time. (Teacher A)

Teacher A did not only confidently illustrate her previous choral teaching experience and current lesson implementation, but she also mentioned the difficulties of teaching the youngest group of students (Grade 1 and Grade 2) in class. Classroom Management, one extra teacher behavior that appeared to differ from the findings in Study 1, was described by Teacher A as a critical element for implementing a successful music lesson. According to her:

Although I like to have an active learner in my class with a fun and exciting learning environment, I also notice that I have to make sure the "craziness" should be under control. I mean, this is also very different from teaching a regular lesson in school than a demonstration lesson on a stage. Students are so familiar with their music teachers and also familiar with their teaching strategies and certain "sequential patterns." So, it is so normal to see we manage the class multiple times during the lesson. No matter how excellent teaching ideas the teacher has, it would not be taught successfully if she/her do not know how to discipline students when they are getting wild. (Teacher A)

From the observational data, Teacher A did use *Classroom Management* several times during the lessons. This kind of behavior usually did not last for a long time but took the form of verbal reminders and short interruptions to allow students to calm down. Teacher discussed the management of her class:

After guiding students to create some movements to represent animals, students become very excited about each other's improvisation. They start chatting around with an increasing voice volume and actively imitate each other's movements. Teacher A sees this change and starts raising her hands while saying, "If you are that loud, then we cannot continue our fun activity." However, it does not work very well to make students keep quiet. Teacher A walks to a wind chime and gently plays from left to right on this chime with a metal fork. With the beautiful major scale sound in class, students quickly stop chatting and look at the teacher. "See, the chime tells us to stop chatting. Did you hear that?" says Teacher A, "if we are too loud, then nobody can hear anything." "See, group two is ready to continue the next activity," Teacher A turns to one of the group students who are sitting nice and still and smiles at them, "I see group four is ready as well." When

most students sit well again, Teacher A continues her instruction on the following teaching content.

5.1.1.3 Learning Aspect

Because many activities were conducted by Teacher A, students remained active and positive during the lessons. The whole class learning mode was observed as the leading learning approach with 98.22%, 100%, 94.78% of time spending rate in the three lessons, respectively. Because of that, only a tiny proportion of time was given to individual working (1.78% in the first lesson and 5.72% in the third) and none for group working. Teacher A gave an explanation for her unbalanced learning approaches in interview:

> …You may find out that I rarely conducted group discussion and collaboration in my Singing-based lesson. The reason for that was, as I mentioned previously, that I did not follow the order in the content list. Let me give you an example. When I teach new content, let's say, a new song. I normally take the first lesson of this learning this song as the whole class learning the new content and then organize some group work in the second lesson of learning this song. Group work needs a lot of classroom management. So, I have to make sure that students have known the song very well, and then they might be able to work in groups to explore other musical elements in the song. (Teacher A)

As Teacher A illustrated, the lack of opportunities for students to voice their ideas during activity hours is in the nature of new song learning. However, the observational data also found that students had a mere 5.44%, 10.78%, and 8.22% of their time spent answering teacher questions and participating in class discussion. Although students in Teacher A's classes were physically active and positively engaged in the in-class activities, the development of their thinking skills has seemingly not been considered.

5.1.2 Case 2

Teacher B is another experienced music teacher who teaches Grade 5 and Grade 6 and has 16 years of teaching experience. Before coming to School A, she had almost ten years of working

experience using traditional teacher-centered education, which focused on the planning and design of lessons to ensure student learning outcomes. She was pleased to try new ideas and teaching strategies after joining School A. As she mentioned, she saw some good changes while implementing her practices in the current school:

> I'm lucky to join in School A with Teacher A's team. You know in my previous school; we did not have teacher training on student-centered education. Well, maybe the reason was also that this (SCE) has not become a fashion in education during that time…This school, instead, especially the music department, encouraged us to concentrate on how students could learn rather than what teachers could plan. After we follow Teacher A's innovative idea of implementing multiple teaching strategies and methods in our classroom, I indeed found my students became more active and engaged during the lesson. (Teacher B)

5.1.2.1 Teaching Perspective

Regarding Teacher B's teaching practices, the time spent on *Organize Activity* (see Figure 5.2) formed a huge contrast with other teaching behaviors. All three lessons used more than half of the time doing activities to engage student participation. From Teacher B:

> Personally speaking, I think activities are very important for students. It helps to physically motivate them through active participation and also benefiting on their mental engagement when doing tasks with peers together… I have to say, teaching music is a kind of experiencing arts. Students somehow need to physically experience the musical environment, so they might understand teaching content much better. (Teacher B)
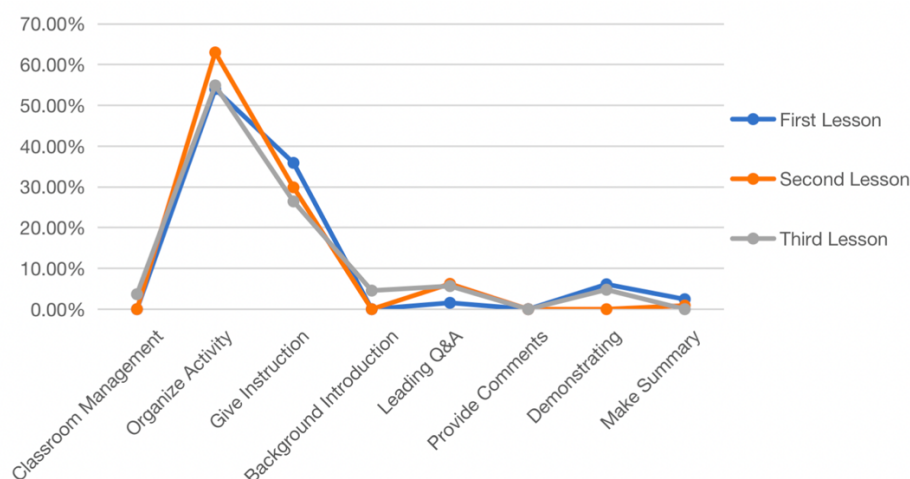
Figure 5.2. **Teacher Behavior in Teacher B's Regular Music Lessons**

Among the diverse kinds of activities, what made Teacher B's lesson unique was a new type of activity, an activity which teachers provided clear instruction and led the activity by themselves with a name they named them as *Game-based* activity. Unlike the mutually exclusive kinds, *Game-based* activity was a cluster of Singing-based, Listening-based, Movement-based or other combinations in a game-playing setting. An example of this combination can be seen in Vignette 5.1:

> *Vignette 5.1.* **Examples of Game-based Activities in Teacher B's Class**
> After doing a few short vocal exercises in a singing-based activity, Teacher B took a tennis ball out of her toy bag. "I brought a new friend today," says Teacher B, "I'm going to sing a song while playing this ball. Please watch carefully about how I will play with it." Then, she starts singing a song named Seagull. "Seagull, seagull, our friend, you are our good friend…" she sings the entire song, and at the same time, she is bouncing the tennis ball rhythmically on the floor as keeping the beat going. When she finished, she turned to students and asked volunteers who wanted to try what she had done with the tennis ball. A boy raises his hand and comes close to the teacher. When he starts bouncing the ball, Teacher B sings the Seagull song again to help him keep the rhythm. This might be the first time this student bounces the ball while listening to a song as an accomplishment. He seems pretty excited but also nervous. His unbalanced bouncing rhythm and his sometimes "Oh…my…god!" vocal expression made the class environment full of happiness and fun.
>
> After this boy tried and received a round of applause for his courage, the teacher turned to others and said, "you can see, keeping the beat is not as easy as you thought could be. Especially when you have something physically in your hands, you need to concentrate on both your "little thing" in hand and the song itself. One strategy I can share with you is that you should be very familiar with the song first, and then try to bounce this ball with the beat. You will find it becomes much easier to handle." Finish sharing comments and suggestions, Teacher B invites all students to play with their "imaginary tennis ball" while listening to her singing the song again. Students are holding hands, pretending they are having a tennis ball in hand, and repeating the movement of "dropping" and "catching" the invisible imaginary ball. At the same time, the teacher sings the song two times.
>
> After practicing this hand movement, Teacher B asks students to try to sing the Seagull song. With the experience of listening to this entire song several times, most students sing the lyrics pretty well with mostly the correct melody and rhythm. Then the teacher takes another four tennis balls out of her toy bag and invites a group of students to "sing and play." Later, Teacher

B asks students to explore two types of ball bouncing practices: how to bounce the ball to another student while keeping the beat and how to make the ball bounce around among four students while singing.

Students had a lot of fun during this "Game-based" activity. They listened to the song, sang it, and played a "game" with it. As Teacher B wrote in her reflection journal, she thought that the technique helped students unconsciously support musical learning:

> I like using different materials as teaching aids to teach a new song. Singing multiple times without any physical movement, especially fun actions, would be very boring to do. I think the activity I conducted today with the bouncing ball was quite successful. I can see my upper elementary students become much more engaged and excited in learning the Seagull song. Some of them also sang the song after the music class in the hallway. Playing game is always my confident musical strategy to use. It helps to some extent enhance student musical understanding. (Teacher B)

5.1.2.2 Learning Aspect

According to observations, Teacher B's *Game-based* design activity worked very well to motivate student active learning attitudes. From the statistical data (see Figure 5.3), student activity significantly contrasted with static listening and answering Teacher questions. Using mostly the whole class learning mode, students were positively active and engaged for nearly two thirds of their time (58.78% for the first lesson, 67.89% for the second lesson, and 58.89% for the third) during the lesson.
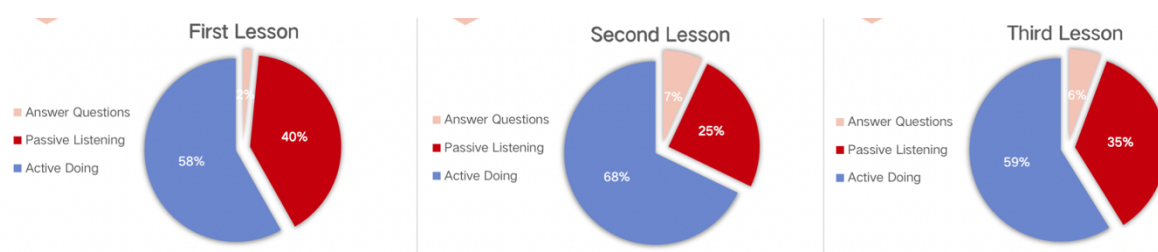
Figure 5.3. **Student Behavior in Teacher B's Three Lessons**

However, while Teacher B was confident about her teaching and leading of the multiple activities, there was a concern about student in-class voices, as shown in Figure 5.3. Students

had fewer opportunities to answer Teacher B's questions than other types of student behaviors.

Similar to the issue found with Teacher A's lessons, the short Q&A sections worked more as

transitional activities than real opportunities for allowing students' voice and fostering student

agency to think and express independently and musically. In-depth discussion and conversation

about musical questions was not found in the data as a consequence. Two examples (Vignette

5.2) were noted for how Teacher B conducted her Q&A section:

Vignette 5.2. **Q&A Section in Teacher B's Class**
The first Q&A section happens when the teacher is teaching the song
Seagull. After singing the song one time, Teacher B stops singing and says,
"Now I am going to sing again, but you will need to think about these three
questions: what is the time signature of this song? How many phrases in part
am I going to sing? Moreover, what are the feelings when you listen to this
song?" Then she starts singing the song again. However, while she is singing,
she also shows her fingers in counting the phrases. After she finished, she
lifted four fingers to represent the four phrases. "So, how many phrases in
this song?" she asks, "You may answer this together." Students answered,
"Four," with a little bit of an awkward look. Some students look at the person
sitting next to them and sneakily laugh about how easy the answer is.
Teacher B did not continue asking the other two questions about the time
signature and student feelings about this song. Instead, she asks students to
sing each phrase and continues conducting other activities to learn the next
part of the song.

The second Q&A section happens when Teacher B encourages students to
improvise new lyrics for a Raining song. She asks students, "does anyone
have ideas of how to change the lyrics to your favorite words?" Students
look at her with a little bit of silence. "For example," says Teacher B, "let's
change the word "raining" to "bird." So, what would a bird do in the song?"
Rather than waiting for student answers, Teacher B continues improvising
the rest of the lyrics. At the same time, students look at her and start
mumbling to themselves. However, Teacher B did not ask for student
answers when she finished her creation. She goes to the piano, plays the
tunes in the Raining song, and asks students to sing their improvisation. In
other words, Teacher B seems to start a discussion about improvisation, she
did not leave time for students to discuss this topic. Instead, she quickly
moves on to the next section of teaching, summarizing the knowledge of
this Raining song.

5.1.2.3 Lesson Structure

The findings illustrate lesson structure from two perspectives. On the one hand, Teacher B did not limit her design to one specific structural element (see Figure 5.4). Conversely, she distributed the new teaching content into diverse learning stages. *Leading-In* and *Going Further* could be seen as two different learning stages. One helps students unconsciously experience music before the transmission of new knowledge began, and the other made further musical actions after learning. Teacher B's lesson's structural purpose of ensuring student musical understanding through multiple in-class engagements is clearly defined. Unlike Teacher A's content-driven teaching design, Teacher B's lesson appeared mostly an activity-driven design that focused on how content might be distributed to students.

On the other hand, even though an activity-driven lesson design can be easily found in Teacher B's classes, no teaching stages connecting the activities to student previous knowledge was discovered. Teacher B stated a similar point to Teacher A about time pressures, but she also mentioned a new educational phenomenon in China context that the "national assessment" (The China Quality Monitoring of National Compulsory Education). In her words, this national assessment was a national compulsory assessment for all students in the public school system and the assessment content is based on the knowledge students learned in their textbook. Therefore, this added up another reason for lacking of attention paid to previously learned knowledge.

> I actually really want to check on students' previous knowledge because I can see some of them adapted their previous understanding during the activity time. However, I find that it was very difficult to balance the time between reviewing the songs and chants they learned before and the teaching task that the textbook required. We actually should count our team (in School A) as lucky, because we can still keep a little bit of opinion in choosing how we want to teach. The school is open-minded to our music department. But, on the other side, we should not forget the national assessment (The China Quality Monitoring of National Compulsory Education) which has been taken once every two years in fourth grade and eighth grade. The tasks in this kind of national assessment are entirely

related to the knowledge in the textbook. If we did not follow what the textbook required students to learn, then they might not be able to pass this exam once they get to that grade. So, finishing what the textbook required us to do become the dominant task and also a challenge for our teachers. (Teacher B)
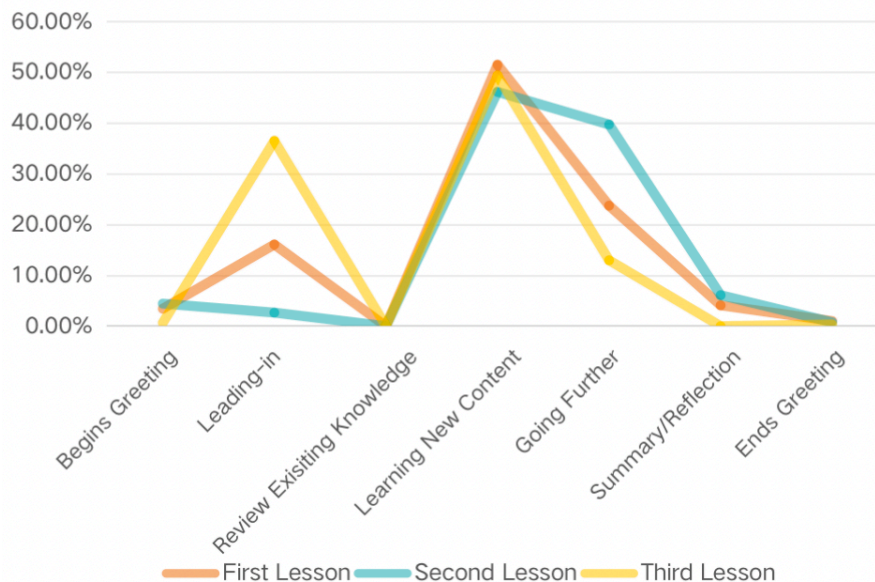
Figure 5.4. **Lesson Structure in Teacher B's First Three Lessons**

5.1.3 Case 3

Teacher C taught Grade 3 and Grade 4 in School A. Unlike Teacher A and Teacher B who presented a high passion in sharing and discussing their thoughts, Teacher C presented a shy and had less conversation with me when we first and second met and shared ideas with me quietly and cautiously. However, she became more willing to share when more time we spent online chatting and knowing with each other. According to her, although she has seven years of teaching experience, she still preferred using different ways to keep the class disciplined and manageable because she was concerned about her teaching and had less confidence about the teaching strategies and methods she applied during the lesson. She mentioned:

Compared with the new coming teachers (another three young teachers in School A), I am the experienced one. However, I am always feeling that I am on the way to learning as well. Sometimes, I doubt my teaching strategies. With not many professional training experiences, I am also curious about how my teaching is in general. Is there a teaching standard somewhere to let us know how well we implement our lessons? I don't know.

But the thing I am pretty sure of is that I need to keep my class disciplined because I teach young students. Otherwise, there will be too noisy to learn knowledge. (Teacher C)

5.1.3.1 Teaching Perspective

Teacher C's behaviors showed a higher proportion of *Classroom Management* than the other two participants. One lesson featured lower *Classroom Management* but the other two classes spent 12.00% and 11.22% of time disciplining the students. Teacher B explained that young students are supposed to have a well-disciplined class environment. Loud and noisy lessons disturbed student focus and affected the learning outcomes. Vignette 5.3 gives an example of how she managed her class during a Presenting-based activity period:

> *Vignette 5.3.* **Classroom Management in Teacher C's Class**
> After teaching students how to use hand gestures to conduct others reading the rhythm, Teacher C invited some volunteers to come to the teaching stage and tried out to conduct the entire class for rhythm reading. Because five students were taking turns, students sitting in their seats also became excited, chatting around and wanting to be called and presented. Teacher C's original smile disappeared, she looked around the classroom seriously and started clapping a rhythm pattern. Some students responded to this rhythm pattern by clapping back the same pattern and stopped chatting. However, there were still half of the students either chatting or mumbling. Teacher C walks slowly and closely to the students, and uses her low register voice, saying, "It is too loud. I want to praise XX, also a praise YY," she stops for a second and then walks slowly towards the students, "praise XY, YZ, ZZ…" She called a few students names and praised their well behave attitudes at the same time. While she is calling the names, the class becomes quiet in a short amount of time. Teacher C repeated this classroom management strategy of calling students names and giving praises in many different situations during the lesson. Students seem commonly familiar with Teacher C's classroom routine and quickly respond to this "reminder of being quiet."

Another unique feature of Teacher C's lessons was that her teaching behaviors were relatively fixed and uniform. Among the multiple teacher behaviors which were coded in Study 1 (see Table 4.1), only *Organize Activity* and *Give Instruction* were observed as taking up a lot of time. Although *Leading Q&A* was discovered in all three lessons, it occurred only a tiny proportion of the time. Students did not have many opportunities to discuss music problems

considering the limited proportions of 1.56%, 6.22%, and 5.67% in the first, second, and third lessons.

Background Introduction, *Providing Comments*, *Demonstrating*, and *Make Summary* all appeared in one lesson with a minimal amount of time spent or not did not feature in Teacher C's lessons at all. Also, these elements were rarely mentioned in Teacher C's reflectional journals and lesson plans. This strengthens the impression of her fixed and uniform teaching behaviors.

However, when she shared her experiences about her past professional development, Teacher C explained this phenomenon. According to Teacher C, her single teaching practices were primarily a result of her teaching experiences. Unless mandatory, she seldom participated in any teacher training to extend her teaching skills. Based on her memory:

> I hardly remember that I participated in any of the official professional teaching training neither for understanding the Curriculum Standards or specific teaching strategies. I watched other teachers teaching if that counts, and some regular music class teachings when needed. But I don't think demonstration lessons can benefit our regular school teaching because the whole lesson structures are completely different. Therefore, I wouldn't say I learn a lot from the demonstration lessons… So, I guess I mostly conduct my teaching behavior based on my previous teaching experiences. That's why I cannot say I'm confident about my teaching. (Teacher C)

Not only were Teacher C's behaviors relatively simple, the specific kinds of activities she conducted were also not as varied as others. The *Exploration-based* activity has made her class stand out. Due to the multiple instances of providing *Exploration-based* activities, Teacher C was the only participant who provided time for students to do both individual and collaborative work in class. Here comes an example in Vignette 5.4:

> ***Vignette 5.4.*** **Exploration-based Activity in Teacher C's Class**
> In this class, Teacher C is teaching a new song Wild Jujube Thorn. She teaches students how to read different rhythm patterns within this song and points to the different notations for students to recognize the melody. After several times of both melodic and rhythmic practices, Teacher C shows the

whole music score of Wild Jujube Thorn on the screen. "Now you have a task," says Teacher C, "You might have seen many familiar rhythm patterns and melodic patterns in this music score. You need to do now use sometimes, working independently, to try to combine the rhythm patterns with the melody. I mean, you will be given two minutes to find out and practice how to sing the entire music score. Are you ready?" Students look excited about the given practicing time. They shout loud, "Yes!" "But you need to remember that independent work requires quiet practices," Teacher C continues reminding the routine, "if you are practicing too loud, then you are going to bother others for sure." After giving the reminder for classroom management, Teacher C starts walking around and observing what students practices. She stops walking and offers help when some students raise their hands. After two minutes, she stops student practices and starts inviting volunteers to present their practices. Later in the lesson, Teacher C continues conducting another two exploration-based activities for students to practice independently.

Teacher C explained that she provided time for students to explore or practice independently because:

> Maybe I am not a person to always ask for help, I prefer to let my students be independent as well. This independence, I mean, provides the opportunity for them to learn how to think and work by themselves. It might be just a short period of time, but I do want to give students a feeling that I cannot always help you and that you sometimes need to figure out things by yourselves. (Teacher C)

5.1.3.2 Lesson Structure

Aligning with the data surrounding *Teacher Behavior*, Teacher C's lesson maintained a comparatively simple structure. Among her three lessons, *Reviewing Existing Knowledge*, *Summary/Reflection*, and *End Class Greeting* were not found. Her lessons emphasized providing new teaching content like Teacher A. In one class she spent 84% of class time teaching a new song with lots of repetitive practice. Because of that, other structural elements did not have enough space to be implemented.

Because of Teacher C's simple lesson structure, her lessons did not have the fixed teaching sequential patterns of Study 1's demonstration lessons. Even though she was not confident about her teaching due to the lack of professional development as she mentioned, she believed

in her teaching experience and continued to implement her lessons based on her understanding of music education, which is a quiet and manageable classroom that could enhance students' learning attention and further benefit on their learning effect.

5.1.3.3 Learning Aspect

We should not conclude that student behavior in her class was as single and straightforward as Teacher C's classroom practice. Conversely, there were several unique aspects to her student behavior and their learning approaches.

Differently to other participants' large proportion of student dynamic activity, student behaviors varied across Teacher C's three lessons. As can be seen in Figure 5.5, there were two lessons in which students listened quietly for half of the lesson (52% for each). However, student learning status varied in the second lesson, where the children became more active (53%) and had less static time (36%).
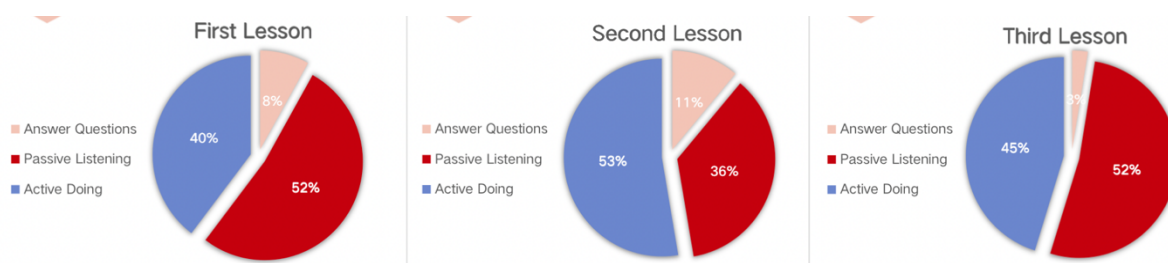
Figure 5.5. **Student Behavior in Teacher C's Three Lessons**

Students in Teacher C's lessons learned using diverse approaches. Unlike in other participants' lessons where independent working and group working was not found at all, all three types of learning approaches occurred in specific proportions in Teacher C's classes (see Table 5.1). Students were still using the majority of time learning together under teacher instruction, but the allocation of time to the other two learning approaches might have benefited

student learning in other ways. It did support the development of independent and collaborative

student skills, even though these learning approaches only appeared in small proportions.

Table 5.1. Proportion of Time for Teacher C Lessons' Learning Approaches

	Whole-Class Learning	Small Groups	Individual Work
First Lesson	92.22%	7.78%	0.00%
Second Lesson	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Third Lesson	90.78%	0.00%	9.22%

Teacher C also discussed in what ways she hopes her students work in class:

> I don't mind letting students work individually or collaboratively as I said previously. For me, I prefer my students to become independent. However, I can only spend a very few times in class to really let them try out different learning approaches. You know how many students are in my class. Organizing group activities for 46 students, keeping the class behave, and ensuring they are not chatting but learning at the same time, is super challenging and difficult. I had one experience where one teacher came to my class during the group activity period and complained to me that it was too loud in the classroom. So, I guess the best way to adjust their learning status is to change the way of learning in a short amount of time. In this way, students can not only experience the diverse ways of learning but also are able to slowly accumulate into a learning habit. A habit of fostering their independent and collaborative skills during the music lesson. I don't know whether it works or not, but I'm currently doing it this way. (Teacher C)

Students in Teacher C's class also showed a unique behavior when transitioning from loud

discussion or practices to a quiet resting position - "Jing Xi," meaning quiet and rest in English.

This behavior commonly occurred in Teacher C's lessons after students finished teacher given

tasks and rested with their upper body on their desks (see Figure 5.6). With a strong sense of

classroom environment management, Teacher C usually reminded students before the tasks

started and gave short praise for the quiet positions. Vignette 5.5 gives an example of how this

behavior happened during one exploration-based activity:

> *Vignette 5.5.* **An Example of "JingXi" in Teacher C's Class**
> "The coming task for you is to practice reading these four rhythm patterns independently," says Teacher C, "you may directly use your hand gesture to assist your reading or just explore how to read it correctly first. But don't forget that when you think you are ready, you need to 'Jing Xi'." Then students start self-practicing, reading the rhythm pattern written on the board.

Most of them work independently by mumbling or reading with movements, and also some of them chat with neighbors without focusing on the tasks. After a few minutes, a few students start positioning the "quiet and rest" behavior. They stop practicing and quietly rest on their desks. Following them, more students are changing to the "Jing Xi" position, and the class volume has a clear tendency of turning down. Almost all students rest at their desks within a half-minute, and the class becomes much quieter. "Okay, it seems like most of you have already finished practicing these rhythm patterns," Teacher C starts talking, "Now let's read them all together." Then, other kinds of activities start.

Figure 5.6. **A Picture of "Jing Xi"**

5.1.4 Synthesis of Cross Cases

In a multiple-case study, each case is selected for its educational sake and function (Yin, 2018). However, the method of synthesizing phenomena across cases depends on the research goals of the case study (Rihoux & Lobe, 2009). For this study, the purpose was to gather in-depth insight into the complexity of each case and to seek a possible generalization of their common phenomena. Therefore, an in-depth examination of the similarities across cases might enhance the qualitative understanding of the implemented curriculum in a regular school setting and further support future research exploration (Rihoux & Lobe, 2009).

All codes in Study 1 were found to varying extents in the three participants' lessons. Many implemental phenomena have a high similarity to the status in Study 1. This supports what has been mentioned in the literature (Li, 2017) about the lesson implementation in demonstration

lessons possibly having a connection with the teaching practices in a regular school setting. More specifically, common phenomena cross cases can also be summarized from the following aspects.

5.1.4.1 Common Characteristics in Lesson Implementation

Content-driven Lesson Structure

Across all three participants, nine music classes similarly showed a content-driven lesson structure with lots of teaching time (range from 46.22% to 84%) focusing on new knowledge delivery. Teachers illustrated several reasons for this phenomenon, including textbook-oriented, time pressures, heavy teaching loads, and class management. Textbooks were mentioned the most among all the teachers. This required teaching material and its subsequential influence on student national assessment scores, time pressures, and heavy teaching loads all emerge as potential lesson implementation problems.

Classroom management was also a major concern when structuring lessons. To ensure understanding of the textbook knowledge for most students, teachers became cautious when designing activities. According to participants, the "safest" way of finishing all the teaching content within 35-40 minutes was to focus on newly learned information and practices several times. To this end, it is not surprising that there was not much time left for structuring other elements in class.

Inadequate Connection to Student Previous Knowledge

While spending most time on new knowledge, none of the participants spent enough time on reviewing previous learned knowledge. There might be a quick reminder with the phrases like "You know what this is, right?" or "Do you remember this 2/4-time signature, it means…" However, detailed knowledge reminders which connected "past known" to "new learned" were rarely found.

The lack of reviewing existing knowledge was also found in Study 1 in the demonstration lessons. This might point to a common phenomenon in China's music lessons. From a cognitive constructivist perspective, the connection between students' previous knowledge and new learned are significantly important as it could support students to become active learner through assimilating, and accommodating the new knowledge related to their original existing schema, which is the pattern of thought that organizes categories of information and the relationships among them (Piaget, 1985). In other words, students came to school with their own understanding of the world, and school education is supposed to respect this cognitive nature and supports students to construct knowledge beyond what they had known to a new level of understanding (Windschitl, 2002). Therefore, the current findings of an inadequate connection between students' previous known to new learned not only unaligned with what China's national Curriculum Standards emphasized and the student-centered education, but also to a certain extent might inhibit students' cognitive development.

Activity-driven Teaching Strategy

Another commonality among all three participants was conducting many activities in class to keep students engaged and active. Compared with the traditional didactic Chinese teaching style with a top-down and teacher-centered educational status (Ji, 2013), physical participation and active interaction with teachers is important to current lessons.

In practice, even though increasing the in-class activity might not necessarily formulate a student-centered class, it indeed enhances in-class participation and engagements which might create an active learning environment and further supports students' learning motivation and knowledge construction (Dabas & Kaur, 2017). From the findings, many similar activities were found in Study 1's demonstration lessons such as singing-based, movement-based, and listening-based. Among the diversity, exploration-based, creating-based, presentation-based

and performance-based activities which to most extent represent SCE's activities were much less found compared to the findings in Study 1.

Because of the emphasis on conducting activities during the lessons, the student's learning position with a more balanced situation between dynamic action and static listening to the teacher could be found in the findings. No matter these activities could truly represent an SCE class, an activity-based education can be observed in application in current Chinese music classrooms.

Neglect of Student Voice

While students were provided with more opportunities to physically participate in class events, their voices still could not be heard in most of the teaching hours. Although all the participants conducted Q&A sections to provoke student thinking and encourage their voices, they did not provide enough time for the thinking and answering process, and the diverse kinds of questioning types such as open-ended questions and rhetoric questions except close-ended questions could also be seldom found. The Q&A sections commanded a proportion of time ranging from 1.56% to 11.11%. This means that the most time spent on student verbal participation was less than five minutes.

According to Shively (2015), in a student-centered learning environment, students are supposed to be involved in authentic conversation or discussion to develop their thinking and expressive skills. The short time devoted to answering teacher questions left student in-depth thought towards questions and the mental engagement of the conversation uncertain. Accordingly, aligning the findings as in the demonstration lessons might leave a possibility that the value of listening to students might not be fully appreciated in China when implementing student-centered music lessons.

Whole-Class Learning Approach

The final common phenomenon observed across all three cases was the predominance of whole class learning in music lessons. Time spent on students working with the teacher was observed in all three participants' classes. Even though a few lessons operated independent or collaborative working modes, the time given to these two kinds of learning approaches was still fairly low when compared with the massive time spent on whole-class learning.

Participants gave detailed explanations for applying a single learning approach. With the large population of students in class and the required teaching material, the textbook, it was very difficult to balance student learning needs with their learning outcomes. More specifically, teachers realized that student social skills benefit more if they study in multiple approaches. However, to ensure the majority of students reach the learning outcome, all three teachers chose to use the most effective teaching strategy, whole-class learning.

5.1.4.2 General School Curriculum in China

Dominant influencing factors in School Curriculum

When participants explained their in-class teaching practices toward regular school lesson implementation in the music subject, they commonly mentioned a few elements, functioning the influencing factors, which either guide their teaching or play significant roles while they are planning or implementing their lessons. These influencing factors could be summarized as follow:

1. *National Curriculum Standards*: it functions as the national level of educational intention conceptually guiding the school curriculum. Teachers are mandatory to read it and perceive the general guidance within this national document.

2. ***Music textbook***: it functions as the middle transition interpreting national educational concepts into practical applications by presenting them in a textualized way. Teachers are mandatory to use the textbook as teaching content in class.

3. ***Music Teacher Inspectors***: they act as leaders of music teachers from province-based level, city-based level, or district level, to guide teachers' lesson implementation by using the textbook as teaching materials and curriculum standards as conceptual guidance. Teachers are supervised by music teacher inspectors.

4. ***Lesson Demonstration Event***: one of the educational events organized by music teacher inspectors aims to function as professional developments for participating teachers to practice their teaching skills and for observing teachers to perceive the "best" teaching strategies and pedagogies.

5. ***National Assessment***: it is a national-level evaluation of students' learning outcomes, and it functions to assess students' understanding of the textbook which under the guidance of the national curriculum standards. Teachers are required to prepare students' learning based on the required teaching materials, the textbook, for attending this assessment in Grade 4 and Grade 8.

The Mutual Relationship of These Influencing Factors in School Curriculum

As discussed, the five influencing factors to teachers' lesson implementation have been revealed based on participants' explanations of their in-class behavioral practices. The following diagram (see Figure 5.7) further presented the mutual relationship between each of the influencing factors and how they affect teaching and learning. In addition, a general understanding of the operation of the current school music curriculum in China could be revealed in this diagram.
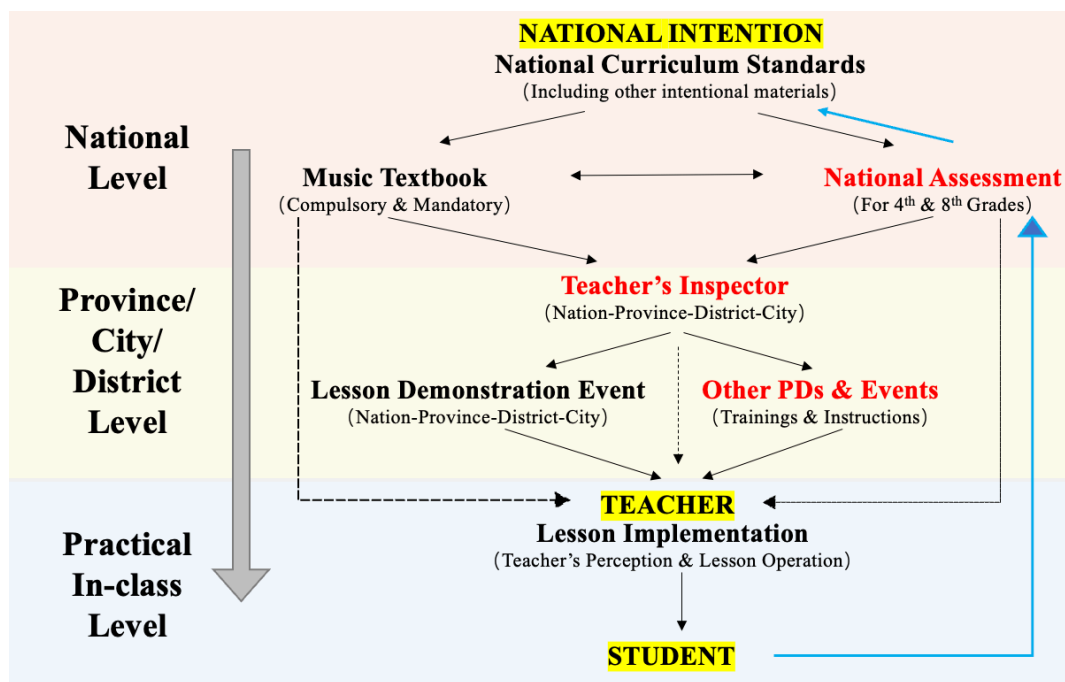
Figure 5.7. **A Diagram of School Music Curriculum in China**

From a general perspective, what participants have mentioned was a linear knowledge transmission system from the educational intention coming from the national level government all the way to practical level teachers and students. The content knowledge and conceptual ideas with national intention were first conceptually written in the National Curriculum Standards, then were further written in the textualized music textbooks and national assessments which were still dominated by China's ministry of education. Once teachers received and perceived this governmental-oriented content knowledge, the different hierarchical levels of the teacher inspectors would start organizing diverse kinds of professional development events, including the Lesson Demonstration Event, to facilitate a better understanding of governmental intention in teaching and learning to the rest of school teachers. Students were the last receiver in this knowledge transmission system and were taught and guided by teachers' prepared music lessons.

Specifically, in the diagram, all the black arrows represent the directions of how the knowledge is transmitted from the government to individual teachers and students. The blue

arrows represent the direction of how the knowledge is assessed and evaluated from students' perspectives to ensure the intentional alignment between government and individuals. According to the participants, they teach knowledge to students not only for empowering students to be independent and knowledgeable individuals but also for preparing them to successfully pass the national assessments and ensuring they have a good understanding of the music knowledge embedded in textbooks and further align the instructional guidance within the curriculum standards.

Accordingly, based on participants' illustrations of each influencing factor to their teachings in this generalized school curriculum system, the observed current lesson implementation, such as content-driven structure, whole-class learning mode, and the neglecting of students' voices might easily be understood. Within this knowledge transmission system in China's school music curriculum, teachers also passively absorb information from their upper level, the government intention, and continued passing it to the students in a linear way. With a strong expectation for teachers to pass through the required knowledge for students without much authority and autonomy at the operational level to adjust or change them, a teacher-centered music lesson would be seen at the actual practical level.

5.2 TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND REFLECTIONS ON THEIR PRACTICES REGARDING SCE

From a theoretical perspective (see Table 2.1), the implemented curriculum contains two aspects: the perceived curriculum and the operational curriculum (Akker, 2004). RQ 1 mostly discovered how teachers operated their lessons and interacted with their students from a regular school teaching perspective. The purpose of RQ 2 was to explore the implemented curriculum from the interpretive perspectives of users, especially with regard to their specific understanding of student-centered education.

This section was mainly based on the participants' first round of interviews before the training sessions.

5.2.1 Personal Interpretation of SCE

Participants in the study recognized student-centered education as an important concept to China's education system. They thought of it as a new direction of educational theory, which was mentioned in many national essential documents, including the updated *Curriculum Standards*. Some examples were provided when participants recalled the first time they heard about SCE. They commonly mentioned the latest curriculum reform had made SCE essential to school music education:

> *Teacher A*: The concept of SCE has been prevalent for many years. I remember that about ten years ago when we were still implementing the previous Curriculum Standards, I saw this idea of emphasizing student learning in some national leading documents. Then, after publishing the new *Curriculum Standards*, SCE quickly started becoming a leading idea for guiding school curriculum reform not only for music subjects but also for many other domains.

> *Teacher B*: I remember the discussion of "teacher-centered education versus student-centered education" continues to be a "hot topic" for at least more than ten years. As a schoolteacher, I can hear this word pretty much everywhere related to my working environment during the important school meetings, professional developments, and some music experts giving the speech.

> *Teacher C*: I have heard this concept since I started my work. Personally speaking, the sentence "making students the center of teaching and learning" has become a teaching routine for me to think about when I conduct my practices. You wouldn't even forget this idea because you will hear this almost everywhere during the important meetings and see this in a lot of essential educational documents.

By being familiar with the concept of SCE for a long time, all three participants commonly introduced their personal interpretations of the idea. The results are illustrated in the following four aspects.

5.2.1.1 Learning Progress Matters

Aligning with Wiggins (2015) and Scott (2011), all participants confidently mentioned that student-centered education is a learning approach that emphasizes student learning progress. It is a conceptual idea that musical learning should go through an interactive process of listening, responding, creating, and performing. Different from a traditional teacher-centered classroom, where teacher instruction took on an important role during lessons, students were now engaging with musical experience and learning outcomes are now at the center of lesson implementation. The specific explanations came from the participants:

> *Teacher A*: The main difference between the concept of teacher-centered and student-centered is that teachers are no more "Yi Yan Tang," which means they can decide everything in class, and students can only accompany whatever the teacher needs to teach for the lesson. For me, an SCE learning environment pays more attention to what students need for learning rather than what teachers want for teaching. I need to credit students by following what they would like to listen to or do if they achieve some sort of big improvement.

> *Teacher B*: SCE upsides down the relationship between teachers and students. I remember we used to be told that teach the lesson by deciding what our teachers think is good for the lesson. However, now we are told that we should always think about whether students are able to understand or "absorb" our planned teaching content while we are planning ahead. There is a clear sense that the student learning experience becomes much more important for us to consider.

> *Teacher C*: In an SCE music lesson, we need to make the students the main character. We, as teachers, are serving student needs. Compared with quietly listening and watching, their thinking and opinions matter in the class. For example, we have many musical listening tasks during the lesson for students to experience music aurally. A teacher-centered way might be asking the students to mimic the teacher's actions by doing movements or responding to fixed answers. But a student-centered classroom would encourage students to give their opinions and create their own movements.

5.2.1.2 In-class Activity Matters

Secondly, involving students in diverse activities was another common point made by all three interviewees. As Blair (2009) stated, an SCE learning environment is where teachers assist

students in interacting with music and each other during classroom activity. The three

participants gave similar opinions:

> *Teacher A*: The most changing part for students, which I have seen over the twenty years of teaching, was how much more engaging time they have gained for doing activities. This is what we call "experience music" to make students feel the music while participating in the activity. Actually, this is also a major educational trend in China to make students active. They were being quiet, listening, and watching for teacher's actions for so long. Now is much better with student active engagement during class time. All the teachers from China are doing this probably.

> *Teacher B*: Personally speaking, music class is a type of class for making and making music. Students are supposed to participate in the musical action to experience the elements embodied in the music itself. I guess this is why we all love conducting activities as a response to SCE during class hours. It is so easy to see how well students engage with the teachers and other students, and it helps to assess student understanding by using a visible way, acting out their feeling! Beyond that, there is another fact that the most famous music learning approaches such as the Orff teaching approach, Kodaly teaching method, and Dalcroze eurythmics have been introduced in China for more than twenty years. Some of their methods are so much fun for students to engage in class. These approaches help broader our thinking to conduct more activities for students.

> *Teacher C*: I have to say that the dominant way of learning music in class is still singing. Many reasons might cause this especially because of the massive singing tasks in the textbook. Therefore, we have to find different strategies and methods to let students sing with fun but not get tired of it. Merely copying whatever the teacher or the soundtrack sing would be very boring and teacher-centered. So, I prefer doing some activities to make students engage and think during the music class.

5.2.1.3 Personal Thoughts Matters

Thirdly, all participants noted how "popular" but "challenging" encouraging students to create

their musical ideas has become. According to them, creativity is an essential element in the

SCE classroom because it helps develop student thinking and creative skills. However,

differently from understanding creativity as a solving of musical problems (Wiggins, 2015),

the participants' thought that creativity was for students to offer personal thoughts. From them:

Teacher A: SCE classroom definitely focuses on student learning, thinking, and creating. But creating part is a difficult task for us to do because it takes time and requires well-behaved students. When we ask students to give free discussion or free creation, the class environment might suddenly become wild and "dangerous" because students would be too overexcited to think about the quality of creation. Therefore, what we usually do is to give the opportunity for students to offer ideas on how to create movements for a song. This is much safe and less loud to do. Students can take turns to offer ideas, most of the students can quickly imitate the movements, and the teacher can collect student ideas and quickly organize a "dance" for the song they are learning.

Teacher B: I can see the entire China educational environment is encouraging us to promote in-class creativity. Asking students to create new ideas, no matter in movements or musical elements such as rhythm and melody is a "popular" topic not only for regular school teaching but also for the demonstration lessons. Even though many teachers prefer to let students create something during the music lesson, I have to say that this is not a very easy task do. Different from simply teaching students how to sing and dance, it requires students understanding of creativity and thinking in progress.

Teacher C: When doing the activity, I ask students to change lyrics or create some movements for a song. For me, having students' unique ideas involved in the creation process is very important. I seldom ask students to create a song or create a hands-on instrument because it involves much more steps during the procedure, and we do not have time for that. However, providing students an opportunity to express their thoughts is still my teaching priority. That is why you may have seen that I sometimes offer a few minutes for them to think and practice.

5.2.1.4 Student Interest and Motivation Matters

The last common perspective of SCE in practice was the attitude that students like music lessons. Specifically, according to participants, an SCE classroom should make students feel willing to engage and participate. Student interest and motivation have become the dominant elements of SCE lesson design and operation. From the participants:

Teacher A: One of the good things about implementing SCE is seeing that students enjoy music lessons much better compared to the past. Well, I also should say that student interests become one of the most critical factors for me to structure my lesson. With the idea of putting students as the center of the class, we also need to respect student interests."

Teacher B: In an SCE learning environment, student interests and motivations play an important role when we design and operate our lessons.

They are the "compass" for reminding us whether we plan the lessons by thinking of student needs. At least for me, I should constantly remind myself that students and their learning are the most crucial thing in class.

Teacher C: I think currently our school music teachers concern more about student interest: whether we have conducted some popular and fun activities, whether the teaching content motives them to be more active during the lesson, and whether students are feeling comfortable with the teaching pacing and new learned knowledge. In other words, student interests become a significant element for us to design our lesson for sure.

5.2.2 Perception and Reflection in Personal SCE Practices

Aligning with the participants' perceptions of SCE, all four interpretive perspectives of SCE were found in the teacher reflectional journals and interview transcripts. In general, all participants believed that SCE had been well adapted to their school system even though there were still many areas for improvement when facing contextual issues. The detailed explanations were found as follows.

5.2.2.1 Well Implementation of SCE

All three participants mentioned that their school music department is following SCE guidance and implements it well in practice. They also illustrated from diverse aspects that good changes have emerged since SCE has been promoted. According to them, current music lessons feature students who were much more engaged and active, have a less intense class environment, and are less teacher-centered. Therefore, participants believed that SCE is well implemented in practice.

Among the three, Teacher A was the most confident when reflecting on her SCE teaching. Her confidence came from her long teaching experience and her role as the head of the department. When she reflected on how her teaching is being implemented now, she said:

I am glad that my students seemingly quite enjoy having my lessons. Actually, throughout these decades, I have completely changed my teaching style from

directly telling students what the knowledge is to designing different activities for them to explore and experience knowledge. Although I am still learning and exploring, I do think we, our department, are doing pretty well in promoting student learning and treating them as the center of the lesson. (Teacher A)

She further illustrated how the multiple teaching methods support SCE in her school music lessons:

For extending our teaching methods, our school allowed me to invite some music experts in Orff teaching approach, Kodaly teaching method, and Dalcroze eurythmics. These teaching methods from different aspects support student participation in singing, playing instruments, dancing, listening, Music Appreciation, and many domains. By the way, we also purchased a full set of Orff percussive instruments last year for supporting teacher teaching. Even though chorus teaching is our school's main character, we never limited our view in singing but continue seeking the multiple teaching methods for supporting the idea of SCE in a regular classroom setting. (Teacher A)

Moreover, she also stated the positive effects of implementing SCE from a student perspective:

I can see these multiple music teaching methods benefit student learning experience and understanding. Students, compared to the past, become much more engaged and participated in the activities. The main reason is that activity-based lesson is much more fun and relaxing. During the activities, students unconsciously remember what we want them to learn. I guess this is also the reason why our nation and our school promote the SCE learning approach. Not only in my lesson, but when I observed other music teachers learning, I can see this engaging music classroom truly benefits student learning and development. (Teacher A)

Teacher B illustrated her good implementation of SCE by providing the specific teaching strategies. According to her, in an SCE learning environment, a story-telling strategy was positive because it attracted the attention of lower elementary school students. Pop-music exploration was effective for getting older students to focus on music elements. A specific example of how she designed an SCE activity for older students was:

I found that asking my six graders to improvise lyrics worked well for engaging them in the classroom. For their ages, they started becoming shy

to sing and dance but are still highly interested in creating new ideas. One of the activities I have done, which I think worked very well, was asking them to change the familiar lyrics to their favorite ones and then asking them to present their creations. Their thoughts were so different from each other, and they also enjoyed listening to others' creations. This kind of activity might only provide students a few opportunities to express themselves a little bit, but I can see student excitement when presenting their works. I guess this is what SCE is aiming for, to provide students opportunities in presenting themselves. I'm working on designing more of this kind of activity to engage my students. (Teacher B)

5.2.2.2 Concerns Towards SCE In Practice

However, while participants were confident of current SCE implementation, they also raised a few questions and concerns, especially about the activity-based lesson structure mode. Questions such as how to keep student enthusiasm and turn it into study motivation, organize collaborative activities, bring in content not in the textbook, and promote more student creativity were all reflected in both interviews and reflectional journals.

Specifically, one significant concern about current teaching was that, although student interest was inspired by multiple activities, the maintaining of these interests and passions for an extended period was still uncertain.

Participants noticed that younger elementary students are naturally more curious about learning content. They quickly imitate or respond to teacher actions, follow teacher instructions, and actively engage with different types of activities with natural curiosity and enthusiasm. However, students become less passionate about learning music as they get older. They become "Ting Hua," following teacher instruction as before while continuing to learn in a fixed method with repetitive practices. To this end, participants were eager to find "the most effective one" or a few efficient teaching strategies to solve this question. They wanted to ensure longer student passion. As Teacher C mentioned in her reflective journals:

Students of diverse ages have experienced different degrees of mental changes. Each class of students has different levels of receiving knowledge. When facing a large number of students in class with a heavy teaching load,

> I am always thinking is there an effective teaching way to satisfy different kinds of classes and students, and to keep motivating their learning? (Teacher C)

Teacher B illustrated the same concerns but was curious about the phenomenon of "active engagement" in the long run. From here:

> Implementing SCE makes the classroom environment becomes much more active, but I am actually not sure about this active learning would certainly benefit students actual learning outcomes. Especially when students are getting older, either they don't want to participate in game-based activities or they are so used to the teacher's teaching style, I wonder whether this activity-leading teaching mode would still be effective enough for their musical understanding. (Teacher B)

The large size of the classroom (40 to 50 students) was also noted as one of the biggest obstacles to the complete implementation of SCE in class. Even though the instructional suggestions from the *Curriculum Standards* promote student individuality, collaboration skills, and independent creativity (Ministry of Education, People's Republic of China, 2011), teachers still struggled with whether time should be spent on fostering individuality or standardized generalized understanding.

From Teacher A's perspective, it was essential to see the majority of students positively engaged in the music lesson. This was a good sign that the majority of students were participating in the music learning experience. According to her, when facing a context of limited teaching time and a large number of students, generalized teaching strategies, such as whole class learning and teacher-centered instructional time, ensured most student musical learning.

However, when Teacher C shared her opinions about SCE in practice, she stated her desire to provide more time to fostering individuality. As the only participant who led all three different kinds of learning approaches, individual learning, group learning, and whole-class learning in her first three video recordings, Teacher C reflected on the limited time spent on individual students and pointed out the contextual limitations:

> It was a super challenge when I try to provide time for students but also have to think about finishing all the planned tasks, including the textbook-required knowledge. Spending too much time on creativity and collaboration would make the lesson becomes noisy and in danger of being out of control. However, spending too little time on student independent learning seemingly does not truly focus on individual students in an SCE learning environment. I have not figured out a better way to balance this controverted situation yet. (Teacher C)

Teacher B described her practical concerns by sharing her views of others' SCE teaching experiences. She wanted to try another kind of SCE lesson, a class with "flipped" educational roles, which she had heard about a few years ago in Shanghai. She admired the way in which teachers became the "students" to learn from student "teachers." Teacher B thought this kind of lesson might provide students with the full authority to select learning content, explore information, and give them the confidenve to present themselves as teachers in class. She shared this desire to imply the completely different teaching situation she has. As she said:

> I have heard this kind of teaching for a long time, but I never dare to try. The large number of students combined with the textbook-required teaching content drives me only have the energy to think about when I could finish all my teaching tasks. Accordingly, the pressure from the external teaching context was the main limitation when I design my lessons. The unavoidable classroom management, the required teaching tasks, and the goal of ensuring most of the students understand make me and other teachers really struggle sometimes to try out some new teaching methods and strategies. (Teacher B)

5.2.3 Summary of Teacher Perception and Reflection towards SCE

Based on the descriptive data drawn from the first round of interviews and written documents, the findings demonstrate a few commonalities between participants when perceiving and reflecting on their practices.

First of all, all three participants have a common understanding of SCE. According to their interpretation, a possible definition of SCE could be:

Student-centered education is a learning theory that emphasizes the students and their learning process guided by the national music *Curriculum Standards*. The purpose of SCE is to provide opportunities for students to positively participate in the class activities, present their personal thoughts and ideas, and further like music lessons in the long run. Replacing the traditional teacher "Yi Yan Tang" situation, SCE with its strength in developing student interests and motivations, makes students become the dominant considering factor when delivering knowledge. Therefore, in an SCE learning environment, students should be commonly seen actively engaging in the class activities with high motivation in learning music.

All three participants perceived that they are in the process of implementing SCE with School A's support. Among all the different strategies to encourage student learning motivation, activity-based lesson design under a required content-driven lesson structure was frequently mentioned as the most effective way of engaging students and supporting the unconscious delivery of knowledge.

Nevertheless, while participants praised their own SCE implementation, they also discussed their classroom concerns and difficulties. On the one hand, SCE encouraged students to be both independent and collaborative learners, but participants could not provide enough time to foster these abilities. On the other hand, the large class sizes and textbook-driven required knowledge were the main obstacle to completely following the theory of SCE. This led independent student exploration and creativity to be barely implemented. Also, although students were more active in an SCE learning environment than in the past, the effective learning outcome were still to be assessed, and continuous and lasting motivation for music learning also needed to be witnessed.

5.3 THE POSSIBILITIES OF IMPLEMENTING SCE IN CHINA REGULAR MUSIC CLASS

SCE has been examined from mostly Western perspectives and its successful implementation has been noted in smaller classes with well-trained educators (Alford et al., 2016; Bautista et al., 2018). However, SCE instruction was also highly recommended by China's national intentional level to large-sized music classrooms. Therefore, the findings for RQ 3 aimed to present empirical research with the aim of discovering the possibility of implementing SCE instructional practices in a large number of student environments.

As described in Chapter 3, after three weeks of interventional training, all three participants were required to conduct three new lessons that would constitute the experimental lessons. One was a *musical concept-based lesson plan*, which emphasized musical dimensions (see Figure 3.4); the second was a *general interdisciplinary concept-based lesson plan*, which focused on developing student interdisciplinary thinking and working skills, and the third was a *self-directed SCE lesson plan*, which allowed participants to design their own SCE-based lesson.

This section was derived from the second round of data, including observations, interviews, and written documents. According to the results, the experimental lessons displayed some changed behavioral practices and a few unchanged statuses compared to what was observed in the first round of data. All three aspects of data, observations, interviews, and teacher written documents were essential to the comprehensive understanding of the adaptation of a Western-style SCE in China.

5.3.1 General Status of Experimental Lessons

Referring to Wiggins' book (2015), *Teaching for Musical Understanding*, participants independently designed their three experimental lessons during and after the interventional training. The specific design information for three types of lessons is given below.

5.3.1.1 Musical Concept-based Lesson Plan

The purpose of teaching musical concepts and elements is to "understand the whole (the musical work or experience)" within its context (Wiggins, 2015, p. 31). Following this idea, "melody," "rhythm," and "melody and rhythm" were chosen by Teachers A, B, and C respectively as the main teaching concepts for their experimental lessons "element of music" or "dimension of music" (Wiggins, 2015, p. 30). The detailed lesson design from each participant can be seen in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2. A Summary of Lesson Plans for First Experiential Lessons

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C
Musical Concept	Melody	Rhythm	Melody and Rhythm
Teaching Goal	1. Through reviewing a number of familiar songs which students learned in the past few months, students can recognize how many musical notes are in each of the songs and how musical notes support composing a song. 2. A mind map with different notes clustered in diverse scales will be demonstrated on board for students to understand the meaning of "musical scale."	1. Students are able to recognize and apply *Quarter Notes*, *Eighth Notes*, *Sixteenth Notes*, and *Eight Sixteenth Notes* in practice. 2. Students are able to combine the different rhythm patterns to create an independent chant 3. Students are able to use what they learned in rhythmic knowledge to sight-read the song "Wild Roses."	Through participating in both melodic and rhythmic activities, students would get familiar with specific musical elements, which could support learning the required song "Parachute."
Content Focus	The "magic" combination of notes (forming different scales) support two aspects of musical understandings: 1. "Musical Scales" 2. Songs created by diverse scales	The application of different rhythm patterns: a. Teacher conduct and lead to reading b. Sight-read the rhythm patterns	1. The application of *Eighth Note*, *Quarter Note,* and *Half Note* within different rhythm patterns 2. C major scale sight-singing for learning the song

		c. Students create independent rhythm patterns in their notebooks	
Skill Focus	1. Singing skill: Students will be guided to sing a number of familiar songs. 2. Analyzing skill: After singing each song, students should self-define how many musical notes are in each of the songs.	1. Sight-reading skill (Rhythmic): Students should be able to read the different rhythm patterns fluently. 2. Creating skills: Students should be able to design their own rhythm patterns and create chants by adding in lyrics.	1. Singing skill: Students should be able to sing the song "Parachute" independently. 2. Movement skill: Students should be able to use their bodies to demonstrate the descending scale.

5.3.1.2 General Interdisciplinary Process-connected Lesson Plan

The aim of teaching interdisciplinary concepts is to help students build an "authentic connection" and "understand and engage in the various disciplines" (Wiggins, 2015, p. 208). In the participants' lesson plans, classifying, comparing, describing, and analyzing as learning processes were all found are the process connection within an interdisciplinary lesson. From a general understanding of the definition for an interdisciplinary lesson, participants originally provided two interpretations before the interventional training started. They were: 1) to present musical understanding from another subject domain — focusing on one present another subject knowledge, and 2) to use multiple discipline knowledge to support one common concept — focusing on the common concept across diverse disciplines. Therefore, one of Wiggins' recommendation for an interdisciplinary course, the process-connected skill course, that focuses such as classifying, comparing, predicting, describing, applying, and summarizing skills were applied in participants' lessons. The details from an interdisciplinary lesson designing aspect are summarized in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. A Summary of Lesson Plans for Second Experiential Lessons

	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C
Teaching Goal	Based on the "scale" knowledge from the previous lesson, students	Students need to review musical knowledge from the	By reviewing all the musical knowledge with the teacher first, students need

	will need to classify the songs in their textbooks based on how each song's musical notes are organized.	past six years and summary what they have learned.	to draw a poster to summarize what they have learned from "rhythm" and "melody," two aspects of musical concepts.
Content Focus	Rather than singing any specific songs, students will be given independent time to think about the musical connections between songs.	Students will be given time to draw a summary chart including the songs/knowledge they have learned before.	Because of their young age, the teacher will first guide students to review all the information together and then provide time to work by themselves.
Process Connection	Classifying, Analyzing	Summarizing	Summarizing

5.3.1.3 Self-directed SCE Lesson Plan

The third experimental lesson aimed to provide the autonomy to participants to design a SCE lesson based on their training and the experience gained from the previous two experimental lessons.

Teacher A continued designing another musical concept-based lesson plan which emphasized the concepts of "melody" and "harmony" to support learning a song. Students practiced singing to enhance their understanding of "harmony" during the lessons. Compared to the previous two experimental lessons, the third was more similar to the teacher's original singing lessons, which mostly focused on vocal development but added some independent working time for students to think and practice the specific musical elements.

Teacher B's lesson design was a return to her original activity-driven style. Diverse kinds of melodic, rhythmic, movement, and instrumental activities were found for students to engage in actively and participate. The entire lesson design had the purpose of teaching students how to sing a new song well. Each activity were conducted to learn one aspect of the song. Therefore, a teacher-centered and content-driven lesson structure was mostly found and judged similar to her three regular lesson designs.

Like Teacher B, Teacher C's third experimental lesson design was also content-driven but added more "melody" and "rhythm" concepts. By asking students to review what they had

learned about these two concepts and how they demonstrated the knowledge they learned, a small amount of independent exploration was provided to students to think and practice their understanding. A "Musical Concept-based" lesson structure and content-driven lesson design were both embodied in the lesson.

5.3.2 The Changes and Retentions

The purpose of implementing Wiggins' SCE lesson plans was to judge the possibility of conducting a well-recognized constructivist learning approach in a Chinese contextual teaching situation. Based on the observational results, multiple coding aspects appeared to signal diverse changes from the participants' original lessons. Many other elements remained the same. The specific findings are summarized below.

5.3.2.1 Review Existing Knowledge

Firstly, a large change was seen in participants' lesson structures. More attention was paid to previous student learning experience. In other words, the original regular lessons had a content-driven nature which left almost no space for students to connect the knowledge from "past known" to the "new learned." However, the first two experimental lessons under a constructivist perspective emphasized how new musical understanding happens based on previous knowledge.

Therefore, compared to the participants' three regular classes, the proportion of time spent reviewing student previous knowledge increased from rare appearance (range from 0%-2.11%) to common occurrence (range from 14.33%-99.11%) over the first two experimental lessons. The main reason was that teachers changed their teaching pedagogies from directly delivering new teaching content to asking students to summarize or classify what they had learned in the

past. Figure 5.8 demonstrates the significantly increased proportion of *Review Existing Knowledge* (REK) in the first two experimental lessons (E1 & E2).

	R1	R2	R3	E1	E2	E3
Teacher A	0.00%	2.11%	1.11%	72.22%	64.78%	0.00%
Teacher B	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	19.11%	99.11%	1.78%
Teacher C	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	36.00%	14.33%	14.33%
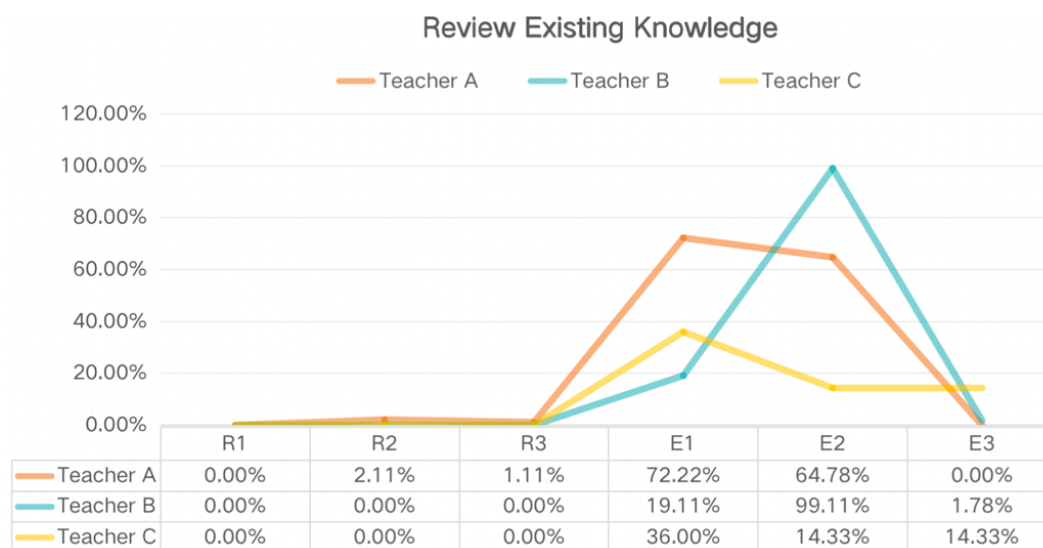
Figure 5.8. **A Comparison Between Regular Teaching and Experimental Teaching in REK**

5.3.2.2 Individual Work

Another aspect that increased tremendously (see Figure 5.9) was individual student working time. There was much less time spent on other learning approaches in the participants' three regular lessons than learning in a whole-class format. Therefore, there was a concern that student individuality would not be developed well as a consequence. However, in the experimental lessons, a large proportion of time was provided for students to independently work on what they had learned and further create personal ideas. This increased the chance that student voices might be heard independently and further empowered student autonomy in the music lessons.
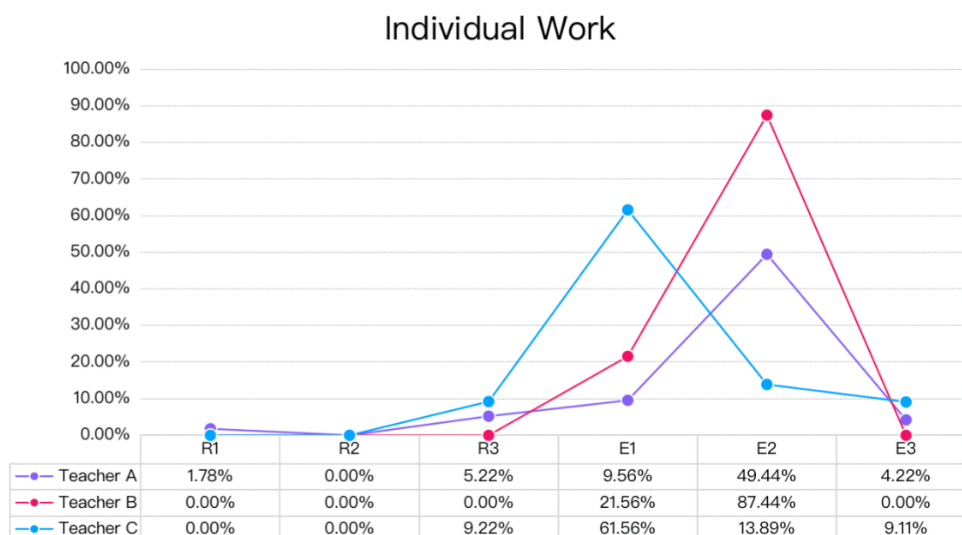
Figure 5.9. **A Comparison Between Regular Teaching and Experimental Teaching in IW**

5.3.2.3 The Retained Elements

However, while some positive changes occurred in the experimental lessons, some phenomena remained the same as in the regular lessons. The specific results can be illustrated from two aspects.

On the one hand, many aspects remained similar to the participants' regular lessons. Although individual working time was much increased, learning within small groups of exploration or discussion was still rare. Besides, while student voices were increasingly heard, participant teachers still rarely provided their comments and opinions on student answers. With many changes appearing in the experimental lessons, class management also occurred as frequently as in the regular school teaching. In some of the lessons, classroom management became an important teaching behavior to keep the lesson going.

On the other hand, even though the first two experimental lessons occasioned some exciting changes that seemingly gave more emphasis to student experience and autonomy, the final experimental lessons, to some extent, went back to participants' regular lesson design. Rather than increasingly considering student specific musical skills and growth in

interdisciplinary competencies, the content-driven and activity-driven lesson designs reversed the changes sharply, almost back to their original levels.

5.3.3 Perceptions and Reflections towards Experimental Lessons

Observational findings revealed that participants implemented the new SCE lesson structures based on Wiggins' book but quickly changed back to their original lesson structures when they gained the autonomy to design. This aroused a few questions from many aspects. For example, how did participants perceive Wiggins' SCE lesson structure? From the participants' perspective, did the first two experimental lessons effectively support student learning? After implementation, how did participants reflect on the application? Also, why did participants change back to their original lesson design? Answers to these questions were found in the participants' interviews and reflective journals and are addressed in the following sections.

5.3.3.1 General Perception of the Experimental Lessons

To align with what had been observed in the participants' three regular lessons, the findings for their general perceptions towards the experimental lessons can be stated from the following three perspectives.

Lesson Structure

From a lesson structural aspect, participants illustrated how their lesson preparation changed from focusing on "what should be taught to students" to "what students could demonstrate their understanding to teachers." Teachers also stated that when the textbook became a teaching reference, instead of a required resource, there was more flexible time to follow student learning paces and focus on individual understanding. From Teacher B's perspective, although

she structured her first two experimental lessons based on the knowledge within the textbook, previous student experience and musical creation became more important than in her past lessons. In her words:

> In my past lessons, I gave students musical quizzes or paper tests when I want to make students review their previous knowledge. I used to think a standardized answer would provide a clear picture of whether students truly understand what they have learned in class. However, in my second interdisciplinary experimental lesson, I asked them to draw a mind map by writing down their summaries of the musical knowledge they have learned. It was amazing to see they actually have their own thinking and understanding when structuring the mind map. Their answers are similar but not the same. The most important thing is, I seemingly provided a hind to them that their open-answers matter because they looked very happen when writing. (Teacher B)

Another interesting comment was made by Teacher A when illustrating how much time she spent preparing the lesson before implementing it. When the emphasis of lesson structure truly switched from content-driven to student-centered, teachers needed to prepare many steps to support learning:

> After learning Wiggins in the training, I thought an SCE lesson plan should be easy to create because there was no fixed structure or required content to follow. However, the surprising part for me was switching my mind from preparing knowledge by having standardized references to completely following the student pace. For letting students fully express their understanding, I need to review what I have taught first and structure in mind what questions they might ask and what problems they might encounter. Also, reviewing their personal ideas also take time because we have more than 40 students in class. The task of structuring this kind of lesson was truly not easy at all. (Teacher A)

Teaching Aspect

From the teaching aspect, participants commonly mentioned the feelings of "loose" and "flexible" teacher behavior during the experimental lessons. According to them, there was a "recommended" or "standardized" teaching sequence guided by the music inspectors to follow in normal lesson implementation. As the teacher instructor/leader, music inspectors provide specific suggestions, such as how much time should be spent on giving instruction and

conducting activities, what kinds of activities should occur during lessons, and at what pace content knowledge should be delivered. To this end, teacher practices could not be regarded as "wrong" because of these suggestions and there was not a lot of innovative practice for the same reason.

Conversely, the experimental lessons were designed relying on personal experience and perceptions of their own students' learning progress. In other words, no music inspectors had told them what the best lesson implementation would be. Consequently, teachers had to conduct a little more discussion with students to understand their feelings and working progress to inform the next teaching steps.

Learning Aspect

From the learning perspective, all three participants expressed their excitement when seeing student musical creations. As they said, they were used to being cautious of allowing students to create things individually because of the time pressures of delivering all the information in the textbook. They also have limited confidence in student creations because students are less knowledgeable than teachers, and they might not present their understandings very well. Teacher A expressed her feelings about this lack of confidence in student work:

> Even though I designed a lesson of asking students to classify their understanding of melody, I felt very nervous about student creation. You know, I need to video my lesson to you, right? What if students cannot draw anything from their head? What if they cannot classify their musical understanding from their memories? (Teacher A)

However, student reactions to the experimental lessons were different to what teachers used to expect. They enjoyed the moments of expressing their musical thoughts and focused well while creating. Teacher A also mentioned how amazed she felt when she saw second graders' drawings. In her words:

> In my more than 40 student class, more than 20 students could hand in their work nicely with a few summaries in the drawing. Even though there were still around 10 students who did not hand in their work, the general effect was pretty good which is out of my expectation. The most important thing is that students mentioned they really enjoyed the moments of drawing their understandings. It definitely is an inspiring and creation-driven activity to do. (Teacher A)

Teacher C. also noted a similar excitement when seeing students work. She provided a series of student musical posters (see Figure 5.10) summarizing melodic and rhythmic knowledge to express her surprise in student thinking and work.
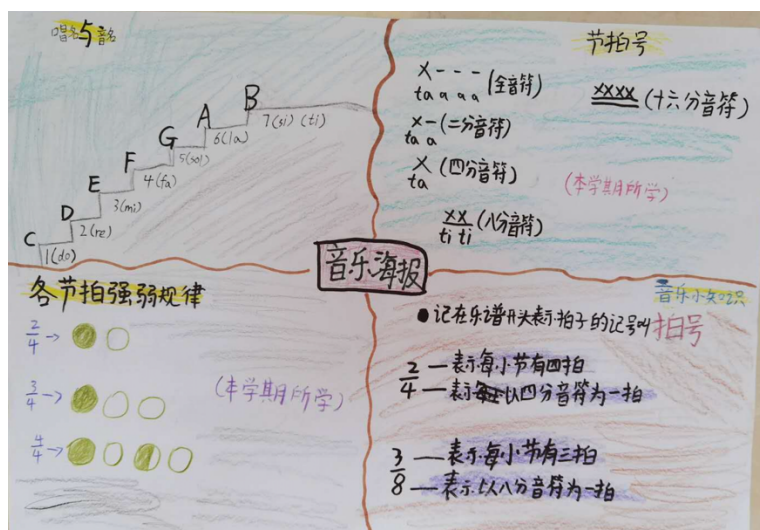
Figure 5.10. **An Example of Student Work in Summarizing Musical Knowledge**

5.3.3.2 Reflection on the Meaning of SCE

Except for the general perceptions towards SCE in practice, participants also commonly reflected on their new understanding of SCE as an educational concept. The interventional training from a theoretical level in tandem with experimental lessons from a practical level broadened their understanding of what SCE is, especially the meanings of its "sub-concepts." According to participants, these "sub-concepts" referred to the specific instructional strategies and methods that could guide teachers to implementing SCE well in practice. As Teacher A explained:

I have experienced the main conceptual changes in education for a few times because of my long teaching period. But each main concept also contains multiple sub-concepts which also need to be introduced to us with specific teaching in action. From my experience, people often discuss about the main concept, what is SCE, but rather on the specific teaching methods and strategies, how to implement SCE. For example, the phrases such as "let students experience music," "provide student autonomy", and "develop student creativity" also needs us to understand how to let students "experience" and what we should do to promote "creativity." Unfortunately, because of the lacking experiences, in many circumstances, we just guess what we need to do. (Teacher A)

A similar comment was also made by Teacher B. She noted that she used to have a "narrow" understanding of a term which appears a lot in the theory of SCE; autonomy. Wiggins (2015), from a music perspective, advocated that "music learning should enable learners to move toward a degree of independence and autonomy in music (p. 39)". However, Teacher B illustrated her original thinking about this term and her new understanding after the experimental lessons in her reflectional journal:

I realized that it is necessary to understand the meanings of the detailed concepts under the broad SCE…Regarding 'autonomy, what I have done in the past was that I normally to ask students improvise some lyrics or verbally answer some questions. My original understanding of 'autonomy' in an SCE learning environment was to let students be autonomous to provide their ideas, mostly verbal. This is why when designing my experimental lessons, I realized how narrow I thought about the concept of 'autonomy'. Students could be able to work alone and think independently. Especially for my grade six students, when I asked them to independently work on their summary of learning, it was amazed to see how excited students enjoy thinking and creating things by themselves. (Teacher B)

Concern about the inadequate SCE professional development

When participants mentioned the fresh interpretation of SCE, they also commented on the difficulties that inhibited their comprehensive interpretation of SCE. In their interviews, participants mentioned that very little official professional development had been conducted to introduce what SCE music lessons should look like and what teaching practices teachers should consider applying in class. Therefore, teacher understanding of SCE comes mostly from self-

interpretation based on personal teaching experiences and observing the demonstration lessons

of the model teachers. A few explanations are given by teachers below.

> I feel that I changed my thinking way of structuring lessons when I learned what an SCE lesson is from the western perspective. In the past when we talked about a good music lesson, we always thought the lessons should include singing and active activities participation. It seems like I started providing more time for students to quietly think rather than merely actively doing in the experimental lessons. This is a very interesting finding. I think most of us did not realize this, but actually, no one ever mentioned this to us as well. Neither we could perceive that from any teacher training nor observing in anyone's demonstration lessons. (Teacher B)

> I have tried asking students to summarize what they have learned in the previous lesson but in a verbal communicating way rather than writing any personal thoughts down. I also have tried providing time for students but less considering whether the time is long enough for their thinking process. Some of the ideas embodied in your SCE training were indeed fresh to me. I guess I did not understand SCE very well because I rarely participated in any professional developments and seldom observed others' lessons. But from what I heard; they seemingly do not benefit much from a theoretical level to guide our actual teaching practices. We still have to explore what is SCE based on our teaching experiences. (Teacher C)

Challenges to implementing experimental lessons in a long run

Besides professional development, participants also shared similar worries about implementing

Western-style SCE lesson into Chinese music classes in the long run. The specific challenges

of continuing the experimental format into the regular school teaching environment came from

two perspectives.

First of all, the advantage of experimental lessons was allowing students to independently

express their musical understanding and demonstrate their personal creations. However, this

kind of lesson requires time for students to process their thinking, expression, and creating.

However, time is very limited in reality because of pressure to complete the required teaching

content and make students memorize massive amounts of content. According to the

participants, if the required content was not delivered from teachers to students properly and

comprehensively it would be harmful to both teachers and students. Teachers might be blamed

by the music inspectors or school administrators for not completing the required tasks. Students might not be able to pass the standardized national arts assessments, which rely on the required content knowledge at Grade 4 and Grade 7. Because of this, thinking about the teaching pace and how to distribute the textbook content in each semester and school year has become what Teacher A described as "a teaching habit." This might also be the main reason they returned to content-driven lessons for the third experimental lessons.

The experimental lessons recommended teachers structure SCE lessons for promoting individuality by providing opportunities for students' independent autonomy, authority and thinking, and creating processes (Wiggins, 2015). In contrast, the large number of students sitting in a limited learning space forced teachers to consider mostly on how to maximize students' understand in the learning content rather than how much each student absorbs the knowledge. In other words, to ensure students at large to have a relatively standardized understanding, participants prefer choosing a *collective student-centered* rather than an *individual student-centered* strategy when implementing lessons. As Teacher B mentioned, many conflicts appear when focusing on individuals rather than whole-class learning. For example, individuality needs time to think and create, but time is pressurized as mentioned before. Individuality requires discussion to express personal thoughts and perspectives, whereas the number of students in each class would make such a class extremely loud and noisy. Individuality requires collaboration with peers to ensure a focus on learning goals rather than unrelated content. The limited size of teaching spaces was the main obstacle inhibiting group work. To this end, *whole-class learning* became the teacher's preference in lessons and was embodied across the third experimental lesson's structure and implementation.

5.3.4 Summary of the Possibilities in Implementing SCE

Under Wiggins' constructivist SCE lesson recommendations, experimental lessons have been implemented to both teacher and student satisfaction in the participants' regular music lessons. By increasing the class time devoted to reviewing student previous knowledge and allowing students to summarize and create their musical ideas individually, all participants shared their excitement at the thought students could be given the autonomy to think, express, and create on their own. They also positively expressed their fresh understanding of SCE after being trained in the qualitative intervention and implementation that they learned in theory and actual practice.

However, although positive perceptions of a Western-styled SCE were commented on, participants also stated their concerns and the perceived difficulties associated with implementing Western-styled SCE in the long term Chinese context.

First of all, a comprehensive understanding of SCE requires not only understanding of the main conceptual meaning but also of its related concepts, teaching methods, and teaching strategies. However, as the participants mentioned, there is currently a lack of professional training for understanding SCE in both theory and practice. This inadequate understanding causes diverse interpretations based on personal experience and observation of teaching demonstrations. The differences in SCE interpretation cause different teaching methods and strategies in actions and might ultimately affect student learning achievements. Therefore, rather than guessing at how SCE might work in practice, participants preferred to follow trusted teaching habits and traditions.

Even with a comprehensive and broader understanding of SCE, the compulsory teaching tasks and present educational contexts of China inhibit original educational goals in SCE. Specifically, the amount of required teaching content, time pressures, large class sizes, and limited teaching spaces that are common in the current Chinese music teaching context are

seen as major obstacles to promoting student individuality and the expression of their personal thoughts. To ensure teachers finish teaching tasks and students pass national assessments, *individual student-centered education* is not believed to be as practical and effective as *group student-centered education.* In other words, instead of providing large amounts of time to student personal thinking, expression, and creativity, the participant teachers prefer to adapt their teaching methods to a content-driven and activity-dominated format to ensure student musical understanding.

Consequently, it can be seen in the results of this study that participants have a mixed view of implementing Western-style SCE into China's music lessons. On the one hand, they are excited about short-term implementation effects which benefit student personal growth. On the other hand, they are concerned about the long term consequences of not completing the national educational requirements. To this end, to implement a long term Western-styled SCE, a balanced and localized interpretation of SCE must be pursued by urgently increasing professional training in teaching methods and strategies.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

As an essential connection between intended curriculum and attained curriculum in Goodlad's (1979) curriculum representation, implemented curriculum has been used to interpret China's educational phenomenon (Cui, Zhou & Dong, 2018; Li, 2017). However, few empirical studies have explored the implemented curriculum in a Chinese music educational context (Yang et al., 2021). To this end, like the "black box" (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977; Cuban, 2013), the implemented curriculum in the Chinese music education domain has been explored in this doctoral thesis based on two types of general music lessons; demonstration lessons and regular school lessons. The findings not only illuminate how lessons are being held in the Chinese music education context but also expose connecting concerns, which might affect the entire theory curriculum representation. This Chapter aims to provide a discussion of the specific curriculum situation in China's music education domain and point out the potential issues that might inspire Chinese educators to reflect on possible solutions with a student-centered educational approach.

6.1 A COMPARISON OF THE LESSON IMPLEMENTATION IN TWO KINDS OF CLASSES

Through observation, Chapters 4 and 5 have investigated two types of lessons; Music Class Demonstration (MCD) and regular school lessons, and aimed to demonstrate the operational level of lesson implementation. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the demonstration lesson (MCD) is a unique phenomenon of China's educational system. On the one hand, it represents the requirements of the *Curriculum Standards* and functions as part of official national guidance on the intended curriculum (Li, 2017). On the other hand, the demonstration lessons are

selected from regular school lessons, which are representative of the implemented curriculum (Xiao, 2019). Therefore, exploring the similarities and differences between demonstration lessons and the regular school lessons might help understand their relationship and connection, especially from a broader curriculum perspective. The following sections generalize key findings from these two aspects and provide readers with a picture of how lessons are being implemented in the Chinese music teaching context.

6.1.1 Similarities

The observational findings have revealed that demonstration lessons show strong similarities to regular school teaching with regard to lesson structure and operation. Specific commonalities are presented from the following aspects.

First, the greatest amount of time was spent on learning new content in both sets of lessons. Little time was spent reviewing existing knowledge in either demonstration or regular school settings. According to Yu and Leung (2019), the phenomenon of conducting lessons led by new content and knowledge in music lessons can be seen as a "content-driven" teaching model. The unbalanced connection between student "learned" knowledge to "new received" information indicates that a content-driven teaching mode is very present in China music class. Based on previous literature, the content-driven teaching mode might relate to China's national textbook policy, which requires teachers to deliver the pre-determined knowledge to students (Jiao & Xun, 2018). The standardized expectations of student achievement and assessing student learning outcomes by using a standardized national examination may also indicate a content-driven teaching mode (Wang, 2003). The "cultural tradition" that Brinkmann (2015) described for the Indian educational context might also affect this content-driven phenomenon. Since class textbooks are used extensively in China, teachers might form the habit of relying on the textbook. As compulsory teaching resources, teachers are forced to complete content as

the required teaching tasks within the textbooks (Wang, 2003). However, no matter what the causes of content-driven teaching, the two kinds of lessons exposed concerns of too little autonomy and authority being given to students. When the teaching goal becomes to finish compulsory teaching tasks, it might be that not enough attention is given to checking student previous understanding and present learning progress. This can lead to aspects of the initial educational purpose of student learning becoming vague.

Unlike the traditional teacher-centered lesson environments of China, where direct instruction is common (Li, 2017), much more classroom time for student active participation was found in both types of examined lessons. The demonstration lessons gave slightly more time to conducting activities and also provided a balanced learning environment for student static and dynamic action. Similar observational results were also found in the regular Shenzhen music lessons, which further confirmed the significance of student active participation. The regular schoolteachers mentioned that they were encouraged to inspire students to actively engage in classroom activities. This conception matches well with Chinese governmental encouragement of "active activities," the construction of an "active learning environment," and the fostering of "active students" (Xu, 2011). To this end, the emphasis on class activities in both types of lessons points to a possible common tendency towards student engagement and participation being taken into greater consideration during music lessons.

Both types of lessons showed that singing-based activities still take a dominant role in class. In fact, the long tradition of using singing in Chinese music lessons has been reported by many educators (Li, 2017; Liu, 2011; Ma, 2002). Singing has been recommended as the best way to express musical understanding in the past decades (Ma, 2002). This meant it was unsurprising to note singing-based activities are still a common teaching choice for teachers. However, singing-based activities have the character of expressing music, rather than creating music (Wiggins, 2015). When the majority of time is spent on singing, rather than thinking and

exploration, students might get used to the teaching model and gather the impression that participating in activities should mostly focus on music expression rather than music thinking and creation. (Wiggins, 2015). In other words, singing had a large amount of time devoted to it in both types of lesson implementation and a shortage of musical thinking skills might be a common result among Guangdong music students.

Furthermore, a large proportion of whole class learning approaches appear in both types of lessons. Students were seemingly used to following teacher guidance and imitating teacher behaviors quickly based on instructions. Consequently, independent thinking and team collaboration were weakened during the lesson times. However, similar to the emphasis given to singing-based activities, the whole-class learning approach provides limited time and space for students to practice their thinking and exploration skills. In fact, independent exploration and peer collaboration, with their high value in power-sharing (Bremner, 2020), creative thinking (Coss, 2019), and individuality (Elena, 2015), are recommended in both SCE theory and the Chinese *Curriculum Standards*. In other words, whole-class learning under teacher guidance with few individual or collaborative learning approaches gives rise to the suspicion that teachers might still be taking the lead in activities, knowledge explanation, and lesson organization. In this way, it might not be surprising to conclude that TCE might be more common than SCE in the Chinese music teaching context.

6.1.2 Differences

Despite having many observable features in common, demonstration and regular school lessons were also observed to have two main differences at their operational lesson levels.

6.1.2.1 Fixed Sequential Pattern

The first difference is the fixed sequential pattern, LI (leading in)-LNC (Learning new content)-GF (Going further)-S/R (Summary/Reflection) was commonly found in demonstration lesson structures. In contrast, this pattern rarely occurred in the regular school setting. For the regular music classes LI and LNC similarly appeared but GF was only sporadically found. This seemed to depend on how much time regular music class teachers had left for extending the newly learned knowledge. S/R, differently, occurred much less often in the regular music class setting. These difference lead to two interesting assumptions.

Based on behaviorist theory, sequential patterns are usually used to reinforce certain behaviors through repetitive actions (Yarbrough, Price & Hendel, 1994). Due to behaviorists believing that students can be managed under teacher instruction and the learning consequences, rather than the processes, can be targeted (Schwandt, 1994). Sequential patterns might reduce student authority over knowledge construction and easily return to a teacher-oriented education. Therefore, if sequential patterns commonly exist in demonstration lessons, should we assume that TCE, rather than China's *Curriculum Standards* suggestion of SCE, is the actual lesson implementation mode? In other words, the fact that SCE is suggested in *Curriculum Standards* but TCE is observed in official demonstration lessons is a controversial phenomenon.

The demonstration lessons should represent *Curriculum Standards* (Li, 2017) and possess a guiding function for regular school lessons (Xiao, 2019). However, the regular school music teachers conduct their lessons by relying on the actual teaching pace, rather than on the fixed structured teaching pattern observed in demonstration lessons. In this light, the influence of demonstration lessons on regular school music lessons might reasonably be doubted. Added to the controversial TCE teaching mode dominating demonstration lesson, another possibility might be that the demonstration lessons might not authentically represent *Curriculum Standards* or regular school music lessons. Instead, demonstration lessons possibly have their

own unique function in the general music education system. In other words, as discussed in the findings, demonstration lessons were usually organized within the educational events led by the teacher inspectors. Therefore, its professional development function might be to practice teachers' teaching skills instead of demonstrating the real teaching situation. From this aspect, the demonstration lesson could be mostly differentiated from the regular school teaching in China school music curriculum.

6.1.2.2 Classroom Management

Another difference between the two lesson types was the classroom time spent on managing student behavior. In demonstration lessons, teachers did not worry about classroom management because students were sitting nicely and quietly for the entire lesson. On the contrary, students in a real school setting may behave much more loosely and chat, laugh, and surprise teachers with unexpected classroom behaviors. The possible reasons causing this difference might include the following two aspects.

On the one hand, the teaching environments of the two types of lesson are significantly different from each other. The demonstration lessons were held on a performing stage and had an audience. Students would naturally experience pressure to behave well and be ready to perform for the audience (Li, 2017). Students sitting in their familiar school environment with only the teacher with them in a regular school music lesson is another story. This familiar learning environment provides students with a much more comfortable and relaxed atmosphere to interact with teachers and classmates and motivate themselves as a consequence (Scott, 2011; Myers & Christopher, 2012).

The types of students sitting in the class were also essentially different in the two different kinds of lessons. All the lessons in a regular school setting are normal classes that happen every day with teachers and students that frequently interact with each other. Hwang, Kisida, and

Koedel (2021) pointed out that students behave more loosely and are more comfortable when they are with their familiar teachers. However, the students in the demonstration lessons are chosen from a local school and are not familiar with the demonstrating music teacher. This would add pressure and tension to learning on a performing stage. Behaving well consciously and unconsciously becomes an invisible reminder of function in student observable behavior. Teachers in demonstration lessons, as a consequence, would not need to worry about classroom management.

These reasons increase concerns about the representation of a demonstration lesson for a regular school lesson to some extent. When classroom settings (stage vs. classroom) and student selections (unfamiliar vs. familiar) are completely different in the two kinds of classes, it increases the chance of both teachers and students turning "a normal teaching and learning mode" into "a stage performing mode" (Li, 2017).

To this end, even though strong similarities in lesson implementation were found between demonstration lessons and regular school lessons, their differences raise a concern that demonstration lessons might be of a performance-based nature and unreflective of reality. The following passages discuss this concern by providing more specific illustrations of the function of the demonstration lessons.

6.2 THE UNIQUENESS OF THE DEMONSTRATION LESSON

6.2.1 The Function of the Demonstration Lesson

The observable features provided a general picture of how two kinds of lessons operate in their own settings. However, a question of the representation of the demonstration lesson was raised based on the observation results. As discussed, the demonstration lesson should be highly representative of *Curriculum Standards* (Li, 2017) and serve as a guide for regular school

lessons (Zhang, 2012). In actuality, the demonstration lessons not only differ from the educational suggestions in *Curriculum Standards* but also diverge from the realistic teaching settings of regular classrooms. Whether these demonstration lessons maintain a representative function has therefore become a significant concern from the following aspects.

6.2.1.1 Best Representation?

From a "best representation" aspect, demonstration lessons with an observed teacher-oriented lesson implementation are, to a large extent, incompatible with the SCE-based *Curriculum Standards*. Many written suggestions within the national documents, such as promoting the autonomous and active learner, allowing students to explore, adapting multi-evaluations to student learning achievements during the school music learning progress were rarely found in the content of the demonstration lessons (Ministry of Education, 2011).

To be specific, *Curriculum Standards* points out that "(Teachers) should foster student willingness in the curiosity of music and the willingness of inquiring. Focusing on the inquiring process during the autonomous learning to make students actively engage in improvise-based or creation-based activities" (p. 10). The findings of this thesis show the opposite occurs in demonstration lessons because activities are mostly designed for students to follow teacher instruction, rather than think, inquire, and create independently.

Similarly, when the *Curriculum Standards* guides collaboration, it says, "(To make students) be able to fully communicate and cooperate with others during the arts-based collective performance or practical progress. To enhance (students) collective conception and collaborating competency" (p. 10). The findings of this paper reveal that students in most demonstration lessons studied in a whole class setting with the teachers as the leader for most of the time. A few independent explorations and no group discussions were found in reality.

Another example is the difference that occurred in the learning assessment. In *Curriculum Standards*, the learning assessment is suggested to have multiple options, including "self-evaluation," "peer-evaluation," "formative assessment," and "summative assessment" (pp. 31-32). However, in reality, teachers in demonstration lessons provided much less time for students to answer questions than they did for other classroom activities. Even fewer discussions were found that included teacher feedback and evaluations of student learning progress.

Consequently, as the original purpose for examining these demonstration lessons was to evaluate the alignment between regular school lessons and the *Curriculum Standards* (Liu, 2011), the differences in actual implementing practices illustrates the opposite. In other words, these selected model lessons hardly represent the SCE-based national intention.

6.2.1.2 Realistic Representation?

The 19 primary demonstration lessons from the Guangdong Music Class Demonstration Event (GMCDE) were originally selected from regular school music lessons given by ordinary teachers. This is supposed to guarantee that the demonstration lessons represent school music teachers conducting their lessons in a regular school setting (Zhang, 2012; Zhang, 2017). However, this assumption ignores the contextual differences between the actual school environment and the performing stage.

Firstly, in terms of the student size, a regular city school setting has an average of 50-60 students (Jin & Cortazzi, 1998). Rural music classes might average 60-80 students in each class (Wang, 2011). In contrast, 2018 GMCDE had a standardized classroom size of 35-45 students for all demonstration lessons. Due to the different class sizes that might influence classroom management and in-class engagement (Jin & Cortazzi, 1998), the demonstration classes lack fidelity to realistic classroom engagement.

Secondly, as discussed earlier, in regular classes there is a familiarity between teachers and students and lessons are held on campuses where staff are aware of their students' learning progress. However, the selected demonstration lessons are conducted with teachers and students who are mutually unfamiliar. This unfamiliarity not only makes the demonstration teachers hardly take any account of existing student knowledge but also leads the students to behave differently than they would with teachers that they know (Hwang, Kisida & Koedel, 2021). This unfamiliarity increases the tension between teachers and students, which might further cause an unnatural educational environment.

The third difference in educational setting is the extreme learning environment of the demonstration lessons. For a regular school music class, students sit in their familiar music classroom with only one adult, the music teacher, in a relatively closed learning surrounding. However, the video recordings from the demonstration lessons show a relatively open performing stage with an audience as the student learning environment. This changed study environment not only increases teacher and student pressure in the lessons but also gives rise to concerns that the original natural class teaching has been turned into a stage performance (Li, 2017). Consequently, the idea that demonstration lessons are an authentic representation of regular school music teaching should be challenged.

The last difference is in the teaching style. Demonstration teachers were observed to have a strongly patterned lesson structure with a fixed teaching sequence and common teaching strategies, such as a whole class learning approach and the use of singing-based activities. In reality, teachers have their personal identities with diverse teaching styles (Aitkin & Zuzovsky, 1994), teaching beliefs, and teaching experience. This diversity makes their own structuring of lessons, provision of knowledge, and teaching paces unique. Following this logic, when demonstration lessons become a series of standardized model lessons that show a high

consistency in their teaching processes, representation of regular school teaching has already been weakened and even disappeared.

6.2.1.3 Model Lesson in SCE Era?

When the demonstration lessons neither reflect the national intention within the *Curriculum Standards* nor represent realistic school classroom environments, is it still possible to see their function as "model lessons" in an international student-centered learning era? In fact, from an "SCE demonstration" aspect, most classroom statuses found in demonstration lessons have challenged the implementation of an international style SCE in China.

Educators with an SCE mindset regard music learning as a process of making music and solving problems. There is an expectation for teachers to encourage students to think, explore, reflect, and make mistakes during music-making (Wiggins, 2015). However, the findings of this study reveal the opposite happens in practice – students are given inadequate time for independent and collaborative exploration. Besides, "music following" instead of "music-making" was also very common in the demonstration lessons, which weakened Bremner's (2020) SCE perspective of power-sharing. Moreover, a content-driven lesson predominantly featuring teacher-led whole-class activities strengthens an impression of a "result-driven" rather than "process-driven" classroom. In a constructivist SCE-based class, a "result-driven" educational mode should be avoided because it has a TCE nature and a potential emphasis on "fact memorization" over "meaning-making" (Windschitl, 2002).

On the other hand, the typical student-oriented classroom is more effectively adapted to classes of less than 40 students and a flexible, movable learning environment (Bautista et al. 2018; Mtika & Gates, 2010). In comparison, each demonstration lesson gathered around 40 students onto a limited performing stage, which obviously impairs the provision time and space needed to focus on individual student musical learning development. Previous researchers have

noted the concern that teachers might easily reduce class interaction and require students to learn passively with minimal movement when students are crowded in a classroom short of space (Brinkmann, 2015; Mtika & Gates, 2010). Therefore, when facing the difficulties of conducting a music lesson on a stage with more than 40 students, the teachers might prefer to choose a teacher-centered way to conduct the lesson.

6.2.2 The Possible Significance of the Demonstration Lesson

Even though the representational function of a demonstration lesson has been significantly challenged for the above reasons, everything has its own value (Jaspers, 2010). Combining the previous literature with the present findings, there remain a few essential functions of demonstration lessons that is important to be noted.

6.2.2.1 Standardization Function from a National Expected Aspect

Firstly, demonstration lessons might not perfectly represent a national expectation suggested for a music lesson. They do, however, establish a standardization for teachers to understand how a model lesson in China should operate. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Music Class Demonstration Event (MCDE) has almost thirty years of history since its launch in 1995. So far, there have been eight national events and hundreds of province-level events (Li, 2017). In other words, these selected lessons, no matter what teaching methods they apply or what educational mode they stand up for, are "a model" for the entire country's teachers to observe and learn from. According to Xiao (2019), the influence of MCDE extends from the cities to the countryside, which has allowed more teachers to watch the video recordings and observe and reflect. These video recordings also help teachers understand what teaching strategies can be adapted, what educational trends are prevalent, and what a good music class should look

like. Qin (2013) illustrated that these model lessons speed up the standardization of what a "good" and "expected" lesson based on the national standards should be. They also support the development of Chinese music education by improving school teaching quality in many circumstances. Therefore, the demonstration lesson function as a representation of a high-quality music lesson and their influence on general school music teaching should not be neglected.

6.2.2.2 Award Stimulating Function from Event Participants' Perspectives

The demonstration lesson selection process contains a competitive nature to stimulate school music teachers to polish their regular school lessons and further improve their teaching quality (Liu, 2011). Based on the literature, the initial purpose of the MCD events was to act as an examination of participating teachers to check out how well their teaching at the regular school level aligned with national requirements (Liu, 2011). In other words, the lesson selection process not only aims to choose model lessons for others to study but also to reward the teachers who constituted the "best representatives" for this kind of event. The regular school music teachers used as participants in this study also commented on this "award stimulating" function. According to them, if they designed a lesson chosen for any of the MCD events, they would have a strong hope of receiving a teaching award to better support their future job promotions. One interviewee shared one demonstration teacher's story about how he had quickly became a teaching inspector and district-based teacher trainer after winning a national award for "the outstanding demonstration lesson." In other words, when a teacher's lesson is selected as a model lesson and demonstrated at a city-based, a province-based, or a national level event, the potential honor can benefit diverse aspects of teaching (Liu, 2011). From this aspect, the advantage of winning this demonstrational competition is highly likely to stimulate teacher motivation to polish their regular school lesson into an outstanding demonstrational one.

6.2.2.3 Function in Professional Development from the Observing Teacher Perspective

Demonstration lessons might not encourage observing teachers to use the same teaching methods and strategies as they might in a regular school setting. In contrast, it may inspire observing teachers to think about teaching practice as a kind of professional development, a way to improve teachers' teaching competencies from a teaching perspective but not to show how learning should happen from a learning aspect (Liu, 2011).

The findings in this study illustrate that lesson preparation for the two types of lessons examined is different. For the demonstration lesson, teachers need to follow the fixed lesson structure, spend more time on lesson preparation, and organize diverse activities to attract the attention of both the students and the audiences. However, in a regular school setting, they mostly pay attention to the teaching materials, student learning progress, and each class's pace. This means that once the teachers start participating in the class demonstrational event, they need to spend more time and energy to "polish" their lessons, to practicing their teaching skills again and again until getting a certain kind of standardized teaching criteria. Due to the preparation period of practicing teaching skills which would be long and not spontaneously happening with students' reactions and responses as in the regular school setting, teaching in a demonstration setting mostly would not be the same as what they would normally teach in a regular school setting. However, the preparational process helps teachers practice their teaching frequently and professionally. During the polishing process, checking on the implementation requirements in national documents, finding teaching materials for lesson preparation, and creating activities to engage unfamiliar students to enhance participating teachers' thinking, researching, and inquiry skills.

In the meanwhile, the teachers who observed the demonstration lesson might easily perceive what teaching skills and strategies they are expected from the teacher inspectors or

any educational intention from an upper level in a school music curriculum (see Figure 5.8). In other words, the action of observing the demonstration of teachers' behaviors might also be another way to perceive the governmental intention for teaching competencies.

6.3 THE NEGLECTED IMPLEMENTING ISSUES IN SCHOOL GENERAL MUSIC LESSONS

However, no matter what function a demonstration lesson might fulfill in the educational system, it remains a special event that can benefit teachers and lesson implementation almost as a side effect. Realistic lesson implementations, especially at an operational level, are still found in the music lessons given every day in a regular school setting. Study 2 has structured an overall impression of how a regular school lesson is conducted, which fills the gap left by the relatively few empirical studies exploring the status in China's music education domain (Yang et al., 2021). This section will discuss the situation in a school general music teaching set by pointing to a series of practical issues and concerns in the implemented curriculum. Detailed discussions are listed as follows.

6.3.1 General Concerns of the School Music Curriculum in China

In Study 2, based on the findings from participants, China's school music curriculum system including teaching (teacher) and learning (student) and their influencing factors has been summarized into a diagram (see Figure 5.8). This diagram not only provides us a contextual understanding in how knowledge could be linearly transmitted from a governmental intention to individuals, but also presents some potential concerns and issues in practice when teachers' actual lesson implementation is highly affected by other factors in a hierarchical government-driven educational system. Specifically, based on the linear knowledge transmission and the

hierarchical knowledge instruction, the practical issues could be aroused from the following three aspects.

Firstly, since what should be taught and what should be learned could not be decided either by teacher or student but by China's national government, the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2011), the entire educational system in China might possibly be under a highly government-driven mode which leaves much less space for promoting both teacher and student's autonomy and authority. Even though many researchers encourage people to explore local culture and contextual policy based on the respect for global diversities (Bremner, 2020; Schweifurth, 2020), a government-driven educational system with mostly standardized learning criteria might cause a significant difference in SCE lesson implementation compared to the perspective in a western perspective who promotes individuality, and this further would lead to a content-driven and teacher-centered lesson structure due to the nature of top-down knowledge transmission situation.

Second, within this government-driven school curriculum, findings also revealed that knowledge is not transmitted directly from governmental intention to individual teachers and students. Instead, teacher inspectors, the group of teacher leaders with their organized diverse kinds of events, also perform as a mediate for knowledge transmission, interpreting the national educational intention, and then guiding teachers' actual teaching in action. Due to human interpretation is highly independent thinking and presenting action which has an unavoidable subjective nature, whether these teacher inspectors contain different interpretations and perspectives based on their understanding and performance towards the national documents might be another practical issue. In other words, without understanding how and how effective teacher inspectors' function in the knowledge transmission process, there might be a danger that the knowledge and structure of the expected lesson teacher perceived was the intention of the teacher inspector's understanding but not the realistic expectations of the government.

Third, according to teachers' illustrations in the diagram (see Figure 5.8), the knowledge transmission of governmental intention has gone through a relatively complex process from the contextualized content instruction to teacher inspectors and their organized events, and then get to teachers and students. However, when assessing students' understanding of governmental intention, the national assessment for Grade 4 and Grade 8 was seemingly the only evaluation tool standing from many levels to represent students' learning outcomes. This complex knowledge transmission from top to down with a simple knowledge evaluation from bottom to up might cause other essential concerns in the lesson implementation of the school music curriculum. For example, when applying the standardized national assessment to evaluate students, educators might easily get a score to understand what and how but not why students learn in their school music lessons. In other words, the reasons why students are doing well or not on their assessment could hardly tell by the standardized assessment, but the reasons should be the key exploration for understanding knowledge transmission in a government-driven system.

6.3.2 Specific Implementing Issues in the School Music Curriculum

6.3.2.1 A General Inconsistency Between Teacher Initial Perceptions and Operation of SCE

From the aspect of specific lesson implementation in a practice level, generally speaking, according to Akker (2004)'s curriculum representation, the implemented curriculum can be further divided into two components, the perceived curriculum, and the operational curriculum. These two curriculum components should be closely connected to each other by the lesson implementor, the teacher. However, based on the findings of Study 2 about participants' perceptions and operation of the latest *Curriculum Standards*, especially for the instructional practices with a student-centered theory, the first major issue was revealed. There was inconsistency between teacher curriculum perceptions and their realistic lesson implementation.

The Specific Issue

The specific inconsistency occurred between the observation and interview data regarding this issue. The observations showed that the music teachers, the participants in Shenzhen, are still mostly focused on a content-driven and a teacher-oriented teaching method. In contrast, these teachers actually did a good job mentioning the key components of the *Curriculum Standards* that align well with a student-centered learning approach.

To be more specific, the interview findings in Study 2 show that teachers interpreted SCE well in the main four aspects (learning progress, in-class activity, personal thoughts, and student interests and motivation). This means that the interviewees' interpretation of SCE aligned appropriately with the guidance and suggestions in *Curriculum Standards*. Specific phrases such as "encourage students to be independent thinker," "provide students autonomy to create music," and "respect individual student willingness and diversity" were all mentioned by both the interviewees and are in *Curriculum Standards*. To this end, these interviewees' interpretation of SCE is appropriately aligned with a Western-based SCE conception that encourages teachers to not only concentrate on student active learning engagement but also on their individual cognitive and phycological development (Schweisfurth, 2013).

However, the observational findings also reveal that teachers have not implemented SCE as they interpret and expect. Instead, a content-driven, whole-class learning, and TCE mode, similar to the demonstration lessons, was commonly found among teacher school lessons. Even though there were many activities conducted by the participants to balance out static and dynamic student learning, the types of activities were mostly singular and focused on singing most of the time. Teachers did not extensively empower student autonomy and authority during class time.

This inconsistency was seemingly not noticed by the participants. When they illustrated their understandings of SCE and its implementation, they thought they had implemented lessons the way they had interpreted the guidance. Participants started rethinking and reflecting on their original interpretation of the *Curriculum Standards* and SCE when they participated in this study's interventional training and implemented Western-based SCE within their experimental lessons. This leaves open the question of what is behind the current inconsistent situation. What causes the inconsistency between Chinese music teacher perceptions of their own lesson operation?

The Possible Reasons

Akker (2004) notes this inconsistent alignment of theory and practice is a common practical issue in many countries. He noted that it included the broad theoretical idea, the lack of coherence between the intended curriculum and other curriculum components, and the inadequate involvement of stakeholders in the curriculum. However, his explanation involved connectional issues in a broader curriculum distinction between the first two levels of the intended curriculum and the implemented curriculum. The current inconsistency happens at the level of the implemented curriculum with the teacher at the center of the conflict. To understand the reasons for this practical issue, it is worth tracking what resources help teachers perceive the intended curriculum.

According to related literature, two main recourses support shaping teacher perceptions of teaching; the national authoritative guiding documents, especially the national curriculum standards (Cui, 2018; Ye & Cheng, 2018), and the model lessons representing the "best" implemented lessons, such as Music Class Demonstration (Li, 2017; Xiao, 2019). As Li (2017) mentioned, the video recordings of these demonstration lessons selected from the MCDE have an essential modeling function for other teachers to watch and learn. There is a possibility that

these regular school music teachers applied similar teaching practices as the teachers in the demonstration lessons. Thus, if the modeling function of a demonstration lesson does influence participants' regular school lessons, this partially explains why a content-driven, singing-driven, and teacher-centered lesson implementation, which is similar to in the demonstration lessons, was found in the regular school settings. In fact, to a large extent, observing a video-based document, compared to reading the literal documents, is more direct, visible, and practical for learner understanding (Wang, 2018). To this end, the influence of the demonstration lessons might become the first reason for the inconsistency issues.

Missing detailed supporting interpretation for the *Curriculum Standards* might be another cause of inconsistency. To be specific, the *Curriculum Standards* is usually written in short passages with conceptually guiding ideas, rather with detailed descriptions of implementation (Yu & Leung, 2019). Therefore, teachers might be familiar with the phrases within *Curriculum Standards* but not truly understand how these concepts should be adapted into actual practice. Participants also mentioned in interview that they rarely participated in any professional development studying *Curriculum Standards*. According to them, the *Curriculum Standards* is a compulsory learning document but mostly relies on self-learning. In that regard, the inadequate training on the applicable side of the *Curriculum Standards* might be another possible reason for the inconsistency of teacher curriculum perceptions and their lesson implementation. Also, since inadequate teacher training might hinder the development of teacher beliefs, teaching behaviors, and negatively influence student learning achievements (Yoon et al., 2007), this phenomenon should be a warning for the *Curriculum Standards*' designers to reflect on how to authentically support teacher understanding with detailed explanations of application rather than relying on the memory of literal concepts.

6.3.2.2 Inadequate Knowledge Construction in the Learning Process

From a student cognitive development perspective, teachers should provide a learning environment that supports a connection between spontaneous student knowledge and experience and "past known" and "new learned" information (Wiggins, 2015). However, the investigation into the Guangdong music education teaching environment showed that teachers extensively use a content-driven model and leave almost no time and space for reviewing student previous experience or allowing them to construct their understanding independently. Therefore, the ignorance of constructional processes during music teaching hours is exposed as another essential practical concern under a student-centered learning era.

The Specific Issue

SCE is rooted in the constructivist theory which emphasizes how knowledge is cognitively and socially self-constructed, rather than directly transferred by others (Shively, 2015). In the past, SCE under social constructivism has commonly been used to explain education as it matches well with the interactions between teachers and learners in a school environment. However, the development of an individual's cognitive construction requires a process of "meaning-making" and "making connections" to understand new experiences in relation to past experiences (Wiggins, 2015, pp. 8-9). To allow learners to make these connections for new understanding, setting students in a context where they are exposed to both familiar and unfamiliar learning content is a fundamental requirement (Piaget, 1985; Windschitl, 2002).

Accordingly, in a student-oriented classroom, "meaning-making" and "making connections" are the key concepts, rather than "fact memorization" and "knowledge transformation." Students should be able to review their previous experience and make connections either independently or with the support of teachers to the newly learned information during the lesson time. Teachers should facilitate a learning environment that

allows these "meaning-making" and "making connection" moments to occur for knowledge construction (Wiggins, 2015; Schweisfurth, 2013).

However, the observation results showed the proportion of time spent reviewing previous student understanding and allowing the connecting moments for student "past knew" to "new learned" was extremely low. Almost all the investigated lessons, including both demonstration lessons and the regular school music lessons, showed a lack of attention paid to the process of "meaning-making" and "making connections." This revealed another significant concern - that the ignorance of individual cognitive construction might be a prevalent issue within current Guangdong music education.

After the experimental lessons based on Wiggins' (2015) *Teaching for Musical Understanding* had been implemented by the participants in Study 2, the teachers reflected on their fresh understanding of the meaning of SCE. It was true that making connections from student "past knew" to "new learned" had not had an emphasis put upon it in their previous teaching experience. Instead, content-based teaching using the required teaching resource, the textbook, had always been their priority when teaching. Their reflections on the inadequate recognition of knowledge construction from a subjective perspective further confirmed the ignorance of the in-class knowledge constructing process. Similarly to the participants' ignorance of their inconsistency between theoretical interpretation and actual practice, they were also unaware that they should spend time and energy reviewing previously learned student knowledge.

Consequently, the results of both observation and teacher reflections exposed a danger of a lack of attention to student cognitive development within the Chinese music teaching context. When a content-driven teaching mode dominates a knowledge construction-based learning mode, it is highly doubtful whether students and their learning process are truly at the center of their education.

The Possible Reasons

As with the discussion of the inconsistency between teacher perceptions and operations, the current ignorance of student knowledge construction might also have unique contextual reasons. More specifically, the possible reasons can be illustrated from the following three aspects.

First, from a general Chinese policy aspect, pre-determined content-driven teaching instead of spontaneous in-class knowledge constructional learning might be the purposeful educational decision made at a national level. As stated in Chapter 2, China has a unique nationally unified phenomenon, "institutionalization." It means that unified guidance and organization is passed from the national government all the way down to individual people (Ma, 2002). Taking China's educational system as an example, according to Akker (2004), student-centered education can be seen as a conceptual idea of the ideal curriculum representing the national governmental expectations in education. China's official textbooks and national curriculum standards are the compulsory teaching resources, the written curriculum, for teachers to use to transfer pre-determined learning content to students. In the implemented curriculum, teachers are expected to perceive and understand whatever appears in the written curriculum and apply it to realistic teaching practices to ensure student learning achievements for the subsequent attained curriculum. Therefore, from this perspective, it is easy to understand why content-driven and textbook-based music teaching is taking a dominant role in Guangdong's music classes.

Besides, from China's philosophical aspect, even though the current advocation for Chinese education includes fostering well-rounded students by promoting individuality (Lyu, 2018), China's philosophy and history are still based on the promotion of collectivism (Winfield, Mizuno & Beaudoin, 2000), rather than the individuality promoted in Western

contexts (Elena, 2015). For example, from a Western perspective, the goal of students engaging in an SCE classroom and combining already known knowledge with new content is to explore and "develop their own understanding of dimensions and metadimensions of music such that they move toward musical competence and independence" (Wiggins, 2015, pp. 55-56). However, in the *Curriculum Standards*, the purpose of designating certain knowledge for students to learn is to fulfill "student psychological development and music cognitive characteristics by ages" (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 7). Therefore, from a national intentional point of view, knowledge construction in China focuses on collective knowledge acquisition rather than individual knowledge exploration. These differences in initial educational philosophy determine why teaching content and newly learned knowledge is pre-determined by China's Ministry of Education (Ji, 2013). However, these decisions are left for teachers in most Western countries, especially in the SCE-based learning era (Shively, 2015).

Due to the first two reasons, teachers, from generation to generation might have followed this national linear top-down educational mode of knowledge transformation and this might have led to it eventually becoming a teaching habit (Liu, 2011). With this habit, teachers might pay more attention to successfully transmitting the pre-determined knowledge and learning content to students in their music classes rather than leading new processes of knowledge exploration and construction with students. This also explains why the participants in Study 2 mention the strong time pressures on finishing the teaching contained within the textbook no matter whether experimental lessons were being introduced. According to them, the long history of "following instruction" might primarily inform teaching habits that consider successfully implementing the intended national curriculum as more important than adapting to student learning needs and inquiries. To this end, even though the latest *Curriculum Standards* has changed its literal concepts from a teacher and educating-centered to student-centered (Li, 2017), giving much more emphasis on student autonomy and authority, teachers

might still apply a content-driven teaching style and rely on the given knowledge in the textbook to ensure successful knowledge transformation.

6.3.2.3 The Missing "Visible Thoughts"

In a student-oriented learning environment, visible student thoughts and ideas play a significant role in supporting teacher understanding to track student learning processes and predict their possible learning achievements (Schweifurths, 2013). In most circumstances, student learning progress and visible documents are also collected as formative assessments representing student learning achievements (Havnes et al., 2012). Therefore, to make student "inside voice out" and to make their thinking visible, class activities are suggested to involve an "output" process that allows students to express and create music (Wiggins, 2015). Group work, discussion, and cooperation are also highly encouraged to help teachers to hear student thoughts and evaluate their learning progress (Shively, 2015). When students engage in an interactive learning environment by exchanging opinions, it helps them naturally share their thoughts and make their thinking visible (Webster, 2011). However, the implementation reality in regular school lessons is that there is very little time spent on student thoughts and expressions. The specific issues of missing student "visible thoughts" can be seen from the following two aspects.

The Specific Issue

The specific issues are embedded in the answers to the following two questions. Firstly, whether class activities allow student thinking that might be either seen or heard as "visible thoughts" by the teachers during class time. Second, whether student thoughts might be interacted with others by in-class communication and discussion for teachers to track their "visible thoughts".

Ritchhart and Perkins (2008) noted that when student thinking becomes visible, it allows teachers not only to have a "window" through which to see and hear what students understand but also how they understand it. Therefore, the first answer emphasizes whether student thinking can be found visibly in a general activity-participation aspect. Unfortunately, the observable findings provided a relatively negative answer. Within the limited number of participants' video recordings, teachers in Study 2 were observed to focus more on student observable behavioral outcomes such as singing, making movements, or playing instruments than they were on thinking progression and final thoughts. Any teaching strategies to bring a student's "inside voice out" and express themselves, such as writing a musical essay, drawing music listening maps, or creating a composition, were not found in the regular school lessons. Therefore, in the activities student thoughts were paid less attention than their observable behavior. Teachers hardly noticed student thinking processes or how well they understood what they were supposed to know.

The answer to the second question emphasizes whether student thoughts might be heard in an interactive and cooperative learning environment. Even though the selected class activities might not present student thinking processes, in-class discussion and cooperation with proactive teacher questions are other valuable learning approaches that make student thoughts visible to teachers (Scott, 2011). However, students spend limited time answering teacher questions based on the findings, and collaborative discussions have not appeared at all in Study 2's regular school music classrooms. Also, because most questions had a close-ended answer and could be responded to in a short amount of time, students seemingly did not have to engage a thoughtful thinking process in the question-and-answer sections. Authentic discussion and the sharing of student thoughts and ideas with verbal interactions with teachers, as a consequence, might be uncommon in a regular school setting.

The Possible Reasons

However, what does cause these missing student "visible thoughts" in a regular music school classroom? Do the *Curriculum Standards* not mention the significance of the awareness of student inner thoughts to teachers? In fact, the latest *Curriculum Standards* do mention the importance of student engagement to musical expression and presentations as a part of the teaching goals for each grade level. It also suggests that teachers use multiple strategies to inspire student descriptions and illustrations of musical expression and further collect them as student formative assessment (Ministry of Education, 2011). So, if the suggestions made in *Curriculum Standards* are not the main problem, what is the reason for teachers not providing enough opportunities for students to demonstrate their "inside voice out"? Except for the common reasons of teacher time pressure and the lack of professional development, two other possible reasons should be noted.

As Brinkmann (2015) discusses the ingrained cultural beliefs affecting Indian educational reform, the phenomenon of missing student voice and expression might also strongly relate to China's historical-cultural influence. In China, knowledge-based, content-driven, and teacher-centered education has existed for hundreds of years (Liu, 2011; Ma, 2002). As mentioned earlier, in an educational system based on "institutionalization", people might get used to following a top-down knowledge transformation process, in which teachers wait to perceive whatever the intentional decisions and suggestions might be and the students wait to understand whatever knowledge the teachers instruct (Ma, 2002). In other words, teachers and students do not have much authority to choose knowledge or make decisions within the linear top-down relationship. These long ingrained behaviors lead to both teacher and student subjective personal perceptions and opinions becoming less important than the objective knowledge and content ready to be taught. Teachers might have become accustomed to passing content knowledge from textbooks to students, and students might have become used to receiving

knowledge as "input" rather than providing expressions as "output." Even though the new *Curriculum Standards* have raised concerns about paying attention to student thoughts and expressions, around ten years of changes must be compared to the past hundreds of years of educational tradition. It is no wonder that teaching and learning habits of today's teachers and students have not yet met expectations. It also means the recognition of student "inside voice out" won't be an easy change to make.

Classroom management might be another reason for the lack of student voices and thoughts appearing in China's music teaching context. As Bautista and his team (2018) discussed in their research, classroom discussion, especially peer-to-peer or teacher-to-student feedback, causes unavoidable notices resulting from student enthusiasm and excitement. Therefore, the successful implementation of in-class discussions, especially with open-ended topics, is majorly reported in a Western context of small classroom sizes (Shively, 2015). On the contrary, in China, the regular school classroom size is reported to average 50-60 students within the cities (Jin & Cortazzi, 1998) and 60-80 students in rural areas (Wang, 2011). In this case, the initial purpose of having in-class discussion and cooperation for opinion sharing becomes an almost impossible task for the students. The classroom would not only be very noisy, but students would certainly be disturbed by others. The purpose of teachers considering student thinking processes would also be weakened due to the same loud and noisy reasons. Consequently, large class sizes might be another impediment to providing opportunities to students to express their thoughts during class time.

6.3.3 A Summary of the Practical Issues in Regular School Music Education

To sum up, through the investigations carried out for this paper, it can be seen that the three main practical concerns arise from China's regular school music teaching context. As well as the content-driven and teacher-oriented nature of the current music lessons noted earlier in this

chapter, the inconsistency between teacher perceptions of their operation, the lack of student in-class knowledge construction, and the missing student "visible thoughts" are also revealed.

From a lesson implementation perspective, the above sections give a general picture of how lessons are being implemented in the Chinese music education context. Its potential issues have been described in detail from the author's perspective. However, findings related to the implemented curriculum reveal a significantly unbalanced relationship between student-centered and teacher-centered classes. For example, a student-centered classroom allows students to think and inquire about knowledge in pursuit of their independent understanding (Akker, 2004). In contrast, examination of current lessons shows that teachers prefer to take charge of exploring processes by either directly providing the answers or by providing inadequate time for students to explore independently. Students are supposed to use multiple learning strategies, including individual learning and group collaborations in an SCE lesson (Wiggins, 2015), but the whole-class learning displayed by the teachers constitutes a big contrast. Furthermore, in a student-oriented lesson, students should be able to use diverse classroom resources to connect their "previous learned" to "new received" knowledge to facilitate their own knowledge construction (Schweisfurth, 2013). However, the national government's pre-determined student musical knowledge leaves almost no space for student autonomy or authority to facilitate growth during music teaching hours.

In other words, when interpreting the findings in a student-centered educational era, the results from the general school setting appeared to conflict with how SCE is being interpreted within an international perspective. This further supports previous researchers' concerns that even though a literal concept has been changed and the curriculum reformed, the reality of the misalignment with Western student-centered education expose the fact that SCE might not have been authentically implemented within China's educational context (Ji, 2013; Ye & Cheng,

2018). Based on that, it is possible to conclude that SCE does not match China's music educational system. It is also reasonable to assume unsuccessful SCE implementation in China.

6.4 SCE'S ADAPTATION FROM CHINA'S SITUATION TO THE WORLD'S NEW DIRECTION

This research study has illustrated a highly unbalanced educational relationship between student-centered learning and teacher-centered teaching. Some controversial elements, such as the misalignment of the suggestions in *Curriculum Standards* and application in demonstration lessons, the inconsistency between the regular school music teacher interpretations of SCE and their actual in-class lesson implementation, and the different directions of SCE within the international context and the Chinese context, have all pointed to the less than successful implementation of SCE in China.

However, in the previous sections, the possible reasons for these practical issues have been discussed and have further made these concerns relatively reasonable. From the findings, the music teachers, as the curriculum implementors, face many constraints on lesson implementation, including national policy decisions, cultural influences, time pressures, and inadequate professional development. Similarly to many other developing countries, these constraints add to the difficulties of adapting Western-based SCE to actual teaching contexts (Schweisfurth, 2013; Brinkmann, 2015). Therefore, by simply concluding SCE is not suitable for China's education context, these constraints could be weakened to continue the exploration of the adaptation of SCE in China. This was also the purpose of Study 2, to design a series of SCE training based on Wiggins' (2015) teaching strategies for participants working in a regular school setting and give them a much more comprehensive understanding of the concepts and practical lesson plans of SCE with an international perspective.

6.4.1 The Controversial Adaptational phenomenon of Western SCE in China

After participants' understanding of SCE from an international perspective was strengthened and their experimental lessons based on Wiggin's lesson designs were implemented in Study 2, discussion about the possibility of implementing Western-oriented SCE into China's music teaching context with a large number of students could begin. In fact, the findings from these experimental lessons showed an interesting, controversial adaptation from two specific aspects.

6.4.1.1 The Successful Application

From an objective physical aspect, even though participants' initial lesson implementations differed from Western perspective SCE, the findings from the first two experimental lessons in Study 2 indicate the possibility of providing a student-oriented learning environment in a regular Chinese school setting.

Based on the participants' comments, the three weeks of interventional training, which was based on Wiggins' *Teaching for Musical Understanding*, provided more detailed theoretical and practical support to their comprehensive understanding of SCE. Consequently, when they started following Wiggins' suggestions for providing more time and autonomy to students to think and create their own ideas, both teachers and students responded positively.. For example, as illustrated in the interview findings, teachers were surprised about student musical creation (the mind maps and the summative posters), and students shared their excitement about writing down their thoughts and ideas. This positive feedback support the previous literature that suggests teacher fulfillment can be strengthened and student enthusiasm and confidence in studying music can be enhanced by implementing SCE appropriately (Scott, 2011).

Therefore, from the perspective that teachers are able to apply SCE appropriately when the constraints upon them are weakened and students do enjoy the positive empowerment when

teachers provide opportunities in action, we can see a successful adaptation of SCE in a Chinese classroom. This also supports Thompson (2013)'s statement that SCE should be able to be implemented internationally when it is introduced and adapted properly.

6.4.1.2 The Unsuccessful Application

However, all participants rejected the new SCE learning modes in favor of content-driven teaching mode in the last experimental lessons. SCE seemingly does not fit well with China's educational context. Based on the interview findings, participants noted many concerns about applying a Western-based SCE in the long run. Even though they implemented a Western-based SCE successfully with mostly positive attitudes, the contextual constraints, especially the complex reliance on textbooks, are still the major challenge hindering their willingness to apply SCE in class. Their specific worries can be summarized by the following two aspects.

Firstly, from a general aspect, the textbook is a long-lasting Chinese educational tradition and strongly connects to the phenomenon of "institutionalization" by requiring teachers to finish the assigned teaching tasks as a priority (Ma, 2002). This is despite Western-based SCE emphasizing student knowledge construction over teacher knowledge transformation (Schweisfurth, 2015). Also, with this emphasis, teachers are expected to reduce the dependence on music textbooks and add teaching resources which match well with student flexible learning needs (Wiggins, 2015). Since the contextual textbook policy is still prevalently applied in China's educational system and cannot be ignored in reality, teachers would rather give up their autonomy to select other resources and revert to a content-driven teaching mode to ensure the completion of the required teaching tasks.

Secondly, the SCE teaching environment requires teachers to provide multiple resources to support student exploration and understanding (Shively, 2015). However, in a traditional public-school environment, electronic devices are usually not allowed during class time (Yi,

Yun & Duan, 2021). This means students are not able to do any independent research or collaboration in class. In this case, predetermined teaching materials become the only resources during lesson implementations. In other words, teachers might actually need to spend more time finding resources and knowledge before providing more information in class for students to think and explore. When facing the inadequate time teachers have to spend on both lesson preparation and finishing other important schoolwork, their preferred changed back to textbook-driven teaching saves a lot of research and lesson preparation time.

Consequently, from a subjective teacher perspective based on the Chinese contextual situation, a Western-based SCE is difficult to match to China's music teaching requirements. This unsuccessful contextual application in China further supports previous researchers' assumptions that SCE might not be a good choice for developing countries (Brinkmann, 2015; Schweisfurth, 2013).

6.4.2 Multiple Interpretations on the Adaptation of SCE

The controversial implementation phenomenon that appeared from Study 2's experimental lessons suggests that we should not simply conclude either a successful or failed adaptation of SCE. Taking the experimental lessons as an example, and it could be summarized as a successful SCE implementation when solely analyzing the observational results in terms of the positive in-class interactions and responses from both teachers and students. It could also be seen as an unsuccessful SCE adaptation when the specific practical concerns are recognized and the reasons behind the teacher reversion to practical methods are considered. Like a coin has two sides, the investigation into experimental lessons has provided us with a relatively objective perspective to interpret how SCE is being perceived and implemented in the current Chinese music education domain. Therefore, a polarizing definition that compares SCE with TCE is not a satisfactory result of the current study.

6.4.2.1 The Multiple Interpretations

In fact, the discourse surrounding the adaptation of SCE from an international aspect also changes from time to time. In the past, many researchers preferred using standardized criteria to discuss the adaptation of a Western SCE in any local context (Schweisfurth, 2013). Because of the standardization in interpreting SCE, many regions, especially in developing countries, were reported as unsuccessfully implementating SCE. However, in recent years, many researchers have used multiple interpretations to analyze the contextual adaptation of SCE (Bremner, 2020; Neumann, 2013; Starkey, 2017).

Actual teaching contexts are much more complex than literal definitions suggest. The previous definitions and concepts embedded in a constructivist-based student-centered education are either too narrow or too broad to comprehensively explain complicated, contextual education. Therefore, the necessity of exploring multiple ways to describe the meaning of SCE and its degree of application has been highlighted. These diverse interpretations complement each other and provide more comprehensive perspectives for interpreting the implemented curriculum in China's context.

For example, instead of having TCE and SCE as two extreme polar points, Nuemann (2013) provided a conceptualizing framework that advanced a continuum between TCE and SCE. In this framework, the implementation of SCE is not judged by success or failure but rather by emphasizing whether the learning contexts were centered in, on, or with students. Starkey (2017), from another perspective, synthesized the concepts within SCE into three overlapping dimensions; humanist (student uniqueness), agentic (student empowerment), and cognitive (student learning process). Her suggestions were that teachers in an SCE environment should consider all three dimensions to foster student learning and development when implementing lessons. Bremner (2020) took a flexible approach to defining SCE and provided strong support

to the diverse interpretations of SCE adaptation. Through careful analysis, ten initial categories of SCE became ten aspects derived from the literature and further condensed into six categories to define SCE. The six categories, Formative Assessment, Adapting to Needs, Power Sharing, Active Participation, Relevant Skills, and Autonomy, have frequently been found with different occurring proportions. Therefore, rather than judging the success of implementation from a few SCE aspects, these six categories function as "flexible" or "contextually appropriate" standards to explore realistic educational situations in different contexts. Bremner (2020) further suggested that the multiple ways of understanding SCE enable us to "address the complex challenge of implementing aspects of SCE in a wider range of classrooms" (p. 26).

6.4.2.2 The Possible Interpretations of SCE in Chinese Music Education

Actually, the multiple interpretations of SCE adaptation provide a new perspective of interpreting the contextual educational situation and benefits for an in-depth understanding of the educational phenomena from different angles.

Specifically, the research findings from this study structure a general picture of how the implemented curriculum is conducted in China, especially in the Guangdong area, and reveals a series of practical concerns surrounding SCE-based lesson implementation. Applying Nuemann's (2013) framework to explain the revealed findings, the educational model might possibly be interpreted as mostly "learning context centered on students," as teachers dominate the lesson most of the time, rather than "learning context centered in students," empowering student authorities, and "learning context centered with students," sharing in-class empowerment with each other. Even though Nuemann's interpretation of SCE might focus on the learning aspect of student needs, his "learning context centered on students" could directly point to issues of inadequate in-class power-sharing, upon which educators should think and reflect.

Similarly, if the phenomena revealed in China's current music implemented curriculum could be explained by Starkey's (2017) three dimensions of SCE, it would clearly expose the fact that Chinese music education pays too little attention to power-sharing and student learning progress. Although participants might recognize students as unique human beings, Starkey's interpretation would, from a humanist dimension, point out the concerns caused by seeing students as "groups" but not "individuals."

Correspondingly, if applying Bremner's (2020) flexible approach to China's teaching context, the present music educational phenomena might be interpreted as a strong focus on Active Participation, an emergent concentration on Adapting to Needs and Autonomy, but almost no emphasis on Formative Assessment, Power Sharing, or Relevant Skills. Compared to the other two interpretations of SCE adaptations, Bremner's flexible approach might stimulate more thought and reflection in Chinese educators.

6.4.3 The Direction for Future Research

In an era of globalization that highly influences education, understanding China's evolution of arts education towards a world approach contributes to structuring a comprehensive worldwide educational trend. However, the actual educational status in real teaching environments is also essential for understanding music education in China. Although this research study merely investigates implemented curriculum in primary school levels and may not reach broad conclusions, it could serve as a starting point for future studies on how model lessons reflect reality and how SCE is being interpreted within China's context.

Actually, no matter how SCE is being implemented in China, a flexible framework has provided multiple lenses to explore the possibilities of implementing SCE. Its advantage can be illustrated from two aspects. Rather than simply judging whether SCE is applicable in certain situations, this flexibility in interpretation allows contextual differences to impact

theoretical understanding and practical implementation. On the other side, we live in a multi-cultural and diversely contextual world. Multiple interpretations of a global concept support people's understanding of each other and further strengthens authentic cultural and contextual realization and respect.

However, to promote multiple interpretations of SCE, further research in this domain is urgently needed. With its limitations of sample representation and limited number of participants, this research is just a start to understanding the interpretation and implementation of SCE in China. The interpretation from teachers in other regions and school stakeholders will also support a comprehensive understanding of SCE in China. Multiple interpretations from different subject areas and age groups would also be good extensions to understanding SCE lesson implementation. Any large questionnaire surveys might also help to generalize certain circumstances.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Generally speaking, this research contains two independent but consecutive studies with five different research questions related to China's primary school music education implementation in a student-centered educational era. Due to the complexity of the curriculum in an educational system, the entire curriculum theory is supposed to have an interactive and mutually supportive relationship with each related curriculum component (Akker, 2004). However, an in-depth understanding of China's implemented curriculum, especially in the music education domain, had still yet to be arrived at in the scholarly literature (Yang et al., 2021). Therefore, to fill the gap of inadequate empirical research into China's primary school lesson implementation, this study provides an insight into selected model lessons, which have a high representation of *Curriculum Standards*, and regular school music lessons. The investigations into the two kinds of lessons also supports understanding of China's implemented curriculum from two aspects:

the perceived curriculum and the operational curriculum. The results not only provide a general picture of what each curriculum representation within the implemented curriculum currently looks like in the Chinese music educational context, but also reveal some practical issues in the connection and relationship between different curriculum representations.

To be more specific, the detailed findings demonstrate two main aspects.

First, lesson implementation in current China's school music education in the Guangdong region has the characteristics of fixed lesson structures, content-driven delivery, whole-class learning, and a teacher-centered educational mode. These statuses illustrated many differences between China's national *Curriculum Standards* and the international perspective of what a student-centered education should be. In a learning era where significant worldwide dialogues emphasize students and their learning process in education, the revealed phenomena needs to be seriously considered by Chinese educators in light of what kind of education they expect in the 21st century and how they will achieve it. Here is a quote from Darling-Hammond (1996). When she provides resolution to education's future direction, she says,

> If we want all students to actually learn in the way that new standards suggest and today's complex society demands, we will need to develop teaching that goes far beyond dispensing information, giving a test, and giving a grade. We need to understand how to teach in ways that respond to student diverse learning approaches, structured to take advantage of student unique starting points, and that careful scaffold work aimed at more proficient performances. We will also need to understand what schools must do to organize themselves to support such teaching and learning. (p. 7)

SCE, with its diverse praise for empowering student thinking, expression, creativity, and social skills, has been written into China's national music curriculum standards. The results from this research support the understanding of how SCE is being adapted into China's music

teaching situation. Similar to Schweisfurth (2013) and Brinkmann's (2015) concerns of SCE adaptation in developing countries, the results indeed appear to show the seeming inapplicability of SCE to China's context. The lack of attention given to existing student knowledge, the inadequate opportunities given to student independent thoughts and creation, and the structured lesson designs with little space for individuality all point to an unsuccessful implementation of SCE in China's music classes. However, instead of quickly answering in the binary, multiple interpretations of SCE might better match the common educational goal in an era of globalization. To respect the uniqueness of each educational context, interpreting the adaptation of SCE from different angles and different contextual situations might benefit the understanding of the worldwide educational trend.

6.5.1 Limitations

Even though this research study has provided an in-depth understanding of how China's music lesson are being implemented in Guangdong province and in what ways SCE has been adapted to a realistic teaching environment, there were a few limitations within the study that should not be ignored.

In Study 1, using only observation brings some limitations to data collection and analysis. The nature of using observation as a single analyzing method means that only the question of "what the situation is" but not "why it is happening" can be answered. This kind of inadequate understanding might lead to the misperceptions of the purpose of the observable behavior. In other words, findings from Study 1 from solely observational methods lack any in-depth perception of why the phenomena revealed in the demonstration lessons occurred as they were observed. Even so, observation was still applied as the single research method in the first study because of the viewpoint allowed a realistic examination of current Chinese music teaching. To avoid misperceptions about the purpose of the observable behavior, Study 1 also analyzed

all 19 elementary lessons with descriptive data as major analysis and used vignettes as complementary evidence to enable an overall comprehensive behavioral examination.

Due to the data coding and analysis being conducted independently by the author, subjectivity could not be totally avoided. To this end, a coding review and an intercoder agreement were both been used during the process of analysis to make the coding system reliable and replicable for future researchers.

In Study 2, due to the limited number of participants, the results from the multiple case studies may not be representative and replicable, as a quantitative study usually requires. However, when the focus is to understand the implemented curriculum in a typical educational experimental environment, an in-depth understanding of the situation is more important than a representative sample. In other words, for this research study, the quality of the investigation of each teacher's practice was more important than the number of teachers. Also, collecting data from all the full-time music teachers at the school as a whole sampling strategy was purposefully designed to obtain a deep and holistic understanding of the school's implementation.

Another limitation of Study 2 lies in the educational intervention. It usually takes time for teachers to process knowledge transformation from internal perception and thinking to external observable instructional behavior. To avoid the possible surface learning issues, observation, interviews, and teacher written documents were all collected to enhance the trustworthiness of this study.

6.5.2 Implications for Future Research

Although this research may not reach broad conclusions, it should serve as a starting point for future studies of contextual lesson implementation. The results begin excavating the

educational status of China's general music lessons and their specific SCE interactions and practices. Further explorations could be considered from the following three aspects.

With the exploration of China's implemented curriculum in music education, a series of practical concerns have also been raised. The inconsistency between the intended curriculum and implemented curriculum from a general curriculum perspective, the misalignment of SCE interpretation and its implementation from a teacher perspective, and the missing autonomy and authority from a student perspective remind us that further investigations into this domain should continue. The current study reveals an understanding of China's SCE lesson implementation from "what" and "how" aspects, there is still an urgent need for more empirical studies to answer "why" these practical issues remain. Also, this study only focused on the primary school level; other age groups and other subject domains should also be explored to balance out the understanding for an authentic China educational status.

Secondly, returning to the original purpose of promoting SCE for student autonomous knowledge construction and active interaction with the world (Schweisfurth, 2013), a new perspective in understanding the contextual adaptation and interpretation is necessary to support a comprehensive understanding of any innovative educational theories. By saying that, either Stakey (2017), Bremner (2020), or Schweisfurth (2020)'s studies on interpreting SCE contextual adaptation could be considered as future theoretical frameworks to support hearing the diverse voices from different regions and showing respect to their contexts. In other words, for better preparing future students in the 21st century with multiple competencies, it is necessary first to notice how they were educated in their regions and reflect on what could be learned from other places.

Thirdly, this research has revealed an overall phenomenon of the school music curriculum in China. The issues including music inspectors, professional developments, and national assessments have all been raised within. Therefore, for a future research project, we could first

make a deep investigation on the function and responsibility of music inspectors and to understand how they interpret the national intention and how they guide teacher education. Another exploration could also be considered to include an examination of large professional development gatherings to see what kinds of student-centered activities are presented to very large groups, which might allow for some understanding of a subset of SCE that can work with large groups. Due to the limited number of investigations into the effectiveness of national assessments, any empirical research studies in the future would support the understanding of the alignment between national intention and students' learning achievement.

Last but not least, this study reveals that student independent studies can barely be focused on in China's educational environment. Since individuality has become one of the goals of global sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015), future research might go beyond specific SCE adaptations and consider a broader educational aspect by focusing on the individual personal development of students. With a common educational goal of developing students as independent global citizens (UNESCO, 2015), how each country responds to the preparation with their specific music educational strategies methods matters.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions (English Version)

1. First Round of Interview Questions

Self-reflection on teaching and learning

1. Please describe what the general feeling is about your current teaching and learning.

2. Based on your experience, what would be the most effective and ineffective ways in teaching? Why?

Perception on Curriculum Standards

3. Do you remember what educational concepts/guides/suggestions embedded in the latest Curriculum Standards?

4. How did the suggestions in Curriculum Standards guide your teaching?

Perception on SCE

5. How do you define Student-Centered Education?

6. What are the differences between a Student-Centered Education and a Teacher-Centered Education?

6. How did you implement SCE in your actual teaching practice?

Perception on Outstanding Class Demonstration

8. Did Class Demonstration influence on your teaching? How?

9. Are there any differences between a demonstration lesson and a regular school lesson?

2. Second Round of Interview Questions

Self-reflection on interventional teaching and learning

1. What are the general feeling about your experimental lessons?

2. Are there any differences/changes from a teacher's teaching aspect?

3. Are there any differences/changes from a student's learning aspect?

Perception on the possibility of SCE in application

4. Do you feel any good differences/changes for teaching under a China teaching context?

5.Any there any differences/changes make you still concern on its application?

6. In general, do you think a western-SCE could be implemented in your regular teaching circumstance? Why?

Interesting behavior in observation

7. When you designed the third experimental lesson, did you still follow a western SCE to make the lesson plan? Why?

8. Are there any difficulties when implementing a western SCE in China's actual teaching practice?

Appendix B

Interview Questions (Chinese Version)

1. 第一轮访谈问题

教学自我反思

1.请描述您对当前教学的总体感受。

2.根据您的经验，在教学中最有效和无效的方法是什么？为什么

对"课程标准"的理解和感知

3.您还记得最新课程标准中嵌入了哪些教育概念/指南/建议吗？

4.课程标准中的建议有没有为您的教学提供了指导？是怎样指导的？

对"以学生为中心"的理解和感知

5. 您是如何定义或者解读 "以学生为中心" 这个概念的？

6. 您觉得 "以学生为中心" 与 "以教师为中心" 有何不同？

7. 您的教学中是否使用了 "以学生为中心" 的教学理念？具体如何教学实施的？

对"精品展示课"的感知

8."精品展示课" 对您平时的教学有影响吗？

9. 您觉得"精品展示课"和您平时的常规课有什么异同吗？

2. 第二轮访谈问题

教学自我反思

1. 总体来说，您怎样感受或评价实验课程在课堂中的实施情况？

2. 与常规课相比，从教学的角度来看有哪些改变的地方吗？

3. 与常规课相比，从学生的角度来看有哪些改变的地方吗？

对"以学生为中心"在实施中的可行性感知

4. 在中国教学国情下， "以学生为中心" 的哪些方法和理念是可以很好地实施的？

5. 有哪些不太适用于中国教学国情的？

6. 总体来说，您觉得西方理念中的 "以学生为中心" 的教学方式可以适用于中国的教学情况吗？为什么？

关于实验课中的变化

7. 当您设计第三个实验课的时候，是否依然使用了西方的 "以学生为中心" 的教学方式呢？ 为什么？

8. 在将 "以学生为中心" 的教学方式和方法进行教学实施的时候，是否遇到哪些困难或困惑？

Appendix C

An Example of Regular School Music Lesson Plan (Chinese Version)

《降落伞》简案

一．导入

1. 复习《音阶歌》

2. 节奏练习

出示 PPT，让学生观察节奏，分析有哪些节奏型，然后让学生先自行练习

二．歌曲学唱

1. 聆听歌曲范唱，感受歌曲的速度情绪。

边聆听边手拍拍子，感受歌曲的速度情绪，并写在乐谱的左上角。

2. 歌曲快要结束时有些什么变化？

3. 唱一唱

  (1) 跟钢琴慢速模唱，体会音乐中的降落伞是如何降落的。

  (2) 尝试跟老师合作按照书上的乐谱接龙演唱。

  (3) 难点乐句学习：6 各"慢慢降下来"的乐句音准。

  (4) 完整填词演唱

4. 动一动

化身小小降落伞，用手或身体的律动来感受歌曲中的音阶的不断下行所表现的降落伞

下落时的音乐形象。

5.唱唱、找找

请学生找出歌曲的组成音，然后一起唱唱 C 大调音阶。

Appendix D

An Example of Regular School Music Lesson Plan (English Version)

"Parachute" Lesson Plan

1、 Lead-in

(1) Review the scale song

(2) Rhythm practice

Show the PPT, let the students observe the rhythm, analyze which rhythm types, and then let the students practice by themselves

2、 Learn the new song

(1) Listen to the songs and feel the speed and mood of the songs.

While listening, clap the beat with your hands, feel the speed and emotion of the song, and write it in the upper left corner of the score.

(2) What changes did the song make towards the end?

(3) Sing the song

a. Sing slowly with the piano and experience how the parachute in the music lands.

b. Try to cooperate with the teacher and sing Solitaire according to the music score in the book.

c. Difficult phrase learning: 6 intonation of each "slow down" phrase.

d. Complete lyrics singing

(4) Movement

Become a small parachute and feel the music image of the parachute falling when the scale in the song goes down with the rhythm of your hand or body.

(5) Sing and find

Please find out the composition of the song and sing the scale in C major together.

Appendix E

An Example of Musical Concept-based Lesson Plan (Chinese Version)

教学概念： 旋律、音阶

教学目标： 1、知识与技能目标： 通过复习音符出现顺序和对应的歌曲，引导学生梳理出五声音阶、六声音阶以及七声音阶，并能用音乐手抄报的形式表达出所学知识。2、过程与方法目标：采用律动、聆听、老师带领练习、学生自我练习、看手号说歌名、听辨乐曲、演唱等方式复习。

教学重难点： 通过复习音符出现顺序和对应的歌曲，引导学生梳理出五声音阶、六声音阶以及七声音阶，并能用音乐手抄报的形式表达出所学知识。

教学用具： 课件、电子琴等

教学过程： 组织教学。师生问好！

教学流程

1.播放音乐《顽皮的杜鹃》

引导学生回忆：这是一首一年级学习过的歌曲，请你听听在这首音乐里我们是怎么表现的？学生回答：布谷鸟 《顽皮的杜鹃》

教师：这只杜鹃很顽皮，小朋友想和他交朋友，它却飞来飞去藏起来。你们来做这只顽皮的杜鹃，老师做小朋友，跟音乐做律动

播放音乐律动

教师：布谷的叫声是用了哪两个音符？教师边唱边打手号

学生：5、3

2. 教师板书：53,53 的歌曲还有哪些？教师范唱，帮助学生回忆。

3．教师：3、5 两个音之后又出现了哪个音呢？

教师范唱《雨水真是甜》，引导学生唱旋律，回忆歌曲出现音符。

板书：3、5、6

再回忆同是 3、5、6 三个音符的歌曲《左手右手》《小鸡喝水》等。

4．看手号猜歌曲

教师打《小铃铛》手号，学生看手号唱，才出歌曲是《小铃铛》

教师：请再举个例子同是这 1、3、5、6 的歌曲还有哪些？

由学生自主回忆，教师提示。

5．木偶游戏：《渔光曲》

教师：现在我们来玩个游戏，这个游戏名字叫木偶游戏。请同学们倾听歌曲，跟老师做木偶游戏。出现音有低音：5↓6↓1235

6．有规律律动演唱《小鼓响咚咚》，出现了高音 i

7. 小结

教师：请同学们给中间的圆圈起个名字。引导学生说出五声音阶

我们刚才复习的这些歌曲分别由 3、5；3、5、6，1356,12356,12356i，，这些出现音符里没有 4 和 7，它们有一个名称叫"五声音阶"。

教师：五声音阶之后，是什么音阶呢。引导学生说出"六声音阶""七声音阶"，请学生从音乐书中寻找六声、七声的歌曲并唱一唱。

板书：六声、七声

8.手号歌--音乐之声《哆唻咪》伴奏

教师：为了帮助同学们记忆我们学过的七个音，老师送一首手号歌给同学们。出示歌词，教师唱，带学生做手号。

跟音乐唱打手号

教师：我们要掌握的手号就是这 7 个，这 7 个手号会在我们接下来的音乐课堂中不断出现，非常重要。其实很简单，就 7 个动作，请同学们课余时间自我练习，通过手号歌记忆手号。

Appendix F

An Example of Musical Concept-based Lesson Plan (English Version)

Teaching Concepts: melody, scale

Teaching Objectives: 1. Knowledge and skill objectives: guide students to recognize and sort out pentatonic scale, hexatonic scale and septonic scale by reviewing the order of notes and corresponding songs and be able to express their learned knowledge in the form of musical transcription. 2. Process and method objectives: review by means of rhythm, listening, teacher led practice, students' self-practice, reading hand signs, saying song names, listening to music, singing, etc.

Potential Difficult Tasks: by reviewing the order of notes and corresponding songs, guide students to sort out pentatonic scale, hexatonic scale and septonic scale, and express their learned knowledge in the form of musical transcription.

Teaching Tools: PowerPoint, electronic organ, etc

Teaching Process: organize teaching. Hello, teachers and students!

Specifically,

1. Play the music "naughty cuckoo"

Guide students to recall: This is a song learned in grade one. Please listen to how we behave in this music?

Student answer: Cuckoo "naughty cuckoo"

Teacher: This cuckoo is very naughty. The child wants to make friends with him, but it flies around and hides. You do this naughty cuckoo. The teacher is a child and moves with the music

Play music rhythm

Teacher: what are the two notes used in cuckoo's cry? The teacher sang and beat the trumpet

Student: 5, 3

2. Teacher blackboard writing: what are the songs of 53 and 53? Teachers sing fan songs to help students remember.

3. Teacher: which sound appears after 3 and 5?

Teacher fan sang "rain is really sweet", guided the students to sing the melody and recall the notes in the song.

Blackboard writing: 3, 5, 6

Then recall the songs with 3, 5 and 6 notes, such as left hand and right hand, chicken drinking water, etc.

4. Look at the hand signs and guess the song

The teacher plays the hand number of "little bell", and the students watch the hand number and sing, then the song is "little bell"

Teacher: please give another example. What are the songs of 1, 3, 5 and 6?

The students recall independently and the teacher prompts.

5. Puppet game: Yuguang song

Teacher: now let's play a game called puppet game. Please listen to the songs and play puppet games with the teacher. There are bass tones: 5 ↓ 6 ↓ 1235

6. Singing the little drum with regular rhythm, and there was a high pitch I

7. Summary

Teacher: please name the circle in the middle. Guide the students to say the pentatonic scale

The songs we just reviewed are composed of 3 and 5; 3. 5. 613561235612356i,, there are no 4 and 7 in these notes. They have a name called "pentatonic scale".

Teacher: after the pentatonic scale, what scale is it. Guide the students to say "six tone scale" and "seven tone scale". Ask the students to find six tone and seven tone songs from the music book and sing them.

Blackboard writing: six tones, seven tones

8. Hand signs song -- accompaniment of the sound of music "Do Mi"

Teacher: in order to help the students, remember the seven sounds we learned, the teacher sent a hand signs song to the students. Show the lyrics, the teacher sings, and take the students as hand signs.

Singing while doing the hand signs

Teacher: we need to master these seven hand signs. These seven hand signs will continue to appear in our next music class, which is very important. In fact, it's very simple. Just seven actions. Please practice yourself in your spare time and memorize the hand number through the hand number song.

Appendix G

An Example of an Interdisciplinary Concept-based Plan (Chinese Version)

教学概念：总结、提炼、分类

教学目标：

1、知识与技能目标： 通过上节课的复习，指导学生用音乐手抄报（与美术和语文结合的学习方式）的形式表达出所学知识。

2、过程与方法目标：采用聆听、观察、自主学习等方式。

教学重难点：

能用音乐手抄报的形式表达出所学知识。

教学用具：课件、白纸、颜色笔、铅笔、橡皮擦、尺子等

教学过程：

一、组织教学。

师生问好！

二、教学流程

教师：上节课我们通过复习，知道了五声音阶、六声音阶以及七声音阶，还学了一首《手号歌》。现在，我们来复习一下这首歌曲，看看大家练习得怎么样了。

1、练习《手号歌》

2、观看手抄报模板

这节课，老师想请同学们通过手抄报（也称思维导图）的形式来总结一下所学的音乐知识内容。

例如; 标题 1 一年级开学以来至今学过的歌曲标题的周围或者下方或者上方就写上歌曲的名字

标题 2 五声音阶的歌曲

标题 3 六声音阶歌曲

标题 3 我最喜欢的歌曲

除了标题，还可以有对老师说的一句话；或者我的创作等等

3、欣赏一些已完成班级的手抄报

三、独立创作 "我的音乐手抄报"

Appendix H

An Example of an Interdisciplinary Concept-based Plan (English Version)

Teaching Concepts: summary, refinement and classification

Teaching Objectives:

1. Knowledge and skill objectives: through the review of the last class, guide students to express their knowledge in the form of music poster (learning strategy combined with interdisciplinary knowledge such as visual art and Chinese).

2. Process and method objectives: listening, observation, autonomous learning, etc.

Potential Difficult Tasks:

Be able to express the knowledge in the form of music manuscript.

Teaching Tools: courseware, white paper, color pen, pencil, eraser, ruler, etc

Teaching Process:

1、 Organize teaching.

Hello, teachers and students!

2、 Teaching process

Teacher: last class, through review, we learned the pentatonic scale, hexatonic scale and septonic scale, and learned a song "hand signs song". Now, let's review this song and see how you practice.

1. Practice the hand signs song

2. Watch the music poster templates

In this class, the teacher wants to ask the students to classify and summarize the music knowledge in the form of handwritten poster (also could be understood as mind map).

For example; Title 1 the name of the song is written around or below or above the title of the song learned since the beginning of school in Grade 1

Title 2 pentatonic scale song

Title 3 six tone scale song

Title 3 my favorite song

In addition to the title, there can also be a sentence to the teacher; Or my creation, etc

3. Enjoy some handwritten newspapers of completed classes

3、 Independent creation of "my music manuscript"

Appendix I

An Example of Reflectional Journal （Chinese Version）

一、我觉得学生合作和学生自主学习在现阶段的课堂可行，从一年级就开始以小组或两人合作进行学习，同时，每节课均给学生叠加出现音和出现节奏等音乐知识，大部分学生能利用这些识谱知识来进行自学，只不过在教学方法上还有所欠缺。

二、第一次参加培训后，我对学生合作和自主学习的教学方式有了一些改观，发现同一课内容，同样的目标，由于教学方式的改变，可以上得更有趣。

三、真正实践在课堂上以后，我是按感受、自学、表现及创编四个步骤进行实践的。实践的比较顺利，学生制作的思维导图也能很好的体现他们的理解和认知，让我更容易了解他们当下的学习情况。

四、最终的教学实践是比较顺利的，主要在熟练度上还要再下功夫。我坚信"学生合作和自主学习"在自己的课堂里即使人数多一些也肯定可行，只不过因不熟悉，每个环节应该呈现什么效果以及环节之间的串连方面还可以进行调整，更有趣更细。

五、但是确实需要考虑课本中规定内容的外在压力影响，所以这些课程我会循序渐进的加入到我平常的课程，但频率应该不会很高，不然也有可能完成不了原本的教学任务。

Appendix J

An Example of Reflectional Journal (English Version)

1、 I think students' cooperation and students' autonomous learning are feasible in the classroom at this stage. From the first grade, they start to study in groups or two people. At the same time, each class gives students music knowledge such as sound and rhythm. Most students can use this knowledge for self-study, but there is still a lack of teaching methods.

2、 After the first training, I made some changes in the teaching methods of students' cooperative and autonomous learning. I found that the same course content and the same goal can be more interesting due to the change of teaching methods.

3、 After the real practice in class, I practice according to the four steps of feeling, self-study, performance and creation. The practice is relatively smooth. The mind map made by students can also well reflect their understanding and cognition, making it easier for me to understand their current learning situation.

4、 The final teaching practice is relatively smooth, mainly in terms of proficiency. I firmly believe that "student cooperation and autonomous learning" is certainly feasible even if there are a large number of students in my own classroom, but because I am not familiar with it, what effect each link should present and the connection between links can also be adjusted, which is more interesting and detailed.

5、 However, it is really necessary to consider the external pressure of the contents specified in the textbook, so I will gradually add these courses to my ordinary courses, but the frequency should not be very high, otherwise I may not be able to complete the original teaching tasks.