

**Nurturing Chinese Music Students' Cultural Identity through
Teaching and Learning Chinese Piano Repertoires in a University
Setting in Guangdong, China**

by

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Statement of Originality

I, WEI, Taoying, 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: 2024.08.16



Abstract

Nurturing students' cultural identity has become one of the most critical tasks in the Chinese educational system. However, the existing studies rarely mentioned how to nurture music students' cultural identity through teaching and learning Chinese piano repertoires, and these studies also barely offered efficient pedagogies for examining teachers' and students' experiences with reflections linking to Chinese culture and piano interpretations. This research explores the phenomena of nurturing music students' cultural identity by teaching and learning Chinese piano repertoires in Chinese universities from both piano teachers' and students' perspectives, aiming to propose a teaching approach for future practices.

In this study, the scope of cultural identity is primarily focused on individuals' understanding of Chinese culture, forming personal musical interpretations connected to Chinese piano repertoires' teaching and learning. The nurture of cultural identity is explored through an empirical process to strengthen individuals' musical understanding and acceptance of Chinese culture (thinking style, aesthetic of performance and appreciation, music values) from performing to listening, concerning the knowledge from teaching and learning of Chinese piano repertoires.

The study was launched in two phases to answer two research questions. In Phase I, a three-round Delphi survey was adopted, and ten piano teachers from universities were invited to share their thoughts and implementations on performance and pedagogy related to Chinese piano repertoires' learning and teaching experience, with a particular concern on Chinese cultural influence. The three-round Delphi survey had reached a consensus with ten elements that mapped out a strategic path for integrating cultural awareness within the teaching of Chinese piano repertoires.

Phase II was an empirical study in a Chinese university setting with four piano majors. The teaching framework was based on the findings from Phase I, and the results indicated that a comprehensive framework in nurturing students' cultural identity through Chinese piano repertoires involves a holistic approach that transcends technical mastery to include emotional engagement, cultural understanding, and creative interpretation.

All these two-phase data analyses mainly adopted Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, which aimed to understand the meaning and sense-making from participants' points of view. The inductive analysis underly double hermeneutic in the IPA process attempted to describe and interpret how participants think about cultural practices through Chinese piano repertoires, interpreted from participants' answers primarily focused on personal expressions and emotions.

This study responds to the Chinese educational policy in nurturing Chinese culture, and the nurturing of cultural identity through music teaching and learning also benefits the development of Chinese piano education that aligns with the broader educational objective of nurturing students with cultural competence in a diverse and interconnected global community.

Keywords: Cultural Identity, Chinese Piano Repertoires, Chinese Cultural Context, University Setting

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List of Abbreviations

IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
PETs	Personal Experiential Themes
GETs	Group Experiential Themes
R1-10	Respondent 1-10
PM	Post-class Memo
RJ	Reflective Journal



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CHAPTER 1

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

China boasts a significant number of piano learners, and the Chinese piano repertoire plays a crucial role in shaping the musical life within Chinese society. This repertoire has emerged as a cultural symbol in tandem with China's modernization (Yang, 2015). However, the widespread adoption of Western musical theories, history, philosophy and appreciation has deeply influenced piano learners, posing a challenge for them to recognize and understand the Chinese piano repertoire. Despite contemporary efforts to integrate Chinese cultural elements into the educational paradigm¹, piano educators must reassess the impact of Chinese culture on the overt and subtle aspects of musical preferences, values, practices, abilities, and knowledge.

The inclusion of Chinese piano repertoires in the curriculum aims to enhance student's cultural awareness and identity following the trend of promoting Chinese culture in university settings. However, a facet that was previously underexplored in piano education about constructing with effective methods. This gap highlights the scarcity of empirical research focusing on the role of piano education in shaping cultural identity among teachers and students within the context of Chinese higher education institutions. More pointedly, the discourse seldom acknowledges the interconnection between the deep-seated wisdom inherent in Chinese philosophical thought, the mental fortitude required of musicians, and the impact of cultural

¹ The Chinese central government issued “*the guidelines on preserving and developing excellent traditional culture*” in 2017, eyeing a “*marked boost*” in the international influence of Chinese culture by 2025.

comprehension on musical interpretation, especially in the professional development of music students.

According to the researcher's learning and teaching experience, mastering Chinese piano repertoire presents a unique challenge due to its stylistic deviation from Western classical music. Consequently, the Chinese cultural influence via piano education necessitates a thorough exploration grounded in empirical evidence from the perspectives of both educators and learners.

This study interpreted the phenomena of nurturing Chinese music students' cultural identity via piano lessons in Chinese university settings. For learners of Western musical instruments, this presents an opportunity to re-examine and reacquaint themselves with the significance of traditional Chinese culture, Chinese musical heritage, and the cultural awareness behind musical interpretation, which may exert both overt and covert impacts on their musical comprehension. Furthermore, this study aligns with efforts to rejuvenate and contemporize the Chinese culture.

1.1 BACKGROUND

Positioned within the framework established by the 2017 guidelines aimed at the preservation and enhancement of China's distinguished traditional culture, the endeavor to foster individuals who possess a profound sense of Chinese cultural identity, national awareness, and patriotic sentiment has been identified as a critical mission within the realm of higher education in China (Wang & Zhong, 2020). Within the domain of piano education, there has been a notable surge in scholarly engagement, evidenced by an increase in seminars and academic publications dedicated to the promotion and exploration of Chinese piano repertoire. This burgeoning interest encompasses analytical studies of specific compositions, the development of technique

training methodologies, and innovative approaches to musical interpretation. In particular, since 2018, researchers have witnessed a rapid proliferation of such scholarly activities, underscoring the growing emphasis on integrating aspects of Chinese cultural heritage within the field of piano education (Yu, 2021; Li, 2021; Li, 2017). This trend not only reflects a broader educational objective to deepen cultural literacy and national pride among students but also signifies the evolving landscape of music education in China, where traditional and contemporary elements converge to shape a unique pedagogical approach.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research endeavor aimed to investigate the potential for nurturing of cultural identity through the pedagogical processes of teaching and learning Chinese piano repertoires within the context of university settings in China. Specifically, the study explored how engagement with Chinese piano repertoires, contributes to nurturing cultural identity among students.

This research explores whether exposure to and interaction with Chinese culture, through the medium of piano repertoires, may serve as a significant catalyst for fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Chinese culture. Moreover, this study aimed to examine the mechanisms through which these educational experiences facilitate the integration of cultural values and historical awareness into the personal identities of students, thereby enriching their overall musical journey and personal development.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study lies on the intertwining between the development of Chinese piano education and the Chinese cultural context. It endeavors to bridge the existing scholarly

void by investigating the cognitive processes engaged in the assimilation and interpretation of Chinese culture within tertiary-level piano education in China. This area of inquiry is critical for understanding how teachers and students internalize and reflect upon Chinese cultural elements through their musical training, thereby enriching the knowledge of cognitive engagement with cultural content in educational settings.

The study delves into the influence of Chinese cultural immersion on individuals' personal development within the musical sphere. By examining how exposure to and engagement with Chinese cultural norms, values, and aesthetics through piano education impacts students' personal growth, artistic identity, and expressive capabilities, this research provides valuable insights into the transformative power of cultural education in music.

Additionally, this research significantly contributes to developing a localized approach to piano education in China. It articulates the importance of integrating Chinese piano repertoires and cultural insights into the curriculum, thereby fostering a pedagogical framework that is deeply rooted in the Chinese cultural context. This aspect of the study highlights the necessity for education systems to adapt and reflect local cultural identities, promoting a more inclusive and resonant learning experience for students.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study explores the ways and the effectiveness of nurturing cultural identities via teaching and learning Chinese piano repertoires in a Chinese university setting through qualitative research from teachers' and students' perspectives. The research questions of this study include:

1. What are the teaching strategies and practices for nurturing music students' cultural identity in Chinese university settings from piano teachers' perspectives?

2. How do piano students act with reference to the identified teaching strategies to develop their cultural identity and shed light on developing their musicality with the influence of Chinese culture?

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN

1.5.1 Phase I: Delphi Survey of the Teaching Strategies and Practices

This initial phase of the research involves the execution of a Delphi survey (Skulmoski et al., 2007) a systematic forecasting method used to gather consensus among a panel of experts on the effectiveness of various teaching strategies and practices within the teaching of Chinese piano repertoires that underscores the cultivation of students' cultural identity. This iterative process aims to refine and converge on the most effective pedagogical approaches by soliciting and synthesizing the insights of seasoned educators in the field of piano education.

1.5.2 Phase II: A Case Study in a Comprehensive University

Following the Delphi survey, the second phase transitions to an in-depth case study conducted within the environment of a comprehensive university. This qualitative research component is designed to explore, in detail, the application and outcomes of identified teaching strategies and practices within a real-world educational setting. Through this case study, the research seeks to illuminate the practical implications, and challenges with pedagogical concepts to cultivate students' cultural identity via teaching Chinese piano repertoires.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review explores the intersection of cultural identity, Chinese music culture, and the integration of piano music within the Chinese context from primary viewpoints. It concerns the multifaceted nature of cultural identity, the historical and contemporary aspects of music in Chinese culture, and the distinctive process of piano music localization in China.

2.1 THE ESSENCE AND SCOPE NOTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

Cultural identity is a multifaceted and dynamic construct that encompasses various dimensions, including individual and collective identities, dynamic and contextual aspects and symbolic expression. This section aims to provide an in-depth review of these dimensions, drawing on key studies and conceptual frameworks across multiple disciplines.

2.1.1 Individual and Collective Dimensions

Cultural identity at the individual level involves personal identification with cultural values, beliefs, and practices (Phinney, 1992; Ogrodzka-Mazur et al., 2021). Scholars often delineate cultural identity as a dynamic process through which individuals negotiate their sense of self in relation to one or more cultural phenomena (Hall, 1990; MacDonald et al., 2017; Taylor, 1999). This negotiation process is influenced by factors such as family upbringing, education, and personal experience.

Robinson (1999) defined identity as comprising both visible and invisible aspects of the self that shape self-construction. These aspects include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, skin color, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, and physical and intellectual abilities. Zheng (2018) explored how individuals internalize traditions and customs, shaping their personal

cultural identities. The study found that personal experiences and familial influence play significant roles in this internalization process. Similarly, Zuo and Wen (2017) highlighted that individual cultural identity is expressed through life patterns and a sense of connection to a shared history.

The manifestation of cultural identity among individuals primarily occurs through a commonality in cultural background and ethos, or through mutual recognition and acceptance of divergent cultural expressions (Cui, 2004). Furthermore, the nurturing of cultural identity is characterized by an amalgamation of emotional spontaneity and a rational, conscious embrace of culture, bolstered by profound comprehension and reflective engagement with cultural values and norms.

The essence of cultural identity has undergone rigorous scholarly examination across various disciplines, including sociology, developmental psychology, social psychology, cross-cultural psychology, indigenous cultural psychology, ethnomusicology, and ideological studies (Lindholm, 2007; Robinson, 2009; Mao & Shen, 2015). A central aim of cultural identity research is to explore the mechanisms by which individuals understand themselves, communicate with others, and perceive their belonging to cultural groups (Berry, 1997; Schwartz et al., 2008; Voicu, 2013).

Conversely, the collective dimension of cultural identity refers to the shared sense of belonging to cultural groups, such as local, regional, national, or linguistic communities, characterized by common moral and aesthetic values (Lindholm, 2007; Robinson, 2009). Collective cultural identity fosters social cohesion and a sense of belonging, reinforcing group solidarity through communal practices and rituals (Mao & Shen, 2015).

In sum, the relationship between the individual and collective dimensions of cultural identity is complex and interdependent. Individual cultural identity is shaped and reinforced by participation in collective cultural practices and the internalization of group values.

Simultaneously, collective cultural identity is maintained and propagated through the individual identities of its members, as they engage in and transmit cultural traditions and norms (Berry, 1997; Schwartz et al., 2008). Therefore, the relationship between individual and collective cultural identity is mutually reinforcing, with each dimension influencing and sustaining the other.

2.1.2 Dynamic and Contextual Aspects

The dynamic nature of cultural identity is a nuanced and multifaceted perspective that emphasizes the dynamic and evolving nature of how individuals come to understand and define themselves in relation to their cultural environment. This view posits that cultural identity is not a static entity, but rather a continuously negotiated and reconstructed aspect of the self that emerges through interactions with the cultural milieu, social experiences, and personal reflection (Hall, 1990; Jenkins, 2008).

Nurturing identity is a complicated process with social surroundings. According to Hall (1996, 2000), identity shifts from enlightenment to the sociological till post-modern. It originated from individualism, which emphasizes the essence of the autonomous and self-sufficient. When it comes to the sociological stage, the emphasis on the interaction between self and society and the continuous dialogue between self and the cultural worlds expands the identity concept in the social scope. He insisted that “the process of identification, through which we project ourselves into our cultural identities, has become more open-ended, variable, and problematic” (Hall, 1996, p. 277). The post-modern subject conceptualized identity as *a movable feast* from a historical, not a biological, perspective. Cultural identity can be formed and transformed continuously with how we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems.

Zuo & Wen (2017) argued that cultural identity is relatively innate, and people tend to naturally accept, learn, and inherit cultural norms in a stable social environment. However,

cultural identity becomes challenging, especially when people face cultures from different countries and nations collide. People need to make choices in the contemporary world. The attitude toward cultural value also constructs the individual's cultural identity.

Cultural identity is also an affirmative cultural value judgment that includes three aspects: identification, acceptance, and confidence (Liu et al., 2020). Identification is a kind of rational thinking that must first distinguish the differences between cultures and then make judgments and choices towards cultures. Acceptance refers to accepting cultural concepts and lifestyles, which can be a spontaneous and unconscious acceptance or a choice after rational thinking and weighing. Acceptance also refers to recognizing the value and utility of different cultures that conform to the local context (Feng, 2001). Cultural confidence refers to a firm belief and emotional recognition of the cultural vitality and development prospects to which people belong based on fully affirming their cultural values (Liu et al., 2020).

Moreover, the nurture of cultural identity involves the assimilation and accommodation of new cultural experiences and knowledge, which contribute to the individual's evolving sense of self and belonging. This dynamic process reflects the individual's capacity to integrate multiple cultural narratives and identities, allowing for a more complex and layered understanding of oneself (Schwartz et al., 2008). It also highlights the importance of agency and choice in the nurture of one's identity. Individuals actively participate in selecting, rejecting, and reinterpreting cultural elements, thereby shaping their cultural identity in a manner that reflects their unique experiences, aspirations, and personal growth (Jenkins, 2008; Berry, 1997).

The nurture of cultural identity is predicated upon an introspective engagement that facilitates access to one's inner sense of self, functioning as a guiding mechanism across three distinct dimensions (Bamberg, Watzlawik & Demuth, 2022). Firstly, it aids individuals to navigate a sense of temporal stability and change, enabling a comprehension of the self that is both consistent over time and adaptable to change. Secondly, this process fosters the integration

of an individual's sense of identity and belonging within the social fabric, permitting a harmonious balance between affiliation with and differentiation from others. Thirdly, it encompasses the navigation of personal agency within the context of broader societal dynamics. This dimension acknowledges the dual reality of individuals as both subjects to external forces beyond their immediate control and as active agents capable of influencing their environment through their actions and endeavors.

It is important to review from the contextual aspect to understand the influence from culture in nurturing individual's identity. Berry and Triandis (2006) identified three salient characteristics that contribute to a foundational understanding of culture. They highlight that culture is characterized by its shared nature within society, its relative stability over time, and the importance of tradition, which is passed down through generations. This perspective underscores the role of culture in shaping collective societal norms and values.

Additionally, culture is analogized to a conceptual space by Boden (2009), who described it as a culturally accepted thinking style that could manifest in various forms, such as artistic expressions or culinary traditions. Boden noted that this conceptual space is delineated and constrained by a set of generative rules that, despite their potential ambiguity and significance, fundamentally shape cultural expressions and practices.

Complementing Boden's analysis, Sundararajan (2015) explored the underlying principles governing this conceptual space, positing that these rules are integral to rationality. Sundararajan argues that this rationality is reflective of a functional mindset tailored to specific ecological niches, providing a logical framework through which culture can be understood and analyzed.

In the Chinese language, culture (文化 wén-huà) is a term that combines two Chinese characters. They can be used separately or work together as a term. Wén (文) originated from the interlaced texture of various colors. More specifically, Wén (文) refers to the literary,

official document, liberal arts, humanities, ritual, and etiquette from a narrow scope. Huà (化) means to change, to transform, and to convert. The ideology of Huà in Chinese tradition is to enlighten the populace by cultural means rather than force by violence (Wang, 2019). It the dynamic process similar to the idea of identity nurture.

Yijing (易经, Book of Change) is one of the essential books for scholars throughout the history of China. It serves as a foundational text for both classical Confucianism and Daoism, offering central concepts such as *yin* and *yang*, and the interplay between change and unchanging principles (Zhu, 1995).

Fung (2018) applies the concepts found in *Yijing* to the phenomena of music and music education, suggesting that the yin-yang dyad can be effectively used to explain various aspects of musical practice. These include musical motion, the roles of individuals within musical settings, and the nature of musical activities and events. In educational contexts, the dynamic nature of music education is highlighted, with events continuously evolving in response to changes in context, the teacher, and the learner. Despite this constant change, these events remain interconnected and synchronized, reflecting the principles outlined in *Yijing*.

In sum, the dynamic nature and contextual aspect of cultural identity as a process of personal construction offers a comprehensive understanding of how individuals navigate and negotiate their place within the cultural landscape. It underscores the dynamic interplay between external cultural influences and internal processes of self-reflection and identity nurture, illustrating the complex and ongoing nature of cultural identity nutrition (Hall, 1990; Taylor, 1999; Jenkins, 2008).

2.1.3 Symbolic Expression

Symbolic expressions are vital for understanding the nurturing of cultural identity. Symbols such as language, art, music, and religious practices serve as tangible representations of cultural values. (Hale & de Abreu, 2010; Hanssen, 2011). Every culture has its own set of symbols and meanings associated with different experiences and perceptions (Ho, 2018).

According to the notion of symbolic resources, socio-cultural contexts provide the cultural components necessary for people to understand their experiences and navigate social interactions (Zittoun, 2006) and individuals actively engage in assigning personal meaning to the symbolic elements and environments they inhabit. These components are described by Vygotsky as sociocultural tools that mediate psychological processes (Vygotsky, 1978), including socially recognized interaction patterns, cultural customs, and physical objects (Zittoun, 2006; Cole, 1996).

Lindholm (2007) and Robinson (2009) discussed how these symbols create a sense of continuity and belonging within cultural groups. It has been shown that music plays a significant role in expressing and preserving cultural identity (Guan et al., 2022). Traditional music and dance are powerful tools for transmitting cultural knowledge and fostering a sense of identity among community members.

Zittoun et al. (2003) proposed that a symbolic element becomes a resource when it is utilized for a specific purpose. Focusing on the use of these elements highlights their function beyond their intended role and allows for an examination of why some individuals may or may not use them, providing insight into the factors that enable or restrict the transformation of cultural elements into symbolic resources.

Zuo & Wen (2017) argued that cultural identity includes three-level:

1. cultural form identity, which is the identity from tangible aspects such as traditional Chinese architecture, clothing, and languages;

2. cultural norm identity, which is the identity of behaviors inherited from a cultural perspective, including how we define our social role, how we act, and the approaches to nonverbal communication;
3. cultural values identity refers to mind culture, which is abstract but is the core level of identity that mediates people's cognition, emotions, expressions, and behaviors with explicit or implicit knowledge of culture.

Symbolic resources involve cultural elements connected to personal experiences, such as a piano repertoire associated with a childhood memory. While the use of these resources helps individuals navigate the socio-cultural world, this process is often taken for granted. This perspective explains why cultural identity often goes unnoticed until an individual encounters others perceived as different (Hale & de Abreu, 2010). Routine symbolic resources suddenly become conscious processes, such as realizing that a customary musical interpretation with Western Classical style may be inappropriate in playing a Chinese piano repertoire, thereby highlighting the need for adaptation and redefinition of these resources.

In sum, symbolic expressions are vital in nurturing cultural identity by embodying cultural values. Symbolic elements become resources when used for specific purposes, shedding light on their broader functions, such as music being a way of expressing and preserving cultural identity. These resources, often connected to personal experiences, help individuals to explore their socio-cultural world, usually unconsciously, until interactions with different cultures highlight the need for adaptation and redefinition.

2.1.4 Music in Identity

MacDonald et al. (2017) introduced the concept of *music in identity*, highlighting the multifaceted ways in which individuals utilize music to shape and express their identities. This

concept explores how personal engagement with music influences self-perception, social interactions, and identity formation. Furthermore, they argue that music is not merely a passive reflection of identity but an active agent in its construction, enabling individuals to explore and affirm various aspects of their identities. Through musical choices, performances, and affiliations, individuals navigate their social worlds, negotiate their identities, and communicate their unique cultural narratives.

Furthermore, music functions as a critical medium for exploring and understanding the complexities of culture, offering a lens through which the dynamics of cultural identity and interaction can be examined (Back, 2024). Engaging with musical practices enables individuals to delve into the intricate layers of cultural expression, which manifest in various forms such as traditional rituals, social ceremonies, and contemporary performances (Hu, 2022). These musical practices are not merely artistic expressions; they are embedded with the values, beliefs, and social norms of the communities from which they originate. As such, they serve as living representations of cultural identity, transmitting a wealth of meanings and interpretations that are deeply rooted in the historical and social contexts of a community (Johnson, 2002; Ho, 2018). Through the study and participation in these practices, one can gain profound insights into the cultural fabric that shapes and defines communal life, revealing the interconnectedness of music and culture as a whole.

Frith (1996) posited that music serves as a vital resource for social identity development by articulating and reinforcing shared group norms. According to Frith, music is able to convey collective values and behaviors helps individuals understand and align themselves with the social dynamics of their group. This shared musical experience fosters a sense of belonging and unity, thereby strengthening social identity. By participating in or studying these musical activities, individuals gain access to the underlying cultural frameworks that shape social and individual identities.

Music education is pivotal in this process as it facilitates access to cultural narratives and traditions. Davis (2005, p. 60) pointed out that cultural identity is not an external referent of music education; instead, music education is itself a move within a cultural identity. Through the study and performance of music from various cultural backgrounds, learners are exposed to the diverse ways in which communities articulate their histories, beliefs, and social values. This educational engagement with music not only enhances learners' musical skills and appreciation but also deepens their understanding of the complexities of cultural identity.

Shepherd and Wicke (1997) argued that music acts as a cultural text that reflects and shapes the identity of individuals and groups. They suggested that music education can serve as a powerful tool for cultural transmission, enabling students to engage critically with their own cultural identities as well as those of others. Through this engagement, music education fosters a sense of belonging and connection to one's cultural heritage while promoting intercultural understanding and respect.

In sum, music functions as a dynamic medium that both reflects and shapes cultural identity. It captures the historical trajectories of cultural development, preserving ancient traditions while simultaneously fostering innovation and adaptation. As communities interact with and reinterpret musical forms, they continuously negotiate and redefine their cultural boundaries, thereby illustrating the fluid and evolving nature of culture itself.

2.1.5 The View from Educational Perspective

Within the framework of the educational system, the development of cultural competence emerges as a pivotal element in nurturing talents. Cultural competence is underpinned by three fundamental components: cultural understanding, cultural identity, and cultural practices (Liu et al., 2020). Cultural identity entails the recognition and embrace by individuals of a

collective's aesthetic preferences, cognitive styles, ethical norms, behaviors, and customs, all within the purview of a distinct cultural milieu.

Cultural identity and experiences significantly influence individuals' perceptions of the world, impacting teaching practices (Berry & Candias, 2013). Gay (2018) delved into the principles and methodologies of culturally responsive teaching, underscoring the importance of aligning curriculum and pedagogy with students' cultural backgrounds to foster engagement and enhance learning outcomes.

In the Chinese context, Confucian philosophy plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's cultural identity and moral values. Wang (2004) argued that the core tenets and fundamental aspects of Confucian thought in traditional moral education have had a profound influence on the Chinese educational system. Wang further contends that Confucius and his followers did not solely emphasize the transmission of knowledge; instead, they highlighted the significance of the teacher's role and the positive impact of the educational environment. This perspective underscores the subtle yet powerful influence of unconscious factors on an individual's character. Wang also recognized that Confucian philosophy suggests that teaching praxis must consider students' interests, preferences, aptitudes, and personal characteristics to promote the holistic development of both body and mind.

Harold (2016) examined the shared concern of ancient Chinese and Greek thinkers regarding the moral value of music, focusing on two central claims. The first claim posits that music can shape our character, which Harold requires two steps to establish: demonstrating that music affects us and that these effects are both lasting and morally significant. While Harold finds substantial evidence supporting the first step and considers the ancients' arguments convincing, he acknowledges that the second step is more challenging to prove due to the lack of empirical research, which would be difficult to conduct. However, Harold suggests that the idea of music having morally significant, lasting effects is plausible and merits further

exploration. The second claim, that musical goodness equates to moral goodness, is also unproved, but Harold argues that the most significant objections to this claim have been addressed, rendering the ancient idea credible and deserving of further discussion.

Moral education has a far-reaching influence on the Chinese educational system. As Chinese President Xi emphasized at the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (2022), the most basic aim of education is to foster virtue. The emphasis on patriotism within the educational process is not merely a reflection of loyalty to the nation but also an affirmation of cultural self-confidence, a concept heavily promoted by the Chinese government. It posits that a robust sense of national pride, rooted in a deep appreciation of China's cultural values and historical achievements, is crucial for the nation's development and its role on the global stage (Callahan, 2010; Wang, 2021). By linking cultural identity with the broader goals of national development, Chinese educational praxis embodies a holistic approach that seeks to nurture individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also deeply connected to their cultural and national identity. It reflects an understanding of patriotism not only as a love for the country but also as an appreciation and promotion of Chinese culture in a global context.

Zhao (2004) explored how modern Chinese nationalism and patriotism have been constructed through state narratives and education, highlighting the role of patriotic education in fostering a sense of national identity among citizens. This educational approach aims to instill in individuals a deep respect for China's historical struggles, cultural achievements, and the importance of contributing to the nation's prosperity and global standing. In essence, viewing cultural identity through the lens of patriotism offers a rich analytical framework for understanding how national allegiance and cultural belonging are interwoven. It reveals the depth and complexity of the patriotic sentiment, showcasing its significance not only as a marker of national identity but as a foundational element of the cultural self. This perspective underscores the importance of national narratives, symbols, and values in the ongoing process

of cultural identity nurture, highlighting the continuous interplay between individual identities and collective national consciousness.

In summary, the literature from an educational perspective underscores the pivotal importance of cultural competence in the educational process, which encompasses a comprehensive understanding of cultural identities, practices, and the broader societal context. Cultural competence is integral to shaping effective teaching practices and fostering meaningful student engagement. At the heart of this competence lies cultural identity, which involves the recognition, appreciation, and incorporation of cultural characteristics. This cultural identity plays a significant role in influencing how educators approach their teaching and how students connect with the learning material.

One of the key strategies highlighted in the literature is culturally responsive teaching (Lind & Mckoy, 2016), which involves the integration of curriculum content with students' cultural backgrounds. This approach is designed to make learning more relevant and accessible, thereby enhancing educational outcomes by aligning educational experiences with the cultural contexts of the students.

Moreover, the literature emphasizes the ongoing and dynamic interaction between individual and national identities within the educational context (Zhao, 2004; Wang, 2021; Xi, 2022). In the Chinese educational system, this interplay is particularly pronounced, where national narratives and cultural values are actively cultivated to strengthen a sense of cultural identity among students. The reinforcement of national identity through education is seen as essential in nurturing a collective cultural consciousness, which is crucial for the preservation and continuity of cultural heritage. Therefore, the literature highlights the dual role of education in both fostering individual cultural identity and promoting a cohesive national identity, illustrating the complex and multifaceted nature of cultural competence in education.

2.2 MUSIC IN CHINESE CULTURE

From a sociological perspective, music is a cultural phenomenon created by human beings who use sound as an agent to deliver ideas, exchange in nurture, and express emotions (Li & Liu, 2012). In this study, Chinese music is narratively limited to the music composed by the Chinese people (including the Chinese diaspora), who use the nation's inherent musical forms, methods, and melodies to reflect Chinese culture (Du, 2004).

2.2.1 Concepts of Music in Ancient China

The term music in Chinese, represented by two characters 音乐 (*Yin* and *Yuè*), carries distinct meanings for each character within the Chinese cultural context. In general, *sheng* (声) is the fundamental level, which refers to all the sound, including noise. Some noises, such as the rubbing sound of the gong, can be treated as a part of Chinese music, which is different from the concept of Western art music (Du, 2004). *Yin* (音) refers to the ordered, organized sound with high and low pitches; it is similar to musical notes in tune and melody (Du, 2004). According to Xiu (1986), the original character of *yuè* (乐) in the oracle bone inscriptions probably referred to the mature grain and related to the joyous celebration of agricultural harvest. *Yuè* is also a mixture of art activities, including poetry, music, and dance, in ancient China. When two characters, *yin-yuè* (音乐), are combined in the Spring and Autumn Periods (春秋时代, 770-476BC), *yin* has gradually limited its meaning into tune, and *yuè* generally represents music (Li & Liu, 2012).

According to the *Yueji* (乐记, Book of Music) of Li (礼), there was a systematic evolution from the concept of *sheng* (声, sound) to *yuè* (乐, music). This transformation is described in terms of the natural progression from sound to structured musical expression. The text explains that when sounds are in harmonious accord, they are referred to as *sheng*. When these

harmonious sounds are organized methodically, they are termed *yin*, meaning tune or melody. When these ordered tunes are performed in a structured form, often accompanied by dance elements such as shields, axes, and yak tails, they are recognized as *yuè*, or music (声相应，故生变；变成方，谓之音；比音而乐之，及干戚羽旄，谓之乐).

This distinction underscores the Chinese philosophical view of music as not merely a sequence of sounds, but as a disciplined and culturally significant form of expression that integrates auditory, ritualistic, and social elements (Du, 2004). The evolution from *sheng* to *yuè* reflects the broader cultural and philosophical emphasis on order, harmony, and the integration of music with other forms of artistic and ritualistic practices in ancient China (Li & Liu, 2012).

2.2.2 Culturally accepted thinking within the realm of music

Sundararajan (2015) proposed the culturally accepted thinking style referring to a functional mindset that operates in a particular ecological niche that explains culture rationally. Nisbett et al. (2001) argued that the “considerable social differences that exist among different cultures affect not only people’s beliefs about specific aspects of the world but also their naïve metaphysical system at a deep level, their tacit epistemologies, and even the nature of their cognitive processes—the ways by which they know the world” (p. 291).

The culturally accepted thinking style also reflects the cultural differences between Chinese traditional and Western classical music art—for example, the different concepts towards the musical note with dynamics. One of the features of Chinese music that focuses on the action within a single musical note is called the “waving sound” (摇声) with no fixed pitch. The law of a waving sound should accord with the change of language tone. In other words, an unstable single musical note that imitates the language tone was vital in shaping personal performing style and leading to the musical style (Du, 2004). However, in Western classical

music, the notes have a fixed pitch, and the arrangement of musical notes' movement constructs the content and distinct the musical styles from different musical periods (Li & Liu, 2012).

Music style can be recognized as a symbol of culture. Peng (1999) argued that music can be recognized in ethnic groups. The cultural differences formed different music styles from place to place, from Chinese to Western. In general, Chinese music works tend to be holistic² and collective (Nisbett et al., 2001), referring to its entire structure of musical form and tempo design with dialectical reasoning.

Musical notations, to some extent, imitate the local language, which leads to the different styles in composing melodic lines with geographical disposition. In contrast, the representation of Western classical music tends to be more analytic, using compositional rules, including formal logic in composing musical works (Guan, 2013).

However, Green (2007) noted that Chou Wen-Chung argued the true artistic power stems from the sincerity of an artist's vision. Chou's idea emphasizes that genuine creativity does not primarily rely on allegiance to any specific cultural heritage or tradition. Instead, the essence of powerful artistry lies in the artist's ability to think independently, deeply understand their own feelings, and express those feelings clearly and authentically. There is no replacement for this kind of sincerity in artistic creation.

2.2.3 Music and its Social Practice in China

Music and its social practices explore how music functions within societal contexts, influencing and being influenced by social structures, behaviors, and cultural norms. This multidisciplinary

² holistic, attending to the entire field and assigning causality, making relatively little use of categories and formal logic, and relying on dialectical reasoning.

inquiry delves into how music acts as a medium for social interaction, identity nurture, and cultural expression, transcending its auditory characteristics to become a potent social phenomenon.

Music has played a multifaceted role in Chinese history, serving not only as an art form but also as a vital component of social and moral practices. The philosophies of Confucianism and Daoism offer rich examples of how music was integrated into Chinese society, each providing a distinct perspective on its significance.

In Confucianism³, music was viewed as a powerful tool for moral education and social harmony. Confucius himself emphasized the importance of music in cultivating virtue (Harold, 2016) and well-being (Fung, 2018). He believed that music had the capacity to influence an individual's character and a happy connection (Wang, 2004). Confucius also emphasized that the essence of music lies in the truth and sincere expression behind the musical sounds⁴. For music to hold true meaning, it must embody ren (benevolence 仁), a central Confucian virtue (Analects 3.3). Ren inherently involves interactions between individuals, which implies that music is not an isolated entity or solitary activity; rather, it is inherently interactive. In the classic Confucian sense, music is deeply interconnected with individuals and the society from which it originates. Music is meant to be shared, serving as a reflection of the collective

³ Confucianism is a philosophical tradition that holds a central place in Chinese communities, named after the renowned philosopher and educator Confucius (Kongzi 孔子, 551–479 BC). Interestingly, in Chinese linguistic terms, the word for Confucianism (Rujia 儒家) does not share any common Chinese characters with the name of Confucius himself. This reflects the broader scope of Confucian thought, which, while significantly shaped by Confucius, also draws on earlier intellectual traditions. The foundational ideas of Confucianism existed before Confucius, but it was through his efforts—and those of his followers—that these ideas were developed into a cohesive philosophical system. Confucius played a crucial role in refining, expanding, and disseminating these teachings, solidifying their place in Chinese intellectual and cultural history (Fung, 2018).

⁴ Analects 17.11; 子曰：「礼云礼云，玉帛云乎哉？乐云乐云，钟鼓云乎哉？」

characteristics and values of the society (Fung, 2018). Thus, music in Confucian thought is both a social and moral practice, reinforcing the bonds between people and reflecting the ethical principles of the community.

In contrast, Daoism offers a more mystical and naturalistic view of music. While Confucianism focuses on the social and ethical functions of music, Daoism emphasizes its connection to the natural world and the Dao (the Way). In Daoist thought, music is seen as an expression of the natural order and a means of aligning oneself with the Dao (Fung, 2018).

In Daoist literature, both music and sound are referred to as *Lai* (籟), which originates from three sources: the sky (*tian lai* 天籟), humans (*ren lai* 人籟), and the earth (*di lai* 地籟). These sounds are regarded as forms of music that embody the essence of the Dao. Among these, the music of the sky (*tian lai*) is considered the most metaphysical and transcendent. Daoists believe that this type of music can only be truly perceived through a specific mindset, attitude, self-cultivation, and philosophical attainment.

Listening to *tian lai* (天籟) requires the ability to go beyond the physical perception of sound and the comparative qualities that typically define music. Instead, it involves an understanding and acceptance of all sounds as expressions of the Dao, where conditions are perfectly synchronized to produce this music. The deeper implication is that all beings and phenomena are accepted as they are, seen as manifestations of the Dao. By attuning oneself to these sounds, one can achieve a state of harmony with the Dao, transcending the artificial distinctions and judgments imposed by society (Fung, 2018).

This Daoist perspective highlights the importance of embracing the natural flow of existence and recognizing the inherent unity in all things. In this way, Daoism views music not as a tool for social order, but as a path to spiritual enlightenment and inner peace. It is through the spontaneous and unstructured nature of music that one can experience the true essence of the Dao, free from the constraints of human-imposed structures and rules.

The ideologies of Daoism have significant implications for music education. A key principle, *wuwei* (无为), often misunderstood as inaction or doing nothing, actually emphasizes a state of effortless action that arises from a deep awareness and attunement to the present moment. Wuwei is not mindless behavior, but rather an embodied mind approach, as described by Slingerland (2003), where actions are performed with a natural ease that comes from mastery and alignment with the Dao.

This concept suggests that in music education, the focus should be on cultivating a deep, intuitive understanding of music, where the process of making music, itself is valued, rather than seeking external rewards or recognition (Tan, 2016; Fung, 2018). This aligns with the idea that the true meaning of an activity lies within the activity itself, and that students should be encouraged to find intrinsic satisfaction and fulfillment in their musical practice, rather than being driven by external goals or pressures.

Besides, the classic Daoist principle of *guan* (观), which emphasizes observation and perspective-taking, is essential implications that we should place ourselves in the same position as the music learners whenever we observe process, whether for teaching or research purposes. By doing so, our understanding becomes more authentic and empathetic (Fung, 2018). This approach allows us to genuinely learn from the learners themselves, which is crucial in determining the most appropriate and effective course of action within a given context.

Applying *guan* in the study of a musical tradition also emphasized the importance of adopting an indigenous perspective. An indigenous viewpoint is vital for gaining a deeper, more accurate understanding of the music and its cultural significance (Hu, 2022). This perspective ensures that the interpretation and teaching of the musical tradition remain true to its origins and are respectful of the cultural context in which it exists.

In summary, music in Chinese history has been deeply intertwined with both social practices and philosophical thought, with Confucianism and Daoism offering contrasting yet

complementary perspectives. Confucianism sees music as a means to cultivate virtue and maintain social order, while Daoism views it as a natural expression of the Dao and a path to spiritual harmony. Together, these philosophies highlight the multi-functional role of music in shaping both the moral and spiritual dimensions of Chinese society.

The social function of music within the Chinese context is deeply influenced by Confucian principles, a legacy articulated by Reimer (1959) and profoundly ingrained in Chinese cultural practice. This tradition posits that music and its associated social activities ought to benefit the populace, aligning with both political and societal objectives to encapsulate an aspect of Chinese identity. Throughout Mao Zedong's leadership, the significance of music as a tool for political messaging was accentuated, positioning it as a critical medium for disseminating societal values and serving the broader community. Mao advocated for artistic endeavors to authentically represent the lives of the masses (Zhang, 1993).

In a contemporary extension of this ideology, President Xi Jinping, in his address at the opening of the 11th National Congress of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and the 10th National Congress of the China Writers Association in Beijing (2021), reiterated the imperative that the arts, including music, should prioritize serving the people and promoting socialist values. He underscored the importance of acknowledging and rejuvenating China's rich traditional culture as a source of inspiration for artistic and literary innovation, presenting a refreshed image of China. This stance is part of Xi's broader advocacy for the *creative trans nurture and innovative development of traditional culture*, a theme he has consistently emphasized across various platforms (Xi, 2014; China Daily, December 15, 2021). This narrative underscores a continued commitment to leveraging music and the arts as vehicles for cultural expression, education, and ideological dissemination, echoing historical precedents while embracing the potential for contemporary innovation and international cultural exchange.

2.3 LOCALIZATION OF PIANO MUSIC IN CHINA

The localization of piano music in China is a dynamic process of cultural exchange and adaptation. It represents an intersection of Western musical traditions with Chinese cultural and aesthetic values, leading to the creation of a unique genre that reflects China's rich cultural heritage and its engagement with global musical trends.

2.3.1 Overview of Chinese Piano Music Development

The development of piano music in China started late compared to the Western countries. However, the piano has become a beloved and popular instrument among the Chinese people. The publication of a series of piano works by famous Chinese composers indicated a wide range of piano works that combined the Chinese tradition with Western elements had been explored in composing practice, gradually becoming Chinese music characteristics piano works (Tong, 2010).

A four-fold mission underlies the development of Chinese piano music. Firstly, the blending of Chinese elements, such as folk music, traditional instruments, and ancient philosophies of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism with Western compositional techniques (Wang, 2022). Secondly, the idea that music served the masses, introduced for political propaganda purposes by Mao's influence in the 1940s, encouraged composers to strive to produce artworks related to people's lives and became mainstream for composing Chinese piano works (Zhang, 1993). Thirdly, the creation of Chinese piano music should meet the appreciative tradition of the Chinese audience. For example, composers adopt the theme melody from folk songs, Chinese instrument music, and Chinese drama as the matrix for their compositions. They commonly use fourth and fifth intervals, well-recognized in Chinese music and adopted in piano music. Fourthly, the expression of tone color and the artistic conception

of the Chinese style calls for innovations in using ornaments, arpeggio, heterophony, and extended piano techniques to produce sound effects (Zhao, 2013).

2.3.2 Nurture of Chinese Piano Style

The development of a distinctive Chinese piano style signifies a nuanced amalgamation of traditional Chinese musical aesthetics with Western classical music principles, embodying the cultural divergence and creative synthesis between these two musical traditions. According to Zhou (2002), this fusion has not only enriched the diversity of piano music but has also served as a conduit for introducing and promoting a rejuvenated Chinese culture on the global stage.

The challenge of articulating a Chineseness within the paradigm of the Western piano has been acknowledged by Yang (2015), who noted the inherent difficulties in capturing the essence of Chinese musical language through an instrument synonymous with Western music. Typically, Chinese piano repertoires incorporate identifiable elements derived from Chinese folk melodies and tunes, aiming to encapsulate the quintessence of Chinese musical style within the context of piano music. Despite these efforts, Chen (2017) critiqued the overreliance on folk elements as the primary means of defining Chinese piano music, arguing that such dependence might stifle artistic innovation and hinder the genre's evolution.

Chen (2017) further observed that contemporary Chinese piano compositions, particularly those emerging after 1988, have been influenced by the concept of modern nationalization. This approach seeks to envelop nationalistic themes within a framework of modernity, allowing composers to employ contemporary compositional techniques freely to explore and express Chinese cultural themes. This period has witnessed a notable openness in Chinese piano music, with composers experimenting with innovative sounds, technical methods, and performance practices, integrating these elements with aspects of Chinese culture (Weng, 2008; Yang, 2015).

Despite the widespread use of the term Chinese piano music within scholarly and musical circles in China, a precise definition remains elusive. For this study, Chinese piano music is defined as solo piano works composed by Chinese musicians that are specifically intended to interpret and reflect Chinese cultural identity. This delimitation aims to focus the research on how Chinese cultural narratives are conveyed and represented through the medium of solo piano compositions.

2.4 TEACHING AND LEARNING PIANO WITHIN CHINESE CULTURAL CONTEXT

Chinese piano education proves high achievement for many Chinese pianists who came to the world stage and won world fame, such as Lang Lang, Sa Chen, Yujia Wang, Haochen Zhang, and Wei Luo. These successes underscore the effectiveness of piano pedagogy in China, which predominantly adheres to the conservatory model of elite musical education. Qualified piano teachers are well-trained and often complete their studies at prestigious conservatories or university music departments, with a structured curriculum that is heavily influenced by Western classical music traditions (Yeh, 2018).

As a consequence of this educational orientation, the majority of piano instructors place a significant emphasis on the cultivation of performance skills and the interpretation of music within the Western classical paradigm. This approach is also applied to the teaching and assessment of Chinese piano repertoires, utilizing methodologies and evaluation criteria derived from Western classical music standards. However, this focus trend has led to a notable gap in the pedagogical literature, with insufficient scholarly attention devoted to exploring the integration of Chinese cultural values within the context of piano teaching and learning. This oversight points to a critical need for research that bridges the divide between Western-centric

pedagogical practices and the rich cultural heritage of Chinese music, aiming to foster a culturally responsive approach to piano education in China.

2.4.1 Integrated Chinese Thoughts in Piano Pedagogy

Zhao Xiaosheng was the first person who adopted Chinese thoughts to illustrate piano pedagogy based on the holistic, systematic performing —the Tao (道) of piano playing. In his book preface, he indicated that:

...based on the dialectical method of the ancient Chinese philosophy of Yin and Yang, with a holistic rather than partial perspective, dialectical rather than one-sided analysis, systematic rather than sporadic observations, summarizing the whole process and general rules of piano performance, and establishing a unique set Characteristic piano performance theory system (Zhao, 2007, p. 5, translated by the author).

He presented his thoughts on piano performing by using discourse to tap into native, cultural-intellectual with ancient Chinese philosophy based on the functional situated, embodied, and enactive cognition paradigm (Sinha, 2010) in the piano performing approach.

Musical interpretation is always an important issue in piano teaching. It is emphasized in the whole process of musical learning. According to Lin (2002), who describes three Chinese piano teachers' (Zhou Guangren, Li Qifang, and Yang Jun) teaching philosophies and their influences on pianism in China. Those three teachers were all keen to interpret the composer's original ideas behind the notes alongside the exploration of composer's character. They all stressed the importance of slow tempo practice, from which use ear to hear niceties of the tone color, thereby the power use with back and arm weight transferred to the fingertips, smooth finger touch motion, and relaxed shoulders and arms which can be summarized as the realizing

process of Qi flow within body as a way to self-awareness that helps to enhance musical interpretations.

2.4.2 Integrated Chinese culture within the multi-teaching model

Bai (2022) introduced a multi-teaching model with different modules for teaching Chinese piano music, including several elements, such as narration, singing, recitation, multimedia teaching, scene introduction, performance teaching, and self-learning. All those teaching contents can be categorized into three modules: 1) After-class learning; 2) Chinese ethnic element in class; and 3) Performance teaching in class. Bai claimed that the proposed multi-teaching methods intend to promote the value of Chinese culture other than just focusing on technique training. Bai also illustrated teaching selected piano works in folksong arrangement, works inspired by Chinese culture. However, the proposed teaching model from Bai was relatively a personal experience without showing its efficiency with a transparent research methodology.

The after-class learning, which refers to self-regulated learning is important to individual practice, including developing advanced practice strategies and being aware of Chinese culture's influences (Zhang & Leung, 2023). Using the reflective journal as an effective tool to explore students' self-regulated practice (Pike, 2017), thereby concerning the communication between teachers helps the piano student to increase self-regulation, and improve attributions and intrinsic motivation during practice (Pike, 2017), which also enhances the teacher-student relationship to diminish the authority influence from teacher's perspective, while empowering students to produce proactive thinking by themselves.

2.5 SUMMARY

The study of nurturing cultural identity emphasizes the intricate and mutually reinforcing relationship between individual and collective dimensions of cultural identity. Individual cultural identity is shaped by participation in collective cultural practices and the internalization of group values, while collective cultural identity is sustained through the engagement of individuals in cultural traditions and norms. This interdependence highlights the dynamic nature of cultural identity, which involves continuous negotiation between external cultural influences and internal processes of self-reflection and adaptation.

Symbolic expressions, such as music, play a crucial role in nurturing cultural identity by embodying and transmitting cultural values. Music, in particular, serves as a dynamic medium that reflects and nurtures individual's cultural identity, preserving historical traditions while fostering innovation. It enables communities to negotiate and redefine their cultural boundaries, illustrating the fluid and evolving nature of culture.

From an educational perspective, cultural competence is identified as a key component in shaping effective teaching practices and fostering meaningful student engagement. Cultural competence involves a deep understanding and integration of cultural identities and practices into the educational process. Culturally responsive teaching, which aligns curriculum content with students' cultural backgrounds, is highlighted as a crucial strategy for enhancing educational outcomes. Additionally, the literature underscores the importance of the ongoing interaction between individual and national identities within the Chinese educational context, where national narratives and cultural values are actively reinforced to cultivate a strong collective cultural consciousness. This dual focus on individual and national identity within education underscores the complex and multifaceted nature of cultural competence and its vital role in nurturing cultural identity.

The review of Chinese music and the pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning Chinese piano repertoires has predominantly been narrative, often relying on personal experience rather than offering systematic and effective educational methodologies. This approach has led to a gap in the literature, particularly regarding the role of piano education in nurturing students' cultural identity—a critical aspect that remains largely underexplored.

In this study, the focus is placed on exploring the phenomenon of piano teaching and learning process as a means of nurturing cultural identity, particularly through the lens of musical experience. This includes how individuals come to understand Chinese culture, the aesthetics of performance, and the underlying musical values, from the acts of performing to listening, all within the context of learning Chinese piano repertoires. The study explores how cultural identity is fostered through the incorporation of Chinese philosophical insights, culturally accepted thinking styles, cultural ideals, and concepts of Chinese aesthetics and music culture.

A key area of investigation is the interpretive performance embedded cultural identity, specifically in expressing Chineseness through piano performance (Yang, 2015). This involves discussing the performer's role in engaging with the piano in a way that seeks to develop a new musical vocabulary and infuse fresh meaning within a distinctly Chinese context. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding and integrating these cultural elements into musical education, with the goal of not only teaching piano repertoire but also deeply engaging students in the cultural identity that these repertoires embody. By doing so, this research aims to contribute to the development of more systematic and culturally responsive educational approaches in the field of Chinese music education.

2.5.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Fig. 2.1) is based on literature review and illustrates the interplay between teachers, students, and Chinese piano repertoires in nurturing individual's cultural identity.

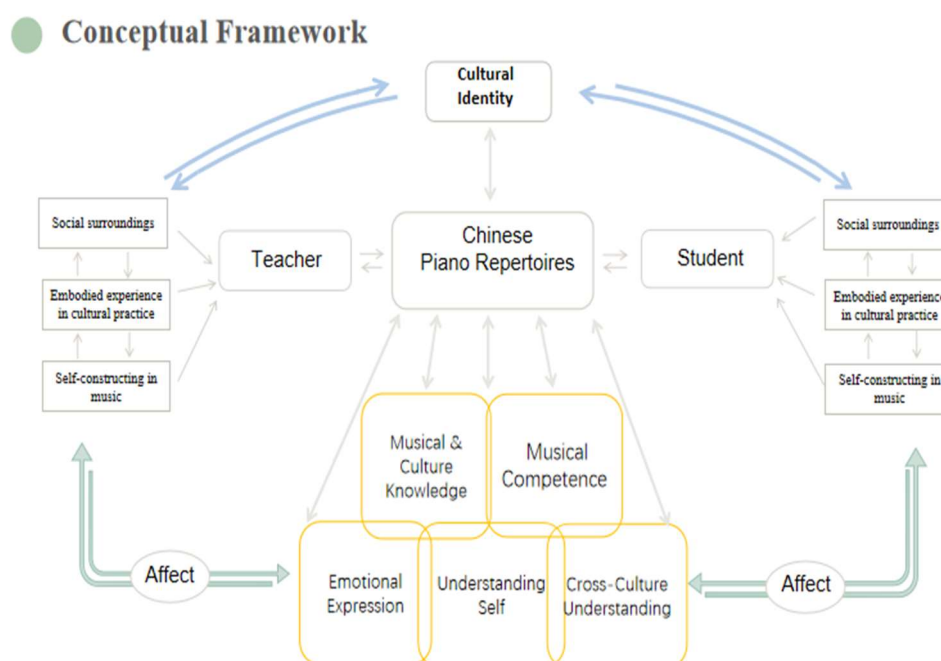


Figure 2. 1 A Conceptual Framework for Nurturing Music Students' Cultural Identity via Teaching and Learning Chinese Piano Repertoires

At the core of this framework are the Chinese piano repertoires, which act as the primary medium through which cultural identity was nurtured. These repertoires are central to the interactions between the teacher and the student, fostering the growth in cultural and musical understanding.

On the left side of the framework, the teacher's role is emphasized. The teacher is influenced by their social surroundings, which shape their teaching practices. Their cultural practices are embedded in their teaching methodology, and their identity and competence in

music are partly self-constructed through their musical experiences. This highlights the teacher's continuous development and the importance of their cultural and social context in shaping their teaching approach.

On the right side, the student's role is highlighted similarly. The student's learning process is influenced by their social surroundings, which contribute to their embedded experience in cultural practice. Like the teacher, the student's identity and competence in music are partly self-constructed through their musical experiences. This shows the student's active role in their own cultural and musical development.

The framework also emphasizes two key processes: musical and cultural knowledge, and musical competence. Musical and cultural knowledge connects the teacher's and student's experiences to the Chinese piano repertoires, facilitating a deeper understanding of cultural practices through music. From this knowledge, musical competence is developed, which includes emotional expression, understanding of self, and cross-cultural understanding. These aspects are crucial outcomes of musical engagement, reflecting the broader impacts of music education on personal and cultural development.

Cultural identity is an overarching outcome influenced by the interactions between the teacher, student, and Chinese piano repertoires. It reflects the integration of cultural and musical experiences, shaped by both the teacher's and student's continuous engagement with cultural practices.

Lastly, affect plays a significant role in both the teacher's and student's experiences, influencing their emotional expression, self-awareness, and cross-cultural understanding. This element underscores the emotional and psychological dimensions of music education, highlighting how affective experiences contribute to the development of cultural identity and musical competence.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 defined the research method, research design, sampling selection, and analysis tools used in this study. This two-phase study drew a clear methodological plan for nurturing music students' cultural identity via teaching and learning piano.

3.1 PURPOSE OF THE TWO-PHASE STUDY

The purpose of the two-phase study aimed to figure out this study based on two research questions separately. Phase I used the qualitative Delphi method (Hohmann et al., 2018) via three-round questionnaires to collect and distill teaching strategies from piano teachers' lived experiences from their learning and teaching perspectives in nurturing students' cultural identity through the Chinese piano pieces. Phase II adopted a multi-case study (Yin, 2018) at one university in Guangdong Province, China, exploring the effectiveness of identified strategies from Phase I in the empirical study environment. Data was gathered and triangulated using several sources (Creswell & Poth, 2023), including one-to-one (teacher-researcher and individual student) piano class, semi-structured interviews, and reflective journals.

The two-phase study engaged in shared reflection, discussion, and exploration of various components in shaping cultural identity from piano music and its value in the transmission from piano education.

3.2 PHASE I THE DELPHI SURVEY

The Delphi method aimed to answer Research Question 1 from panelist opinions. It was an iterative process with a series of questionnaires that varied from open-ended to more structured multistage interaction distributed via e-mail or WeChat account to collect data from piano teachers' anonymous judgments, interspersed with feedback.

The original Delphi research was conducted in 1963 by Norman Dalkey and Olaf Helmare of the RAND Corporation to forecast future trends for scientific purposes (Green, 2014). The label has also been applied as the Delphi expert consensus method, emphasizing an anonymous communication structure between individuals and specializing in making sense of consensus from experts' knowledge on a specific research topic (Brady, 2015).

The Delphi method is an appropriate research instrument for incomplete knowledge about the phenomenon or the problem. The research goal is to improve the understanding of the phenomenon, problems, and solutions or develop forecast trends (Skulmoski et al., 2007; Humphrey-Murto et al., 2017). It was widely adopted in forming guidelines, teaching standards, and predicting trends in educational settings (Green, 2014). Three considerations for using the Delphi method were identified (Linstone, 1975):

1. The problem does not lend itself to precise analytical techniques but can benefit from subjective judgments on a collective basis;
2. The problem at hand has no monitored history nor adequate innurture on its present and future development; and
3. Addressing the problem requires exploring and assessing numerous issues connected with various policy options where a judgmental technique can facilitate the need for pooled judgment.

Some experts claimed that the Delphi method could be effectively modified according to the need of the study (Linstone, 1975; Adler, 1996; Skulmoski et al., 2007). However, Rowe

and Wright (1999) insisted that only studies that match the following four critical features that can be classified as Delphi studies:

1. Delphi participants' anonymity: On the one hand, anonymity facilitates experts with independent thinking and expressing their opinions freely without conforming to group members or undue social pressures. On the other hand, evaluating decisions relies on experts' responses rather than who has proposed the idea;
2. Iteration: allows participants to refine their opinions from round to round.
3. Controlled feedback: provide feedback responses to each participant for each round and provide the opportunity for experts to clarify or change their views;
4. Statistical aggregation of group responses allows quantitative analysis and data interpretation.

The advantage of the Delphi method was highly concentrated on the research topic. Questionnaires were designed and distributed to a group of anonymous experts who contributed to the interest in the research area. Obtain experts' views via the internet without worrying about the geographically dispersed and relatively low-cost, especially fit for the travel restrictions under COVID-19 when this research was started.

3.2.1 Procedure of the Three-round Delphi Survey

This study adopted a typical three-round Delphi process proposed by Skulmoski et al. (2007), commonly used by graduate students in their research projects (see Figure 2.1).

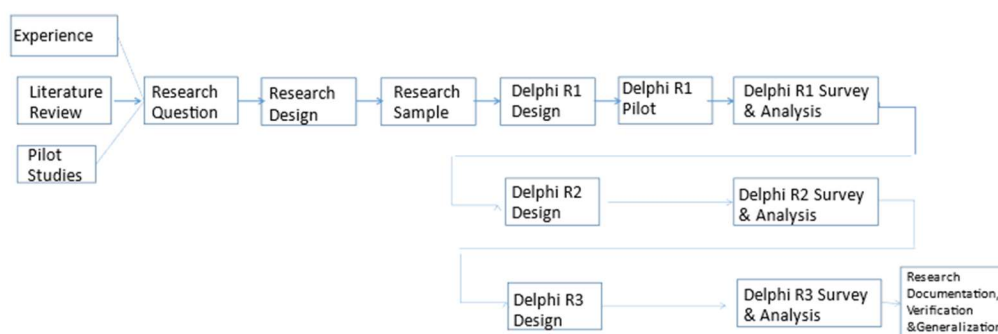


Figure 3.1. The Process of Phase I Data Collection

(Retrieved from Skulmoski et al., 2007, p. 3).

3.2.2 Participants

Choosing participants are critical to the Delphi method because the output relies on experts' views (Skulmoski et al., 2007). This study adopted purposive sampling with a homogeneous strategy for recruiting the panel (Morgan, 2008; Yin, 2016), inviting piano experts with rich experiences and knowledge to participate. This study followed four requirements for recruiting experts (Adler, 1996):

1. Knowledge and experience with the issues under investigation;
2. Capacity and willingness to participate;
3. Sufficient time to participate in the Delphi; and
4. Effective communication skills.

All participants are piano teachers; however, the sampling selection pursued maximum variation, aiming to adequately capture the heterogeneity within the group (Maxwell, 2013). A list of selected potential respondents featured in Chinese piano music performances, specialists who contributed to Chinese piano music teaching and composition, and those with experience

in curriculum management. For example, different ages, educational backgrounds, geographic distribution, job positions, and the working environment were considered.

3.2.2.1 Number of Participants

Several factors were carefully considered for the sample size in the Delphi method (Turoff, 1970; Skulmoski et al., 2007). In this study, a homogeneous approach was adopted, and according to the suggestion of homogeneous participants, the number should be no more than 20; and 10-15 people may obtain satisfactory results (Skulmoski et al., 2007). The Phase I study aimed to understand the meaning and sense-making from the participants' points of view; therefore, the sample size of a group of 10 experts was made.

This study also used snowball sampling (Noy, 2008) to recruit participants. Using criteria for data saturation in the data collection process as the standard for determining sample size was employed (Morgan, 2008). Thirdly, internal and external verification is considered (Skulmoski et al., 2007). Since the number of intended participants was small, a follow-up interview or survey is often conducted to verify results from the Delphi investigation in Ph.D. dissertations (Skulmoski et al., 2007).

3.2.2.2 Participant's Profile

Table. 3.1 Participant's Profile in Phase I

Participant	Sex	Working experience	Academic Achievement
R1	Female	Associate professor in a conservatory of music for more than 15 years	Wrote several academic papers concerning mother tongue teaching applied to piano education
R2	Male	Associate professor; work in a comprehensive university; manage piano curriculum issues	Composed and arranged several Chinese piano repertoires; arranged

		with leadership and management in a university for over 10 years	many activities to prompt Chinese piano repertoires
R3	Male	Senior lecturer, with many years of local and overseas study experience in piano, working in a normal university	Enthusiastic about Chinese piano composing and won piano competition awards for his performance; recently published a piano textbook related to Chinese folk piano repertoires
R4	Male	Lecturer; talented piano performer; work in a comprehensive university, also pursuing his doctoral degree in a conservatory of music in China	Won many piano competition awards and interested in the research of Chinese piano music; gave lessons related to Chinese piano repertoires
R5	Male	Associate professor; had overseas learning experience; working in a conservatory of music	Won his famous in research and promoting of Chinese piano music. His research interest is spreading valuable Chinese piano compositions “tucked away in composers’ drawers” through performances, lectures, and writing articles to introduce and promote them
R6	Female	Professor; Head of piano performance department in a leading conservatory of music and worked in piano education for over 30 years;	Interested in piano pedagogy and seeking to construct the teaching graded curriculum for Chinese piano compositions, published several piano textbooks, and host many research projects related to Chinese piano teaching and performing
R7	Male	Senior Lecturer; music researcher, and an outstanding collaborator with local musical instruments, work in a comprehensive university	He wrote articles promoting Chinese piano music, contributed to the research, and promoted regional music in a chamber way with performance to the world.
R8	Male	Professor; vice dean of a college of art in multi-ethnic cultural regions, manage curriculum in curriculum management and piano education	Interested in promoting the fusion of regional music culture with piano works
R9	Female	Associate professor; vice dean of a college of art in a comprehensive university; gained rich experience in piano curriculum setting and management	Published journal articles on piano teaching and edited Chinese piano music textbooks for many times
R10	Male	Senior Lecturer; the head of the music department in a comprehensive university	Specializing in piano education and is interested in composing piano pieces

3.2.3 Collection of Data

The first round is an essential process to determine opinions. This study followed the classical Delphi process, using an open-ended questionnaire to generate ideas, which allows participants

complete freedom in their responses. The first-round results helped identify issues addressed in subsequent rounds (Millican & Forrester, 2018). The first round aimed to form issues, including three perspectives: 1. the personal learning and teaching experience on Chinese piano repertoires; 2. Individual's cultural identity nurture; 3. Individuals' attitudes towards coping with the educational policy. Therefore, the round one open-ended questionnaire was comprised of three sections which are shown as follows:

A. study and teaching experience on Chinese piano repertoires

A1. Learning experience

1. Could you please briefly introduce some Chinese piano repertoires that impressed you and give your reasons?

2. How do Chinese piano repertoires impact your performing experience?

(Prompt: physically, emotionally, mentally, technically)

A2. Teaching experience

3. How often do you assign Chinese piano repertoires to your students? (Prompt: course requirement, competition requirement, personal interests, etc.) Has the proportion of Chinese piano repertoires used in your piano teaching changed over the past ten years? If any, what are the changes?

4. What specific objectives or requirements do you have for Chinese piano repertoire teaching?

B. Embodied experience in cultural practice

5. What areas of Chinese traditional culture have influenced and linked your performance and teaching of Chinese piano works?

(Prompts: traditional architecture, clothing, cuisines, Chinese paintings, Chinese literature, dramas, Chinese opera, calligraphy, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, etc.)

6. Have you ever experienced or learned about Chinese folk songs, dances, traditional instruments, or cooperating with people playing Chinese traditional instruments? If so, can you describe your experience, please?

7. Have you tried to compose or rearrange piano works with Chinese elements? If so, what are your points of interest? If not, what are the reasons?

8. Have you ever organized or encouraged students to participate in cultural events to promote their understanding of Chinese culture and thus their learning of Chinese piano repertoires? If so, please share the details.

C. Coping strategy

9. When you teach Chinese piano music, do you pay attention to students' Chinese cultural understanding? Do your students have a sense of Chinese cultural identity? To what extent do you think that cultural identity affects your teaching and students' learning process? Please share your experience.

10. Current educational policy has put a significant emphasis on promoting Chinese traditional culture. From your point of view, how does teaching Chinese piano music contribute to this focus?

The round one open-ended questionnaire allowed piano teachers to brainstorm their ideas. Before sending the questionnaire to the participants, a pilot study invited four participants to answer the first set of questionnaires for 16 questions. After submitting their answers, they were all asked to review the questionnaire through an online interview individually. Then 6 questions were deleted and recompiled into the final 10 questions as above to help ascertain research questions for the first round. The second round provided a summary report of the first round's answers to each participant.

The second round of the Delphi survey involved the integration and categorization of various perspectives collected in the open-ended questions from the first round. Based on this

data, a new structured questionnaire was designed. In this new questionnaire, structured questions were employed to gather quantitative data, aiming to delve into the participants' attitudes toward the collective viewpoints reflected in the initial open-ended survey. It aimed to measure the central tendency to present and determine consensus from panelists. Through the quantitative approach, a more precise consensus is sought, facilitating the comparison of perspectives among different participants. The following outlines the methodology employed in each step of the design for the second round of the Delphi survey.

In the design of the second round of the questionnaire, integrated and classified viewpoints were collected in the first round into various themes as the basis for designing structured questions. These questions cover multiple aspects, including repertoire allocation, teaching objectives, teaching requirements, factors influencing understanding, interpretation, and teaching, approaches to nurturing cultural awareness, as well as methods for identifying and nurturing students' cultural identity.

This round utilized the Likert scale and multiple-choice question items to quantify participants' responses for statistical analysis. It is noteworthy that, panelists were asked to rate the items on a scale with an even number of points (Cox, 2008) to avoid mid-range responses, leading to the false census for the Delphi study. To facilitate participants in expressing their viewpoints more clearly, this round employed the Likert-even-odd scale, utilizing a 6-point rating scale (1-6). Ratings ≥ 4 indicate a tendency towards agreement, while ratings ≤ 3 indicate a tendency towards disagreement. However, the multiple-choice questions, not only presented participants with viewpoints from the previous round for comprehensive consideration but also allowed them to propose new perspectives, thereby further exploring unresolved issues or points of contention in related questions.

In short, the second round of the Delphi questionnaire, using comprehensively applied both quantitative and qualitative methods, aimed to deepen our understanding of the intricate

dynamics surrounding the teaching and interpretation of Chinese piano repertoires. The insights gained contributed to the development of a robust framework for the pedagogy of Chinese piano music.

The third iteration of the Delphi process represented a continuation and refinement of the preceding phases, aiming to achieve a consensus among the panel of experts. This round was predicated upon an analysis and integration of the feedback accrued in the initial two rounds. The questionnaire for the third round was meticulously constructed, grounded in the statistical aggregation of prior responses and a comprehensive synthesis of the principal arguments and observations elicited previously. This stage presented an opportunity for the experts to critically reassess and potentially revise their initial responses. The questionnaire was specifically designed to prompt a reevaluation of positions on pertinent issues, assimilation of new evidence or perspectives introduced by peers, and a refinement of their prognostications or judgments.

A significant focus of the third round was to address and delve deeper into topics that had manifested notable divergences in opinion during the earlier stages. The objective here was to dissect these disparities more thoroughly, thereby encouraging the experts to reexamine their stances in the context of the broader feedback from the group. As the process unfolded into its third round, an emergent trend towards consensus or a more aligned viewpoint was anticipated. It was observed that the variability in responses tended to diminish, indicative of the experts' adjustments of their views to more closely mirror the collective intelligence of the group.

This third stage was pivotal in steering the discourse towards a more nuanced and collective comprehension or forecast. The inherent strength of the Delphi method lies in its systematic approach to collating and refining expert insights. This approach effectively mitigates biases and extraneous influences, gradually fostering a comprehensive perspective. This is particularly relevant in the context of enhancing the understanding of how Chinese piano repertoires can be leveraged in Chinese universities to nurture students' cultural identities.

3.2.4 Analysis of Data

The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used for Delphi round one data analysis, which was particularly suited for studying how individuals perceive Chinese piano repertoires and how they experience certain cultural events related to music inspirations and teaching practices.

The IPA research sought to explore how teachers reflected on their experiences and began to contemplate the significance of those events (Smith et al., 2022). The inductive analysis underly double hermeneutic in the IPA process, in which the research attempted to interpret account from how participants think about what is happening, from their writings, expressions, emotions, and performing status to understand their experience.

The analytic focus in IPA directed the analytical attention toward how participants attempted to make sense of their experiences, and the process of analysis followed the guidelines from Smith et al (2022):

1. Immersive reading and re-reading of the transcriptions, from broad and general to the specific micro-detail of events, that involved ensuring focus on analysis, entering a phase of active engagement with the data, and overview of the structure;
2. Exploratory noting, including examining semantic content and language used by the participants, and writing notes, have a clear phenomenological focus that stays close to the participants' explicit meaning, while interpretative noting involves looking at the language participants used, thinking about the context they concerned, identifying abstract concepts, and make sense of the patterns of meaning in participants' account;

3. Constructing experiential statements to produce a concise summary reflecting both participants' original words, thoughts, and analyst's interpretation, and the experimental statements reflected the analytic work rather than just reconfiguring the original data;

4. Searching for connections across experiential statements, cutting down the experimental statements onto a separate piece of paper in no particular order, moving them around, trying different clustering, and gradually constructing a patterning of the experiential statements which the analyst thought was the best way to show the connections;

5. Naming the Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) and consolidating and organizing them in a table, which involved the PETs titles were presented in bold upper case, the sub-themes in lower case bold, and a set of experiential statements brought together in developing it, which helped to trace back for the evidence trail;

6. Working with PETs to develop Group Experiential Themes (GETs) across cases, which aimed to highlight the shared and unique features of the experience across the participants, understanding and exploring the points of convergence and divergence at the level of the contributing cases; at this level, each GET was shown in uppercase bold, and each group-level sub-theme in lower case bold, and the relevant experiential statements from contributing participants were shown underpinning.

In this research, cultural perspective, piano music, collaboration, cultural identity, Chinese traditional instruments, music appreciation, and artistic expression were the main focus points that were primarily concerned. The keywords were grouped into two GETs:

1. Music Experience and Appreciation, which included piano music, music appreciation, performing, collaborating, and composing experience

2. Cultural identity, which includes cultural perspective, cultural identity, Chinese traditional instruments, policy

The sub-themes delved deeper into the text and considered the nuances of the participants' experiences were extracted specific quotes or sentences that reflected these nuances. Then the patterns and commonalities in the themes, such as how they connect to the participants' overall perspective on music and culture, how these themes contribute to a deeper understanding of the participant's perspective, and what insights these themes provide about their relationship with music and cultural identity were weighed.

In Phase I, the sample of participants was relatively large, compared to phase II. Therefore, the emphasis shifted to presenting the shared elements in the group-level themes, but considering the feature of IPA, the themes were still illustrated with particular examples taken from individuals. The negotiation between convergence and divergence, commonality and individuality were constantly involved in doing IPA analysis. The more profound level of interpretation involved micro-textual, such as the use of metaphors participants expressed, which were carefully weighted.

After gathering responses from participants, the researcher began by reading through the data multiple times to familiarize herself with the depth and breadth of the content. Then, she made exploratory notes on what she found interesting or significant in the data. This procedure included descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments. The developing emergent themes retrieved from exploratory notes, started to identify patterns across the data. These patterns formed the experiment notes, and also reflected the process of making sense of the participants' experiences and perceptions. After the experiment notes were confirmed, the connections and relationships between them, formed the group experiment notes, which helped in understanding broader insights and trends in the expert opinions.

Finally, the findings illustrated the analysis with direct quotes from participants, and interpreting these findings in the context of research study. The analysis of the collected data in the second round of the questionnaire typically involves quantitative statistical analyses

(such as calculating averages, medians, standard deviations, etc.) and content analysis of qualitative data. The purpose of the analysis is to identify consensus and points of disagreement within the expert group. This step was fundamental to the application of the Delphi method in our study, aiming to achieve a higher level of consensus among experts.

The third stage of the Delphi process was centered around furnishing feedback from the antecedent round, ultimately striving for a conclusive consensus or acknowledging that consensus on certain issues is unattainable. To facilitate this, participants were furnished with a comprehensive summary detailing the amalgamated responses and feedback from the second round. The anonymized nature of this summary was deliberately implemented to foster candid and unbiased participant responses. Participants were instructed to reassess their initial responses in consideration of the feedback and insights proffered by their peers in the prior round. Moreover, participants were invited to reevaluate their perspectives in the third round, with particular emphasis on those whose responses exhibited significant disparities from the collective sentiments.

The encouragement for participants to provide a rationale or argumentation for their responses serves to elucidate the cognitive processes underlying their viewpoints. This practice not only aids in comprehending the intricacies of participant reasoning but also holds the potential to enhance the attainment of a more informed consensus, as highlighted by Green (2014). Certain queries underwent iterative repetition; however, they underwent reformulation in accordance with feedback received from panelists in successive rounds. This iterative refinement transitioned questions from abstract formulations to more specific viewpoints, with the overarching objective of reaching a definitive consensus or acknowledging persistent disagreements.

To triangulate findings, a comparative analysis was conducted between panelists' opinions and existing literature. Additionally, brief follow-up conversations were conducted as an

essential step to validate the outcomes of the Delphi process and gain a deeper understanding of nuanced perspectives among the expert cohort.

3.3 PHASE II: CASE STUDY

Phase II employed a multi-case study approach (Yin, 2018), exploring the effectiveness of Phase I findings through the applied piano lessons and after-class practicum by one teacher and four volunteer piano major undergraduate students in a comprehensive university. The main methods for data collection in the naturalistic inquiry applied piano class observation, three interviews with each participant, students' reflective journals, and students with teachers' after-class self-reflection memos, bounded by space and time (Cohen et al., 2018; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

Phase II contributed to the refinement and warrants further exploration of the Phase I result, increasing this study's credibility. The investigator triangulation strategy (Carter et al., 2014) was adopted to check the validity. Supervisors were invited to review the data analysis to verify and maintain data credibility.

The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was adopted to explore "in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world" (Smith, 2008, p. 53) via the interaction between mentor and students, the circumstances of particular cultural learning in piano performance setting. The researcher-generated themes invited participants to check, ensuring those themes resonated with them.

3.3.1 Positionality of the Researcher

The author served as a teacher-researcher instrument because cultural identity issues cannot be measured by external instruments but can be revealed by making inferences about observed

behaviors and talking to the participants (Spradley, 1979, cited in Yin 2016, p. 40). The role of the teacher-researcher was an instructor who applied the Phase I results referring to the identified teaching strategies and skills to complete the Phase II study. The challenge was the selectivity in focusing on teaching strategies related to cultural identity and teaching beliefs unavoidably underlie the researcher's research lenses. The teacher-researcher exerted considerable power within the teaching process, referring to the responses from the participants that the teacher's points of view may have influenced.

In response to this challenge, the study adopted interpretative phenomenological analysis, aiming to fairly examine and interpret the concept of cultural identity as experienced by music students through observations and semi-structured interviews. The inductive analysis underly double hermeneutic in the IPA process attempted to describe and interpret participants' sense-making activity (Gill, 2020). The researcher's central concerns on how participants think about what is happening to them were interpreted from participants' talk, thinking, emotions, and performing state. Being a teacher-researcher, the author got better acquainted with those participants regarding their piano performance, verbal expression, and nonverbal behavior.

3.3.2 Participants' profile

The sampling was a homogeneous and purposive sampling hybrid. Participants were invited among the piano major students in a college of art, a comprehensive university in Guangdong, China.

Four participants were helpful for the sample size for the first-time using IPA, which "allows sufficient in-depth engagement with each case while allowing a detailed examination of similarity and difference, convergence, and disconvergence" (Smith, 2008, p. 58). The criteria for choosing participants are:

1. Students without systematic professional training before taking the undergraduate music program.
2. Students with less experience in Chinese piano repertoires, for instance, played less than five Chinese piano repertoires.
3. Students who are enthusiastic and have sufficient time to participate in this study
4. Students can complete the assigned works on time, including after-class reflective memos, practice memos, and extra-curricular readings.

Table 3.2 Participant's Profile in Phase II

Participant	Sex	Pre-university background	piano learning experience
P1	Female	Year one student (first semester); Started piano learning at the age of 4.5; changed a lot of piano teachers; received formal instructions from a professional piano teacher from the Conservatory of Music at the age of 13-14; then dropped learning for two years in high school; picked up at the age of 17 with a professional teacher who graduate from music academy for one year; then pass the college entrance examination and admitted to the university in 2023	Have limited recollection of Chinese piano repertoires; performed The Shepherd Boy's Flute and one Chinese composition from the piano-graded exam textbook. She encountered difficulties with the latter due to its unstable rhythm, resulting in a challenging and less favorable experience.
P2	Female	Year one student (first semester); Started piano learning at the age of 5.5 with a teacher around 7.5 years in a music training center; then learned from a teacher who possessed a music education degree to prepare for high school entrance exam for piano talent; then shortly learned from a high school teacher around one month, switched to another professional teacher who graduated from Royal music academy majoring piano until admitted to the university in 2023	Played three pieces, The North Wind Blows, The Happy Female Warrior, and Chasing the Moon by the Colorful Clouds. Based on her former learning experience with Chinese piano repertoires, her impression of Chinese piano repertoires tended to be a gentler style.
P3	Female	Year two student (third semester); Started piano learning at the age of 8, and received instructions from one teacher over 9 years, then learned from a professional teacher in the Conservatory of Music to prepare college entrance examination and be admitted to the university in 2022	She performed several Chinese piano pieces, including "Azalea (Ying Shan Hong)," "Xin Tian You," "Chasing the Moon by the Colorful Clouds," and "The Blooming Bright Red Flower of the Mountain." She noted that the approach to playing

			Chinese piano repertoires felt distinctly different from that of Western compositions.
P4	Female	Year two student (third semester); the individual commenced piano instruction at the age of 4 within a piano training center, continuing for approximately two years. Subsequently, she transitioned to another instructor renowned for excellence in piano teaching. There was an interruption in piano studies for four years during middle and high school. The realization of the necessity to prepare for the college entrance examination for music prompted a return to piano studies under the guidance of her high school music teacher. Consequently, she gained admission to the university in the year 2022.	Her primary focus has been on graded exams, with minimal exposure to Chinese piano repertoires. She can recall playing pieces such as 'The Sun Comes Out and It's Jubilant,' 'The Shepherd Boy's Flute,' and 'Kang Ding Love Song.' However, she expresses a lack of affinity for the style of these piano compositions without articulating the specific reasons. She perceives them as somewhat unsophisticated, particularly reluctant to play the 'Kang Ding Love Song' because she could not appreciate it.

3.3.3 Collection of Data

The data was collected in a naturalistic teaching and learning environment with less structured approaches (Cohen et al., 2018) to enable participants to project their ways of interpreting how and what they experienced in learning Chinese piano repertoires toward understanding the Chinese culture in a context in the research field (Yin, 2016).

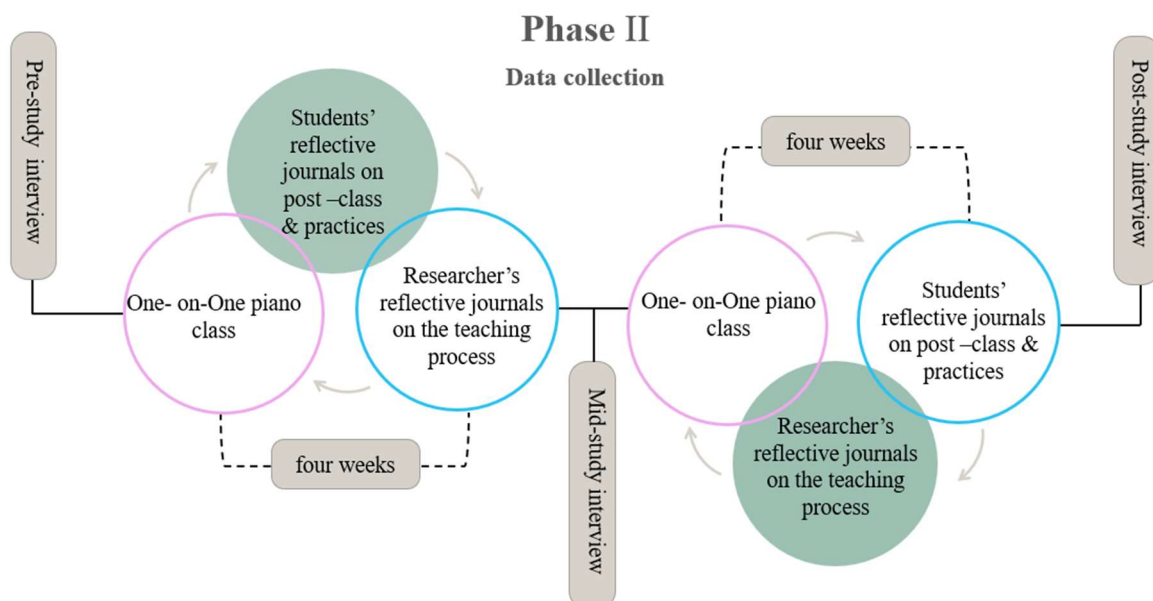


Figure 3.2 The process of Phase II data collection

The data encompassed several components: (1) an eight-week course focusing on Chinese piano repertoires, culminating in a final examination; (2) a series of three individual semi-structured interviews, with the initial interview conducted before the commencement of the study, the second following the fourth week of classes, and the final interview subsequent to the concluding examination; (3) the compilation of students' reflective journals; and (4) the accumulation of reflective journals maintained by the teacher.

3.3.3.1 Classroom Participant Observation

The series of eight-week piano lessons were documented on video after obtaining consent from the participants. The purpose of this video documentation was primarily for detailed note-taking, capturing each approximately 40-minute lesson. This visual record focused on cataloguing both verbal and non-verbal interactions between the teacher and students, with a particular emphasis on how Chinese cultural elements were integrated into piano performance pedagogy. The video recordings served as an essential tool for the teacher-researcher's note-

taking process. After reviewing the video footage extensively, the teacher-researcher composed reflective notes, which, along with relevant video clips, were subsequently shared with the featured participants for their review and feedback. This approach encouraged participants to actively engage and offer their perspectives on the reflective observations.

3.3.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

A total of three individual semi-structured interviews were conducted. The initial interview, conducted prior to the study, aimed to glean in-depth insights into students' perceptions and preconceptions about Chinese culture and piano learning, encompassing their knowledge, ideas, and assumptions. The second interview, scheduled after four weeks of the course, was designed to delve into the students' experiences and impressions of learning Chinese piano music. The final interview, post-final examination, focused on a comprehensive review of the students' learning journey, particularly how they assimilated and applied aspects of Chinese culture in their performances. These interviews were conducted in the familiar and comfortable environment of the teacher's piano room, as per Smith (2008).

The semi-structured nature of these interviews allowed for flexibility, enabling the integration of observations and students' reflective notes. The primary focus of these interviews was to understand students' musical perceptions over time, including their embodied experiences, thoughts, and reflections on specific aspects of the teaching and learning process. Special attention was given to the students' comprehension and interpretation of Chinese culture, encompassing philosophical, ideological, aesthetic, and musical knowledge as it relates to piano performance. Exemplary questions were listed in Appendix 4.

Except the first interview, the interviewer could provide class video recordings to the interviewees to stimulate their thoughts and help them remember what they thought when they answered the questions (Blair et al., 2013) during the mid-interview, and after-exam interview.

The researcher also tried to establish good contact with the interviewees by attentive listening, showing interest, respecting what the students say, and figuring out the implications of the conversations, which is crucial to the research findings (Kvale, 2007) since participants might not easily expose their innermost feelings in verbal communication. All semi-structured interviews were audiotaped with permission.

3.3.3.3 Student's reflective journal

All participants enrolled in Phase II were required to write reflective journals that outline the “reflection-on-action” proposed by Schön (1987) after daily piano practice twice a week. The first journal was asked to be recorded right after class; the other one was completed one day before the next applied piano lesson. The weekly reflective journal included practice goals, the procedures for achieving the goals referring to listening, imitations, and interpretation of related repertoires throughout the practice, any concerns about the concept of Chinese culture, and any feelings that might be relevant to this study. Students were also encouraged to write down any worries or action changes they made while practicing.

3.3.3.4 Teacher's reflective diary on the teaching process

The reflective writings helped promote the teacher's reflective thinking on improving participants' piano performance ability, such as adjusting teaching strategies, diversifying teaching materials, and the attention to students' feelings. It mainly concerned the influences from the culture that help shape personal development rather than machine-like piano performance capacity. The teacher wrote a reflective diary twice a week. The first one was after observing students' verbal and non-verbal in-class behaviors with playing the piano and verbalizing instructions. The other was based on students' weekly reflective journals before the

next class. The central concerns focused on students' reactions to the teacher's verbalized instructions, the self-regulation in practices, and the learning outcomes with the impact of Chinese culture.

The multiple sources of evidence were collected and compared, forming the source triangulation to test validity and maintain credibility (Patton, 1999).

3.3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of classroom observations in this study employed a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach. This analysis sought to gain insights not only into the technical progression and skill acquisition of the students but also into their engagement with the cultural dimensions of the music. This engagement was crucial for understanding its potential impact on their broader musical comprehension and the development of their cultural identity.

The raw data was coded using a thematic approach (Adu, 2019). The predetermine codes were generated from literature and the result of Phase I as a start list (Maxwell, 2013). Codes were inductively categorized, and memos clarified and interpreted the research questions. After the initial coding, several themes emerged as tentative categories, accompanied by recording for dimensionalization. Matrices are constructed from the data to identify patterns, comparisons, trends, and paradoxes. The codes followed theoretical and substantive organizational categories (Maxwell, 2013). Periodic reviews of all the collected data with analytic memos were done every 3 to 4 weeks throughout the study.

The comparative analysis between individuals explored the similarity and differences reflected in students' reviews from the empirical teaching environments (Musante & DeWalt, 2011). Particular attention was paid to students' wording about their attitudes and behaviors, which are the key factors that influence their cultural identity in the learning process.

The methodical procedure for analyzing the piano class observations was delineated as follows:

Initially, the focus was on the students' engagement and interaction with the repertoires. This phase involved careful observation of the students' reactions to and engagement with the Chinese piano pieces, emphasizing their response dynamics. Additionally, the interaction dynamics were scrutinized to record the exchanges between the teacher and students, especially in relation to the cultural facets of the pieces.

Subsequently, attention was directed toward assessing technical skill development. This included evaluating the learning curve to determine how students adapted to the distinct technical requirements of the Chinese repertoires, which may diverge from their previous experiences with Western compositions. Additionally, an assessment of musical expression was conducted, focusing on the evolution of musicality in aspects such as dynamics, phrasing, and emotional expression, contextualized within the cultural background of the pieces.

The third component pertained to cultural understanding and appreciation. This encompassed observing cultural discussions and explanations related to the cultural context and significance of the pieces. Concurrently, an examination of students' reflections was conducted to identify indications of heightened cultural awareness or appreciation, as evidenced in students' behaviors, comments, or journal entries.

The final aspect concentrated on tracking the students' progress over time. This involved contrasting their initial reactions and capabilities with their development throughout the observation period. Moreover, the correlation of observations with interview data and reflective journal entries was undertaken to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the students' learning experiences.

In Phase II, the class observational notes and the interview transcriptions, alongside the reflective journal, were also conducted by the IPA, which aimed to understand the meaning and

sense-making from participants' points of view. The IPA is an appropriate approach in detail to inform how individuals perceive particular situations and make sense of their personal and social world (Smith, 2008).

All data were read and re-read, focused on understanding an individual's subjective experience. The analysis aimed to capture the essence of the participant's thoughts and feelings as expressed through the chosen keywords. Then, identify the keywords and phrases that captured the core themes of the text, which also the words that hold significant meaning and contribute to the participants' experiences and perspectives.

Hancock & Algozzine (2006) pointed out that observation is the investigative process of interacting with innurture and also is a recursive process that requires simultaneously summarizing and interpreting innurture as an ongoing examination. Simultaneously, the class videotapes were repeatedly watched to enhance the research. It contained the procedure of rewriting and reorganizing the raw data by categorizing themes within the teaching and learning practices that focus on how culturally relevant teaching strategies apply to the practice stages. In searching for sound patterns, the primary concern is the concepts that refer to the cultural identity behind the music behavior (Marriam, 1964; Nettl, 1986), which have previous researched in music education but have not specialized in the Chinese piano teaching context.

Results from observational notes, semi-structured interviews, and reflective journals were method triangulated, compared, examined, and compiled to build a logical chain of evidence. Data source triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 1999) were validate data, which compared the findings from piano majors, and senior piano teachers. The author, participants, and supervisor examined the analysis result.

3.5 ETHICAL CLEARANCE

The researcher strictly followed the ethical issues and guidance announced by Hong Kong Education University. The researcher got the Human Research Ethics Committee's approval before starting the research. Participants were asked to sign the consent form, in which the study's purpose and procedures, anonymity, confidentiality, and personal rights were demonstrated.



CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF PHASE I DELPHI SURVEY

This chapter presents the findings from three rounds of the Delphi survey. The conceptual framework was developed from culture, identity theories, and piano pedagogy perspectives at the outset.

4.1 ROUND ONE RESULT

Round one was an open-ended questionnaire with ten questions aimed at understanding the live experience of participants' learning and teaching on Chinese piano repertoires in terms of nurturing cultural identity. The awareness of Chinese cultural identity and cultural competencies included disciplinary, interdisciplinary, practical knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-reflections within Chinese culture and piano teaching. Research findings emerged from three perspectives: 1) cultural awareness through Chinese piano repertoires, 2) learning and teaching experience of Chinese piano repertoires with cultural context, and 3) nurturing cultural competence through Chinese piano repertoires.

According to the findings, cultural identity was influenced by various factors, including school education, social practices, religions, cultural activities, and musical learning with cultural context. The purposeful and subtle influence of learning Chinese piano repertoire helped to shape one's values with the self-concept of belonging to the Chinese culture and strengthened one's cultural confidence. Meanwhile, cultural competence, which refers to the ability of individuals to interact and communicate with diverse cultural backgrounds effectively, is essential to those who work with piano music. Therefore, nurturing cultural competence with cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural skill, cultural sensitivity, and cultural

adaptability was also embedded in teaching tasks. Cultural competence is the cornerstone that helps individuals construct their self-cognition, leads to a sense of belonging and happiness in the social world, and guides individuals' interaction across cultures, which forms their self and cultural identity (Liu et al., 2020). Table 4.1 illustrates the conceptual framework for the round one questionnaire settings and the core findings from participants' responses.

Table 4.1 Conceptual Category

<u>Initial Category</u>	<u>Substantive Category</u>	<u>Core Category</u>
<u>Subjective interpretation of Chinese piano repertoires</u>	<u>Learning and teaching experience on Chinese piano repertoires</u>	
<u>Requirements of teaching Chinese piano repertoires</u>		
<u>Influence of Chinese Traditional Culture</u>		<u>Participant's awareness of the influence of Chinese culture on performing and teaching issues</u>
<u>Learning of Chinese Traditional Culture</u>	<u>Embodied Experience in Chinese Cultural Practice</u>	
<u>Creations under the influence of Chinese traditional culture</u>		
<u>Interactions with Chinese traditional culture</u>		
<u>Students' awareness of Chinese traditional culture</u>	<u>Coping cultural identity with teaching strategies</u>	<u>Participants' reflections on cultural identity issues</u>
<u>Coping with the current Chinese educational policy</u>	<u>Propagation of teaching Chinese piano repertoires</u>	<u>Future expectations</u>

4.1.1 Specialness of Chinese Piano Repertoires

The Chinese piano repertoires are primarily evident through the approaches to their appreciation and learning. This underscores the importance of integrating Chinese piano repertoires into the core curriculum, making it one of the essential teaching tasks for educators. The teaching of Chinese piano repertoires necessitates a multifaceted approach, which involves addressing various dimensions, such as cultural context, technical mastery, and interpretive understanding. These dimensions are crucial for a comprehensive engagement with the music, ensuring that students not only develop the technical skills required to perform these pieces but also gain a deep appreciation for the cultural and aesthetic values they embody. As such, the

teaching of Chinese piano repertoires becomes a complex and layered process that goes beyond mere technical instruction, aiming to instill a broader understanding of Chinese musical heritage and its significance in the global music landscape.

4.1.1.1 Appreciating Chinese piano repertoires

Thirty-six essential features (see Exploratory Notes in Table 4.2) of the participants' descriptions of their thoughts on Chinese piano repertoires were developed into 14 experiential statements, which were the initial preliminary markers of the analytic work. Three Group Experiential Themes (GETs) across cases were compiled based on the experiential statements.

Table 4.2 illustrates the IPA summary of question 1 and presents the GETs-generating process. Question 1 aims to collect the Chinese piano repertoire preferences from participants' perspectives and the focal points concerning appreciating Chinese piano repertoires.

Table 4.2 The IPA Process of Question 1

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Fusion of Western and Chinese music	Adopted Chinese musical essences in various ways while keeping pace with Western compositional or performing techniques	<i>...utilizes polyphonic writing, incorporating Western counterpoint and Chinese polyphonic melodies' essence...(R1)</i>	Incorporating Western and Chinese music
		<i>...blends traditional folk tunes with Western musical techniques...(R2)</i>	
		<i>...incorporates elements of Peking Opera...(R4)</i>	
		<i>...demonstrate a skillful fusion of ethnic folk music and Western music...(R8)</i>	
		<i>...Imitate Chinese musical instruments...the distinctive characteristics of Guzheng(R1)</i>	Imitate Chinese musical instruments.
		<i>...mimics the sound and rhythm of traditional folk percussion instruments...imitating the passionate tones of the Suo Na...(R2)</i>	
	Pay more attention to the "Chinese" Essentials on piano	<i>...This piece is considered an outstanding work that transplants Chinese melodies onto the piano...(R1)</i>	Transplant Chinese instrumental melodies
		<i>...melody combined with a variation of the folk song...(R2)</i>	Transplant Chinese folk songs
		<i>...an adaptation of a folk</i>	

	<i>song... (R4)</i>	
	<i>...it actually highly corresponds with Cha Fuxi's version [Gu qin] of "Yang Guan San Die." (R5)</i>	Advanced adaption, which represents an abstract development of the original
	<i>...embodies the rhythmic characteristics of the Korean ethnic group... "Pi Huang" takes the term "Shengqiang" from Peking Opera...presents the charm of "Guangdong music."... (R6)</i>	Inspired by the ethnic music, regional essentials, and vocal music essentials from Peking opera and Cantonese Opera
Pursuit of audibility through piano	<i>... Utilizing the expressive capabilities of the piano, it enriches the expression of the ethnic scale through dissonant ornaments and chromatic progressions... (R2)</i>	Seeking for ethnic expression from a piano perspective
	<i>... Our ears have been trained in Western music...It can make each sound channel in my ears feel three-dimensional. I think this is a characteristic of piano music...from my perspective, it focuses on sound and the saturation of colors... (R3)</i>	seeking reasonably suitable sound effects for the trained ears
	<i>... Wang Jianzhong's arrangement version was elegant. The accompaniment voices are pleasant to the ear... (R4)</i>	the seeking of elegance and pleasant sound effect
	<i>... during the early stages of piano education in China, which is a crucial period for the formation of musical perspectives, we were predominantly influenced by Western teaching materials. As a result, many piano learners, including myself, couldn't appreciate Chinese works like we appreciate Chopin, for example. You could argue that this reflects the "immaturity" of Chinese piano compositions... It was extremely difficult to play, didn't sound good, and never flowed smoothly... (R7)</i>	The "immaturity" of sound effects aroused the dislike of Chinese piano repertoires at the early stages of learning piano.
	<i>I played this piece [Cowherd's flute] during my childhood, around the age of 10. It deeply attracted me with its Chinese ethnic melodies, and it was probably when I started to enjoy Chinese piano works... The first time I listened to it [Pi Huang], I was deeply drawn to the elements of Peking Opera. After practicing it, I realized it is a piece with great effects and not too technically challenging. Its sound</i>	What do ethnic melodies mean? Sound effect

		<i>design breaks through the traditional framework of Chinese piano adaptations, providing the performer with ample room for creative interpretation... (R9)</i>	
		<i>It [Pi Huang] demonstrates excellent musical effects through concise and effective technical means... Numa Ame is highly enjoyable and has a great performance effect... (R10)</i>	Enjoyable sound effects
Deeply rooted in Chinese Culture, and possessed an international appeal to the world		<i>In my opinion, Mr. Zhang Zhao's piano compositions are famous because, although they are deeply rooted in Chinese culture, they possess an international language and appeal. They can be understood and appreciated by foreigners... (R3)</i>	Deeply rooted in Chinese Culture, and possessed an international appeal to the world
		<i>The "Tu Feng Ji" series of piano works... are highly appreciated by piano enthusiasts and performers in China and even worldwide...</i>	Appreciated by locals and foreigners
		<i>I performed this piece [Mei Hua San Nong]... in Tokyo, Japan, in 2012. It is a composition that beautifully captures the essence of various Chinese traditions and was well-received by the Japanese audiences... (R9)</i>	Proud to perform Chinese piano repertoire and got well-received by foreign audiences
General ideas of Chinese artistic conceptions reflect on piano music	The performer could follow the heart to handle the flexible tempo and rhythm	<i>... Through techniques such as grace notes, trills, arpeggios, harmonics, and flexible tempo and rhythm, it reproduces the distinctive calls of various birds... (R2)</i>	Flexible tempo and rhythm were governed by the performer? Depicting was one of the frequent words the respondents used
	Music was gradually developing linearly rather than having a dramatic contrast.	<i>Pinghu Qingyue [Autumn Moon Over a Calm Lake] creates a beautiful artistic conception, gradually developing the emotions and perfectly aligning with the aesthetic preferences of the Chinese people... Numa Amei is deeply moving, while the fast section of the second part features a beautiful and graceful melody with a lively rhythm... (R4)</i>	The artistic preference was gradually developing the emotions with beautiful and graceful melodies and lively rhythm.
	Evoked images/pictures/stories that help performers better understand the repertoires.	<i>depicting a vibrant natural landscape (R2)</i>	Depicting natural landscape
		<i>... evoking images of ethnic minorities singing and dancing... (R4)</i>	Images of minorities singing and dancing
		<i>Wang Amai's "Sheng Dan Jing Mo Chou" ... portraying the different characters in Peking Opera... Overall, it presents a Peking Opera tableau from the</i>	focuses on the various transformations and developments of the motif to portray the

		<i>perspective of a female born in the 1980s ... (R5)</i>	different characters from the composer's perspective
			The performer's comments on this repertoire
		<i>... The "Tu Feng Ji" series is mainly inspired by ethnic minority music, depicting the ethnic characteristics of Yunnan, Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, and other regions... (R8)</i>	Stressed the ethnic minority music characters
		<i>"Si Fan" ... has narrative solid and dramatic qualities, with a well-structured composition... "Die Nian Hua" has a strong narrative quality and carries a certain intellectual depth... (R10)</i>	Stressed the narrative quality
	Synesthesia	<i>... I tried playing it [Jasmine Fantasy] and felt that the introductory section had a translucent beauty as if I could smell the fragrance of jasmine while listening to the music... (R9)</i>	Synesthesia: Experience the fragrance through playing the piano
	Aesthetic pursuits	<i>"Pinghu Qiu Yue" [Autumn Moon Over a Calm Lake] captures the ideal of Chinese literati music aesthetics through its timbre, layers, and structurally poetic "rhyme." (R6)</i>	The ideal of Chinese literati music aesthetics pursuits
		<i>... I discovered certain Chinese piano compositions from the 1970s ... have a remarkable artistic quality... (R7)</i>	Remarkable artistic quality
		<i>"Pi Huang" ... embodies the essence of traditional Chinese music, with innovative harmonies and rich expressive content... (R10)</i>	Embodies the essence of traditional Chinese music with innovation in piano
Personal interests in Chinese piano repertoires	The sound color	<i>... I feel like there's a missing element in one of the sound channels in my ears. It doesn't envelop me when I listen to the sound. However, Mr. Zhang's "Nua Amei" does, especially the main theme... I enjoy "Dinosaur." ... I think that work has a Chinese system, although I can't quite describe it. It fits my ears but doesn't conform to the theories I am familiar with. (R3)</i>	The saturation of the sound color
	Individuality through the piano repertoires	<i>I chose "Pi Huang" because it has high aesthetic values. The different sections of the piece represent different personalities. (R3)</i>	Different personalities from sections
		<i>Sang Tong's "Zai Na Yao Yuan De"</i>	The folk song

	<i>Di Fang</i> ... variations present different characterizations... It treads the line between tonality and atonality... (R5)	variations tread the line between tonality and atonality, presenting the variations of different characterizations.
	<i>"Pi Huang" takes the term "Shengqiang" from Peking Opera as its theme and showcases personalized, Chinese-style musical ideals on the piano. (R6)</i>	The pursuit of individuality within the Chinese style
	<i>Wang Amai - "Four-Dimensional Watercolor": It embodies strong individuality and the artistic transformation of Chinese music within a modern context. (R10)</i>	The pursuit of individuality in an artistic transformation of Chinese music modern context
The design of the piano repertoires	<i>Wang Amai's "Sheng Dan Jing Mo Chou" uses the most common motif from Peking Opera's interlude music to create a grand composition... (R5)</i>	The innovation of structure
	<i>"Si Fan" is a rare long-form composition in Chinese piano works. It has a solid narrative and dramatic qualities, with a well-structured composition and relatively uncomplicated use of piano techniques. (R10)</i>	Rare long-form, Dramatic qualities, Well-structured, Uncomplicated
Rational choice based on academic training and cultural background	<i>Based on my academic training and cultural background, I am currently working on compiling a database of Chinese piano compositions while focusing on piano works related to Inner Mongolia, where I have discovered several outstanding pieces. ... it's somewhat paradoxical that through rational choices, I have gradually developed a fondness for Chinese piano compositions. (R7)</i>	That is an interesting point.
	<i>Mr. Zhang Chao has created a series of Yunnan-style piano compositions called "Tu Feng Ji."... As an educator in Yunnan, I am particularly impressed by Mr. Zhang's Yunnan ethnic piano compositions... (R8)</i>	Regional cultural backgrounds resonate with the piano repertoires.
Positive feedback from audiences	<i>This piece helped me win the first prize ... in the International Piano Competition and gained popularity among many foreign competitors and listeners. (R9)</i>	Promising results from the competition and positive feedback

The GETs included the fusion of Western and Chinese music, general ideas of Chinese artistic conceptions reflected on piano music, and personal interests in Chinese piano repertoires, where the sense of what they were looking for in Chinese piano repertoires was not only shown as a personal favor but also represented a broad summary of what performers like of Chinese piano repertoires of convergence and divergence across the individual cases, which was articulated in several ways.

For the first GETs, participants' attention was mainly focused on the characters of Chinese piano repertoires considered as incorporating Western compositional techniques with Chinese music essentials. However, the pursuit of audibility was based on the well-trained ears of Western music basics (R3, R6); therefore, they were accustomed to analyzing the appealing elements of music rather than focusing on the impression of music with cultural context at the first stage. Meanwhile, all participants acknowledged that the appeal of Chinese piano repertoires should be rooted in Chinese culture and some of them emphasis the charm with an international appeal (R3, R8, R9) which is understandable for promoting Chinese culture with music spread.

The second GETs captured the Chinese artistic conceptions reflected on Chinese piano repertoires, illustrating the concerns in interpreting Chinese piano repertoires. Some characteristics of Chinese music, such as the linear musical structure, the linear melodies, the description of musical contents that evoke synesthesia, and the free-speed processing of inner feelings, were frequently mentioned.

The third GETs turned to personal interests in Chinese piano repertoires, where participants offered a variety of answers. Some liked the attractive sound color that was different from Western music. Some were seeking individuality through the piano pieces, some were concerned about interacting with audiences, while some admitted the rational choice

based on academic training and cultural background gradually developed a fondness for Chinese piano repertoires.

4.1.1.2 Learning Chinese piano repertoires

Table 4.3 illustrates the IPA process of getting GETs from question 2. This question was designed to generate participants' reflections on how Chinese piano repertoires impact their performing experiences physically, emotionally, and mentally.

Table 4.3. The IPA Process of Question 2

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Participants' different opinions and attitudes toward the learning focus on Chinese and non-Chinese piano repertoires	Focused on the specific training for Chinese piano repertoires	<i>Chinese piano compositions have developed their own unique musical style... There are also differences in aspects such as rhythm, melody, and pedal usage compared to Western piano music. Therefore, specific technical training.. and exploration of emotional expression are necessary for piano performance. (R1)</i>	The unique musical style needs specific technical training.
		<i>In terms of technique, I have found that playing Chinese works on the pentatonic scale can be challenging for the hands.. Therefore, I believe practicing scales or exercises related to the pentatonic scale is necessary. (R4)</i>	Stressed the specific training need
	Focused on the Chinese artistic conceptions that influenced the practice of piano performance	<i>Chinese piano works are indeed quite different from non-Chinese piano works. There are significant aesthetic differences between Chinese and non-Chinese piano works.. Chinese works have a more relaxed rhythm and different structures. Many Chinese works evoke traditional Chinese culture.. In terms of spirituality, I feel that.. Chinese works.. emphasize creating an artistic conception and a sense of poetry and painting, leaving more room for interpretation. (R4)</i>	Attitude/Chinese culture influences/ leaves more room for interpretation.
		<i>I believe that the main difference between learning Chinese piano works and non-Chinese piano works lies in the performance techniques and musical styles. (R8)</i>	What kind of techniques and musical styles were not mentioned
The technique and aesthetic judgment were based on Western classical music		<i>.. well-established performance system in the Western tradition has greatly benefited Chinese beginners by helping them establish a solid foundation.. Studying Chinese piano works also helps cultivate our patriotism in the context of China's 5,000 years of history..</i>	The foundation of performing piano was established in the Western style.
			Learning Chinese piano works helps us better understand Chinese culture from

The similarity process of learning Chinese and non-Chinese piano repertoires	(R2)	<i>Chinese piano works are still part of Western classical music and are considered a branch. Their aesthetic and judgment systems are still based on Western classical music... (R5)</i>	a historical context? Aesthetic appreciation in Western classical music custom
		<i>I feel that good Chinese works are not much different from non-Chinese works... There aren't many differences regarding the approach of reading and recognizing sheet music and practicing to develop skills during the learning stage... Whether it's Chinese or non-Chinese works, the ultimate approach is the same. (R3)</i>	Attitude/ similar steps for learning Chinese and non-Chinese piano works.
		<i>... we expect to experience the creative personalities of the arrangers... a similarity in studying Chinese piano works and non-Chinese piano works. Additionally, performers must deeply understand the texts behind the works and their cultural implications at a higher level... In this regard, the similarities between Chinese and non-Chinese works exist... (R5)</i>	attitude expectation of piano works inherited from Western piano custom
		<i>There is not much difference in basic piano playing techniques... (R6)</i>	attitude towards the basic steps of learning repertoires
		<i>I don't believe there are any fundamental differences between learning Chinese and Western piano works. (R7)</i>	attitude
		<i>The steps involved in learning Chinese works are not significantly different from learning foreign works. (R10)</i>	attitude
The cultural value from the musical context	The difference was from the musical context.	<i>Performers need to delve into the artistic conception of the work based on the musical text. Therefore, I believe the interpretation of both Chinese and non-Chinese works ultimately employs the same approach, but the core elements may differ... (R3)</i>	the same process, but core elements vary based on musical context
		<i>... it requires dedicated efforts in the musical context, especially in pursuing Chinese literary aesthetics... (R6)</i>	Focused on Chinese literary aesthetics
		<i>Chinese works' harmony and melodic language often evoke a sense of déjà vu. Additionally, Chinese piano works offer many opportunities for exploring different tonal colors, enriching the overall performance... (R9)</i>	a sense of déjà vu
		<i>... the main difference lies in the spiritual aspect of the works, which</i>	Align with Chinese cultural and aesthetic

		<i>should align with Chinese traditional culture and aesthetic tendencies. Chinese works express their content and temperament in ways distinct from Western music. (R10)</i>	customs.
	The difference was that the performers were Chinese but did not guarantee accuracy in interpreting the music context.	<i>The difference lies only in the fact that we are Chinese. However, this does not guarantee that our interpretation of the music will be more accurate. (R5)</i>	Interesting and important point
		<i>... it must be acknowledged that Chinese works can present challenges when faced with cultural traditions... Chinese people face similar difficulties in mastering their own music styles compared to Western music styles.... Furthermore, the Chinese style is a complex amalgamation, and I even believe it only exists conceptually. It may be more accurate to express it as a regional or ethnic style. Therefore, we may hesitate when playing almost any Chinese piano work because we do not understand the local dialect or regional style. (R5)</i>	Hold a similar opinion as R5 expressed
Function		<i>Chinese piano compositions... exhibit a distinct national character... with ethnic colors serving as a medium for communication, allowing people who are not familiar with Chinese culture to appreciate the richness of Chinese ethnic culture... (R2)</i>	Serve as a medium for promoting Chinese culture.
Benefits	Inherit the core value in education (Patriotism)	<i>Studying Chinese piano works also helps cultivate our patriotism.... Patriotism has always been a core value in education, extending to piano education. (R2)</i>	Patriotism was the core value in Chinese education, which extends to piano education.
		<i>...when playing Chinese piano pieces, there is a strong sense of emotional connection and national pride at a spiritual level... (R9)</i>	Sense of national pride
	Social environment influence	<i>... The place I grew up in is quite inclusive. ...frequently seeing Hui or Uighur people with head coverings. So, I was naturally influenced by it, and I feel that my culture possesses it... Its characteristics have a strong Xinjiang flavor. When I played that piece, I suddenly felt like it was my ethnic music, even though I am Han Chinese... I felt this was how the phrase should be played, and I didn't need anyone to teach me. I could teach others about that particular part. So, I think this</i>	imperceptible cultural impact; sense of cultural confidence

		<i>might be a difference... it's still something we were exposed to since childhood. (R3)</i>	
		<i>Chinese people face similar difficulties in mastering their music styles compared to Western ones. This is primarily due to a century of cultural upheaval, which has created a significant gap and even a divide between us and our traditions. (R7)</i>	The gap between Chinese traditions, which calls for intensive study
	Sentimental connection	<i>... studying Chinese piano works, I don't feel much difference physically. Emotionally, there are differences in the scenes portrayed. The most important aspect, in my opinion, is the interesting point of emotional engagement. Emotion is something related to feelings... (R3)</i>	Scenes portrayed evoke emotional connect
		<i>In terms of emotions... bring back memories of familiar melodies from childhood and creates a strong nostalgia... (R4)</i>	Nostalgia, personal experience
	Individuality from Chinese piano repertoires	<i>Most Chinese piano works are of poor quality, so it is crucial for me to be able to select pieces in my practice... good works give me strong impressions... what impacts me the most is the composers' ability to deliver a powerful and striking message through their works... (R5)</i>	Seeking individuality from piano works, willing to practice good quality works with a strong interest.
	The Benefits of Chinese poetry, lyrics, and classical literature	<i>I enjoy reading and delving into Chinese poetry, lyrics, and classical literature from different periods. The spiritual strength I derive from these texts has had a significant impact and inspiration on my personal understanding and performance of musical works. (R6)</i>	Nourished from Chinese literature to form a personal understanding of music
	Positive feedback from teaching benefits in using Chinese piano repertoires	<i>I have been using Chinese piano works for many years, and my students have responded positively, resulting in significant teaching benefits... (R8)</i>	Intentionally using Chinese piano repertoires, especially with local features.
Responsibility	A sense of responsibility that urged participants to perform, teach, and promote Chinese piano repertoires implicated the cultural identity.	<i>I am responsible for promoting and developing a branch of Chinese piano works that adapts classical ethnic and folk music... I hope to contribute to the more comprehensive promotion and dissemination of Yunnan's ethnic-style piano works in universities and colleges within and outside the province. Furthermore, I aim to provide a platform and share experiences for protecting, inheriting, and developing unique ethnic and folk music while nurturing specialized talents in this field. (R8)</i>	Strengthen the regional culture with music. Implicated a sense of confidence and pride in cultural identity

The GETs show that participants hold different opinions and attitudes toward the learning focus on Chinese and non-Chinese piano repertoires. Some participants argued that the approach to interpreting Chinese and non-Chinese piano repertoires had significant differences referring to the technical training, such as pedaling and scale fingering, which need specific training (R1, R4). In addition, some considered that the aesthetic conceptions revealed substantial differences between Chinese and non-Chinese piano repertoires regarding the free-tempo control and the organization of repertoire structure in practice (R2, R4 & R8). However, most participants considered the steps in learning Chinese and non-Chinese piano repertoires were roughly the same (R3, R5, R6 R7 & R10). Both of them required an understanding of the scores as the basic and then took the further step to explore the music behind the score, which included the cultural implications at a higher level.

They all agreed that learning Chinese piano repertoires offered valuable emotional resonances. Some focused on describing insights into patriotism, folk regional influences, Chinese poetry, literature, and philosophy influences on musical traditions from relatively broad perspectives. Some expressed sentimental connections to their personal experience, reflecting the social environment's imperceptible cultural impact that inspired their understanding of Chinese piano repertoires.

As a result, the primary learning approaches were similar despite some techniques requiring specific training in specific Chinese piano works. Nevertheless, the emotional resonance through Chinese piano repertoires differed from non-Chinese ones was acknowledged. Emotional resonance was one of the motivations for Chinese piano performers when choosing Chinese piano repertoires. Along with the exploration of Chinese piano works, the influences of Chinese culture exerted in interpreting from performing piano become increasingly evident.

4.1.1.3 Chinese piano repertoires became one of the essential teaching tasks

Table 4.4 illustrates the IPA process of getting GETs from question 3. Question 3 focused on the frequency with which participants assigned Chinese piano repertoires to their students and the reasons.

Table 4.4. The IPA Process of Question 3

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Curriculum request	Curriculum requirements	<i>...during the second year of study, there is one semester where students are required to play Chinese piano pieces (R1)</i>	Based on the curriculum request Assigned on the specific semester
		<i>The selected piano piece must align with the student's skill level and meet the requirements of the curriculum. (R2)</i>	With curriculum requirements based on students' level

		<i>... piano major students must play a Chinese piano piece for an exam in their sophomore year. (R4)</i>	A must-play content on specific academic year
		<i>Typically, I assign Chinese piano works to students once every one or two years. The reason for assigning them is usually based on the requirements of the curriculum. In our university, Chinese piano works are mandatory for second and fourth-year students, as specified in the curriculum. (R6)</i>	Assigned works based on curriculum request
		<i>For professional students, I assign 2 to 3 piano works per semester based on curriculum requirements, competition demands, or performance practice requirements. (R8)</i>	2-3 per semester, either on curriculum request or other factors
		<i>As piano major students, they are generally required to have at least one piano work for examination each academic year. (R10)</i>	At least one each year
Extra curriculum request	From Teachers' Teaching Plan	<i>... In addition to that, based on students' personalities, technical abilities, special requirements, and other factors, practice sessions are arranged to include Chinese piano pieces almost every academic year. (R1)</i>	Assigned more Chinese piano repertoires than the syllabus request
		<i>When students have become proficient in a technical exercise or polyphonic piece, I assign them a Chinese piano work. (R2)</i>	Integrate Chinese pieces into the learning chain.
		<i>For piano major students, it is common to require them to play at least one medium-level or above Chinese piece every academic year. (R4)</i>	At least one piece on Medium-level to advanced level each year is required by the teacher.
		<i>I generally only consider Chinese pieces suitable for students... Practicing one piece well will be sufficient for your lifetime unless you develop a specific interest in Chinese music. Considering our limited time for teaching, I focus on this aspect... I feel that Chinese pieces have low functionality. I don't know where to go or how to integrate Chinese pieces into the learning chain. For me, it comes back to the constraint of time...</i>	Stressed the constraint time for undergraduate piano study, which led the teacher to assign one piece that works well for functionality, such as exams, competitions, recitals, teaching, etc.
		<i>... depends on the individual... aesthetic preferences and levels of acceptance... When assigning Chinese works, I do not consider curriculum requirements</i>	Student-oriented, only considered the quality of the pieces and students' aesthetic preferences without

		<i>or competition demands because those factors are external to the music itself. I solely focus on the quality of the pieces and the students' aesthetic preferences. (R5)</i>	care for the curriculum and competition demands.
The phenomenological of using Chinese piano repertoires in Chinese tertiary piano education during the last decade	Increased the portion of using Chinese piano repertoires in the teaching content	<i>In the past decade, using Chinese piano works in teaching has become increasingly significant. (R1)</i>	Increased significantly
		<i>Over the past decade, the proportion of Chinese piano works used in my teaching has gradually increased. (R2)</i>	Related to China's economic development and cultural orientation policy
		<i>When assigning piano works, I tend to assign more Chinese piano pieces to students ... After I started working, I have noticed that I assign more Chinese piano pieces to my students. Furthermore, competitions nowadays also require the performance of Chinese piano works,</i>	Gradually increased
		<i>Teaching Chinese piano works is essential to my piano instruction, and its significance and proportion have been increasing over time ... Regarding proportions, currently, around 70% is still foreign repertoire, although this percentage may be slightly higher among the undergraduate students I teach ... I face significant pressure and misunderstanding. My ratio is the highest among the teachers I know, and it is abnormal ... (R7)</i>	Increased to assign Chinese piano repertoires, mentioned competitions would require Chinese piano repertoires
		<i>In my teaching, the proportion of Chinese works is approximately 25%, and it has remained relatively stable over time. (R)</i>	30% Chinese piano repertoires in the teachers' teaching content as the highest ratio occupied among colleagues, made him face enormous pressure and misunderstood.
The change from assigned more classical Chinese piano repertoires to contemporary works		<i>The proportion of Chinese piano works used in my teaching in the past decade has not changed significantly. If there is any change, it would be a shift from having students perform classical Chinese piano works to encouraging them to explore more newly composed piano works. This is because more and more composers have created innovative and original piano compositions that pique our interest. (R6)</i>	A stable proportion of approximately 25% with Chinese piano repertoires in total teaching content
		<i>Over the past decade, the proportion of Chinese piano</i>	More original, innovative piano repertoires were composed and attracted piano teachers' interest, bringing to their teaching content. Enlarged the Chinese piano repertoires library for teaching and performing, more choices.
			The proportion increased, and the

		<i>works used in my piano teaching has changed. With the increase in the repertoire of Chinese piano works, the range of teaching repertoire has expanded accordingly. (R8)</i>	teaching content expanded with new Chinese piano repertoires.
		<i>Over the past decade, the piano works I have assigned to students have become increasingly innovative. I have chosen many outstanding piano compositions by young and middle-aged Chinese composers... (R9)</i>	Assigned innovative and outstanding Chinese piano works to students composed by young or middle-aged Chinese composers.
Reasons for assigning Chinese piano repertoires	Following cultural policy	<i>It is closely related to the country's cultural orientation, economic development, and national confidence. (R1)</i>	Related to China's economic development and cultural orientation policy
	Cultivate a sense of national identity	<i>Firstly, it enhances students' understanding and performance abilities of Chinese piano works, fostering their sense of national identity and patriotism. Secondly, it ensures the inheritance and promotion of Chinese compositions... Thirdly, it highlights the differences between Chinese and Western piano works, allowing students to showcase the characteristics of ethnic music. (R2)</i>	Reasons for choosing Chinese piano repertoires: 1. fostering a sense of national identity and patriotism; 2. inheriting and promoting Chinese piano repertoires; 3. Distinguished the differences from Western piano music, from which understood the characteristics of ethnic music
	Following the requirements from competitions, exams, and recitals	<i>Nowadays, teaching has become highly focused on competition repertoire, exam repertoire, and, ultimately, the repertoire for final exams... I tend to assign pieces with a strong functional purpose to students. In higher education, the teaching objectives are quite strong... I believe everything you do should have an ultimate goal, and you should focus on that goal... Therefore, assigning pieces to students, especially university students, depends on their functional needs...</i> <i>Using ethnic works to cultivate students' cultural identity is something I am currently interested in, as I lack this element. (R3)</i>	Highly focused on the teaching objective, tended to assign a functional piece that could bring multiple outcomes for competitions and exams and enhance students' teaching experience with limited time and opportunity. He is interested in how to use ethnic piano works to cultivate students' cultural identity due to his experience and lack of this perspective.
	Cultivate a sense of pride	<i>... because it [Chinese piano repertoire] exposes them to Chinese national and folk music, fostering a sense of national pride. (R4)</i>	A way close to national and folk music, which fosters a sense of national pride
	Student-oriented	<i>When assigning Chinese piano works to students, it also depends on the individual. Each student</i>	Depending on students' preferences, the teacher will attempt to exceed

	<i>has different aesthetic preferences and levels of acceptance. I consider the students' acceptance levels and may assign them pieces that slightly exceed their comfort zones in order to broaden their horizons... The repertoire I assign is diverse, and there are no fixed pieces or patterns... (R5)</i>	students' comfort zone to broaden their horizons slightly. Assigned Chinese piano repertoires are varied, with no fixed pieces or patterns.
Promote Chinese piano repertoires underlying the cultural value;	<i>...I believe that the inherent value and significance of Chinese piano works, the gradually recognized value and significance, and the continuous efforts of enlightened individuals have played a decisive role... (R7)</i>	The value and significance of Chinese piano repertoires are worthy of being promoted.
A particular focus on regional music with cultural identity	<i>...rational choices initially dominated, and the works' charm came to the forefront. Furthermore, I believe that piano teaching that truly rises to the cultural level is ...rather in regional music institutions closely connected to the piano art and the land we live in. This has two implications: on the one hand, it connects piano art with the land we live on, and on the other hand, we don't need to overly focus on the evaluation standards of those experts, as those standards may appear sophisticated but often represent serious cultural discrimination. Therefore, I choose to explore local composers and their works vigorously. Of course, there is a utilitarian significance regarding cultural identity and reflecting our values. (R7)</i>	The piano art should closely connect with local life with no need to be over-judged by the so-called central standardization. Utilitarian significance regarding cultural identity and local piano works promotion.
	<i>I hope that through performing these Chinese works, students can gain a deeper understanding of Chinese piano music and further develop their musical sensitivity (as most children find it easier to express themselves when performing Chinese works). (R9)</i>	the teachers' hope and observed outcome from students' performing with Chinese piano repertoires
	<i>The reason behind this is that as Chinese piano performers, it is essential for them to be familiar with excellent Chinese piano works and to learn and appreciate the differences between Chinese and Western piano music. Encouraging students to study Chinese works helps them understand and carry forward the essence of Chinese piano music. (R10)</i>	Telling the difference between Chinese and Western piano music by learning repertoires and deepening students' knowledge of Chinese piano music.

All participants agreed that Chinese piano repertoires had become one of the crucial tasks in their undergraduate teaching content. Most undergraduate piano primary curricula requested Chinese piano repertoires as a must-play work at least once in a four-year study. However, some piano teachers tended to assign more Chinese piano repertoires than curriculum requests based on piano competition demands, recital preparations, students' performing preferences, or teachers' teaching plan perspectives (R1, R2, R4, R5, & R7).

The increasing use of innovative, original Chinese piano repertoires, some of which were up-to-date and after being acknowledged, was quickly applied in teaching and performing during the last decade. On the one hand, it contributes to the expansion of Chinese piano repertoire promotion; on the other hand, it fosters both piano performers and educators' confidence in keeping pace with Chinese piano music development.

4.1.1.4 Undertake multi-level dimensions of teaching Chinese piano repertoires

Table 4.5 illustrates the multi-level dimensions of teaching Chinese piano repertoires from question 4. It was discussed in two aspects: teaching objectives and teaching requirements. Teaching objectives focused on the outcome that participants aimed to achieve through the teaching process on Chinese piano repertoires. It was embedded with curriculum development guided lesson planning and educational assessment. The teaching requirements mainly discussed the techniques and musical expression in terms of piano performance proficiency and contained the essentials for demonstrating and conveying the nuances of the music with a knowledge of Chinese music. The teaching requirements also contained cultural awareness, which meant the understanding of the culture and historical context of Chinese music was important.

Table 4.5 The IPA Process of Question 4

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Multi-level dimensions	Teaching objectives	<i>By studying specific pieces, understanding the characteristics of the Chinese piano style, encouraging students to gain a deeper understanding of Chinese culture, fostering patriotism, and cultivating cultural confidence. (R1)</i>	To understand the Chinese piano style with specific pieces from a music perspective, to foster patriotism and cultivate cultural confidence from cultural and spiritual perspectives.
		<i>... aim to strengthen Chinese ethnic culture... to promote the nationalization of Chinese piano education to the world. (R2)</i>	With the hope of promoting Chinese piano music
		<i>To prepare for exams or meet competition requirements... (R3)</i>	A clear purpose for getting results from judgments
		<i>Through studying Chinese piano repertoire, explore regional folk music and cultivate students' sense of national pride. On the one hand, it allows students to learn new repertoire; on the other hand, it fulfills the purpose of patriotic education by integrating ideological and political education into the piano classroom. (R4)</i>	Similar to the R1 response, it strengthened the fulfillment of patriotic education by integrating ideological and political education into the piano class, a vital teaching objective and a must-done in every discipline nowadays.
		<i>... aim to foster students' understanding and appreciation of their national music by teaching Chinese piano works. Students are expected to become familiar with and understand how to interpret their national style. (R6)</i>	Stressed the interpretation and appreciation of national style with Chinese piano repertoires
		<i>We must first help students understand the complexity of Chinese culture and establish a diverse and multi-layered perspective on Chinese music styles. I once organized a series of events called "Chinese Piano Music Map" to prove a point: various regional music styles in China can likely be expressed through the piano. The fact has indeed proven this to be true. (R7)</i>	Stressed the importance of understanding the complexity of Chinese culture, which helped to establish the diverse and multi-layered understanding regarding Chinese music style
		<i>It helps to stimulate students' interest in learning. It helps to broaden students' technique skills. It helps to enrich students' knowledge</i>	The first four focus on the music perspective, and the last stresses patriotic education immersed in piano teaching objectives.

	<p><i>of piano literature.</i></p> <p><i>It helps to inherit, develop, and promote Chinese music.</i></p> <p><i>It helps to cultivate students' sense of national pride and cultural confidence. (R8)</i></p>	
	<p><i>My main goal is to be able to interpret and perform the essence and style of Chinese music... I believe that in teaching, it is essential to deeply understand Chinese piano music's unique charm and touch (including tone quality) (R9)</i></p>	Specific focal point onto the touching, which helps to interpret the essential charm of Chinese music
	<p><i>Avoid playing "commonplace" works with monotonous harmonies, lack of color, limited musical imagery, and rigid structures.... Focus on playing works adapted for the piano specifically for the piano....</i></p> <p><i>Emphasize playing works composed mainly after the 1980s... Composers had more freedom and self-expression in their compositions during this period. Therefore, there are more worthy works to be explored from this period. (R10)</i></p>	Focused on the quality of piano repertoires, which should specifically fit for piano performing while showing interesting individuality through the repertoires
Teaching requirements	<p><i>Students are expected to express the Chinese piano music style as much as possible through melody expression, rhythmic characteristics, pedal usage, technical abilities, and others. (R1)</i></p>	Specific concerned with performing technique skills
	<p><i>... firstly, we need to cultivate students' awareness of ethnic music in piano education. Secondly, we should emphasize the importance of Chinese works in piano teaching... Thirdly, we need to create diversified Chinese piano music that not only expresses a rich ethnic flavor but also demonstrates the superiority of expressing various ethnic flavors on the foundation of modern sound. (R2)</i></p>	Stressed the importance and superiority of ethnic music that brought to Chinese piano education
	<p><i>The requirements for learning traditional Western classical repertoire are the same... It should be accurate in terms of notes, rhythm, and meter and should be performed in its entirety. It should also demonstrate a certain musicality and the ability to play phrases... The teaching requirements are undoubtedly different for Chinese and Western piano works... the pursuit of tonal saturation should be a commonality. It pertains to the sound quality, the feeling of the piano keys, and the sound quality. These aspects may be common....</i></p> <p><i>Next, there will certainly be musical differences. I'm referring to the characteristics of the tone... Afterward,</i></p>	<p>The basic requirements apply to all piano repertoires.</p> <p>Adhere to the principle of articulate phrases derived from Western classical piano works while admitting the differences between Chinese and Western piano works.</p> <p>Focused on the pursuit of sound quality and committed that each piano repertoire owns its uniqueness that caused the differences in teaching requirements.</p> <p>Provide personal teaching experience of how to communicate with students and inspire them to think</p>

it becomes highly personalized, especially when teaching Chinese works... As for the differences, I should say they are about distinctiveness or uniqueness. Each work has its own individuality. I believe this is the essence of music. It is the most significant difference between music and other things we study... when teaching, I will engage in conversations first. I get to know the students and ask about their interests and hobbies... Ultimately, I want to convey that when you discuss music, even though it's all about sound, the feeling you convey through your performance should be different. That's why music is a particularly mysterious subject, and I love exploring it. (R3)

about piano performing art.

Students are expected to convey the artistic conception of Chinese piano works and understand the aesthetics that differ from Western music... (R4)

Convey the artistic conception and understand aesthetics differ from Western music

Regarding performance requirements, there is no fundamental difference between Chinese and Western piano works. To enhance the performance, I encourage students to explore the background and other details of the compositions... Dialects can provide valuable insights into articulation, dynamics, and tempo expressions. (R5)

Encouraged students to explore the cultural context behind the notes and give an example of how dialects provide valuable insights into articulation dynamics and tempo expressions

Chinese piano works possess certain distinct characteristics due to the pentatonic scale, fingerings, harmonies, musical texture, melodic structure, embellishments, chord positions, and more. Our ear training is based on Western tradition, so special attention must be paid to these "peculiarities" when practicing Chinese works. Piano pieces have certain differences that require specific exercises to achieve better mastery. Furthermore, there will be specific requirements for accents, touch, and other aspects during the performance to emphasize the expressiveness of the flavor and vocal characteristics in Chinese music. (R6)

Highlighted the peculiarities of Chinese piano repertoires, which required performers to pay special attention on it since the ear training was based on Western musical tradition. (this point in accord with Q1R3's answer)

Regarding technical aspects, I recommend students read Zhao Xiaosheng's article "Chinese Piano Context." I believe it is an underestimated piece of literature that guides us in an important direction for teaching.

The main idea of "Chinese Piano Context" (2003) written by Zhao Xiaosheng pointed out that the development of Chinese piano music has opened up a "Chinese piano context" for the piano. This article explained the impact of

Additionally, I have been collecting Chinese piano works to establish a classification system in four aspects: etudes, counterpoint, untitled music, and titled music. This classification system aligns with the teaching model influenced by the Soviet-Russian tradition accepted in Chinese tradition. (R7)

Chinese piano music on the world from eight aspects: rhyme, charm, decoration, timbre, rhythm, playing method, pedal, and structure—the contribution made by the treasure house of music culture. On the one hand, it affirms the efforts made by Chinese piano music creation in integrating Eastern and Western cultures and carrying forward the cultural characteristics of the Chinese nation, adding fresh new ideas to the piano performing art. On the other hand, it also points out that Most of the music with national cultural characteristics comes from the transplantation and adaptation of ancient or folk music. It lacks personality, weak originality, and lacks depth on a spiritual level. Chinese piano music is expected to further develop in the considerable development space. This participant edited teaching material according to different genres to match the piano teaching system.

Most of the participants mentioned the precise objectives of teaching Chinese piano repertoires, discussing them in terms of addressing both musical and cognitive development. Music perspective included the basic understanding of Chinese piano music, deepening the knowledge of Chinese music and culture through learning specific Chinese piano repertoires, and promoting Chinese piano music to the world of Chinese culture. Cognitive development was focused on enlightening cultural confidence and nurturing people with cultural identity which is also meet the requirement as to promote the Chinese culture.

As for the teaching requirements, some stressed the particularness of Chinese piano repertoires regarding rhyme, charm, decoration, timbre, rhythm, playing method, pedal, and structure, which need to pay extra attention to their Chinese music context (R1, R2, R4, R6,

and R7), while some thought that the basic requirements were the same as teaching Western piano repertoires (R3, R5). The main contribution of the specialness, such as musical articulation inspired by regional dialects and different expressions by regional cultures, was verified by one participant that the various regional music styles in China can likely be expressed through the piano.

4.1.2 Embodied Experience in Chinese Cultural Practices

4.1.2.1 The influences of Chinese culture from personal reflection

Table 4.6 illustrates the IPA process of getting GETs from question 5. Question 5 concerned how participants' previous cultural practices and experiences shaped their understanding and approaches to performing or teaching Chinese piano repertoires. Participants' previous cultural practices and experiences brought a cultural context to the music, which could be particularly valuable in conveying cultural and emotional resonance and fostering further exploration and appreciation of Chinese piano music.

Table 4.6 The IPA Process of Question 5

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Acknowledged the influences of Chinese culture from a macro perspective	Subtle influences from daily life	<i>I come to understand many subtle aspects of Chinese culture in my daily life...as Chinese piano teachers, we have a deeper understanding of Chinese culture... (R1)</i>	acknowledged the subtle influences from daily life; Firmly believed that the Chinese would have a deeper understanding of Chinese culture
		<i>...the place where I grew up with different ethnic minorities, like the Hui and Uighurs, has had a subtle but profound impact on me. (R3)</i>	The multi-religion cultural impact from living environment
	Influence from Chinese thoughts	<i>Chinese traditional thought has influenced my performance and teaching of Chinese piano</i>	Admitted the influence of Chinese traditional thoughts;

	works... The concept of "respecting gods, venerating heaven, and valuing human beings" plays a crucial role in Chinese traditional culture and has undergone a long development period. This concept emphasizes the importance of individual self-development... Traditional Chinese music works also significantly impact the performance and teaching of Chinese piano works... the Yellow River as its background, with the melodic elements of folk songs as its foundation, and it absorbs many materials from folk music. As a result, this piece becomes easily accessible to the general public and effectively expresses the heroic struggles of the Chinese people. (R2)	stressed the importance of self-development; use a Chinese piano repertoire, "The Yellow River," to illustrate the absorption of folk songs, the effectiveness of easy understanding and empathy to audiences.
	I've studied a bit of the "I Ching" (Book of Changes). ... I believe in fate, and I don't particularly like struggling. I don't like struggling with anything. I feel that my experiences should be left for more important things... (R3)	The Chinese thoughts exert influence on personal practice.
Participants' answers about specific Chinese traditional cultural influences	Traditional architecture, clothing, Chinese painting, literature, drama, calligraphy, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhist philosophy all have an influence. (R4)	Illustrated the fields of Chinese cultural influences
	It mainly includes Chinese ethnic customs, Chinese painting, literature, drama, traditional Chinese opera, traditional art forms like Chinese ballade singing and calligraphy, as well as dance. (R8)	Ethnic customs, Chinese ballade singing
	Chinese painting, literature, Kunqu opera (R10)	Kunqu Opera
Highlight the Chinese aesthetic ideas that influenced the performing and teaching of Chinese repertoires.	It can be said that the field of Chinese traditional culture deeply influences my performance and teaching of Chinese piano works. This influence is particularly evident in Chinese painting, opera, and literature, as well as China's traditional Confucian and Taoist philosophies, architecture, and clothing. In other words, Chinese aesthetic ideas have greatly influenced my understanding and interpretation of Chinese piano works. (R6)	The same fields mentioned as R4 responded but highlighted the Chinese aesthetics ideas.
Highlight the natural scenery, the character of subtlety and delicacy, with an important concept of blank-leaving	For me, Chinese painting, natural scenery, and classical Chinese architecture have had the greatest influence. Chinese art aesthetics emphasize a sense of subtlety and delicacy, and painting focuses on the concept of blank-leaving. I believe that these aspects have greatly	Mentioned the spiritual from natural, and Chinese aesthetics' ideas on a sense of subtlety and delicacy, and painting focuses on the concept of blank-

		<i>contributed to my interpretation and handling of the charm and style in playing Chinese piano music.</i>	leaving
The influence of Chinese culture on interpreting Chinese piano repertoires	Keep a confident belief that understanding Chinese culture would exert a positive influence on interpreting the related piano repertoires	<i>... For example, calligraphy is reflected in Wang Lisan's poem "Calligraphy and the Melody of the Qin" in his collection "Tashanji." Understanding the graceful Chinese calligraphy helps perform this piece. Literature, such as poetry, is highly beneficial for playing works like "Two Tang Poems." Traditional Chinese opera helps perform works like "Pi Huang." Clothing, such as flowing sleeves and ethnic costumes, as well as other fields, contribute to the performance of Chinese piano works. (R4)</i>	The helpful understanding of Chinese culture inspired how to interpret Chinese piano repertoires.
	Keep an attitude of self-doubt in performing Chinese piano repertoires since some particular traditional arts are unfamiliar.	<i>Regarding the most traditional art forms like Peking Opera, I do not feel that my performance of "Pi Huang" is compelling, as there will always be a group of true Peking Opera professionals pointing out my approach is incorrect. Peking Opera is not my traditional culture; I did not listen to it much in childhood. As for calligraphy and other forms, I think they have their significance, but I do not find much common ground with them. (R3)</i>	Admit that performing Chinese piano repertoires inspired by traditional art forms might not present the original taste because of unfamiliarity, even though the traditional arts have significance.
	Specify the cultural influence in specific Chinese piano repertoire case by case.	<i>This still depends on the specific characteristics of each work. For example, Wang Lisan's "Calligraphy and the Melody of the Qin" naturally involves cursive script; "Patterns" incorporates batik techniques; "Folk Toys" includes various folk toys such as clay roosters, sugar knives, and puppets. All three pieces belong to the collection "Tashanji," which represents the composer's dreams of the "land and mountains" of China. In the case of several piano works by Teacher Zou Xiangping, the composer subjectively links them to Chinese architecture. Pieces such as "Drum Tower in Dong Village," "Rain and Wind Bridge in Dong Village," and "Landscape Temple" fall into this category. Additionally, some composers have a personal affinity for Buddhism or Taoism, reflected in their works. Therefore, it is still necessary to analyze specific issues on a case-by-case basis. Different aspects of traditional culture may influence each work. When performing and teaching these works, it is important to</i>	Emphasis on detailed analysis of specific works

		<i>understand their specific background and creative intent to comprehend better and convey the traditional cultural elements they contain. (R5)</i>	
	The importance of Narrative in Chinese piano repertoires	<i>I believe narrative is highly important in Chinese piano music and even in most contemporary Chinese music compositions. You will find that almost all universally recognized good works have a clear narrative quality. The narrative governs the music's abstractions, styles, and subtle expressions. (R7)</i>	Stressed the importance of Narrative Character in Chinese piano repertoires
	The importance of consciousness in music	<i>What I know as "research" has involved studying material things, but I have never delved into studying consciousness. I refer to a mysterious consciousness, which I regard as an existence equal to the material world. I believe that music is, in fact, one of the best and most direct ways to study consciousness, even more so than visual arts... In what we do, I feel it's closest to consciousness, so we often perceive the performer's emotions in the music, whether it is a vivid image, suppressed emotions, or a process of contemplation. Nevertheless, as for studying consciousness, we currently lack specific data. ... (R3)</i>	
	Keeping a balance between intuition and reason	<i>How you personally interpret and perform it is also crucial in finding a balance between intuition and reason. (R3)</i>	The relationship between intuition and reason
Keywords in teaching	Timbre	<i>Just like Chinese traditional painting, which uses varying shades of ink to create beautiful images, it parallels the pursuit of musical colors in different stylistic compositions and the technical demands built upon that foundation. (R1)</i>	Use analogy to express the demand for musical color, like the shaping from Chinese traditional painting.
		<i>I genuinely feel this way, and it includes the key term we often mention in teaching: timbre. You have to express, convey, and create a sense of resonance with the audience. I often tell my students that during their performance, they should be able to suddenly see inside the minds of their audience, as if they have a third ear. As a performer, it's not just about playing for yourself when you go on stage. There is a sense of service involved in performing. (R3)</i>	Timbre: included expressing, conveying, and creating a sense of resonance with the audience; The sense of service through performing but did not mention to whom or to what matters the performer should serve.
	Storyteller	<i>As a teacher, it is crucial to be able to tell a story and use storytelling to construct the structure of the repertoire and deepen the understanding of the music. This aspect is significant. (R7)</i>	Emphasis that the teacher should be a good storyteller who uses storytelling to help students construct the

			structure of music pieces with a deepened understanding of musical content
	Programmatic music often contains cultural symbols.	<i>However, when it comes to programmatic music, as you mentioned earlier, those elements[as shown in the question] may be present because Chinese works often incorporate cultural symbols. However, they cannot be considered as a comprehensive influence.</i>	Cultural symbols in Chinese piano repertoires would be specific but not comprehensive influence.
The differences in diffusion of culture between Chinese and Western	Marketable and Easy to Package Versus In-depth and Long enlightenment process to comprehend and practice	<i>I think the biggest difference between Chinese culture and mainstream Western culture is that Western culture is very marketable and easy to package, whereas Chinese culture requires a long time to comprehend and understand. (R3)</i>	Emphasis on the diffusion of culture in terms of the tempo of cultural influence: Fast and Slow contrast between Western and Chinese culture.
	Expansiveness Versus Subtle Influence	<i>However, this clashes with our current mainstream culture of fast food and short videos. So, it is challenging to continue what we are doing because Chinese culture requires a slow approach to understanding. I feel Western culture is the mainstream culture now because it has expansiveness, whereas Chinese culture is much more profound. (R3)</i>	The challenging phenomenon raised the question of further exploration of how to diffuse culture creatively and efficiently.

Through participants' answers, it could be confirmed that the Chinese culture, referring to China's rich and diverse cultural heritage, encompassed various aspects of life, including philosophy, literature, religions, art forms, architecture, clothing, and social customs have profoundly influenced personal ideas about interpreting, teaching and performing Chinese piano repertoires.

Some participants observed that the gradual and often subtle influences of their daily lives played a significant role in their journey from an unconscious familiarity with Chinese culture to a more conscious and deliberate understanding of it (R1, R7). This transition illustrates how

cultural awareness can develop over time, as individuals move from experiencing cultural elements in their everyday surroundings to actively recognizing and reflecting on these elements as integral aspects of their cultural identity. This progression underscores the importance of both lived experiences and reflective practice in fostering cultural competence. Some mentioned that Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism philosophy exerted their influence from personal belief to interpreting, performing, and teaching Chinese piano music (R3, R4, R6). Participants also illustrated some specific fields in common: Chinese traditional architecture, clothing, Chinese painting, literature, drama, calligraphy, ethnic customs, Chinese ballade singing, and Chinese operas. Those mentioned elements could be found in the existing Chinese piano repertoires. Therefore, some participants insisted that the analysis of cultural influence should be grounded from case to case based on detailed repertoires rather than discussed from a macro perspective.

Participants hold different attitudes toward the influence of Chinese culture on interpreting Chinese piano repertoires. While some participants were convinced that Chinese culture profoundly nourished and inspired the understanding of music (R4, R8, R10), others expressed concerns about whether Chinese piano repertoires, being a relatively new cultural creation, could truly retain the authentic essence of traditional Chinese culture (R3). This tension reflects a broader debate about the ability of modern compositions to faithfully carry forward the nuances and spirit of historical cultural practices, especially when these compositions are created within a new or evolving artistic medium like the piano. The concern is whether these new works can maintain the cultural integrity and depth associated with traditional Chinese music, or if they represent a departure from the cultural roots that originally shaped them. However, some participants' responses highlighted the significance of narrative, which was worth further exploration in the next round.

The keywords used in Chinese piano repertoire teaching showed the importance of using the art of analogy. For example, participants used an analogy, such as the Chinese painting, to describe the timbre used in Chinese piano repertoires. Some participants also delved into the relationship between natural beauty and artistic expression within Chinese culture. The words implied that participants believed Chinese aesthetics influenced consciousness by forming learning and unconsciousness from subtle influences in social practice.

Since narrative was one of the essential characteristics of Chinese piano repertoires, especially with programmatic music, the title of the music usually contained the cultural symbol. Therefore, to better interpret the Chinese repertoires, some participants argued that the performers or teachers should be good storytellers responsible for telling a good story by conveying the musical content to the audiences or students (R7). That was also the way of teaching, inheriting, and conveying Chinese culture.

One participant offered insightful reflections on the diffusion of Western and Chinese cultures (R3). He observed that Western culture, much like fast food, is highly marketable and easily packaged for widespread promotion. Its appeal lies in its ability to capture immediate attention and be readily consumed by audiences. In contrast, Chinese culture requires a more profound and prolonged process of enlightenment to fully understand and practice. This complexity makes it challenging to convey Chinese cultural values and practices quickly, especially in terms of personal development.

As a result, Western culture tends to have a more expansive and immediate influence, rapidly spreading and dominating global cultural landscapes. On the other hand, Chinese culture exerts its influence more gradually, akin to a silent, continuous nurturing that permeates over time through subtle and persistent impacts. This distinction underscores the differing modes of cultural transmission and reception between the two, highlighting the challenges and nuances in promoting and preserving cultural identity within a globalized context.

4.1.2.2 Personal experiences with ethnic music intertwined with cultural understandings

Table 4.7 illustrates the IPA process of question 6, which focused on participants' experiences with ethnic music intertwined with cultural understanding. The GETs summarized the personal experiences mainly from four aspects: collaborating with ethnic instruments, curriculum learning, being influenced by the living environment, and participating in different musical activities by chance.

Table 4.7 The IPA Process of Question 6

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Collaborating with ethnic instruments	Personal experience in collaborating with different ethnic instruments	<i>I have collaborated with other Chinese folk instruments, such as the dizi (flute), Erhu (two-stringed fiddle), and guzheng (zither). Chinese ethnic music differs from the piano in tonality, melodic patterns, rhythm, and color. In recent years, Chinese ethnic musicians have been striving to find a balance in collaborating with the piano. (R1)</i>	Collaborating with different ethnic instruments; Stressed the differences in the tuning system, which required finding a balance between piano and different ethnic instruments
		<i>Piano accompanists must focus on tone, harmony, rhythm, and emotions during training and performance. (R2)</i>	Mentioned the specific focal point that needed to be paid attention while collaborating
		<i>As for collaborations, I have worked with traditional instruments such as the guzheng, Erhu, sheng, and pipa. (R4)</i>	Acknowledged the collaborating experience with different ethnic instruments
	With personal positive reflection on the cooperation	<i>... in my high school dormitory, several of my roommates were learning traditional Chinese instruments, and I have had the opportunity to collaborate with them. (R6)</i> <i>The recognition I have gained in the music industry is largely built on my collaborations with the horsehead fiddle (morin khuur). I believe that these collaborations and learning from morin khuur players have played a significant role in shaping my cultural perspective... Through collaborations with the horsehead fiddle, I have had the opportunity to perform on CCTV, visit the National Center for the Performing Arts, and even travel to the United States. At times, this has made me feel a bit insecure because I am aware of my limited knowledge of classical piano literature. However, the close connection to regional culture has also given me more confidence because I have discovered my unique qualities and, by certain standards, I am doing well... I learned that music is not just composed of notes but is akin to speaking in sentences. Each sentence could be likened to a bow stroke; beyond each bow stroke, we find space to breathe and more. (R7)</i> <i>I have collaborated with the</i>	Cooperating with roommates who learned traditional Chinese instruments implied participants' friendship with those roommates. Cooperate with morin khuur musicians, which earned the fame of the participant; performing experiences on prestige stages worldwide by collaboration; confidence with regional culture; full of positive and driving force comments on such cooperations. Learn how to express music through cooperation.
		<i>I have collaborated with the</i>	Stressed the cooperated

		<i>guzheng and Erhu and enjoyed this collaboration. Chinese traditional instruments have beautiful tones, and their combination with the piano highlights their ethnic charm even more... During the performance, I was deeply moved and almost brought to tears. I believe this reflects the inherent love and understanding Chinese people have for Chinese music. (R9)</i>	experience with enjoyable impression and believed the cooperation between piano and ethnic instruments would reach a better musical effect; With personal emotion, the participant was deeply moved and almost brought to tears.
	With personal negative reflection on the cooperation	<i>Besides a few occasions during my childhood when I played with a classmate who played the bamboo flute, I have not had the opportunity to collaborate with traditional Chinese instruments. I also do not understand such collaborations because they do not match well, especially in tuning (except for modern compositions). In other words, I find it challenging to appreciate collaborations between Chinese traditional music and the piano, especially in traditional tonal pieces. (R5)</i>	Do not cooperate with ethnic instrument musicians despite childhood experience with a friend; feel challenged in appreciating the collaborations due to the tuning problem between piano and ethnic instruments, particularly in traditional tonal pieces.
		<i>I have collaborated with the guzheng once before. I felt the guzheng player did not strictly follow the sheet music and had much improvisation. I am not sure if this is a common phenomenon among traditional instruments or if it is an individual case. Personally, I prefer collaborators who strictly follow the sheet music. (R10)</i>	A negative experience in cooperating with a Guzheng player due to too much improvisation from the Guzheng perspective brought the participant a lousy impression of those who did not strictly follow the sheet music.
Personal experience in curriculum with ethnic music	Negative experience	<i>Experiencing ethnic and folk songs and dances through school learning is often superficial... everyone just follows the teacher's instructions, and the teaching may be average, resulting in a lack of interest... (R3)</i>	Negative experiences with curriculum teaching, which caused the last interests
	Positive experience	<i>In particular, my study and love for Peking Opera tune during my undergraduate and graduate studies, I have systematically learned Chinese folk songs, Chinese instrumental music, storytelling music (qiyi), and Peking Opera as part of the curriculum in the Piano Department of the Central Conservatory of Music. These courses have given me a comprehensive understanding of Chinese ethnic and folk music culture. They have also provided a solid cultural foundation for me in performing and teaching Chinese piano works. (R6)</i>	Positive experience with curriculum teaching, which developed a personal comprehensive understanding of Chinese ethnic and folk music culture and a solid cultural foundation for a fruitful performing and teaching on Chinese piano repertoires
Personal	The subtle and	<i>I have listened to a large amount of</i>	The subtle influences of

experiences with ethnic music influenced by living environment	unconscious influence that nourished and inspired how to interpret specific Chinese piano repertoires	<p><i>traditional Chinese music, mostly for appreciation or as background music. For example, when I was young, my neighbors enjoyed playing the "Pingtan" (a form of musical storytelling), and it became like a lullaby for me. How could I have imagined that these experiences would later fill me with excitement when I performed Ni Hongjin's piece "Listening to Pingtan"? Additionally, around 2015, while practicing Ge Gan-ru's avant-garde works "Wrong! Wrong! Wrong!" and "Difficult! Difficult! Difficult!", which required the performer to sing, I incorporated some elements of Pingshu and Kunqu opera into my singing style, inspired by my unintentional exposure to them in my childhood. The composer acknowledged this design well. (R5)</i></p>	<p>traditional music came from the living environment of participants' childhood experiences, inspired his creative performing on particular pieces, and was acknowledged by the composer, which seemed to encourage his cultural confidence in interpreting these piano repertoires.</p>
		<p><i>Oh, I should say that during my childhood, influenced by my family and living environment, as well as my personal interests, I learned Chinese folk songs and ethnic dances. I have also studied Peking Opera and can proficiently sing many famous Peking Opera tunes... All these experiences provided a solid cultural foundation for performing and teaching Chinese piano works. Through training in piano technique and improving my piano performance skills, I have deepened my understanding of Chinese cultural traditions and become further acquainted with the traditional music culture of my own nation. (R6)</i></p>	<p>Personal interests in Chinese traditional music, which family and living environment influenced.</p> <p>Acknowledging the experiences from subtle influences or formal lessons provided the participant with a solid cultural foundation for performing and teaching Chinese piano repertoires.</p> <p>Sound with confidence</p>
		<p><i>As a member of the Laku ethnic minority from Yunnan, I have studied minority dances and musical instruments. Yunnan is home to a diverse range of ethnic musical instruments and dance styles that are closely intertwined with the musical lives of various ethnic groups. Each ethnic group has its distinct characteristics regarding musical instruments and dances... Yunnan's minority piano works have attempted to simulate the playing techniques and sound effects of numerous ethnic instruments on the piano. Their unique blend of styles enriches the piano's expressive</i></p>	<p>Learned minority dances and musical instruments with the participant's minority cultural identity; Stressed the closely intertwined musical instruments and dances in minority people's living;</p> <p>Pointed out the importance of authentic learning from ethnic instruments and dances, from which one could better understand and interpret the ethnic music flavor by piano.</p>

		<i>palette and infuses the music with vividness, distinct ethnic characteristics, and rhythms. To perform these works closer to ethnic music and imbued with ethnic flavor and atmosphere calls for studying and understanding the authentic instruments and dances. (R8)</i>	
Personal experiences with ethnic music by chance in different activities	Gaining experience from music activities	<i>I have personally experienced Inner Mongolian ethnic and folk music, such as the horsehead fiddle and throat singing (known as "Khoomei"). I have also witnessed live performances of songs and dances from Xinjiang. I have attended live Guangdong instrumental ensembles, including performances like "Autumn Moon Over the Calm Lake." I have also seen live performances of the Beijing Opera and Tanci storytelling in the Yangzhou dialect. (R6)</i>	The participant illustrated various traditional musical activities he attended as an audience to feel the atmosphere of culture, which also gained experience in knowing the characters of different music art from different areas in China.
		<i>... I didn't particularly like Peking Opera when I was young, but I was aware of it since it was occasionally heard in my surroundings. In the winter of 2007, when I was in Chicago during Christmas break with no access to a piano, I spent time in the basement and listened to a large number of old recordings of Peking Opera (from the series "Sound and Picture"). I also watched some performances. However, at that time, it was simply out of enjoyment, as I was unaware of Chinese piano music. I never imagined that these engaging experiences would greatly help me play certain Chinese piano pieces ... Of course, due to these past experiences of pure appreciation—listening to the performances of the best masters—I developed high expectations for the artistic quality of Peking Opera. As a result, when selecting Chinese piano pieces later on, I avoided many works based on Peking opera themes that I considered to have mediocre taste. (R5)</i>	The changes that happened in appreciating the taste of Peking Opera after listening to and watching many Peking opera recordings also affected the participant's choices in selecting Chinese piano repertoires related to Peking opera with high expectations.

All participants reflected on their personal experiences with ethnic music. Collaborating with ethnic instruments was one of the most common ways, and collaboration of the piano with ethnic instruments became a somewhat popular trend. Except one replied that he had no chance to cooperate with ethnic instruments; others all owned that experience either in formal performance or just for entertainment. Some had experience with different ethnic instruments and pointed out that through collaborating with ethnic instruments (R1, R2, R4, R6, R7, and R9), the piano player could enhance their understanding of ethnic instrument tuning, breathing with a bow stroke such as speaking a sentence, and specific rhythm and music modes while learning to keep a balance between piano and ethnic instruments.

Meanwhile, participants hold different opinions on the collaboration with ethnic instruments. One of the fundamental challenges identified was the discrepancy between the tuning systems used by the piano and various ethnic instruments. This difference often posed difficulties for pianists, particularly those with well-trained ears accustomed to the well-tempered tuning system (R3, R5). The well-tempered system, which is standard in piano music, allows for consistent intonation across all keys but contrasts sharply with the tuning systems of many ethnic instruments that may prioritize different tonal qualities or intervals. As a result, pianists may experience discomfort or disorientation when transitioning to music that employs non-Western tuning systems, highlighting a significant barrier in cross-cultural musical performance and education. This issue underscores the need for greater adaptability and a broader understanding of diverse musical traditions in order to bridge the gap between different cultural practices in music.

The other one was the different interpreting ideas regarding score-oriented or driven-by-mood (R10). Piano players who are accustomed to strictly adhering to the scores may require time to adjust to performing with ethnic instrument players, who often need more improvisational freedom and whose performance is influenced by changes in mood. In addition,

collaborating with ethnic instruments could also be one of the ways to enhance cultural confidence. One participant used himself as an example to share his performing experience with the Morin Khuur ensemble on the national prestige stages and overseas, which motivated him to promote regional music with solid cultural confidence by piano and brought him fame (R7).

One other way of experiencing ethnic music was through the curriculum. Two participants hold opposite reflections based on their personal learning experiences. One participant thought the mediocre teaching of ethnic music in class, for example, glancing over the folk songs and dances hurriedly or learning a song by following the teacher's instructions, was superficial, leading to a loss of interest in exploring ethnic music (R3). On the contrary, one participant introduced the study experience at the top conservatory. In terms of learning ethnic music, the curriculum was systematically designed with detailed classification explanations, which deepened their knowledge of ethnic music and inspired performing and teaching in working with Chinese piano repertoires while solidifying their understanding of Chinese culture (R6). This phenomenon highlights how variations in teaching styles and curriculum design significantly impact students' interest in exploring Chinese culture.

Besides formal learning by the curriculum, informal learning, such as subtle influence from family and living environment, also played an essential part in participants' experience with ethnic music. One participant recalled his childhood memories and acknowledged that the unconscious influence of neighbors' music interests inspired the interpretation and incorporated some elements creatively of specific Chinese piano repertoires, which also gained positive feedback from composers (R5). A participant from a minority group emphasized that the importance of authentic music learning, preserving its original essence, would greatly enhance the understanding and interpretation of related piano repertoires (R8).

The informal way also included appreciating ethnic music by chance with activities, listening to or watching the recordings. Participants reflected that exposure to ethnic music through various activities, whether encountered by chance or pursued enjoyment, could play a significant role in enriching one's cultural understanding. These experiences with ethnic music may eventually contribute to a more nuanced performance of Chinese piano repertoire, serving as a valuable output. This process not only deepens cultural understanding but also reinforces confidence in performing Chinese music, highlighting the importance of integrating such experiences into one's musical practice.

4.1.2.3 Creative attempts on Chinese piano repertoires with cultural motivation from piano teachers' perspective

Table 4.8 illustrates how piano teachers contributed their creativity regarding piano composition and their attitudes toward this issue. The deep cultural motivation significantly enhanced the piano teacher's creativity, inspiring efforts to make the piano emulate the tonal qualities of traditional Chinese music. It was like an exploring journey with skillful performing techniques in expressing emotion, whereas lack of confidence in compositional techniques led most of them to use the word attempted in describing their piano compositions.

Table 4.8 The IPA Process of Question 7

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Piano composing experience with personal specific interests	Focus on the liner flow	<i>I have tried composing piano pieces with Chinese elements, mainly focusing on linear melodic line flows because one of the main artistic characteristics of Chinese music is its linear nature. Chinese music can be described as a linear art form, starkly contrasting Western polyphonic music with multiple voices. (R2)</i>	Melodic line flow
	The compositions should reflect the composers' thoughts and emotions, first and foremost, be piano music;	<i>I have composed piano pieces, and I believe composition should come from personal inspiration and emotional response... My philosophy is that every instrument, including the piano, has its unique language and sound system... regardless of whether Chinese elements are incorporated during composition, it should first and foremost be piano music... Many talented individuals, predecessors, and experts have explored such ideas in first-tier cities like Beijing and Shanghai. I felt that my value could be realized in places like Guangxi. At that moment, I felt that it was our collective ideology, the ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics, which transformed into a melody. It may sound plain, but I believe it comes from within. (R3)</i>	Personal inspiration and emotional response should present the characters of the piano; Fulfilling one's value in some places in need is subconsciously affected by the collective ideology of education.
	Fulfill one's value somewhere in need due to the subconscious collective ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristic influence.		
	composing interests in incorporating the characteristics of ethnic folk music by adapting or creating original piano works	<i>I have attempted and was once selected for training as a piano composer specializing in nationalizing piano music by the National Arts Fund. My focus lies in creating Chinese piano compositions by adapting or creating original works that incorporate the characteristics of ethnic folk music, including its music, melodies, and rhythmic elements. (R4)</i>	Used "attempted" to indicate that the participant was unsatisfied with his compositions; however, being selected for a training program gave him confidence; incorporate the characteristics of ethnic folk music by adapting or creating original works.
	Special interests in incorporating Chinese musical elements such as folk songs and traditional ethnic instrument music	<i>I have attempted composition by creating piano works that incorporate elements of Chinese folk songs and traditional ethnic instrumental music. (R6)</i>	Used "attempted"; special interests in incorporating Chinese musical elements with piano.

	pieces with piano		
	Composed a series of short pieces around 2 minutes for children to play; Stated the challenge of keeping the Chinese ethnic style in long piano pieces	<i>I have adapted works in a Chinese style, primarily using folk songs as source material. I have created over 50 small piano pieces for children to play, each lasting around 2 minutes. I also aspire to create completely original piano compositions in a Chinese style. However, I find this task quite challenging, particularly maintaining a consistent Chinese ethnic style throughout a few minutes of music. (R9)</i>	Adapted folk songs for composing piano works and produced many short pieces for children to play; Felt challenging to compose a more extended piece while maintaining a Chinese ethnic style
	Both adaptations and original compositions were done; Special interests in musical storytelling, alongside composing longer piano pieces such as one-movement sonata; Compose concert etude specialized for students for competitions and practices	<i>I have created both original compositions and adaptations. In the early stages, adaptations were the main works, but most of my works are currently original compositions... For my original compositions, I am interested in creating works with rich musical content and a strong sense of "musical storytelling" in longer forms. Lately, I have been primarily focusing on composing single-movement sonata-style works. I also write concert etudes for students to use in competitions and practice. These etudes are based on both folk music materials and Western music. (R10)</i>	Composed both adaptations and original piano works Highlight the composition of concert etudes for students to engage in competition or daily practice, which adopted musical materials from both Chinese and Western music.
	gave up composing due to the high-quality demand for the compositions	<i>I studied composition from 10 to 12 years old but did not continue with it afterward. I did write some pieces during that time, but I would not consider them true compositions... (R5)</i>	had compositional training in childhood but gave up due to the high standards for the quality of his compositions.
	Instead of producing mediocre piano repertoires, engaging in more meaningful activities that related to Chinese piano music	<i>When I was young, I attempted composition and wrote quite a bit. However, I am well aware of my talent and skill level. I am engaged in three activities that I find more meaningful than producing a heap of mediocre works with limited talent... (R7)</i>	Love to compose when the participant was young, but now engaging in more meaningful activities.
Motivations, desire, and practices for Chinese piano repertoires	Motivation: Solid the fundamental training for students by using Chinese piano repertoires and enhancing cultural understanding	<i>These compositions were used as introductory materials for piano teaching. My focus is to enhance students' piano performance techniques by using Chinese folk and traditional music, allowing students to deepen their understanding of Chinese cultural traditions while practicing and improving their piano skills. Through this process, students become more familiar with the traditional music culture of their ethnic background. (6)</i>	From the beginning of using Chinese piano repertoires as teaching materials, it aims to familiarize students with traditional music and ethnic background.
	Desires: Some Chinese	<i>... hope to see a collection of works by Chinese composers entering the world</i>	Hope that the Chinese piano

piano repertoires and their composers have gained fame worldwide; Some Chinese piano repertoires last as Classical piano repertoires, which the Chinese could be proud to teach Westerners how to play	<i>stage. I intend to have a group of works from China that will remain valuable even after 100 years. I do not want Chinese people to continue playing Beethoven and Brahms daily, relying on Westerners to teach Chinese how to play the piano, but the Chinese could contribute more and teach Westerners how to play Chinese piano music as well. (R3)</i>	repertoires could occupy fame worldwide, leaving some Chinese classical piano repertoires that could teach Westerners
Practice: The choice to perform high-quality compositions from others.	<i>I have high standards for the quality of my work, and I know I cannot meet them. Alternatively, it takes much mental effort for me to write something that satisfies me. I do not have enough energy, so I prefer to play other people's compositions. (R5)</i>	pursue high-quality compositions
Three meaningful musical practices: Creating a database explicitly focusing on Inner Mongolia piano compositions; Encourage and influence musicians to compose and promote creative piano works; Adapting other art forms related to regional culture by a piano ensemble might have a more culturally significant impact than a solo performance.	<i>Firstly, I am organizing historical materials and creating a database, particularly on piano compositions from Inner Mongolia. Secondly, I aim to influence a group of musicians to engage in composition and promote these creative endeavors. Lastly, I collaborate with partners to adapt other forms of Inner Mongolian arts into piano ensembles. By utilizing the characteristics of ensemble performance, we aim to disseminate these challenging pieces of music that are rarely performed... Ensemble performances may hold more cultural significance compared to solo performances. (R7)</i>	Musical practices related to Chinese piano music

Cultural motivation encompasses the underlying reasons that drive participants' actions and aspirations. In the context of Chinese piano music, this motivation translates into a commitment to learning about, engaging with, and deepening cultural understanding through the composition, interpretation, and promotion of piano repertoires. This engagement is crucial in preserving cultural heritage, fostering the development of new musical expressions, and advancing the prominence of Chinese piano music. By harnessing cultural motivation,

individuals contribute to the ongoing evolution and dissemination of Chinese musical traditions, ensuring their relevance and continuity in contemporary practice. Except for one participant who indicated no desire to compose piano pieces (R5), and one said not yet (R8), with no denying the possibility of creative composing in the future. Other participants *attempted* to compose some pieces for different purposes before this research study.

As for the cultural influence on composing works, most participants mainly focused on incorporating Chinese folk songs in the piano adaption or original compositions. Besides, one participant stressed the appreciation of melodic line flow inherited from Chinese aesthetics, making him pay more attention to the melodic line flow in composing piano works. Another participant noted that his compositions were deeply influenced by his thoughts and emotional resonance. He acknowledged that the collective ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics had a subconscious impact on his work, motivating him to contribute his talents where they were most needed. This ideological influence is also evident in his musical compositions (R3). The other two mentioned the length of piano repertoires they composed. It seemed that it would be more accessible to compose short pieces rather than structure a longer piece, but one participant acknowledged he is composing a single-movement sonata with a storytelling context.

However, two participants argued that focusing on other musical activities would be more meaningful rather than investing time and energy into creating mediocre piano compositions. For instance, one might perform high-quality piano compositions by other composers, and compile historical materials related to Chinese piano literature into a comprehensive database, thereby encouraging musicians to create more innovative and substantial piano repertoires. Additionally, one could collaborate with folk musicians to creatively adapt existing pieces, presenting them through piano ensembles rather than solo performances, which could generate a more significant cultural impact.

Some participants also mentioned their motivation and desire for composing piano repertoires. Two participants were mainly focused on elementary-level piano training, which required Chinese piano pieces for students to enhance their cultural music understanding rather than just familiar with Western music textbooks (R6, R9). Therefore, they composed short piano pieces and incorporated folk songs. One participant would compose or rearrange concert etudes for his students to practice daily or engage in piano competitions with Chinese and Western music materials (R10). The other participant made a wish that some Chinese piano repertoires could be promoted worldwide and become classical piano works so that Westerners may learn from Chinese how to play some Chinese pieces one day.

From the perspective of piano teachers, composing piano repertoires could be seen as either a personal interest for enjoyment or as part of a broader teaching objective. They often referred to their compositions as exploratory efforts. However, these compositions not only contribute to the development of Chinese piano music but also deepen the teachers' cultural understanding and strengthen their cultural identity.

4.1.2.4 Encourage extracurricular activities to enhance students' cultural understanding

Table 4.9 illustrates the GETs process from question 8, which focused on extracurricular activities to deepen students' knowledge and enrich their cultural practices. The GETs show the importance of teachers' encouragement in participant cultural activities; participants' shared experiences with embodied practices toward engaging in extracurricular activities were meaningful.

Table 4.9 The IPA Process of Question 8

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Teacher's attitude towards extracurricular activities	Encourage	<i>Encourage students to learn more about Chinese culture through attending conferences, competitions, concerts, reading, and visiting landmarks, among other activities. (R1)</i>	Aims to learn Chinese culture from different aspects
	Encourage	<i>In my piano teaching, I encourage them to explore everything related to the piece, except for just listening to ready-made recordings. However, I have not organized them to participate in activities. (R5)</i>	Encouraged students to explore rather than only listen to recordings
	Encourage students to learn Chinese music, which nurtured the interpretation of Chinese piano repertoires.	<i>...I also encourage them to learn more about Chinese opera, folk songs, and instrumental pieces, which helps them better understand Chinese piano compositions. (R6)</i>	Encouraged students to learn more about Chinese music
	Suggested to learn some related course to enhance the understanding of Chinese music and rethink how to define piano as a music tool	<i>I would suggest students seriously study courses similar to "Chinese Traditional Music" and listen to more folk and traditional music. They should break free from viewing the piano as just a tool and instead focus on the process of experiencing music.. Perhaps my teaching ideal is for the piano to become a "vehicle of art and culture" for individuals.. (R7)</i>	Suggested to learn course related to Chinese music and rethink the role of piano in social life and the contribution it could make for people
	The importance of teachers' subtle influence	<i>I believe that spontaneity is crucial, and it is something I lack to some extent. However, I excel in subtle influence. I appreciate the saying, "Cultivate oneself, govern the country, and bring peace to the world." (everything should be done step by step) One must first cultivate oneself... Of course, I often chat with students, but I must go through my experiences of studying abroad and realize that understanding is a spontaneous process. (Students) One day, they suddenly feel this thing has meaning in their lives. Perhaps the smarter students will take</i>	Students' spontaneity is crucial; teachers could exert subtle influence by chatting with students and sharing embodied experiences to inspire students but not forcefully.

		<i>the initiative, but I cannot force you to do something right now because you must do it spontaneously. (R3)</i>	
Shared experience on the effort of extracurricular activities	Illustrate some detailed instruction examples of how to learn a Chinese piano adaption and encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities such as exploring calligraphy and painting	<i>...for example, a student played "Xiyang Xiaogu." I suggested that students listen to traditional Chinese musical instruments, such as the pipa, guzheng, and guqin, and also encouraged them to explore Chinese calligraphy and painting. In "Xiyang Xiaogu," there are many imitations of traditional instruments, such as the pipa's glissando and the guzheng's plucking. There's also a section where the piano plays in the high register while a lower melody accompanies it, creating a sense of spaciousness in the music. The tempo is slow, reminiscent of the feeling of the guqin. If a student has not heard guqin performances or has not seen Chinese painting and art, they will not be able to play this piece well. (R4)</i>	Use an example of how to learn a specific Chinese piano repertoire with instructions on extracurricular activities.
	A comparison before and after listening to the Erhu performing admitted the improvement for students to play the piano adaption of "Reflection of the Moon on Erquan Spring."	<i>For instance, I invited an erhu performer to explain the piano piece "Reflection of the Moon on Erquan Spring" to my students. I had them perform the piece, allowing them to understand the cultural connotations that should be reflected in this piano adaptation of an erhu work. Initially, one student, who had never listened to live erhu performances, played the piece like a Mozart sonata. However, after listening to the erhu performance and receiving explanations from the performer, the student's performance improved significantly. (R6)</i>	Same approach as above Compared the piano performance of "Reflection of the Moon on Erquan Spring" before and after listening to the Erhu live performance, which students significantly improved
Participants' practices in extracurricular activities	Organized activities to promote Chinese piano repertoires	<i>I have organized activities for students to learn about Chinese traditional culture, aiming to promote the study of Chinese piano compositions. (R2)</i>	Organized activities to promote Chinese piano repertoires
	Organized piano competition activities for students on campus	<i>I have indeed organized students to participate in competitions related to Chinese piano works... (R6)</i>	Organized piano competitions related to Chinese repertoires
	Organized students to participate in ethnic festivals to better experience the local music culture.	<i>I organize students to participate in ethnic festivals in Yunnan, such as the Water Splashing Festival and the Torch Festival, to experience the</i>	Immersed in local ethnic festivals and activities to deepen the regional culture that hints in specific

	<i>charm of Yunman's ethnic music and dance, which promotes the study of Yunman's ethnic piano works. (R8)</i>	piano repertoires reflected the same cultural context.
Boost the thought of valuing extracurricular activities in the future	<i>This aspect has not been undertaken yet, but in the future, I should attempt to explore it. (R9)</i>	Boost the participant's thoughts on exploring extracurricular activities.
	<i>Currently, there are no such activities or initiatives. (R10)</i>	Not yet, with no deny for the future

Extracurricular activities were activities students engaged in outside their regular academic curriculum or coursework. It was essential to undergraduates' campus life and valuable to a well-rounded education. Due to the one-on-one instruction and mentorship of piano teaching, the teachers' impact on students' participation in extracurricular activities becomes significant. Two participants admitted that they did not value extracurriculars, but with this research inspired, they may explore it (R9, R10).

Most participants shared their experiences encouraging students to participate in extracurricular activities to cultivate students to earn a broad view of Chinese culture, including participating in academic conferences, piano competitions, traditional music activities, Chinese art exhibitions, and regional festivals. Additionally, one participant recommended that students take courses such as Chinese traditional music, which are embedded with cultural context, to seriously reconsider the role of musical instruments within the social environment (R7). This suggestion underscores the importance of understanding the broader cultural and societal significance of music and its instruments. It encourages students to reflect deeply on how these elements interact with and influence the social landscape.

Listening to folk and traditional music is a valuable approach to deepening students' understanding of Chinese music. However, as some participants noted from their teaching experience, only listening to sound recordings is insufficient. To truly grasp the essence and charm of traditional music, it is crucial for students to engage directly with traditional

musicians and immerse themselves in traditional music activities. Such firsthand experiences provide a more intuitive connection to ethnic music and can inspire students to interpret Chinese piano repertoires with a more refined sense of musical phrasing and tactile expression. This holistic approach fosters a deeper, more authentic engagement with the cultural and emotional dimensions of Chinese music.

One participant emphasized the importance of student spontaneity in the learning process. To cultivate this spontaneity, he chose to share his personal life stories and experiences through casual conversations with his students. His goal was to inspire them to build their careers around meaningful pursuits, rather than relying solely on force or direct instruction (R3). This approach underscores the value of intrinsic motivation and the role of mentorship in guiding students toward self-directed, purposeful learning and professional development.

4.1.3 Interpret Chinese Piano Repertoires with a Sense of Cultural Identity

4.1.3.1 Coping cultural identity with teaching strategies

Table 4.10 illustrates the process of getting GETs from question 9, which concerned participants' teaching experiences in Chinese piano repertoires with recognition of students' sense of cultural identity, aimed to explore whether the sense of cultural identity influences the interpretation of Chinese piano repertoires.

Table 4.10 The IPA Process of Question 9

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Teachers' views on the relationship between cultural identity and the performing of Chinese piano repertoires	positive relationship between cultural identity and the performance of Chinese piano repertoires	<i>Understanding and identifying with Chinese culture influences students in various aspects of piano performance, from technical skills to musical expression. For instance, students with knowledge of Chinese culture are more likely to grasp the rhythm and dynamics of Chinese music, considering the differences in rhythm and tempo between Chinese and Western music. (R1)</i>	The level of cultural understanding influenced the interpretation of Chinese piano repertoires.
	Students had a strong sense of cultural identity, significantly impacting interactive teaching.	<i>When teaching Chinese piano pieces, I pay close attention to students' learning and understanding of Chinese culture. Most students have a strong sense of identification with Chinese culture. Cultural identification significantly impacts the interactive teaching of Chinese piano music. (R2)</i>	Significantly impact Students have a strong sense of cultural identity;

Students owned a strong sense of cultural identity Causation relationship; believe cultural identity undoubtedly influences interactive teaching.	<i>I am concerned about students' learning and understanding of Chinese culture. As mentioned earlier, students cannot perform Chinese piano pieces well without understanding Chinese culture. Based on my work experience, students have a strong identification with Chinese culture and are becoming increasingly fond of it... I believe that cultural identity undoubtedly influences the interactive teaching of Chinese piano music. Students will only be willing to play Chinese piano pieces when they appreciate Chinese culture. Moreover, playing Chinese piano pieces can also lead to a deeper understanding of Chinese traditional culture. (R4)</i>	Concerned students' cultural learning and understanding; Causation between cultural learning and interpreting Chinese piano repertoires; Students have a strong sense of cultural identity and become fond of Chinese culture; Undoubtedly influence
Cultural identity is based on cultural understanding; students with no solid cultural accumulation and learning ability foundation would not be qualified for cultural identity.	<i>The understanding and identification with Chinese culture come with cultural awareness (or lack thereof). All of this must be built on a foundation of cultural accumulation and learning ability. (R5)</i>	Cultural awareness must be built on solid cultural accumulation and a learning ability foundation.
The higher acceptance and fondness of cultural identity, the more influential the interactive teaching	<i>It is essential to pay attention to students' attitudes and cognition toward Chinese culture and their musical and broader cultural experiences gained from studying Chinese works in the past... Judging from their acceptance and liking of Chinese works, the higher the acceptance and fondness of cultural identity, the more influential the interactive teaching. (R6)</i>	Cultural identity and interactive teaching on Chinese piano repertoires
It is crucial to focus on students' cultural learning and understanding; Students have a sense of cultural identity	<i>It is crucial to frequently focus on students' learning and understanding of Chinese culture, and my students all have a sense of identification with Chinese culture. (R8)</i>	crucial to focus on students' cultural learning and understanding; students have a sense of cultural identity
Emphasize the importance of students' cultural understanding; Cultural identity significantly influences Chinese piano interactive teaching	<i>When teaching piano pieces, I emphasize the importance of students' understanding and identification with Chinese culture... Cultural identity significantly influences Chinese piano teaching, as a high level of cultural identity consciousness can promote an atmosphere of</i>	Emphasize the importance of students' cultural understanding; Cultural identity significantly influences Chinese piano interactive teaching

ethnic pride and a sense of enjoyment during the teaching and learning process. (R9)

	acknowledged the influence of cultural identity on interpretation; Due to the time limit, the teacher paid more attention to technique expression with instructions; students adopted this teaching mode	<i>I have not paid too much attention to students' understanding of Chinese culture because the class time is insufficient, even for explaining and handling the details of the music pieces. However, I do believe it is essential... Cultural identity does have some influence, but from my experience, students generally base their understanding and handling of works on the teacher's interpretation and requirements. Thus, they are more inclined to agree with and adopt the teacher's perspective. (R10)</i>	Time was insufficient Teacher-orientated teaching mode Acknowledged the importance of cultural identity, May embedded in the teacher's instruction on pieces
Teaching examples with shared experience	Examples of cultural awareness and Chinese piano music interpretation	<i>For instance, students with knowledge of Chinese culture are more likely to grasp the rhythm and dynamics of Chinese music, considering the differences in rhythm and tempo between Chinese and Western music. (R1)</i>	Grasp the dynamics, which is an important element in shaping Chinese music style
	Through historical context, traditional music learning, and different adaption versions to structure the understanding of the particular piece From superficial sound-making to deep cultural identity	<i>Let us take the introduction section of Wang Jianzhong's piano piece "Shan Dan Dan Kai Hua Hong Yan Yan" as an example. First, one must understand the historical background of the piece, knowing that it expresses the joyous emotions of the people towards the arrival of the Central Red Army and Chairman Mao in northern Shaanxi, marking a significant turning point in the revolutionary movement. The abundance of "Shan Dan Dan" flowers symbolizes the resilience of life and the people's hearts illuminated amidst hardships. Second, various methods should be employed to deeply understand and appreciate Chinese traditional music culture. Familiarity with the Shanxi Xinjiang (a traditional musical genre) and commonly used techniques and stylistic elements in Chinese ethnic instrumental music, as well as mastering the non-equal temperament rhythms</i>	learn from historical context related to the pieces; learn from Chinese traditional/ regional folk song genres to deepen understanding; learn from various versions to grasp the interpretation of the improvisational character

that give the distinct Chinese flavor, are essential. It is important to appreciate and experience various forms of Chinese traditional music while clarifying the spiritual essence and sonic characteristics that Chinese ethnic music should embody; building a cultural identification. Third, students can refer to various recordings and videos of this piece arranged and orchestrated by Liu Feng to better grasp this section's improvisational character, establishing the corresponding cultural identification and then leading the interpretation of the entire piece. (R2)

The ways of identifying cultural identity	Chat with students by subtly influencing their mindset.	<i>I think sometimes, when you talk to students, they tend to respond in a classroom-style, question-and-answer manner... their responses might be more formulaic and not very sincere, not coming from their hearts. They might even try to guess the answer you want. So I say, to connect with students, you have to go very deep, and Chinese culture is a relatively concrete thing... (Teaching) is like using the law of attraction. It involves spiritual consciousness changing awareness, and the changes in awareness can impact matter. So, it is about having a positive mindset that can influence the material world positively. I believe that is what I should study in music. I often remind my students that our class time is limited, and while I can tell them how to play a particular section or what they should achieve, much time should be spent exploring music and other broader aspects. It is about changing your mindset. (R3)</i>	Q&A was not a good way to explore students' cultural identity; Chinese culture is rather abstract and broad and should be concrete to relative things that connect to students' lives; chat with students' interests and subtle influence their mindset
	Clothing fashion as the starting point for Chinese traditional cultural learning	<i>For example, in Chengdu, many people wear traditional Hanfu when going out. My students also take pride in wearing Hanfu and consider it beautiful. (R4)</i>	The clothing fashion revives the fondness for learning Chinese traditional culture.
	The importance of learning ability and cultural accumulation throughout the	<i>Unfortunately, most of my current professional piano students have a low level of cultural knowledge, mainly because the admission standard for the piano department</i>	Students who lack this foundation would not have access to the essentials of Chinese culture, let alone

whole education	<p><i>at XX Conservatory of Music is relatively low. When correcting students' graduation theses, I often feel like I'm a Chinese language teacher. Many students struggle with listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Therefore, they cannot be said to have a good understanding of Chinese culture, let alone a sense of cultural identification. Some students in the piano department may possess higher cognitive abilities, but I have not encountered them yet. Some students in the musicology department at our school engage in academic exchanges with me privately. They have relatively higher cognitive abilities and are interested in learning about and identifying with (or not) Chinese culture. However, their piano performance skills are essential, and some students lack even the fundamental auditory skills of musicians or music enthusiasts. This is quite unfortunate. (R5)</i></p>	cultural identity.
The importance of school education in ideological and political education in shaping students' cultural identity	<p><i>Students' identification with Chinese culture often stems from education and personal experiences, such as participating in patriotic education or engaging in Chinese culture-themed artistic activities. Schools' ideological and political education shapes students' cultural identity. (R6)</i></p>	Cultural identity stems from school education and personal experiences.
<p>Influenced by the leading pianists' choice of performing Chinese piano repertoires; Express cultural confidence</p> <p>An increasing number of excellent Chinese piano repertoires</p>	<p><i>Interestingly, compared to students from ten years ago, present-day students are more inclined to play Chinese piano pieces. This phenomenon is partially due to the increasing number of excellent Chinese piano compositions and the repertoire choices of pianists like Lang Lang and Chen Sa, which have led the way. The younger generation of students is becoming more culturally confident and is showing a growing interest and fondness for Chinese traditional music. (R9)</i></p>	<p>An increasing number of excellent Chinese piano repertoires leading pianists to perform Chinese piano repertoires influence students' choice of learning Chinese piano repertoires to express their cultural confidence.</p>

The ways of identifying Chinese piano practitioners' cultural identity	<i>... almost all classical Chinese piano music composers have experienced complex life journeys and periods of intense ideological and intellectual transformations. I believe this is the fate of Chinese piano practitioners - either perplexed and obscure or going through intense ideological upheavals to find their cultural identity. (R7)</i>	Experienced complex life journey that fostered the composition of excellent Chinese piano repertoires; Either perplexed and obscure or experienced intense ideological upheavals
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Most participants agreed that students' understanding and awareness of Chinese culture influenced their interpretation of Chinese piano repertoires. Therefore, teachers focus on students' cognition, attitudes, and studies toward Chinese cultural perspectives while teaching Chinese piano repertoires instinctively. Some participants gave examples of linking specific Chinese piano repertoires with Chinese culture or traditional music learning for a better interpretation, strengthening their cognition of the positive relationship between cultural identity and the performance of Chinese piano repertoires.

Some participants recognized that causation lay in cultural learning and interpreting Chinese piano repertoires. A participant referred to an unfortunate phenomenon in a conservatory of music where he worked: students who majored in piano were skillful in performing but lacked the cultural accumulation with a solid foundation, which hindered their learning ability in cultural study. Conversely, students majoring in musicology who were interested in cultural studies and music interpretation but lacked strong performing skills faced challenges in expressing themselves through the piano. This imbalance in learning—whether it be in piano technique or cultural understanding—ultimately impeded their overall musicianship development (R5). The disparity in skills highlights the importance of a well-rounded education that equally emphasizes both technical proficiency and cultural knowledge to foster comprehensive musical growth. Meanwhile, some participants pointed out that learning with a broad cultural experience would bring influential and interactive teaching for

teachers and students whose attitudes and cognition toward Chinese culture and music. Therefore, despite the piano technique training, cultural study was essential and should be embedded in nurturing students' musicianship with cultural identity in Chinese piano repertoire learning.

As for how to recognize cultural identity, one participant argued that the direct question and answer for this topic would not be a good way since students might guess the answer the questioner wants without sincere thoughts (R3). Moreover, given the broad and multifaceted nature of Chinese culture, it's more effective to begin with topics that align with students' interests or relate to familiar issues, such as regional culture and contemporary music trends. By connecting cultural learning to areas that resonate with students, educators can foster greater engagement and make the exploration of Chinese culture more accessible and meaningful. Teachers could exert subtle influences on changing students' mindsets. The clothing fashion of the Han was also a starting point for students to explore the Chinese traditional culture (R4). The more interest in Chinese culture, the more people will explore. One participant considered that students were more inclined to pop culture, whereas the teachers' instructions mainly influenced the cultural identity embedded in Chinese piano repertoires. Due to the time limit for piano class, piano teachers would exert influence, mainly focusing on the interpretation and technique requirements without further and deeper exploration of cultural perspective, even though that was important to fulfill the teaching strategy (R3).

However, one participant pointed out that school education in ideological and political education was essential in shaping students' cultural identity (R6). Their personal experience with school education in patriotic and culture-themed artistic activities structured their identification with Chinese culture. One participant emphasized that famous pianists led the trend of performing an increasing number of excellent Chinese piano repertoires and motivated students to learn and express their cultural confidence with piano music (R9). One participant

stressed that the process of nurturing cultural identity for piano practitioners was to realize the connection between real life and music (R7). The chasm of disconnect between piano and life led to the real problem. Therefore, people had to undergo intense ideological upheaval to recognize their cultural identity.

4.1.3.2 Performing Chinese piano repertoires to promote Chinese culture

Table 4.11 illustrates the participants' view on how Chinese piano music contributes to the Chinese cultural policy.

Table 4.11 The IPA Process of Question 10

GETs	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
The reflection of social-cultural background	The development of Chinese piano music was the reflection of the social-cultural background.	<i>Studying Chinese piano works requires students to understand the background of the compositions. By delving into the development of Chinese piano music, one will discover the significant impact of society on piano development. Learning Chinese piano works enhances students' cultural identity and confidence. (R1)</i>	Social development impacts the creation of Chinese repertoires.
Participants' view on how Chinese piano music contributes to the current cultural policy in education	contributing to the educational policy from three perspectives	<i>It is essential to elevate students' comprehensive artistic qualities. Conservatory of Music and universities should increase the Chinese piano music-related courses within the curriculum, which help students grasp significant Chinese piano works from different periods, broaden their knowledge, and cultivate multidimensional artistic thinking... Piano educators at universities should guide students to focus on Chinese traditional arts, enabling them to comprehend the profound national culture embedded in</i>	Increase Chinese piano music-related courses from the curriculum perspective; Guide students to understand Chinese traditional culture from teachers' perspective; From students' perspectives, pay attention to the comprehensive study of Chinese traditional artistic spirit.

Chinese piano works, which facilitated students in adhering to the spirit of Chinese traditional arts in their learning and creative processes, contributing to the inheritance and development of Chinese national culture. Furthermore, a comprehensive study of Chinese traditional artistic spirit and piano works can cultivate students' national consciousness and patriotic enthusiasm. (R2)

Promote Chinese music by performing Chinese piano repertoires for cultural communication.	<i>As music professionals, the most straightforward way to promote culture is through performing Chinese music for cultural communication. (R3)</i>	Perform Chinese piano repertoires for cultural communication.
Treat the piano as a tool or platform for cultural communication based on the accumulation of Chinese piano repertoires.	<i>The most crucial aspect is to avoid cutting the piano from its cultural context and, instead, leverage its substantial instrumental advantages to produce musical literature. Subsequently, the piano can serve as a platform for cultural exchange. Therefore, we must pay attention to two aspects of the piano: accumulating musical literature and creating a platform for exchange (vital for promoting cultural heritage). Only then can we truly contribute to "promoting Chinese traditional culture." (R7)</i>	Treat piano as a cultural platform from which to communicate different cultures; Accumulate musical repertoires and provide a platform for cultural communication.
Formulating a positive and creative cycle of producing, promoting, and researching Chinese piano repertoires requires musicians cooperating from different major fields.	<i>Regarding the relationship between composition, performance, and theory, I suggest that composers should create more Chinese piano works, and performers should promote Chinese piano works extensively. Theorists should research and summarize Chinese piano works to form various styles and genres. From the education perspective, we should increase the proportion of Chinese piano works in competitions, music school exams, and graded teaching materials, encouraging composers to create more Chinese piano works. (R4)</i>	Promote a cycle of producing-promoting-research study of Chinese piano repertoires.
Cooperate with traditional musicians and musicologists to	<i>Chinese piano works often incorporate elements from folk instrumental music and ethnic</i>	Cooperate with traditional musicians and musicologists to

provide traditional Chinese music lessons to deepen students' knowledge and develop their interpretation of Chinese piano repertoires.	<i>song and dance. When conditions permit, it is beneficial to invite traditional instrumental performers or folk ethnic song and dance inheritors and researchers to provide explanations and performances for piano students, which allows students to directly understand and experience specific ethnic instrumental characteristics in various adapted piano works, inspiring their piano performances. Simultaneously, teachers should consciously guide students to deeply explore the cultural and psychological meanings of the works, using the compositions as a guide. (R6)</i>	further guide the study of Chinese piano music.
Stressed the importance of teaching and research related to Chinese piano repertoires in universities	<i>In higher education and research, Chinese piano works should be given an important position, fostering a sense of national music as the main focus and inheriting, developing, and promoting Chinese music, which allows students to appreciate the charm of Western music while gaining a deeper understanding and mastery of our excellent national music culture, promoting Chinese music culture. (R8)</i>	Call for studying Chinese piano repertoires in university teaching and research to foster students' interest and promote Chinese music culture.
Creatively composing Chinese piano repertoires for children	<i>Creating more outstanding Chinese-style piano works can lead children to play more Chinese pieces and rekindle their love for Chinese piano works. (R9)</i>	Focus on creative composing Chinese piano repertoires for children.
Selected Chinese piano repertoires with high standards in terms of quality artistic pursuit, which embedded cultural thoughts and philosophic meanings	<i>Provide students with high-quality, classic, and artistically rich Chinese piano works for learning. Works with traditional Chinese cultural ideas and creative backgrounds can help students understand traditional culture through music and even grasp certain philosophical ideas.</i>	Focus on selecting high-quality Chinese piano repertoires that embed artistic pursuit and cultural thoughts.
The only focus on the music without caring about the contribution to the educational policy	<i>When I teach Chinese piano works, my focus is solely on teaching these pieces and helping students understand and perform them as best as possible. It is like a farmer growing melons, considering</i>	Use the metaphor to indicate the sole focus on music perspective without concerning policy.

	<i>how to make the watermelon grow better and sweeter without necessarily contributing to China's current agricultural policies with each hoeing. (R5)</i>	
The practical approaches provided by the participant who is undergoing these tasks	<i>Combining the piano with regional music, identifying technical issues related to stylistic expressions. I emphasize the study of piano accompaniments for art songs influenced by folk tunes and compositions, combining the piano with traditional musical instruments... Using the piano in chamber music settings, inheriting and expanding Chinese contemporary music created over the past century, and enriching music literature.... Editing music teaching materials related to the piano, such as sight-singing with accompaniment and piano tutorials. (R7)</i>	Incorporate regional music with piano, focusing on stylistic expressions with technique use; stressed the importance of learning folk music from art songs and traditional instruments by cooperation to gain creative ideas for composing new repertoires; Edit piano textbook with sight-singing training.
Thinking of how to let the piano sound inclined to traditional music	<i>There is also an issue with the Sinicization of piano works, as it sometimes does not fit well with the instrument. The most significant issue is "sound." The sound a piano produce differs from that of traditional Chinese musical instruments... I wonder if the piano is irreplaceable. Then, when it comes to the creation and interpretation of Chinese piano works, how can we practice and promote the core of traditional culture? I am still contemplating and exploring this issue. (R3)</i>	Emphasis on piano sound-making might not fit for promoting traditional Chinese music expression. Keep contemplating and exploring how to produce Chinese sounds on the piano.
Negative response	<i>Current educational policies have their logic, demands, and objectives. They often contradict the essence of music and the laws of art. The current educational policies already pose enough challenges for a music teacher who solely teaches music. (R5)</i>	The contradiction between educational policies and the law of art

The Chinese cultural policy in education must balance the preservation of tradition with the creativity of modernization and promotion of internationalization, nurturing students with

cultural pride and identity while embracing a global perspective. Therefore, adhering to cultural self-confidence, embracing openness and inclusiveness, adhering to tradition while promoting innovation, and spreading the integration and creativity of excellent Chinese traditional culture and development have become essential for universities to cultivate students' cultural identity. Under this circumstance, using piano music to tell Chinese stories and spread Chinese culture has become a way to practice the new era's cultural ideas.

However, teachers' reflections on the practice were varied. Compared with the responses to other questions, the answers for contributing to educational policy were relatively obscure. The responses were mainly focused on the teaching issues related to curriculum design, teaching tasks, composing, and selecting high-quality piano repertoires for students to deepen their cultural understanding. Some participant offered their ideas on cooperation with composers, folk musicians, and musicologists to formulate a positive cycle in composing, promoting, and researching Chinese piano music logically and systematically. One participant argued that the piano, adapted from foreign cultures, should become a medium or platform for exploring traditional and regional music characteristics, using expression methods and musical art forms familiar to foreigners to convey Chinese stories (R2). On the contrary, one participant struggled with how the piano sound could be adapted to express Chinese music characters compared with Chinese traditional music (R3).

As for the response to the educational policy, one participant stated his points of view were only focused on music-related issues rather than concerns from a broad view, such as coping with educational policy (R5). In his view, there is an inherent contradiction between educational policies and the principles governing the arts. As a result, he chooses to focus solely on teaching piano music, without concerning himself with aligning his instruction to educational policies. This approach reflects his belief in prioritizing artistic integrity over policy compliance in the educational process.

4.1.4 Summary of the Round One Findings

The round one open-ended questionnaire was designed to generate participants' ideas, points of view, and reflections on ten questions. All ten questions were strictly followed with the IPA analysis process. GETs were gathered based on the findings from content to exploratory notes. Experiential statement was based on exploratory notes and then compiled into GETs. Some data were saturated with no doubt, while some still needed to be further explored within the second round.

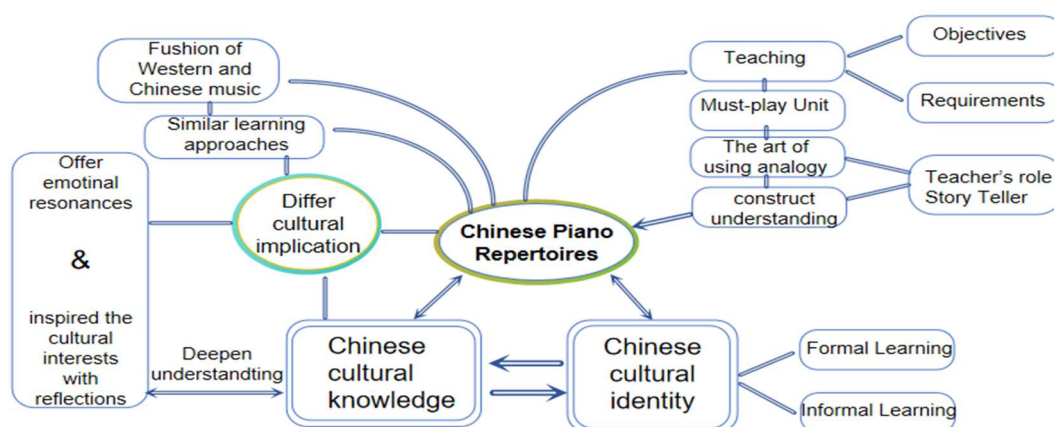


Figure 4.1. A Summary of Round One Findings

Firstly, all participants considered the Chinese piano repertoires a fusion of Western and Chinese music. Therefore, the learning approaches were similar for both Chinese piano repertoires and non-Chinese piano repertoires. However, the cultural implications differed from which participants all agreed that the Chinese piano repertoires could offer valuable emotional resonances and evoke reflections.

Secondly, to cope with the promotion of Chinese cultural policy, Chinese piano repertoires have become a must-play unit in the undergraduate piano curriculum in different Chinese

universities. Besides, participants tended to assign more Chinese pieces than curricula requested due to different demands, such as students' interests, competitions, or recitals. The teaching objectives of Chinese piano repertoires catered to musical and spirit pursuits. The music perspective focused on the learning outcome, including understanding the characters of Chinese piano music, with a knowledge of Chinese music expression and cultural understanding, and the sense of promoting Chinese piano repertoires. The spiritual perspective embedded the enlightenment of cultural confidence, intending to cultivate students' cultural identity with a sense of patriotism, in accord with the educational objective issued by the central government. As for the teaching requirements of Chinese piano repertoires, participants stressed the specialness related to technique requirements and musical expression with cultural awareness, such as dialects' impact on musical articulation. According to one participant's previous practical study on Chinese piano repertoires from a regional perspective, most Chinese regional music had their represented piano repertoires.

Thirdly, participants recognized that Chinese culture has profoundly influenced their personal ideas on interpreting, teaching, and performing Chinese piano repertoires. However, Chinese culture was broad, which could be found in detailed piano repertoires grounded from case to case, which would be easier for further discussion. Besides, collaborating with ethnic instruments and deepening ethnic music knowledge from formal learning and informal music activities were the paths participants used to gain ethnic music experiences. Those experiences also inspired them to understand Chinese music with a sense of cultural awareness. One participant pointed out that Western cultural promotion was more straightforward to capture, like a fast-food mode, with precise analytic processes and clear, logical instructions for people to follow. In contrast, the Chinese cultural promotion requested more creative, comprehensive, in-depth enlightenment and constant subtle influence like a time-consuming simmer cooking approach.

Fourthly, the art of using analogy was also reflected in participants' teaching experience. Since most Chinese piano repertoires have a narrative character, teachers must also be good storytellers to inspire students to structure their understanding of the musical content. With the verbal expression, Chinese aesthetic appreciation also influenced the practices of finger touching and the pursuit of colorful sounds in depicting the ideas on Chinese piano repertoires.

Fifthly, cultural awareness motivated participants to contribute their passion for developing Chinese piano music. Most participants attempted to compose piano pieces for self-entertainment or educational purposes, incorporating Chinese elements. Some found that the composing experience positively enriched their understanding of Chinese culture with a sense of cultural pride. At the same time, some turned their interest in exploring valuable Chinese piano repertoires with high-standard quality for performing and promoting. Those creative activities also boost the heat of studying Chinese piano repertoires with cultural context.

Besides, most participants agreed that cultural awareness influenced students' interpretation of Chinese piano repertoires. Therefore, teachers should not only focus on text-oriented but also on students' cognition, attitudes, and studies towards cultural perspectives. Moreover, the extracurricular activities related to music and culture organized or encouraged by teachers were meaningful. Through the shared experience, students would gain fruitful experiences that enhance their Chinese piano repertoire expression and cultural learning ability.

As for nurturing students' cultural identity, participants offered different suggestions, which could be summed up from the following paths: observing students' cultural identity by informal chatting rather than using a formal question and answer, corresponding cultural issues with students' interest; enhancing learning ability for cultural knowledge accumulation; exert teachers' influence on detailed repertoires interpretation, recognizing the importance of school education in ideological and political education, recognizing the power of role model who

contributes to Chinese piano music, and realizing the connection between real life and music with a sense of cultural awareness.

Lastly, using piano repertoires to tell Chinese stories and spread excellent Chinese culture has become a way to practice the New Era's cultural ideas. The balance of preserving the traditional with creative modernization and promoting internationalization was the focal point in teaching and performing Chinese piano repertoires alongside the mission of nurturing students' cultural awareness, identity, and pride while embracing a global perspective. However, although the mission was clearly stated, participants' reflections mainly focused on detailed teaching and music-related issues rather than structuring a broad cultural training strategy in coping with policy.

4.2 ROUND TWO RESULT

4.2.1 Structured Questionnaire Results

The following details of the quantitative data were derived from the Likert scale items within the questionnaire. This dataset facilitates an analytical understanding of the significance attributed to the instruction of Chinese piano repertoires across diverse dimensions. These dimensions encompass emotional engagement, the incitement of cultural curiosity, and the variances in pedagogical and evaluative criteria pertinent to content rooted in Chinese culture.

Table 4.12 Data Analysis of Likert-scale Questions (N=10)

	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	Minimum	Maximum
Q1	10	5.20	5.00	0.789	-0.407	-1.074	4	6
Q2	10	3.90	4.00	0.738	0.166	-0.734	3	5
Q3	10	5.40	6.00	0.843	-1.001	-0.665	4	6
Q4	10	5.20	6.00	1.135	-1.048	-0.394	3	6
Q5	10	5.70	6.00	0.675	-2.277	4.765	4	6
Q6	10	1.20	1.00	0.422	1.779	1.406	1	2
Q10	10	5.00	5.00	0.943	0.000	-2.129	4	6
Q11	10	4.80	5.00	1.317	-1.008	0.818	2	6
Q13	10	5.60	6.00	0.699	-1.658	2.045	4	6
Q14	10	5.50	6.00	0.707	-1.179	0.571	4	6
Q15	10	5.50	6.00	0.707	-1.179	0.571	4	6
Q19	10	5.50	6.00	0.707	-1.179	0.571	4	6

The data analysis reveals a notable consensus among participants regarding their responses to most of the Likert scale questions. For example, Question 1 (Q1) inquired about the degree to which Chinese piano repertoires represent a synthesis of Chinese and Western musical cultures and yielded an average response of 5.2. This trend of agreement is similarly reflected in other questions such as Q3, assessing the potential of Chinese piano repertoires to evoke emotional resonance (Mean = 5.4). Q10, evaluating the role of narrative language in aiding students' comprehension of these repertoires (Mean = 5.0), Q14, considering the importance of cultural awareness in learning these repertoires (Mean = 5.5), Q15, examining the impact of cultural awareness on the sustainable development of Chinese piano music (Mean = 5.5), and Q19, exploring the benefits of enhancing cultural competency for learning Chinese piano repertoires, where responses uniformly leaned towards agreement.

Additionally, the skewness values for Q5 and Q13 were significantly high, particularly for Q5 (Skewness = -2.27), indicating a strong consensus among participants. In Q5, which queried the importance of delving into the cultural connotations of China in teaching Chinese piano

works, there was overwhelming concurrence, with the majority, including eight participants, rating its importance as ‘extremely high,’ leading to a high mean score (Mean = 5.7). This underscores the participants’ collective view that exploring Chinese cultural connotations is crucial in the pedagogy of Chinese piano works.

Interestingly, in Q13, which sought perspectives on the significance of the composer’s own explanations or performance guidance for understanding their works, participants universally expressed positive attitudes. Seven participants rated this aspect as ‘very important’ (Mean = 5.6), highlighting the perceived criticality of the composer’s insights in the teaching and interpretation of Chinese piano compositions.

The responses to the scale-based questions also revealed a diversity of opinions among participants on certain topics. For example, in Q2, which probed the extent to which the pedagogical approaches for Chinese and non-Chinese piano repertoires are analogous, most participants recognized some similarity in teaching methodologies for these two categories of piano works. However, the consensus on this similarity was moderate (Mean = 3.9). Notably, three respondents diverged in their views, perceiving the teaching processes for these repertoires as distinct. This suggests that while there is an acknowledged overlap in teaching methods, they are not universally applicable to all those repertoires.

Further, the larger standard deviations observed in responses to Questions 4 and 11 points to a more pronounced variability, indicating a less uniform agreement among participants. In Q4, which asked about the extent to which emotional resonance elicited by performing Chinese piano repertoires enhances interest in exploring Chinese culture, most participants agreed that playing these works does invoke emotional resonance. However, a dissenting opinion from one respondent suggested a diminished impact of performing Chinese piano works on emotional engagement. This implies that while a positive correlation between performing Chinese piano

compositions and emotional resonance towards Chinese culture is predominantly acknowledged, it does not represent a universally held view.

In Q11, addressing the frequency of utilizing “analogous art” in teaching Chinese piano repertoires, the majority concurred on the practicality of this approach. Yet, an outlier response indicated its infrequent application, suggesting that while “analogous art” is a widely recognized and effective pedagogical tool in this domain, its adoption is not uniform across all educators.

The preceding analysis yields several key conclusions. Primarily, it underscores that the genesis of the Chinese piano repertoires is rooted in the amalgamation of both Chinese and Western musical traditions. These intertwined cultural elements necessitate that both Chinese and Western musical heritages be considered in the interpretation and study of Chinese piano repertoires. However, the hybrid nature of Chinese piano compositions does not warrant the direct transplantation from Western piano pedagogies in teaching practices. Rather, it calls for developing tailored pedagogical strategies for Chinese piano works, informed by, yet distinct from, those employed in Western piano instruction.

Furthermore, the act of performing and studying Chinese piano repertoires has the potential to invoke a certain degree of emotional resonance among Chinese musicians. This resonance can, to some extent, inspire a deeper engagement with Chinese cultural elements, even though this is not an inevitable outcome for all performers.

In addition to the Likert scale data, the responses from the multiple-choice questions within the survey elucidate prevailing tendencies and preferences in the selection and assignment of Chinese repertoires, formulating teaching objectives and requirements, and fostering students’ identification with Chinese culture. This innurture is instrumental in comprehending participants’ viewpoints concerning the pedagogy and cultural dissemination of Chinese piano

works. Such insights are crucial in formulating a more productive and contextually relevant instructional framework for these musical pieces.

Table 4.13 The Multi-choice answers for Reasons assigning Chinese piano repertoires (Q7)

Reasons	Subtotal	Percentage
To promote Chinese piano works and culture	9	90%
Based on the students' learning abilities and interests	8	80%
To cultivate a sense of Chinese cultural identity	7	70%
To explore Chinese music culture with regional characteristics	6	60%
For examination, competition, and concert requirements	5	50%
To align with Chinese cultural education policies	4	40%
Others (please specify)	1	10%

Regarding the reasons for assigning Chinese repertoires to students, the survey reveals that nine respondents endorse their inclusion to advocate for Chinese piano works and culture, thereby fostering awareness and appreciation for the rich musical heritage of China. Furthermore, seven participants cite the cultivation of Chinese cultural identity as a key factor, while eight respondents align their choice with students' learning capabilities and interests. This latter approach, emphasizing student-oriented considerations, reflects a pedagogically adaptive and engaging strategy.

The acknowledgment of the importance of fostering Chinese cultural identity among learners is also notable. Such a stance demonstrates a commitment to instilling a sense of cultural pride and consciousness through music education. These findings collectively highlight the diversity in the rationale behind the assignment of Chinese piano repertoires, suggesting a multifaceted approach within music education. Educators are seen to balance various factors, including the promotion of cultural heritage, alignment with student preferences and abilities, the fostering of cultural identity, and adherence to educational

standards. This nuanced approach is indicative of an endeavor to provide a holistic and culturally rich educational experience in the realm of music.

Table 4.14 The Multi-choice for teaching goals of Chinese piano repertoires (Q8)

Goals	Subtotal	Percentage
Promoting Chinese piano works and culture	9	90%
Deepening the understanding of Chinese music and culture through Chinese piano pieces	9	90%
Promoting Chinese piano works and culture	9	90%
Basic understanding of Chinese piano music	8	80%
Others (please specify)	1	10%

The teaching goals associated with the instruction of Chinese piano repertoires predominantly revolve around utilizing these compositions as the channel for enhancing the understanding of Chinese music and culture, as well as for the promotion of Chinese piano works and cultural heritage. This is evidenced by the fact that nine respondents opted for this objective, indicating that the primary educational aim is the advancement and celebration of Chinese musical culture. Such an emphasis signifies a concerted effort to instill awareness and appreciation for China's extensive musical tradition among students.

An equivalent proportion of educators also emphasize the goal of enriching students' comprehension of Chinese music and culture through the study of Chinese piano pieces. This reflects an educational commitment to providing learners with a thorough cultural context, thereby enriching their overall musical education.

These findings indicated that the instructional objectives for Chinese piano repertoires are centered not only on promoting the works themselves but also on deepening students' understanding of the broader Chinese musical and cultural milieu. This approach aligns with the wider educational aim of integrating a rich tapestry of cultural knowledge into music

education. The presence of these diverse yet complementary goals highlights a holistic teaching methodology that integrates cultural, musical, and foundational elements to create a well-rounded educational experience in the field of music.

Table 4.15 The Multi-choice for teaching requirements of Chinese piano repertoires (Q9)

Requirements	Subtotal	Percentage
Emphasize tone expression	10	100%
Emphasize pedal usage	9	90%
Emphasize touch and keyboard skills	9	90%
Emphasize the expression of regional music styles	9	90%
Emphasize rhythm	8	80%
Emphasize ornamentation	7	70%
Emphasize the expression of regional music styles	9	90%
Emphasize the structure of the piece	7	70%
Others (please specify)	2	20%

Regarding the teaching requirements for Chinese piano repertoires, the survey data indicates a strong emphasis among respondents on specific technical and expressive aspects. All respondents prioritized timbre expression, highlighting its critical role in the pedagogy of Chinese piano works. This focus reflects a commitment to developing students' capacities to effectively convey emotions and intricate musical subtleties through their performance.

Simultaneously, nine respondents emphasized the significance of touch key techniques, pedal application, and the articulation of regional music styles. The consensus on the importance of pedal usage underscores its role in augmenting the musicality and expressiveness of performances. This aspect of teaching aims to equip students with the skills necessary for the nuanced use of the pedal, enhancing the overall quality of their playing.

Overall, the teaching requirements for Chinese piano repertoires, as identified by the participants, encompass a comprehensive range of elements. There is a notable agreement on the necessity to focus on tone expression, pedal technique, touch and keyboard skills, as well as the rendition of regional music styles. This collective viewpoint reflects an all-encompassing approach to piano instruction, addressing not only technical proficiency but also expressive and stylistic dimensions, thereby ensuring a well-rounded and culturally informed musical education.

Table 4.16 The Multi-choice for factors that influence participants understanding, interpretation, and teaching of Chinese piano repertoires (Q12)

Factors	Subtotal	Percentage
Other art fields in China (traditional architecture, traditional clothing, Chinese painting, Chinese literature, Chinese opera, calligraphy, etc.)	10	100%
Daily life	7	70%
Natural scenery of different regions	7	70%
Chinese cultural thoughts such as Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, etc.	5	50%
Others (please specify)	1	10%

The data about the factors influencing the understanding, interpretation, and pedagogy of Chinese piano repertoires presents a comprehensive perspective, illustrating that these repertoires are shaped by a broad spectrum of cultural elements. The most significant influence is identified as emanating from various artistic domains within China, pointing to a multidisciplinary methodology in both understanding and instructing these pieces.

In addition, everyday life experiences, regional natural landscapes, and traditional cultural philosophies are acknowledged as having a considerable impact. This suggests that the teaching and interpretation of Chinese piano music are intricately intertwined with the wider cultural and natural contexts of China. Such an approach underscores the depth and diversity of cultural

factors that inform and enrich the educational techniques and interpretative understanding of Chinese piano compositions. This holistic view not only enhances the learning experience but also ensures that the cultural essence embedded in these musical works is fully explored and appreciated.

Table 4.17 The Multi-choice for the pathways to cultivate cultural awareness (Q16)

Pathways	Subtotal	Proportion
Collaboration with Chinese folk instruments	10	100%
Learning through classroom lectures	9	90%
Learning through experiential activities in class	9	90%
Participation in relevant social music activities	8	80%
Others (please specify)	2	20%

The data on nurturing cultural awareness in the context of piano education reveals a strong consensus among participants regarding the integration of traditional Chinese elements, particularly through collaboration with Chinese ethnic musical instruments. Ten respondents advocated for this method, highlighting its importance in embedding traditional aspects within music education. This strategy not only broadens students' exposure to diverse musical traditions but also fosters instrumental collaboration, enriching their musical experience and cultural understanding.

Furthermore, nine respondents each favored engaging in relevant social music activities and emphasized classroom experiential learning. This substantial agreement suggests that conventional classroom teaching, encompassing theoretical knowledge and contextual understanding, is viewed as a vital tool for nurturing cultural awareness. This traditional pedagogical approach underscores the significance of integrating theoretical insights with cultural contexts within the educational framework.

Additionally, the emphasis on experiential activities within the classroom setting is identified as a key method for nurturing cultural awareness. This approach, favoring a hands-on and immersive learning experience, enables students to actively participate in and connect with cultural elements during their music education. Such an approach not only enhances their understanding of Chinese musical traditions but also fosters a deeper engagement with the cultural underpinnings of the repertoire they are studying. This multifaceted strategy, combining traditional classroom learning with experiential and collaborative elements, reflects a holistic approach to music education that seeks to integrate cultural awareness seamlessly into the learning process.

Table 4.18 The Multi-choice for identify students' cultural identity (Q17)

Ways	Subtotal	Proportion
Through informal chats and observations	10	100%
Through formalized questioning and answering	7	70%
Others (please specify)	1	10%

The data on the identification of students' cultural identity in educational contexts reveals a marked preference for informal methods, such as casual conversations and observations. This approach is preferred over more formalized strategies, though the latter still hold significance. The unanimous endorsement of informal techniques underscores their effectiveness in gaining insights into students' cultural backgrounds in a manner that is both organic and non-invasive.

The presence and utilization of alternative, more formalized methods, albeit less frequently, indicate a spectrum of approaches employed in this domain. Such variability in methods may be attributed to the specificities of various educational environments, the diverse demographics of student bodies, or the individual pedagogical philosophies of educators. This diversity

suggests a flexible and adaptive approach to understanding cultural identity, recognizing that different contexts and individuals may require tailored strategies to effectively discern and engage with students' cultural backgrounds.

Table 4.19 The Multi-choice for Strategies that nurturing students' Cultural identity (Q18)

Ways	Subtotal	Proportion
Utilizing the cultural influence of teachers in interpreting Chinese piano works	10	100%
Exploring the connection between music and real-life based on cultural awareness	10	100%
Integrating cultural topics closely with students' interests	9	90%
Recognizing the importance of role models (such as composers, performers, educators, researchers)	9	90%
Enhancing students' learning abilities and accumulating cultural knowledge	8	80%
Realizing the importance of integrating ideological and political education with professional learning	6	60%
Others (please specify)	1	10%

The data concerning the methods employed for nurturing students' cultural identity in music education reveals a unanimous preference for strategies that integrate cultural awareness into the exploration of music. All ten participants chose to use their influence as teachers to interpret Chinese piano repertoires through a cultural lens. This approach highlights their commitment to embedding cultural understanding in their teaching, ensuring that students engage with the music not just technically, but also with a deep appreciation of its cultural significance. This collective agreement on the use of culturally informed teaching methods underscores the critical role educators play in shaping students' cultural identities, particularly in the context of interpreting Chinese piano works. Educators are viewed not merely as instructors but as cultural guides and influencers, instrumental in deepening students' understanding and appreciation of the cultural nuances in music.

Furthermore, there is a universal recognition among the participants of the importance of exploring the interconnections between music and real-life experiences, grounded in cultural awareness. This approach emphasizes the need to situate musical education within a broader cultural framework, thereby enabling students to comprehend the real-life relevance and implications of Chinese piano compositions.

The strategies identified for nurturing students' cultural identity encompass a diverse range of approaches. These include leveraging the influence of role models, connecting musical education with real-life and cultural contexts, and aligning cultural topics with students' interests. Additionally, the emphasis on ideological and political education within this framework reflects a comprehensive approach that situates cultural identity within a wider societal and educational perspective. Such a multifaceted approach indicates a commitment to not only teaching music but also fostering a deeper, more holistic cultural understanding and identity among students.

4.2.2 Summary of Round Two Findings

The consensus derived from the second round of the Delphi questionnaire in this study provides insightful conclusions on nurturing students' cultural identity through Chinese piano repertoires. These conclusions can be summarized as follows:

1. While not all universities offering piano majors across different regions incorporate Chinese piano repertoires into their curriculum, a significant number of piano educators choose to include these works. Their primary objective is to advocate for Chinese piano compositions, tailoring the selection to align with students' capabilities and interests. The overarching goal is to employ these repertoires as a tool for deepening students' comprehension of Chinese music and culture, thereby nurturing a sense of cultural identity among the learners.

2. Recognizing that Chinese piano repertoires represent a synthesis of Eastern and Western musical traditions; it is acknowledged that pedagogical approaches for these repertoires should not simply mirror those employed for Western music. Rather, there is an imperative to investigate and cultivate teaching methods that are more congruent with the specificities of Chinese academic environments.

3. The study of Chinese piano repertoires plays a significant role in eliciting emotional resonance within Chinese students, subsequently encouraging their interest in delving deeper into Chinese cultural aspects. A critical component of teaching these works involves guiding students to discern and appreciate the cultural nuances and meanings inherent in the compositions.

4. The key pedagogical elements deemed essential in instructing students in the practice and performance of Chinese piano repertoires include a focus on touch technique, tonal expression, interpretation of regional music styles, and pedal usage. Furthermore, the instruction process is also characterized by an emphasis on rhythmic nuances, ornamentation, and the structural understanding of these compositions. These components are considered integral to the comprehensive teaching of Chinese piano works.

5. A prevalent technique among piano teachers for enhancing students' grasp of Chinese piano repertoires is the utilization of narrative language and artistic analogies. Teachers frequently reference composers' own creative philosophies or performance instructions, which serve as vital instructional resources. Prior to this, teachers' own understanding and interpreting of Chinese piano compositions also significantly influenced by their familiarity with various forms of Chinese art, including traditional architecture, clothing, painting, literature, opera, and calligraphy. Additionally, Chinese philosophical traditions like Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, along with everyday life experiences and regional natural landscapes, are employed as ancillary resources to deepen comprehension.

6. Cultural awareness, defined as the recognition and understanding of one's own and others' cultural backgrounds, values, and beliefs, is considered essential in the learning process of Chinese piano compositions. This awareness is crucial for the sustainable development of Chinese piano music. To cultivate such awareness, pathways include collaborative performances with Chinese ethnic instruments, classroom-based instruction, experiential learning within classroom environments, and engagement in relevant social music activities. These approaches aim to enhance sensitivity and comprehension of the unique attributes and diversities of various cultures through educational experiences.

7. For evaluating and observing students' cultural identification, informal discussions are deemed the most effective tool, supplemented by more formal question-and-answer sessions. There is a unanimous agreement among experts on the significant role of teachers and role models in nurturing students' cultural identification. This involves educators demonstrating their interpretations of Chinese piano works and sharing exemplary instances of composers, performers, educators, and researchers. Furthermore, guiding students to relate their real-life experiences to music and structuring cultural discussions based on their interests are integral to this process. This approach ensures that students develop a deeper, more personal connection with the cultural dimensions of the music they are studying.

8. The exploration and study of Chinese piano compositions provide a vital avenue for students to augment their cultural identification, awareness, and understanding. This educational process facilitates the trans nurture of these elements into personal cultural competence. Cultural competence encompasses an individual's capacity to effectively comprehend, respect, and engage with people from diverse cultural backgrounds within the context of cross-cultural communication and interactions.

4.3 ROUND THREE RESULT

The third round of the Delphi survey was structured into two distinct sections: the feedback on results from the second round and the re-evaluation within the third round. In the feedback segment, a comprehensive summary report was compiled. This report incorporated anonymous responses from the second-round questionnaire, presenting detailed data metrics such as average scores, medians, and standard deviations for each question. Additionally, it included anonymous expert comments on specific issues.

The primary objective of this feedback section was to provide participants with a clear understanding of the range and diversity of viewpoints that emerged in the previous round. By presenting these varied perspectives and detailed data analysis, the report aimed to encourage participants to engage in reflective consideration of their own positions. This process was designed to foster a deeper understanding of the collective insights and, potentially, to prompt participants to re-evaluate and refine their responses in the subsequent re-evaluation phase of the third round. This methodology was integral to the Delphi process, as it ensures that the consensus-building was informed, dynamic, and responsive to the evolving perspectives of the expert participants.

In the re-evaluation phase, which constituted the second section of the third round of the Delphi survey, the process focuses on refining and consolidating expert consensus. This segment took the outcomes of the second round and distilled them into ten specific viewpoints. Participants were then surveyed regarding their levels of agreement with these consolidated viewpoints.

During this phase, experts were encouraged to reassess their initial opinions, taking into account the array of perspectives shared by their peers in the previous round. This reflective reassessment was a critical component of the Delphi method, as it allowed for the evolution of individual viewpoints through exposure to the collective wisdom of the group. Participants

were also invited to offer new suggestions or insights based on this broader understanding. The iterative process of sharing and refining opinions was geared towards achieving the highest possible level of consensus among the experts on the key issues at hand.

The ultimate objective of this third round of the Delphi survey was to lay a solid foundation for the development of a comprehensive and effective framework for teaching Chinese piano repertoires underscores in nurturing students' cultural identity. By striving for a strong consensus among experts, the Delphi process aimed to ensure that the resultant framework was informed by a well-rounded, expert-driven understanding of the subject matter, thereby enhancing its relevance and applicability in the field of music education.

4.3.1 Data Findings from Round Three

Based on the feedback from preceding rounds, ten questions (Table. 4.20) were meticulously structured to illuminate areas of consensus and dissent regarding the refinement of strategies and the development of a unified approach to best practices. These questions were specifically designed to probe deeper into distinct teaching strategies and assessment methodologies that seamlessly integrate cultural education within piano instruction. The intent was to lay a foundational foundation for crafting a teaching conceptual framework that would guide the subsequent inquiry phase.

Table 4.20 Data Findings of Round Three

Questions	Completely Agree	Partially Agree	Completely Disagree
Most piano instructors tailor their teaching of Chinese piano repertoires to the abilities and interests of their students, fostering a deeper understanding and cultural identification with Chinese music and culture, even though not all university piano curricula necessarily mandate the study of these works.	8	2	0

Chinese piano repertoires, embodying a fusion of Eastern and Western musical cultures, require the development of teaching methods more suited to Chinese universities, rather than relying solely on Western piano teaching approaches.	8	2	0
Studying Chinese piano repertoires helps to evoke emotional resonance in Chinese students and stimulate their interest in an in-depth exploration of Chinese culture, making it a critical step in teaching to guide students in thoroughly examining the Chinese cultural connotations embedded within these works.	10	0	0
In guiding students to practice and perform Chinese piano compositions, emphasis should be placed on key touch techniques, tonal expression, interpretation of regional styles, and pedal usage, while also focusing on the teaching of rhythm, decorative elements, and the structure of the compositions.	7	3	0
When teaching Chinese piano repertoires, instructors typically utilize narrative language and artistic analogies and also integrate the composer's creative philosophy and performance guidance. Teachers base their approach on an understanding of other Chinese art forms, such as architecture, apparel, painting, literature, opera, and calligraphy, as well as knowledge of Chinese cultural ideologies, everyday life, and regional landscapes, to aid students in comprehending these piano works.	7	3	0
For learning Chinese piano repertoires and fostering the sustainable development of Chinese piano music, nurturing cultural awareness is essential. Effective methods include collaborative performances with Chinese traditional instruments, classroom instruction and experiential learning, as well as participation in relevant social music activities.	9	1	0
The influence of teachers and role models plays a pivotal role in fostering cultural identity in students. This includes teachers demonstrating and interpreting Chinese piano repertoires and sharing case studies of relevant musicians and researchers with students.	10	0	0
An effective approach to nurturing students' cultural identity involves guiding them to connect real-life experiences with music and setting cultural topics based on their interests and hobbies.	10	0	0
Effective methods for observing students' cultural identification include informal conversations and formal questioning, along with assessing through the musical expression demonstrated in their performances.	10	0	0
Through studying Chinese piano repertoires, students can enhance their cultural identity, awareness, and understanding, which can then be transformed into their personal cultural competencies.	9	1	0

The outcomes of the third-round Delphi survey indicated a substantial consensus among experts on various aspects related to the teaching and cultural significance of Chinese piano repertoires. Each proposed viewpoint garnered overwhelming agreement, with more than 70% of experts concurring on each item. A particularly notable finding was the unanimous agreement (100%) among experts that the study of Chinese piano repertoires plays a critical

role in fostering students' emotional resonance and in stimulating their interest in further exploring Chinese culture.

Additionally, there was a strong consensus on the vital influence of teachers and role models in the development of students' cultural identification. This underscores the importance of educators not just as instructors, but as cultural ambassadors who play a crucial role in shaping students' understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage through music education.

Some experts provided unique insights on specific issues. For instance, the selection of Chinese piano pieces was seen to depend on the teacher's level of expertise and their cultural perspective. Therefore, it was essential to curate culturally sensitive and educationally effective piano educators. Moreover, there was a suggestion to base the exploration of teaching methods for Chinese piano works on established Western piano teaching techniques, advocating for an integrative approach rather than starting entirely anew.

Furthermore, the experts advocated for the involvement of students in activities that extend beyond traditional music to encompass other facets of Chinese traditional culture. This approach aims to provide a more holistic and immersive cultural education experience.

Overall, the results from the third round of the Delphi survey revealed a significant level of agreement among experts, reflecting a strong, shared understanding of the key components necessary for effectively teaching Chinese piano repertoires and nurturing cultural awareness and appreciation among students.

4.3.2 Summary of Round Three Findings

Based on the consensus achieved in the third round of the Delphi survey, this study delineates several key elements to be incorporated into the pedagogy of Chinese piano compositions. These factors are integral to fostering a comprehensive and culturally-rich learning experience:

1. Tailored Teaching: This involves guiding students according to their unique interests and abilities, drawing from the teacher's cultural awareness. Such an approach aims to deepen students' understanding and identification with Chinese music and culture.

2. Integration of Eastern and Western Teaching Methods: The strategy is to develop teaching methodologies that are appropriate for Chinese educational settings. This involved building upon established Western piano teaching techniques and adapting them to fit the context of Chinese universities.

3. Cross-Artistic Teaching Methods: Utilizing narrative language and artistic analogies in teaching, complemented by insights into various Chinese art forms like architecture, apparel, and painting. This approach should be grounded in the composers' creative concepts.

4. Emphasis on Technique and Performance: This aspect focuses on mastering key technical elements such as touch, tonal expression, regional style interpretation, pedal usage, rhythm, ornamentation, and structural understanding of compositions. It also includes encouraging students to appreciate and explore aesthetic perspectives unique to Chinese music and art.

5. Influence of the Teacher and Role Models: Capitalizing on the influence of teachers and role models to enhance students' cultural identification. This involves demonstrations by teachers and sharing inspirational examples from musicians and researchers.

6. Exploration of Cultural Connotations: Teachers should lead students in delving into the cultural meanings embedded within the repertoire. This exploration is designed to evoke emotional resonance and foster an interest in Chinese culture.

7. Connected to Real-Life: This factor involves creating connections between students' everyday experiences and their musical studies, and tailoring cultural topics to align with their interests.

8. Cultivation of Cultural Awareness: Developing students' cultural awareness, which is crucial for both learning Chinese piano compositions and contributing to the sustainable development of Chinese piano music. This can be achieved through collaborative performances, classroom instruction, experiential learning opportunities, and active participation in social music activities.

9. Observation and Assessment of Cultural Identification: This involves evaluating students' cultural identification through various means. Informal conversations offer insights into students' cultural perspectives and values in a relaxed setting. Formal questioning provides a more structured approach to understanding their cultural viewpoints. Additionally, observing students' musical expression in performances can reveal their depth of cultural engagement and understanding. These diverse assessment methods collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of each student's cultural identification.

10. Transnuture into Cultural Competency: The study of Chinese piano works plays a crucial role in enhancing students' cultural identification, awareness, and understanding. This educational process is not just about learning music; it's about immersing students in the cultural nuances and histories embedded within the compositions. As students deepen their understanding and appreciation of these cultural elements, they develop cultural competencies. This refers to the ability to effectively interact, communicate, and empathize with people from different cultural backgrounds.

These components collectively contribute to a holistic and effective approach to teaching Chinese piano repertoires, ensuring that students not only acquire musical proficiency but also develop a deep cultural understanding and appreciation. Such competencies are essential in today's globally interconnected society and go beyond the confines of music education, preparing students for diverse, multicultural environments.

4.4 SUMMARY OF PHASE I

The three-round Delphi survey presents a methodologically rigorous process designed to aggregate, refine, and ultimately reach a consensus on the perspectives of piano teachers regarding the cultivation of students' cultural identities through the teaching of Chinese piano repertoires. This method employs sequential rounds of questionnaires through which participants contribute insights and feedback. These contributions are anonymized and synthesized after each round, providing the basis for subsequent rounds of inquiry. This process facilitates an in-depth examination of complex pedagogical issues, including teaching strategies, personal experiences in integrating cultural education, and the development of cultural competence alongside a reinforced sense of cultural identity. The Delphi method's structured, non-confrontational dialogue among participants encourages the open exchange of ideas and experiences.

The primary goal of this iterative process is to systematically refine pedagogical ideas, strategies, and recommendations. This approach aims to achieve a collective agreement on the most effective practices, strategies, and conceptual frameworks for teaching that are directly pertinent to nurturing students' cultural identities. The survey's outcome indicates a consensus among piano teachers on several crucial components that should be integrated into the pedagogy of Chinese piano compositions. These components are deemed essential for providing a learning experience that is both comprehensive and culturally enriched, thereby facilitating the cultivation of cultural identity and enhancing cultural competence.

The consensus reached through the Delphi survey has delineated key elements that enrich the teaching and learning of Chinese piano music, emphasizing the importance of cultural immersion and understanding. Such elements include the selection of culturally significant repertoire, the contextualization of musical pieces within their cultural and historical background, and the incorporation of cultural symbols and narratives into teaching

methodologies. These strategies are aimed at fostering a deeper connection between the student and the music, thus enhancing the educational impact by transcending mere technical proficiency to include a profound appreciation and understanding of cultural heritage.

Moreover, the survey has yielded a teaching conceptual framework that is poised to significantly benefit empirical practice in subsequent phases. This framework serves as a guide for educators in designing curricula, selecting teaching materials, and devising assessment methods that are sensitive to cultural nuances and capable of promoting cultural identity among students. By grounding teaching practices in a well-defined conceptual framework, educators are better equipped to navigate the complexities of cultural education in music, ensuring that students not only develop technical skills and artistic expression but also cultivate a deep, enduring connection to their cultural roots and a broadened cultural awareness.

In summary, the three-round Delphi survey has effectively mapped out a strategic path for integrating cultural education within the teaching of Chinese piano repertoires. It has highlighted the critical role of cultural competence and identity in music education, offering actionable insights and a robust framework for enhancing pedagogical approaches to cultural integration. This contributes to the broader discourse on music education, advocating for a more holistic and culturally informed teaching methodology that aligns with contemporary educational goals and societal needs.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS FROM THE CASE STUDY

This chapter delineates the empirical findings derived from four distinct case studies in a Guangdong university.

5.1 TEACHING FRAMEWORK

The teaching framework (see Figure 5.1) primarily draw upon the results of Phase I of the Delphi study and represent a review and synthesis of research on the impact of cultural awareness on the teaching and learning process in Chinese piano repertoires. The teaching framework consists of seven categories: tailored teaching, Chinese piano repertoires, emphasis on teaching elements, teacher's instructions, students' explorations, in-depth cultural connotations, and extracurricular activities to cultivate cultural competence.

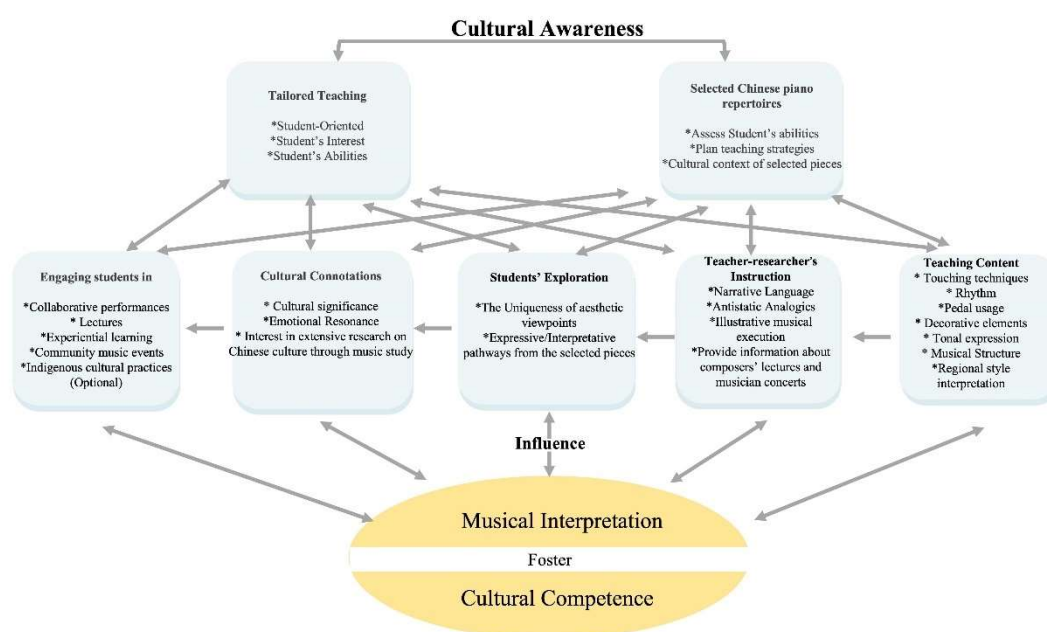


Figure 5.1. Teaching Framework

5.1.1 Definitions of Terms in Phase II Study

Tailored teaching is a dynamic and student-centered approach, which customized teaching strategies, content, and learning activities to meet individual piano students' diverse needs, abilities, and interests. Therefore, variety and flexible teaching methods were employed for each student, combined with ongoing assessment with regular feedback on students' progress.

The selected Chinese piano repertoires refer to a careful assessment of the student's abilities, a well-planned teaching strategy that is responsive to their learning needs, and a deep understanding of the cultural context of the pieces.

The teaching content includes the focal elements that collectively form a comprehensive framework for piano education, addressing both the technical and expressive dimensions of musical performance. The pedagogical emphasis on these aspects ensures the holistic development of piano students, equipping them with the skills necessary to interpret and perform a wide repertoire of piano music with technical proficiency and artistic depth.

Teacher-researcher's instruction refers to the instructional strategies that aim to create a rich, multi-faceted learning environment. Using narrative language and antistatic analogies to enhance the imaginative and expressive aspects of learning, while illustrative musical execution aims to provide practical guidance. Providing contextual innurture about composers and notable performances aimed to foster students' interests and appreciation of the music, contributing to a more informed and nuanced performance.

Students' Exploration emphasizes the encouragement of students to discover their unique aesthetic viewpoints and explore diverse interpretative pathways, teacher-researcher foster a deeper engagement with the music, cultivate creative thinking, and empower students to become confident, independent musical performers. This approach respects and values the individuality of each student, making the learning process both personally meaningful and artistically enriching.

Cultural connotation allows students to connect with the music on a more profound level, understanding not just the notes and rhythms, but also the cultural narratives and emotional language that the music conveys. This holistic approach to music education enriches the student's understanding, fosters a deeper appreciation of different cultures, and cultivates a more empathetic and informed worldview through the lens of music.

Extracurricular activities not only enhance students' musical skills but also broaden their cultural understanding, foster a sense of community, and nurture a well-rounded approach to music education. Such experiences are invaluable for developing not just technical proficiency, but also empathy, cultural awareness, and a deep appreciation for the diverse forms and functions of music in society. However, due to this study duration being short, it would be an optional choice as needed by the learning progress.

These categories function as complex dimensions or constructs, potentially acting as either impediments or enablers in learners' acquisition of Chinese piano repertoires, depending upon how they are influenced or affected by the teaching and learning process. While the model, as represented, might suggest a clear delineation of these dimensions, in reality, their boundaries are frequently indistinct and characterized by considerable overlap. Such an interplay indicates that components within one dimension can significantly influence or interact with components from other dimensions.

5.1.2 Data Source

The participant selection was purposive sampling, as articulated by Silverman (2022). The cohort of participants comprised piano major students from a singular university, all of whom voluntarily participated in conjunction with the teacher-researcher. To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms have been employed. The participants, namely Crystal and Ru (first-year

undergraduates, pseudonymous), as well as Fay and Lana (second-year undergraduates, names also pseudonymous), all experienced identical instructional conditions—weekly individual piano lessons within a consistent practice environment and demonstrated comparable musical practice profiles.

The data for each case was aggregated from multiple sources: (1) an observational study spanning eight weeks, focusing on a specific piece of Chinese piano repertoire and culminating in a final assessment for each participant; (2) students' reflective memos post-class; (3) a trio of individual semi-structured interviews conducted at the inception, midpoint, and conclusion of the study; (4) a compilation of the students' reflective journals on their practice sessions; and (5) a cumulative summary maintained by the teacher-researcher.

5.1.3 Teaching Strategies

The findings of Phase II are structured sequentially for each case. The chronological development of each case encompasses a series of stages: commencing with a pre-study interview, followed by an initial four-week period of classroom observation, a mid-study interview, a subsequent four-week observation phase, and concluding with a post-examination interview. Complementary to these stages were students' reflective memos post-class, their weekly practice journals, summaries compiled by the teacher, and participation in additional cultural activities. Collectively, these elements facilitate a comprehensive depiction of the case study findings.

The pre-study interview is crucial for understanding the student's background and tailoring the teaching strategy. A semi-structured interview was designed with the goal of exploring several key areas: the student's technical proficiency, familiarity with musical concepts, and past repertoire experience. Additionally, the interview aimed to assess whether the student had

previously played or been exposed to Chinese piano music. This exploration was crucial for gauging the students' familiarity with the stylistic and technical demands of Chinese piano repertoires.

The interview also sought to understand the student's thoughts and attitudes toward Chinese piano music, providing valuable insights into their interests and identifying potential areas for motivational emphasis. Furthermore, the interview included questions about any prior attempts or progress the student had made in learning the selected pieces for the study, which helped to identify specific areas that may require further focus or clarification. (For the interview protocol, see Appendix G).

The initial four weeks heavily depended on elaborating on the teaching content and relied on the teacher-researcher's instruction. The tailored teaching approach employs the insights gained from the pre-study interview which helps to customize the teaching strategy. For instance, if a student is new to Chinese piano music, more time would be spent on cultural context and basic techniques specific to the genre. The use of narrative language and analogy are frequently used in deepening students' emotional and intellectual engagement with the music. It facilitates a more intuitive understanding of the piece, allowing students to internalize and express the music's story or mood effectively.

Following the conclusion of the initial instructional phase, a culturally enriching event is orchestrated. The teacher-researcher with students facilitates an excursion to local cultural sites, such as the Cantonese Opera Museum and historical places nearby. The purpose of these visits is to immerse students in the local cultural milieu, thereby enhancing their understanding and appreciation of the regional context. Such experiential learning is expected to augment their musical interpretations and performances.

Subsequently, during the mid-term semi-structured interview (see Appendix G), students are invited to articulate their insights and experiences derived from the first four weeks of the

program. Specifically, they are prompted to reflect on the efficacy of supplementary materials, including notes compiled from post-lesson reflections and practice reflective journals. Additionally, their perspectives on the aforementioned local cultural engagement are sought. These reflections provide valuable feedback on the initial phase of instruction and inform the pedagogical strategies to be employed in the forthcoming four-week segment of the course. This process exemplifies a holistic approach to music education, intertwining practical instruction with cultural immersion and reflective practices.

The subsequent four-week phase has comparatively relied on students' explorations, which encourage students to discover and cultivate their aesthetic viewpoints and to explore various expressive and interpretative pathways within their selected pieces, including student's personal interpretation of beauty, style, and expression within the selected Chinese piano repertoire context as their individual responses to rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, and phrasing. Teacher-researcher facilitates this exploration by encouraging experimentation and by offering multiple interpretive suggestions for comparison. It also involves listening to and analyzing recordings of the same piece by different artists, exploring historical contexts, or even re-imagining the piece in a different style or mood. Such explorations aim to let students realize that there is not always one "correct" way to play a piece, but rather a spectrum of valid interpretative choices that can be made. This process not only aids in enhancing students' musical expressiveness but also instills a sense of creative ownership and artistic independence.

Furthermore, the pedagogical focus extends to an in-depth exploration of the cultural significance inherent in musical pieces. This concept encompasses a comprehensive understanding of how a composition is both influenced by and reflective of its cultural milieu, encapsulating historical, social, and philosophical dimensions that underpin both the creation and interpretation of the work. This exploration is intricately linked with the concept of emotional resonance, underscoring the capacity of music to evoke affective responses.

Through this nuanced approach, students are guided to transcend mere technical execution, moving towards a holistic interpretation that integrates the emotional and cultural narratives embedded within the music. Such an endeavor involves delving into the thematic elements of the compositions, examining how these themes not only resonate on a personal level with the students but also how they connect with broader audience perceptions. This process is instrumental in fostering a deeper, more empathetic understanding of the music, thereby enhancing the student's ability to communicate the work's emotional essence effectively.

Moreover, this approach serves to develop and reflect an individual's cultural identification and competency. By engaging with the cultural and emotional aspects of music, students cultivate an appreciation for diverse cultural expressions and develop skills essential for interpreting and conveying these nuances through their performances. This aspect of piano education is pivotal in shaping students' musicianship which not only requires being technically proficient but also culturally informed and emotionally expressive.

A concluding examination was scheduled upon the culmination of the eight-week instructional period, necessitating each of the four participants to execute a live performance. This event was a performance assessment and a critical opportunity for the students to demonstrate their interpretative skills and expressive understanding of the pieces before an audience. It served as a platform for them to amalgamate their technical prowess with emotional expression, thereby conveying a comprehensive interpretation of the repertoire.

After the final performance, a semi-structured interview was conducted (see Appendix G). This interview aimed to facilitate a reflective dialogue encompassing several key areas: a self-assessment of their stage performance, focusing particularly on interpretive aspects; a comprehensive review incorporating self-reflection on the entire eight-week study; an evaluation of the extent and impact of cultural engagement and understanding achieved through the program; and finally, a discourse on their perspectives regarding Chinese piano repertoires,

including future expectations and aspirations related to the Chinese piano repertoire. It aids in providing insights into the students' learning experiences during this research period, and growth in cultural and musical understanding underscored the exploration of the effectiveness of nurturing students' cultural identity through learning Chinese piano repertoires.

5.2 CASE 1

5.2.1 Pre-study Interview

Crystal's (pseudonym) engagement in piano learning spanned approximately a dozen years. During her pre-study interview, she offered insights into her early six years of piano instruction, characterizing this period as deficient in both systematic organization and professional rigor, especially at the fundamental and intermediate stages. Before her admission into the undergraduate piano major program, her training was heavily skewed toward Western classical compositions. A notable aspect of her reflection was the limited exposure to and acquaintance with Chinese piano repertoire. She recalled playing *The Cowherd's Flute* and another piece, the name of which she had forgotten, but these experiences had inadvertently fostered a somewhat *negative* perception of Chinese compositions, primarily due to *challenges with rhythm*. She perceived a significant *disparity* between Western and Chinese piano repertoires. Compared to the self-learning ability in Chinese piano repertoires, she had more confidence in self-exploring Western pieces, such as piano sonatas with a sense of control over rhythm, dynamics, and musical structure. While expressing an interest in Chinese piano repertoire, she indicated a preference for learning these pieces under the guidance of instructors rather than through self-exploration. She stated:

...I harbor apprehensions regarding my ability to proficiently perform Chinese piano compositions, fearing errors or, more specifically, that my rendition may not align with the expressive demands inherent in these works.

...I perceive Chinese compositions as a novel element in my musical experience, largely due to my limited exposure to them. I got a sense that my performance might not capture the essence of these pieces, potentially leading to self-doubt and skepticism. My intuition reaction is often to question my own interpretation.

Considering the worry articulated by Crystal and given that this marks the commencement of her undergraduate journey, the rationale for selecting specific repertoires centered on compositions with a relatively modest structure, emphasizing adapted works that provide prototypes conducive to learning and imitation. Consequently, *Nocturne: Harboring Under the Maple Tree Bridge at Night*, composed by Li Yinghai, was chosen as Crystal's study repertoire for the duration of the eight-week project.

5.2.2 Initial Four-week

Following the pre-study interview, Crystal played the selected piece, which she had independently prepared over two weeks before the study. Notably, her initial performance marked the start of the project. Her execution was characterized by a lack of fluency and apparent confidence deficit, despite the extensive preparatory work she had undertaken for this piece.

Teacher (T): *Your performance appears constrained, seemed that you are continuously restraining your breath.*

Crystal (C): *I am concerned about the adequacy of my performance. Additionally, the exquisite composition of the piece intimidates me, heightening my fear of not doing it well enough.*

Observing Crystal's evident anxiety regarding her performance skills, the teacher-researcher suggested consulting the composer Li Yinghai's interpretative notes as a potential aid. These notes, found in the accompanying literature, emphasize the piano's role in augmenting the piece's poetic essence and recommend that performers mentally revisit the original poem while playing.

Consequently, Zhang Ji's poem *Harboring under the Maple Tree Bridge at Night* was *recited* by the teacher-researcher, aiming to imbue Crystal's performance with the intrinsic emotional tone and coloration of each word from the poem.

After the analysis of the poem for constructing the music tone, Crystal becomes *more active* with less nervous. She was willing to try the body gesture change and imaging different musical instrument sounds with the hints from the teacher's instructions.

Teacher (T): *I need you to imagine another instrument now. You've written here about imitating the guzheng with scraping. Why imitate the guzheng?*

Crystal(C): *Based on my research, this piece has specific versions for guzheng and piano.*

T: There are many possibilities. If it were me, I might not limit myself to the guzheng. Of course, guzheng is an option too. Think about an instrument that plays with a gliding motion: like a Mark Tree or wind chimes. Imagine the sound it makes as you play it.

(Teacher makes a sweeping gesture with fingers) Imagine performing the motions.

Crystal's body relaxes more, and the ornamental notes are no longer fixated on even speed. The tone has clear layers of variation.

The instructional material for weeks 2, 3, and 4 was intricately aligned with each sentence of the poem. During the second and third weeks, Crystal demonstrated notable advancement in addressing the challenges associated with rhythm. Nevertheless, she expressed concerns about her performance fluency, as documented in her reflective journals (refer to Table 5.1).

In observing Crystal's performance, the teacher-researcher noted that while she endeavored to grasp the poem's meaning, she neglected to appreciate the auditory space and failed to recognize the significance of synchronizing breath with finger movements. Consequently, the teacher-researcher instructed her to recite each word of the poem melodically, adopting a deliberately slow pace to enhance her perception of tension and fluency from a musical standpoint and auditory perspective. Here are some class observation notes takings from week 2.

T: *Try to imagine this: you're playing the piano and singing at the same time... Let's give it a try. Stand straight, and look forward into the distance. You need to have a mental picture of where the sound is placed.*

Crystal starts to play.

The teacher-researcher, standing nearby, gestures in rhythm with the music, reminding the student to focus on breathing. Noticing crystal's breathing is off, the teacher moves closer, using hand gestures to show where the breath should reach.

T: *Be aware of your body. As it moves slowly and with control, you should be able to feel it... Look...* (Teacher sits down and demonstrates playing) *...Before you even start playing, the music has already begun...* (Moves in rhythm with the playing) *You can hear the sound coming from deep within the piano, reaching far away. My body movements are in my awareness, flowing with my music* (The teacher moves arms in a circle to visually represent the sound's trajectory).

As the teacher plays the melody and hums the lyrics, Crystal's body sways gently with the music. After the performance, the teacher asks the student to think of the M-I-AN (rhyming scheme) corresponding to each note while playing. The teacher demonstrates singing, and the student follows the rhythm, contemplating how to rhyme the sounds, and then observing Crystal's performance. There's a noticeable improvement compared to earlier performances referring to a better breath control, smoother flow in playing, and better timing.

T: *Today, our focus was on how to connect musical phrases, especially paying attention to how to connect the end of each phrase with colorful ornamentation. Next class, I hope to hear you playing and chanting simultaneously. I think this will greatly improve your breath control (smoothness). Technically, we still need to work on articulating each small joint, rhythm flexibility, and the dynamics of crescendos and decrescendos in the musical structure. There are many details we need to grasp.*

In the third week of the study, Crystal exhibited a notable advancement in her performance fluency, a development attributed to her integration of recitation with her musical execution. Contrasting with her approach in the preceding two weeks, she adopted a more pronounced and emphatic style of recitation, coupled with a heightened level of attentiveness to her performance. Consequently, the pedagogical focus shifted towards a more profound

exploration of the composition's intricacies. This included an in-depth analysis of the imagery associated with the musical notes and the interpretation of musical concepts derived from traditional Chinese aesthetics.

T: Use your words to paint a picture of Hanshan Temple outside Suzhou city. Make people feel there's a city here, a mountain outside, and a temple on it. Do you think this city is bustling or quiet?

C: It's bustling inside the city.

T: It's got the hustle and bustle of city life. What about the temple?

C: It's really peaceful there, with the sound of bells.

T: You've created a picture of contrast.

T: On the Guqin, each note can create a whole world. Take the note D, for example. It's just one note, but within it, you can make so many subtle distinctions. Like how you can slide your voice up and down when you talk. But on the piano, you can't do that. You can only try to catch those subtle changes in sound with half-tone variations... Think deeper about each sound before you play it...Also, I've noticed I've been talking a lot in the last two lessons, which is necessary. But going forward, I want you to share more of what you're thinking and feeling, anytime, anywhere. You're the one interpreting this piece, not me. I need your understanding of the selected piece.

Crystal starts to chant the piece.

T: Don't scare yourself or set too many limits. Don't feel embarrassed. However, if you want to express yourself, just play your music that way. This melody ties closely with the rhythm of the words. I need you to recite each sound fully, following the rhythm and the breath.

Crystal recites and plays at the same time

T: How does it feel?

C: I feel a lot of ups and downs in my emotions, following the language. It feels less chaotic. Before, when I played this part, it always felt messy, like a tangled ball of yarn.

T: You almost reached a unity between you and the piano just now. The breathing was smooth; you weren't fighting it. Well-done!

Upon examining the integration of Chinese linguistic rhythm and musical elements within the expressive framework of the composition, Crystal demonstrated a prolific conceptualization of the musical piece. Her enthusiasm for delving into the selected work and articulating her insights became pronounced in the fourth week. The dynamic interaction between Crystal and the instructor-researcher during class sessions not only reflects Crystal's

deep engagement but also her burgeoning aptitude for independent musical exploration within a cultural context.

C: I've been experimenting with some new tries in my music and they conjure different images in my mind. However, I'm still puzzled about the phrase midnight bell sounds. I feel like I'm not playing it particularly well.

T: Could you specify what you mean by not particularly well?

C: For instance, sometimes when I play, I feel like the music builds up to a climax and then suddenly deflates. It seems to lack the power to engage the audience and draw them into the scene of the midnight bell sounds.

T: Have you recorded yourself and listened as an audience member to identify this issue, or is this a concern you have while performing?

C: It's both. While playing, I don't feel the emotional intensity, like a volcanic eruption of feelings, which I should. After recording and listening back, I realize it doesn't have the impact I hear in vocal music performances. It lacks that sense of emotional release.

T: What is the feeling in vocal music, specifically?

C: When vocal music reaches that phrase, it feels like a release of all suppressed emotions, like unhappiness and loneliness. It's like the singer is expressing their deepest thoughts and feelings. I don't think my playing captures that same essence.

T: Regarding the phrase midnight bell sounds to the passenger ship, midnight marks the time, and the bell sounds are auditory. The word to is significant here. Your bell sound should originate from a distant temple on a hill, considering sound travels far in silence. Are you giving it that space in your performance? That's my first question. Second question: have you ever visited a temple and seen a large bell that visitors can strike?

C: Yes, I've struck one. The wood was heavy, and I had to put a lot of effort into hitting it.

T: Carry that feeling with you. Think about how to incorporate it into your music so that the sound resonates far. If you lack that force, your performance might seem lacking. Reflect on how to blend this into your imagery, then we'll try playing again. No rush.

C: Should I sing, teacher?

T: Now, let the singing resonate within you... You are the performer, the storyteller, everything. Prepare yourself, and when you're ready, start playing. Consider how to use your breath and how to present the imagery and state of performance you wish to convey.

The initial quartet of instructional weeks revealed Crystal's diligent application to technical skill enhancement, encompassing aspects such as tactile finger articulation, the execution of ornamental flourishes, and rhythmic breath control, all underpinned by cultural comprehension. Her engagement with the piece evolved from mere adherence to pedagogical

guidance to an autonomous auditory investigation, subsequently catalyzing an elevated interest in the confluence of music and culture.

Table 5.1 illustrates the initial four weeks of Crystal's study process. The Experimental statements were constructed from Crystal's Post-class Memos (PM), and Crystal's practice Reflective Journals (RJ). Exploratory notes were key to staying focused on the importance to Crystal while involving some reflections from teacher-researchers.

Table 5.1 Crystal's initial four-week study

Duration	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Week 1	Focused on the technique training with breath usage	<i>When I first started playing the three bell sounds in this piece, I was overly focused on the rhythm. But then, I shifted my attention to the fading and emerging of the sounds and started using my breath. That's when I began to bring out the lingering quality of the bell sounds. It made me realize how the combination of sound and breath can make the music feel more natural... When playing, it's important to capture the spirit and the breath of the music... I should focus on the rhythm in my heart and not get too tied down to the mechanical beats of the metronome. (PM)</i>	Shifting the focus from the mechanical beats to the vivid sound expression with breath
	The mimics of Chinese instruments	<i>What I find interesting about this piece is how each note and phrase mimics the sound of different Chinese instruments... (PM)</i>	colors inspired by Chinese instrument
	The Connection with Chinese Culture	<i>I find Chinese music incredibly beautiful. The sense of solitude in the poet's words is expressed through the piano, bringing the imagery in the text to life vividly and dynamically. (PM)</i>	Focus on the relationship between words and sound express
	Trying to create a musical atmosphere, imitate sounds from other instruments, and realize the	<i>When I was practicing the beginning and the first two sentences, I was conscious about the atmosphere I was creating. This made me play a bit too cautiously. Later, I felt my performance was somewhat bland, so I started to focus on the unique tone of</i>	a positive attitude towards practicing, with many tries in different aspects regarding the performing skills and

	importance of the role of the ear in performing	<i>each sentence... I was struggling to imitate the sound of the Xun (a Chinese instrument), and it was frustrating. So, I listened to some recordings and gradually got the feel of it. It made me happy to overcome this little challenge today. I think my ears play a big role in my practice. I need to listen carefully to what I'm playing and understand what each sentence is saying, what it's expressing, and what its tone is like. (RJ1)</i>	atmosphere creation. Concerned with the importance of listening by ear
	Fluency; Thinking too much without enjoying	<i>Today's practice was particularly frustrating because I couldn't improve the fluidity of my right hand. I was afraid of missing notes, so I held back too much. But then I was also worried that if I let go, my right hand would be too noisy. This bothered me. I didn't feel like I made much progress today. Even though there was a slight improvement in my right hand's fluidity, it wasn't what I wanted. Maybe I'm not really enjoying the process of playing and thinking too much. I need to find new ways to improve the fluidity of my right hand. (RJ2)</i>	Negative appraisal towards the practice. Pay attention to the fluency and unsatisfied with her tries. She realized thought too much without enjoying her play.
Week 2	Attention to the information details from scores to perform	<i>The teacher focused on the concept of musical color blocks and understanding the information on the score. The most I learned from this lesson was how to interpret the information from the score to music, such as how musical sentences connect. A key example is in the eighth measure. The end of the previous sentence isn't a complete stop. The two decrescendos on the score show the connection between the two sentences. So, the nine-note run in the eighth measure is linked to what comes before it, not separated. After thinking about it, I feel that this nine-note run is an extension of the previous sentence, giving a lingering impression.</i>	The connection helps to the perform become fluency
	Color block from the piece	<i>...in the phrase "Outside the Gusu city, near the Hanshan Temple," it's important</i>	The technique training on touching in terms of

	<p><i>to pay attention to the rhythm. The musical color block here shouldn't be fragmented; it's a whole and should be played with consistent tonality. The technique in this phrase is also crucial, with fingers grasping the piano keys at the joint – the notes should be upright, not flat. (PM)</i></p>	creating color blocks
The color contrast from words to interpret in music	<p><i>In practice, I also need to pay attention to the musical colors. The phrase "The moon sets" has a cool tone, whereas "River maples" has a warm tone, and these should be played differently. (PM)</i></p>	The contrast inspired by the poem's words
Learning from the cultural context; express the sigh from music perspective	<p><i>The greatest insight for me came from watching Jiang Jiaqiang's singing and explanations in online videos. I always struggled with playing the connection in measure eight, until I heard Jiang Jiaqiang describe it as a sigh. He also talked about how Zhang Ji was unable to sleep, restless with the stress of failing the imperial examination. We need to express this emotional depth and the beauty of Chinese poetry through our music. I think I should imagine it as the poet's sigh, with the nine-note sequence representing the continuation of that sigh.</i></p> <p><i>I bear this concept in mind, but it's still not quite there. Sometimes, if I don't control the intensity correctly, the feeling of the sigh gets lost... I'm not completely satisfied with my practice results.</i></p> <p><i>Although I've gained new ideas and insights, I haven't mastered them in my performance yet. This is something I need to keep working on and improving through continuous practice. (RJ1)</i></p>	Consider the cultural context and try to interpret the <i>sigh</i> in music; still not satisfied with her work
Build up confidence with her inner thoughts	<p><i>I started by listening to my practice recordings from yesterday, then I played the whole piece again. This time, I mainly focused on my own thoughts and feelings. I've built an understanding of the piece in my mind and, while playing, I infused it with my own emotions... I'm quite satisfied</i></p>	Positive appraisal with confidence

with this session. Although there are still technical aspects to improve, I felt my emotional expression was richer. Unlike before, when I used to imitate other performers' emotional delivery, this time I paid more attention to my own feelings towards the piece and focused on my own interpretations. (RJ2)

Fruitful imagination with cultural knowledge	The phrase "Midnight bell sounds reaching the passenger ship" made me think of Bai Juyi's "Pipa Xing" (The Ballad of the Pipa), particularly the scene where he meets the pipa player. The line "Both are wanderers in this world, why need we know each other from before?" came to mind. This made me feel the poet Zhang Ji's loneliness more deeply. Unlike Bai Juyi, who could converse with the pipa player by the river, Zhang Ji's inner solitude and melancholy had no outlet for expression. These thoughts made my playing smoother and my heart fuller during today's practice. (RJ2)	Extending the imagination from the original poem intertwined with another one, which made fruitful pictures in her mind.
Week 3 The importance of singing while performing; focused on some particular technique training	During this lesson, I gained a lot from it. Firstly, I realized the importance of singing along while playing the piano. When I sing with the piano, my emotions flow with the music and my breath becomes steadier, especially achieving a unity between the player and the instrument. In practice, I need to simplify – isolate the main notes and work on them. Controlling the pedal force and timing is also crucial, as well as focusing on tension, like the feeling of stretching and releasing an elastic band. (PM)	Eager to sing and express; immerse in music with positive thoughts
Gaining enlightenment with a positive attitude	This lesson untangled a lot of confusion for me. My approach to playing is clearer now, and my understanding of the piece has deepened. I'm looking forward to making even more progress in the next class! (PM)	Having an epiphany, this class had a moment of sudden and profound insight into learning complex.
Create her own story by picturing	today's practice, I focused more on the sense of space in my performance, the	Immersed herself in the story of which she

<p>nuanced details; and vivid descriptions with immersed musical expression</p>	<p><i>distance between one scene and another. Also, the images in my mind, from distant to near, from high to low, felt much more profound. Especially the bell sounds from the left hand at the beginning. Previously, I had only a vague sense of this movement from far to near, but today, I visualized it. It was as if my boat was in the middle of a lake, with me drinking tea and lighting a candle. The first bell sound came from afar, the second one felt as though I was instantly at the foot of the mountain, seeing the shape of the bell at the top. By the third bell, I was halfway up the mountain. The bell sound wasn't sharp but surrounded me. Gradually, I seemed to be on the opposite mountain, seeing a figure playing the Xun, its sound echoing with the bells. This vivid imagery was so clear, that it deeply moved me. I'm really happy about this. Although it's a small detail, it was a big surprise for me. I've never had such an immersive experience while playing before. (RJ1)</i></p>	<p>created, with the nuance of changes which helped to become a story-teller with music</p>
<p>Realized that music stems from life; get resources from life</p>	<p><i>I've decided to pay more attention to the scenery around me. In the past, I separated piano playing from my everyday life, overlooking the fact that music actually stems from life itself. I plan to start observing the scenery around me and listening to the sounds of nature. I believe this will be a wonderful thing to do. (RJ1)</i></p>	<p>Resources from life-inspired music interpretation</p>
<p>A positive attitude to finding pathways solves the problem</p>	<p><i>My teacher asked me to think about how to play the tension, like stretching an elastic band. I'm finding it quite challenging. Even though my practice hasn't been going smoothly and I haven't fundamentally solved the problem yet, what makes me happy is that I'm actively thinking about the issue and seeking solutions. Instead of just brute-forcing my practice, I'm trying to understand different things to see if they can help me resolve this dilemma. (RJ2)</i></p>	<p>Even though encounters problems, Crystal is patient with a positive attitude</p>

Week 4	the concept of rhythm	In this lesson, the teacher emphasized the issue of rhythmic value proportions. Firstly, regarding rhythm, it's important to differentiate between sixteenth notes and eighth notes. When counting the rhythm as 1-2-3-4, the breath should not be broken, and the start should not be overly emphasized. This rhythm is not rigid; it's like speaking, with its own intonation...within the defined rhythmic values, sentences should be connected rhythmically. There shouldn't be an intentional emphasis on the beats, but rather a search for which notes to emphasize and which to use as transitions. A thorough analysis is necessary. (PM)	Combined the Western and Chinese musical concept of rhythm
	The concept of flowing Qi	the concept of <i>Qi Yin</i> (Flowing Qi), understanding where in the sentence the rhythm is relaxed and where it is tight. This is crucial. In relaxed parts, there should be enough space and support, while in tight parts, there should be a sense of urgency, but not rigid. (AM)	The flowing Qi, and its interpretation in music
	Vivid concept of tone	regarding tone, the notes themselves are fixed, but the emotions they convey are alive. (PM)	bear the Chinese musical aesthetic idea
	Back to the detailed exercise; metronome	<i>This week, the biggest challenge in my piano practice was the rhythmic value; the incorrect rhythm made my playing feel disjointed, lacking in tension and gave off a sense of disorder. I spent several days pondering how to achieve the correct rhythmic values. I did a lot of clapping and singing to the rhythm, but it didn't seem very effective until I started using a metronome. The struggle in my practice stemmed from my habituation of previous incorrect methods. However, with the metronome, I found a good support system that provided a sense of security and prevented me from becoming flustered. Therefore, a metronome is quite essential in daily practice. (RJ1)</i>	Focus has shifted from creative imagination back to the importance of musical forms and structure
	Sound quality;	<i>During today's practice, I paid special</i>	Consider musical

rhythm, get inspiration from books	<i>attention to the texture of the sound. Sometimes, worrying about rhythm made my practice a bit chaotic. Additionally, I'm not fully satisfied with the refinement of the tone quality; the performance still feels too plain, lacking rich colors and full emotions, and the sound seems somewhat lifeless. I need to read more books for inspiration on how to make the tonal color more fitting to the mood and bring the piano's sound to life. (RJ2)</i>	structure with sound quality
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During the preliminary four-week investigation, Crystal endeavored to adhere to the directives issued by the teacher-researcher, which were explicated in the classroom through the utilization of narratives and analogies, in conjunction with demonstrative musical performances. Crystal's participation and performance in the classroom exhibited marked improvement, particularly in her ability to concentrate on rhythm in conjunction with breathing techniques, her auditory engagement with tone color, and her understanding of the cultural context pertinent to the selected musical pieces. Furthermore, she engaged in considerable reflection during her practice sessions. Even though Crystal mentioned many detailed challenges she encountered in practicing and sometimes she was dissatisfied with her performance, she also displayed a robust motivation to independently resolve challenges. In the fourth week of the study, Crystal acknowledged the integral connection between music and everyday life, recognizing that these elements should not be considered in isolation—an insight that holds promising implications for future research.

5.2.3 Mid-class Interview

In the mid-interview, Crystal deliberated on her transnurture over the initial four-week learning period, identifying two primary areas of change: conceptual understanding and technical skill.

The conceptual shift pertains to her evolving perception of performance, significantly influenced by an extracurricular activity. This particular activity involved guidance from the teacher-researcher on an exploratory visit to a Cantonese museum, aimed at deepening the students' connection with local culture. This experiential learning opportunity provided Crystal with valuable insights, thereby enriching her understanding and approach to musical performance.

Crystal: The change in my thinking has been huge. I used to be stuck in this mindset where I thought the only way to improve at the piano was to just keep my head down and grind away for hours in the practice room. And sure, in a way, that approach did lead to some improvement, but it completely missed the essence of music. Music, at its core, is born out of life, out of the composer's reflections on life. But there I was, trying to conjure up those emotions from thin air in a practice room, which was incredibly difficult. Even if I managed to imagine something, it wasn't genuine; it was fabricated, which made my playing come across as stiff and mechanical. It made me wonder, how could playing the piano ever be fun? But today, I finally got it.

...Beyond the rigorous practice, I need emotional support, which comes from life itself, from nature. When my heart is full, my emotions flow through my fingertips effortlessly. But when I feel empty inside, trying to express those emotions becomes nearly impossible. Emotions can't just be imagined; they have to be experienced to be truly captured. This shift in perspective has been like a revelation to me. It feels like all the problems I couldn't solve before suddenly have clear solutions and directions.

Then, the aspect of technique. I've begun to understand how to breathe while playing the piano. Before, my playing felt all over the place, chaotic. But this time, the piece that really made an impact on me...especially the line about the Cold Mountain Temple outside Suzhou city. After that class (week 3) ...it was as if a tangled mess had been untangled in my mind. I knew how to practice, and everything became clearer, more organized. My inner world felt richer, too.

...Honestly, before, playing the piano felt like a colorless process. For instance, I could physically manage the dynamics of a piece, the louds and softs, but sometimes my heart wasn't in it at all. However, I began to let my heart follow the music. I think this is a significant change.

Crystal recognized the significance of conveying the intrinsic emotional essence of music with resonance, which concurrently facilitated the advancement of her technical abilities, particularly in executing ornaments like grace notes and pentatonic scales. She also

acknowledged the importance of appreciating music within its cultural context, rather than merely generating sounds, and she began to explore ways to ensure that her playing underscored concepts inherent to Chinese musical aesthetics. Following her attendance at a piano recital, Crystal's anticipation for her final performance after this study was notably heightened, inspired by the exemplary performance of a young pianist. This encounter catalyzed her aspirations, influencing her approach to her own musical expression and performance preparation.

T: What are you looking forward to in the next four weeks of classes?

C: I'm looking forward to getting closer to the composer's vision and then being able to play it perfectly. Also, I hope to work on refining my tone, kind of like what we talked about last class—how to bring a note to life. I really want to see a big improvement in that area, especially.

T: Any expectations for the final exam?

C: For the final exam, I hope I can be more open on stage and really enjoy being up there. Like when we went to the concert last time, and I saw how people like XXX were truly enjoying themselves on stage. Especially XXX, he seemed so at ease, like the stage was his own. That's something I feel I'm really lacking.

In anticipation of the subsequent four-week study, Crystal expresses a keen desire to align more closely with the original intentions of composers, aiming to execute the selected piece flawlessly. Additionally, she aspires to refine her tonal quality, particularly in making each note resonate more vividly, echoing discussions from previous sessions about invigorating musical notes. She has a clear objective to achieve substantial progress in this specific aspect of her musical development within a cultural context.

Regarding the final examination, Crystal's aspirations revolve around achieving a greater level of openness and enjoyment during her performance on stage. Her experience at a recent concert, where she observed young performers fully relishing their time on stage and displaying remarkable ease and command, serves as a source of inspiration. Crystal identifies a personal shortfall in this area, expressing a desire to emulate the confidence and enjoyment observed in her role models, thereby enhancing her own stage presence.

5.2.4 Subsequent Four-week

The inaugural session of the ensuing four-week course was dedicated to exploring the influence of tempo on the stylistic interpretation of a chosen musical piece. The teacher-researcher noted a marked deviation in Crystal's performance tempo from the prescribed notations in the score, which was designated as *Lento*, indicating a slow tempo of 40 - 60 bpm. Contrarily, Crystal appeared to interpret the thirty-second and sixteenth notes at an accelerated pace, presumably adhering to conventional practices, thereby hastening the overall tempo of the piece. Consequently, the teacher-researcher challenged Crystal to decelerate her performance tempo to two to three times slower than her initial interpretation, presenting a significant challenge. This adjustment necessitates an extension of breath control and the cultivation of a tranquil internal state. To facilitate Crystal's engagement with this concept of inner tranquility, an experimental exercise involving the mindful tasting of a cup of tea was introduced.

T: I'm pouring you a cup of tea. Take it slow and smell the layers of its fragrance. It's about smelling it slowly, not gulping it down in one go. Try smelling the tea, take it in your hands, sip it slowly, and savor the aroma as it enters through your nostrils, then slowly down your throat, soaking into your heart. Drink slowly, there's no rush.

After tasting the tea and taking a moment of silence, Crystal plays again.

Following the experimental exercise, Crystal's performance exhibited notable enhancement, characterized not merely by her adept control over tempo and phrasing structure but also by a discernible shift in her approach to musical interpretation. Initially keen to express, Crystal transitioned towards a deeper introspection, seeking to convey her innermost sentiments through her music. This transnurture in her interpretative stance resulted in a performance that was both compelling and emotionally resonant.

In the sixth session, the pedagogical emphasis shifted towards interpretation, particularly aiming to elucidate the Chinese thought that wherever the emotion comes, it comes from the sound. At this juncture, Crystal had not only mastered the technical execution of the selected piece, committing it to memory, but she also demonstrated an insightful understanding of each sentence within its cultural milieu. The journey towards nuanced interpretation began with pedal usage, subsequently extending to incorporate body movements fueled by imaginative engagement. The teacher-researcher accompanies Crystal's performance closely. Through guidance in body language and eye movement, the teacher-researcher sought to enhance Crystal's ability to embody the character and emotional depth of the musical piece, thereby enriching her interpretative delivery.

Crystal starts playing the first note (shakes head slightly)

T: *Pay attention to your pedal technique. Start by pressing the pedal all the way down, then let your hand fall naturally with its own weight.*

Crystal plays again (body gradually relaxes, moves with the melody, humming along while playing, getting better and better).

(Teacher prompts) *Keep looking ahead, eyes looking far, eyes looking far. Imagine your sound traveling far away...*

T: *Projecting your sound is something you have to design, like when to lift your hands. You need to think about how to connect the sounds during your practice.*

Crystal follows the teacher's gestures, moving rhythmically.

T: *You've made a lot of progress.*

(Crystal smiles shyly, looking down)

T: *Take another look at the cultural background. If you were to portray this poet, how would you interpret it? Next class, please do a character performance.*

C: *Okay.*

Before the commencement of the seventh session, Crystal engaged in two supplementary educational activities that enriched her musical understanding and performance skills. The first of these was an individualized Guqin lesson, through which Crystal sought to grasp the subtleties of sound articulation unique to the Guqin, a traditional Chinese instrument known

for its expressive depth and cultural significance. The second activity involved attending a lecture by a renowned composer who specializes in Chinese piano compositions. During this workshop, the composer not only discussed his repertoire but also provided live demonstrations, thereby offering practical insights into the interpretation and execution of Chinese piano music.

The seventh and eighth sessions were dedicated to implementing nuanced modifications in Crystal's approach to music, to expand her understanding of musical expression and augment her interpretative skills. Crystal exhibited a commendable performance, characterized by both expressive depth and a substantial engagement with the musical material. Furthermore, her zeal for exploring and performing Chinese piano repertoires was notably heightened, reflecting a deepened commitment and appreciation for this genre of music. Table 5.2. illustrates the subsequent four weeks of Crystal's study process.

Table 5.2 Crystal's subsequent four-week study

Duration	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Week 5	Broadening breath; experimental exercise; intensive emotion	<i>the main focus was on extending and broadening the breath. The teacher gave me a cup of hot tea to smell and taste. Smelling the tea, its fragrance seemed to drift into my windpipe, gradually fading away; tasting it, the warmth of the tea smoothly flowed down my throat into my stomach, the warmth spreading effortlessly... This applies to the performance of the selected piece as well. The piece's breath was extended, and the universe expanded, making it not something confined but rather giving a sense of vastness as if one is in the cosmos... I tried to follow the teacher's rhythm to extend this breath. During this process, I found my breathing to be smoother, more unobstructed, and my inner feelings more pronounced. The emotions of sorrow and solitude in the poetry became more intense, leading to a deeper personal understanding. (PM)</i>	Detailed description about the feeling of drinking a cup of tea and the inspiration of performing with the broadening breath
	inspired from piano recital; breathing; gain new insights and thoughts; emotions; proactive thinking	<i>Last night, I went with my teacher to listen to a performance of Brahms' late works by Teacher Mao, and it deeply moved me. In today's practice, I paid extra attention to the breadth of my breathing. My breathing felt smoother, and I wasn't as anxious inside. Sometimes, I felt like I could hear a poet</i>	Learn from the piano solo concert; anticipant a rare experience with extra attention to the breathing, proactive thinking with new insights and thoughts

narrating stories to me, which was a fascinating feeling I rarely experienced before in my piano practices. I'm pretty satisfied with this practice session because I gained new insights and thoughts, which made me quite happy. Focusing on my breathing, I also cared about expressing my emotions, making the music richer and more complete, more emotional. I've been thinking more about music, and this thinking is proactive. (RJ1)

	The detailed process of letting hands relax from over thoughts, focusing on touching	<i>... letting my right hand relax ... I realized I was too focused on the dynamics, making my right hand's arpeggios feel floaty and ungrounded... So, I grounded my energy, increased the contact area of my right hand, and noticed an improvement. Similarly, with my left hand... I was always worried that the sound might be too loud, causing some notes not to come out. I tried to let go of this notion and played more relaxedly, using the same touch as my right hand, which indeed made a difference... When dealing with music, sometimes we need to let go of overly heavy thoughts because they can burden us and affect our performance. Also, thinking more about how we touch the keys can greatly help in handling music. (RJ2)</i>	Realized the thoughts that hindered the musical expression, keeping proactive thinking with practice
Week 6	concept from Chinese aesthetic thoughts; analysis personal problem; practice requirement	<i>The key point of this lesson is that music and emotion cannot be separated. "Where emotions lead, music follows." However, my current issue is that while the music flows, the emotion hasn't quite caught up, leading to a mismatch ... when performing, I shouldn't be afraid of the volume of the notes. Currently, worrying too much causes the music to be stifled, unable to flow freely and trapping the emotions from being expressed. Practicing with exaggerated time values</i>	Mismatch emotion with music flow ⁷ worry too much; too much focus on express not enjoy; exaggerate extend the duration

		<i>(extending the duration) allows the music to flow with the emotions, using music to express the inner feelings. (PM)</i>	
	Facing the scared things; psychologically changed; unsatisfied with this practice	<i>I've always been scared of the opening note. I'm afraid of not hitting it right, and yet, I'm also scared of playing it too loudly. It's been a confusing issue for me, and I haven't found a good way to solve it. This problem has been bothering me for a while, and I've never really addressed it. Over time, it's become so much harder to fix it immediately. Additionally, my control isn't very good when it comes to how much force to use for a note. This is especially apparent in the playing of the opening bell sounds. Lastly, playing softly is still very challenging for me at this point. I'm not particularly satisfied with my practice this time because my issues haven't been fundamentally resolved, whether it's the psychological fear of that note or the technical aspect of playing it. (RJ1)</i>	Share her scared things with details
	New insights from professor lecture of the concept; analyze the nervous reasons; music naturally born with sing and play	<i>I attended Professor Han's lecture yesterday, and it gave me a new understanding of "Music is born of emotion." Recently, I was so focused on getting the timing right that I overlooked the expressiveness of the music, which made me really nervous during performances because I kept thinking my timing was off. But today, as I played and sang at the same time, I shifted my focus to expressing the music, and I found that my heart would follow along. This feeling of moving with the flow of the music autonomously is different from when I used to tell myself to follow the music in my head. It's a wonderful feeling, one that I rarely experience... Playing and singing at the same time has been a great help to me. (RJ2)</i>	Overlooked the expressiveness of music; time-beat; sing with play boost the music comes
Week 7	Structure the musical layer within the	<i>In this class, the teacher asks me to think about the designed layering within this</i>	3 tiers of the musical layer; the sound

content; mimic the Chinese instruments; pursue the multifaceted sound effect	<i>selected piece. This piece can be broken down into three distinct layers. The first layer consists of the continuous bell and Xun sounds, which maintain a steady rhythm throughout, echoing persistently. The third layer is characterized by the sounds of the Guqin or Kong Hou, with the strings vibrating back and forth, creating a sensation of fluidity and ethereal beauty. The second layer, meanwhile, is the melody itself, which is rich and full, with each phrase offering its own unique color and emotional tone... Achieving performance would render the music colorful and emotionally intense. It becomes multifaceted rather than monolithic, enriching the piece with a diverse array of sounds and sentiments. (PM)</i>	inspiration from Chinese instruments;
Perplexed; inconsistency of practicing quality; psychologically challenged; effective pathway in practice	<i>During this practice session, I found myself quite perplexed. This confusion stems from the inconsistency I experienced; sometimes I could produce the sound I wanted, and other times I couldn't. This inconsistency occasionally made me anxious, but I realized that becoming anxious only led to more chaos, so I had to calm down and focus on my practice... I think the main focus of this session was on isolated practice. Isolating and practicing each different sound can lead to more efficient progress. This approach also improves muscle memory in the fingers and strengthens the memory of how each note should feel when played. (RJ1)</i>	The inconsistency of quality and effect in practicing; analyzing her own feeling; proactive in finding the pathway to overcome
Analogy description; Structuring musical layer; Envision the scene; try different touching skills	<i>In practicing for a sense of layering, I always felt that my execution of the nine-note sequences wasn't smooth enough, always coming across as clumsy. I envisioned the sound to float up like cooking smoke, but my playing felt more like a heavy bear lumbering along... I remembered what my teacher</i>	Used analogy; Envision helps to overcome the clumsy expression

		<p>said about increasing the contact area of the keys, so I tried this approach and practiced it multiple times, which seemed to improve the situation somewhat... (RJ2)</p>	
Week 8	<p>Body energy; project the sound; projecting sound with pre-design; delve into music with emotionally prepared</p>	<p><i>During the performance, the teacher stabilized my body, which felt strange at first but I soon realized that keeping my body still actually improved the tone quality, and for a moment, it felt as if I was playing the Guqin, which was a fascinating sensation. Moreover, the teacher emphasized how to project the sound in a theater, to make it envelop the entire space, which requires careful design on my part. More importantly, I need to follow the music, entering into the emotional state before playing. When performing, I shouldn't control myself too much; when the emotion is there, let it guide my hands without restraint.</i></p> <p>(PM)</p>	<p>Stabilized the body; the design of sound projecting in different places; whenever the emotion emerges, the music comes;</p>
	<p>Notice the importance of Silence; envision the scene;</p>	<p><i>First, play through the entire piece, then focus on just the beginning. Start by sitting quietly, then play the three bell sounds. Imagine a scene in your mind where there's a lake in front of you and a temple in the distance. After visualizing this scene, play the bell sounds again and repeat this cycle of practice... This practice method of first envisioning a scene helps me enter the right state for performing because this imagery makes me feel as though I'm in that era, bringing me closer to the piece. (RJ1)</i></p>	<p>Keep calm and breathe; Portray the picture before the music starts</p>
	<p>Reflections on body energy use;</p>	<p><i>During this practice session, I tried to keep my body still as much as possible, minimizing shoulder shrugs and opening up my shoulders and back. Playing in this posture, I felt the energy flow was unobstructed, and sometimes it felt like I was playing the Guqin, stroking its strings... It's important to use our bodies correctly. Right now, my movements are</i></p>	

*too forced, making the sound quality
muddled, not crisp and clear... I need to
direct my body with my mind, not let my
body take over my mind. (RJ2)*

During the subsequent four-week investigation, Crystal made obvious progress in terms of discovering her viewpoints and exploring diverse interpretative pathways with a deeper engagement on the selective piece, her proactive thinking empowered the performing to become confident. Her individuality enriching was meaningfully developed.

Her concerns about the cultural connotation allow a more profound understanding of the emotional language that the music conveys which also enriches Crystal's understanding of the concept of whenever the emotion emerges, the music comes, cultivates a more empathetic and informed worldview through the lens of music.

Crystal also enthusiastically participated in different extracurricular activities such as famous professors' lectures and solo piano recitals. Which not only enhances musical knowledge with inspiration but also broadens her cultural understanding. Those experiences are invaluable for developing not just technical proficiency, but also nurturing empathy and cultural awareness which motivate her to further explore Chinese piano repertoires.

5.2.5 Post-final Interview

During the concluding interview following the examination, Crystal was requested to evaluate her rendition of the chosen musical piece. However, she articulated challenges in assigning a precise score to her performance. Crystal recognized an enhancement in her stage presence, noting a greater sense of mental stability compared to her experiences during a prior midterm examination. This advancement was evident in her heightened clarity regarding her

performance objectives and expressive techniques on stage, signifying substantial progress by the time of the final examination.

Moreover, Crystal recounted an extraordinary, almost ethereal experience during her performance, wherein she imagined herself beside a lake. This visualization marked a novel and deeply resonant moment for her, underscoring a significant and profound engagement with the piece. This instance illustrates Crystal's evolving connection to the music, transcending mere performance to achieve a moment of genuine immersion and emotional depth.

C: During my performance just now, there was a moment when I felt almost in a trance as if I suddenly saw a lake and found myself mysteriously standing in its center. It was a fleeting sense of bewilderment, a sensation I had never experienced before in my piano-playing career, especially during performances on stage. Yet, just now, I had this momentary feeling.

Regarding the benefits derived from the eight-week course, Crystal articulated significant advancements, marking her inaugural in-depth engagement with the Chinese piano repertoire. She acquired a newfound comprehension of both the expressive nuances of musical performance and the profound cultural underpinnings of Chinese compositions. This exploration underscored the criticality of conducting thorough research and fostering an emotional connection with the pieces—elements she perceived as deficiencies in her prior approach to music.

Crystal noted a transformative effect in each session, with a particular emphasis on the evolution of her practice to include a more holistic engagement with the music's flow. This represented a departure from her earlier methods of practice. The incorporation of techniques such as vocalizing the music and adopting a perspective that views music as a 'living' entity, as advocated by the instructor, markedly influenced her approach to learning. Additionally, the utility of after-class memos and reflective practice journals was highlighted as instrumental in

enabling her to organize her thoughts and systematically approach her ongoing musical development.

Crystal also spoke about the importance of storytelling and envisioning scenes in understanding and performing Chinese repertoires, mentioning that actively visualizing and repeatedly emphasizing certain images helped in forming a clearer mental picture during the performance.

C: Engaging with Chinese piano compositions for the first time, I've come to a novel understanding of them, both in terms of musical expression and from the perspective of Chinese culture. This venture has led to a profound comprehension that necessitates thorough investigation and research when approaching a new piece. Especially in performing Chinese works, the expression of emotions and how to immerse myself in the musical sentiment were aspects I previously lacked. Before, my hands might play while my mind wandered; however, throughout these eight weeks of practice, I've felt a synchronicity between my heart and mind with the music. This period has enabled me to engage in deeper reflection, understanding, and emotional connection with the music.

In conclusion, Crystal underscored the fundamental importance of conducting cultural research into the background of the composer and the contextual framework of the work as imperative for an enriched comprehension of Chinese compositions. She advocated for a comprehensive approach that includes delving into related cultural practices and traditional folk instruments, proposing a more expansive methodology for understanding the nuances of the music.

The exploration of Chinese piano music has ignited a fervent interest in cultural studies for Crystal, propelling her to delve deeper into aspects of Chinese history, with a particular focus on the Tang Dynasty, and the scenic beauty of the Jiangnan region as illustrated in the piece under study. She posits that such immersive cultural engagement serves to enhance her piano performance, recognizing that the essence of musical expression is intrinsically linked to life's experiences. Crystal has articulated a renewed enthusiasm for Chinese piano

compositions, finding them intriguing and significant for further exploration, marking a significant shift in her initial perception of Chinese piano repertoire.

5.2.6 Summary

Crystal's journey through an eight-week course focused on the selected piece of Chinese piano repertoire, highlighting her developmental trajectory in musical expression, cultural understanding, and performance skills. Her engagement with the course material led to substantial progress in her ability to interpret and perform Chinese compositions, underscored by her deep dive into the cultural and emotional contexts of the selected pieces. Her experiences in extracurricular activities, such as attending lectures and recitals, enriched her musical knowledge and cultural awareness. This comprehensive approach to learning, which included techniques like vocalization and visualization, transformed her practice and performance strategies. Crystal's exploration ignited a fervent interest in cultural research, motivating her to delve deeper into Chinese history and music, significantly shifting her initial perception and appreciation of the Chinese piano repertoire.

In summary, Crystal's journey underlines a significant transnurture in her cultural awareness and identity. Her initial engagement, marked by a lack of familiarity with Chinese musical and cultural contexts, evolved into a profound connection and appreciation. The process of immersing herself in the cultural research of the composers, the historical background of the pieces, and the cultural practices related to the music significantly deepened her understanding and interpretation of Chinese piano music. This exploration not only enriched her musical expression but also fostered a broader interest in Chinese history and culture, particularly the Tang Dynasty and the landscapes of Jiangnan. Crystal's experience illustrates how engaging with music from diverse cultural backgrounds can enhance one's

cultural awareness and contribute to the development of a more nuanced cultural identity. Through her practice and performance, Crystal embodies the idea that music is a living expression deeply rooted in life experiences and cultural heritage, demonstrating the transformative power of cultural engagement in shaping artistic expression and personal growth.

5.3 CASE 2

5.3.1 Pre-study Interview

Ru (pseudonym) commenced her musical odyssey on the piano at the tender age of five and a half, under the guidance of a piano instructor, until she reached thirteen. Her pursuit of transitioning to another instructor was motivated by her aspiration to major in music, necessitating her to undergo rigorous preparation for the high school music major examination. She acknowledged that her foundational and intermediate stages of learning lacked professional oversight, as her previous piano instructors did not specialize in piano education. This realization came before she received specialized training from an educator who had graduated from the Royal College of Music, specializing in piano. Unfortunately, this period of specialized instruction lasted only a few months before her university enrollment, leading her to perceive a deficiency in professional training that, in her view, impeded her musical expression.

In reflecting upon her engagement with Chinese piano repertoires, Ru enumerated three pieces that she had studied *The North Wind Blows*, *Chasing the Moon by the Colorful Clouds*, and *The Happy Female Soldier*. These pieces are renowned and considered classics within Chinese piano education, frequently featured in youth competitions, recitals, and examinations. Ru observed that Chinese piano repertoires generally exude a gentler quality, though she could

not pinpoint the exact reasons for this characteristic. Despite her limited familiarity with and curiosity about Chinese piano music, she preferred to adhere to the assignments given by her teacher-researcher, attributing this to her lack of knowledge regarding Chinese piano repertoires.

Thus, the criteria for selecting pieces initially focused on shorter works that incorporated cultural and contextual references for study. After meticulous deliberation, *The Flower Drum* was chosen. Composed in 1946 by Qu Wei for piano, this selected piece's main melody is derived from the traditional folk music *Fengyang Flower Drum* from Anhui Province, China, while its sub-melody is based on another renowned folk song, *Jasmine*, from Jiangsu Province. *The Flower Drum* is celebrated for embodying the authentic spirit of China. Ru shared her anticipatory thoughts regarding her pre-learning phase with this selected piece with the teacher-researcher:

Teacher (T): *Why is it called the flower drum?*

Ru (R): *It symbolizes people's optimism and happiness...the melody used very familiar tunes from folk songs.*

T: *What was the Fengyang flower drum used for in the past?*

Ru looks puzzled

T: *If you don't know, you should look it up. Research means following a thread and continuously exploring further. What style or form is the second part's "Jasmine Flower" in?*

Ru struggles to speak, nervous.

T: *There are many Jasmines in our folk music, so you need to be clear about which region's Jasmine it is. You still need to go back and study the whole work seriously, including its cultural background and creative process; all these are necessary.*

Apparently, Ru was nervous about previewing this selected piece due to the lack of contextual research. Throughout the conversation, she mostly nods in agreement with the teacher-researcher's speech without caution.

5.3.2 Initial Four-week

Ru executed *The Flower Drum*, a piece she had been familiarizing herself with over the course of approximately one week. Upon engaging with this selected composition, Ru acknowledged its segmented nature, prompting the instructor-researcher to request a segmented performance, with each section isolated. Ru commenced at a markedly slow tempo, deliberately abstaining from pedal utilization. The performing was briefly halted after Ru concluded the introductory portion at the precise juncture of fourteen measures. The teacher-researcher then advised Ru to scrutinize the musical score attentively, focusing particularly on the rhythmic character. This included an emphasis on the necessity for accurately timed execution of the beat and accented notes during her rendition. Thus, the teacher-researcher also suggested that Ru needs to improve some practice habits, such as the design of using pedals and fingering with pentatonic arpeggio. The teacher noticed that Ru was extremely nervous, often nodding in agreement without much reflection, yet her performance remained ineffective. To address this, the teacher pointed out the issue and advised Ru to act with more deliberate consideration of the music, urging her to focus on the quality of her performance rather than rushing through it.

T: I've noticed that whatever I say, you always agree, but it doesn't really sink into your mind, which is unacceptable. If you have different opinions, you can express them, but you shouldn't agree so quickly and not act accordingly. This is not good. You must think first. You can take your time, especially when making changes, okay?

R: Okay. I will try.

Subsequently, the instructional emphasis shifted towards technical training, encompassing aspects such as the precision of tonal articulation, rhythmic timing that shapes the musical phrasing, and the integration of breath control. Yet, Ru exhibited a pronounced lack of physical conditioning, characterized by tension and discomfort, manifesting both in her body language and musical execution. The teacher's demonstration of performance did not facilitate Ru's

ability to focus on auditory discrimination and assimilation. As a result, her performance showed no signs of change or improvement. The instructor likened her state of performance to that of *a cat on hot bricks*, highlighting the excessive tension she displayed.

T: You start playing in a panic... If you want to appreciate more Chinese works, you want to know about their styles; you need to research their regional styles. Yan 'an is in Northern Shaanxi, with its endless loess plateaus, vast and expansive. The people's character there is comparatively straightforward, direct, and bold, lacking the gentle and soft speech found in the water towns of the South. Can you play more boldly and directly? Don't be like a cat on hot bricks, making yourself seem tense. Don't play the piano in this state, and don't be so tense overall; relax a bit more... In music, focus more on understanding than how you will perform. Speak through the music. I hope you can be comfortable and natural.

The teacher-researcher prescribed an assignment for Ru that entailed delving into regional cultural knowledge. This included studying the two original folk songs and acquiring the fundamental steps of the Yangge Dance. The objective of this exercise was to alleviate her psychological and physical tension and to enhance her comprehension of the basic rhythm inherent in the selected piece.

The second week of class starts with the response to the assignments. Ru engaged in viewing several online videos to delve into the origins of folk songs related to the chosen musical piece and to acquaint herself with the elementary aspects of the Yangge dance. Despite her efforts, she appeared to lack emotional engagement with the content presented in these videos. Her body language was strained, and hunchbacked, and often swung her arms, causing the fingers to lose support. Maybe it fits in pursuing the gentleness sound which reflected her stereotype on Chinese piano repertoires so far but did not match the musical type of this selected piece. Although the teacher-researcher provided comprehensive guidance on employing body energy and adopting a firmer touch, these instructions did not yield the desired effectiveness. Consequently, the teacher resorted to utilizing a tambourine and a maraca to

accentuate the rhythm, thereby aiming to augment the pedagogical approach through the stimulation of auditory interest (See Table 5.3).

The change happened in the third session. Ru made an obvious development this week. She learned the basic footsteps of the Yangge Dance and danced with devotion in class. She immersed herself in feeling the rhythm rule with her whole body and waving her arms full of energy. When she started to play, the rhythm became natural and the sound quality improved. The teaching focus was given to the first main part with nuance adjusting on musical phrases, and technique skill demonstration, such as quick down and quick off. The teacher also demonstrated the second part, which presents a musical style contrasting with that of the first part. Ru was asked to learn the Jasmine with a dialect imitation from Jiangsu province, aimed to absorb the regional cultural inspirations.

During the fourth week, a discernible enhancement in Ru's performance was observed, driven by her proactive engagement with thinking. This improvement is documented through various means, including her performance during class, notes taken post-class memo, and reflections captured in her practice journals, as detailed in Table 5.3. The instructional focus for this period concentrated on the second section of the piece, intending to elicit a tender melody characterized by the nuanced sound quality produced by the fingertips. Ru was instructed to practice string plucking using her fingertips, an exercise designed to foster an intuitive connection with the sound vibrations. This practice emphasized the importance of achieving a harmonious balance between strength and speed during the plucking action. Consequently, this approach activated her fingertips, transitioning them from merely pressing the keys to actively engaging with the instrument, thereby enhancing the dynamic and expressive quality of her performance.

Table 5.3 Ru's initial four-week study

Duration	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Week 1	Inadequate preparation; feeling frustration	<i>I felt somewhat nervous... The primary reason is inadequate preparation. My understanding of the background of the piece was only superficial, and I was not confident in my performance of the piece. Additionally, my grasp of the teacher's explanations was only partial, leading to situations of frustration during class. (PM)</i>	Inadequate preparation in musical content cause unconfident performance, cannot fully understand teacher's instructions
	Clear strategies for practicing; cheerful with the attempts; realized the weakness	<i>In the evening, the piano room is clean, with the lights dimly lit... I play through the piece at a uniform speed. Then, I practice in sections, hands separately, slowly, and with both hands together, adding emotional expression. I allow myself a little bit of secret delight and joy in these initial attempts... but I also struggle with the limited mobility in my left hand, which is one of my weaknesses. (RJ1)</i>	Describe the atmosphere; detailed process of practicing; joyful with attempts for the change; pointed out the weakness
	Annoyance; technique problems; trying to find the pathways to solve problems both psychologically and physically	<i>The piano room is somewhat cramped, with bright lighting, and there's a floor-to-ceiling window next to my right hand... The constant mistakes in my playing irritate me... The rhythm of the four sixteenth notes is not played flexibly enough... I've</i>	Irritate with constantly mistake; focus on touching skills; analyze the problems and trying to overcome

		<i>neglected the practice of slowly lifting my fingers high, focusing only on quickly finishing the task, overlooking the details... I need to calm down, feel, and practice slowly. (RJ2)</i>	
Week 2	Teaching atmosphere changed; more relax; body posture adjustment; share thoughts by informal conversation	<i>This class was more relaxed than the last, partly due to the teacher's use of teaching tools—a tambourine and a maraca—that made the atmosphere more pleasant...First, I had a conversation with my teacher about the background of the piece, and then we reviewed the homework in sections. The overall feeling was conversational, with each phrase handled differently in terms of emotion... The body posture needs adjustment: sit up straight, keep the back straight, shoulders relaxed, and look forward... Towards the end of the class, my teacher shared her thoughts and mindset regarding playing the piano, which gave me a new perspective on practicing. (PM)</i>	More relaxed; using tools to make the teaching atmosphere change; be aware of the musical content with different emotions; body posture adjustment helps to improve the sound quality; share thoughts on performing piano
	Auditory discern; Self-analysis	<i>When correcting the timbre of the first few identical intervals, I noticed that the left and right hands sounded different, which was somewhat frustrating... The left hand didn't sound as bright as the right hand. The reason might be that the support from the palm joints of the left hand's fifth finger is weak, lacking strength. (RJ1)</i>	Paying attention to the timbre with auditory discern; actively analyzing the causes of the problem
	Anticipate with anxious and excitement; seeking for finger technique improvement	<i>Thinking about preparing for tomorrow's class also makes me a bit nervous and excited, so I pay more attention to each note and its dynamics during practice... The completion level of the piece has improved, and the contrast between loud and soft is more pronounced. However, the stability of the fingers on the black keys is still lacking, leading to wrong notes or weaker</i>	Describe her psychological activities about the coming lesson, nervous about a non-perfect performance while excited about gaining new knowledge;

		<i>timbre. The support strength of the fingers is not sufficient... There is a lack of specialized practice for the fingers, which needs to be strengthened. (RJ2)</i>	
Week 3	Positive engagement; incorporate emotions with performance; encouragement	<i>This class provided new learnings and sparked some fresh ideas. The lesson began with a demonstration of the Yangge twist assigned in the previous session, which also influenced me to incorporate emotion into my playing of the first part later on. The early section of the first part was bold in its execution, creating a sense of dialogue. The second part was gentler, with varied tones, evoking imagery and embodying characters in my mind. I spent more time focusing on finger techniques during practice which gained positive encouragement from my teacher. (PM)</i>	Gain new insights and inspired ideas; Yangge Dance fosters emotional engagement while playing the selected piece; place the different musical styles in each part; positive feedback from the teacher motivates the further development
	Overcome physical problem; Immerse; emphasis the importance of slow tempo exercise	<i>... due to a slight sore throat, I started my practice with less enthusiasm. However, as I continued, I gradually became more immersed in my piano practice... Coordination between my left and right hands was off; I couldn't manage to play staccato with the left hand while executing legato with the right simultaneously... Besides listening to more recordings, I also need to practice slowly and separately with each hand. (RJ1)</i>	Disturbed by the physical problem, however, overcome by immersed in music; slow tempo exercise
	Frustrated; completment raised; aware of the nuance details in music; anticipate positive feedback from teacher	<i>Hitting wrong notes each time was frustrating... leading to disharmony in what I heard... As the practice time increased, the completeness of the piece improved, and the overall sound became more harmonious. Still, some finer details were overlooked. Regardless of my mood, I need to sit up straight at the piano and focus more on the details... I hope to receive affirmation from my teacher in the</i>	frustrated by playing wrong notes unconsciously; the level of completment raised; realized the details of music should not be omitted; wish to gain positive feedback from the teacher in the coming lesson

		<i>next class. (RJ2)</i>	
Week 4	Care about the positive feedback from teacher; nervous about the memorizing performing; interesting insights on pizzicato with piano	<i>First of all, I am very happy because I achieved the goals set in my last pr reflective journal--I gained the positive feedback from my teacher... There was some nervousness about the teacher checking for memorized playing at the beginning of the class. For me, unless I have memorized the piece thoroughly, I still prefer to place the score on the music stand for psychological comfort... During the class, in order to listen to the tone, I also tried plucking the piano strings with my fingertips, which was a novel experience I had never had. (PM)</i>	Happy with the positive feedback from the teacher, nervous about memorizing music; gained new experience on pizzicato on the piano
	Inspired by modeling recording; aware of the deficit points in practice; pathway on further exercise	<i>Catching a cold, I was initially out of sorts when I started practicing piano. However, after listening to the audio, I found my groove, especially starting from the first part, where I became more engaged... At the beginning of the second part, where there's a large interval jump, I struggled because I hadn't accurately anticipated the note positions, lacked coordination between hand and eye, familiarity with the score, and knowledge of the keyboard layout... Listening to more recordings, memorizing the score, and singing the music can help develop a sense of linearity. (RJ1)</i>	Influenced by the cold, then inspired by the recordings, which helped to delve into musical content; find out the deficit points for better exercising; structure the pathway in further explore on the selected piece
	attempts on exercise; motivate new insights and thoughts; mental engagement	<i>At first, singing the right-hand melody while playing the left hand (versa visa) was quite challenging. Mainly, it was due to insufficient familiarity with the score; often while singing, I would lose track of what came next. Also, this practice method had been seldom tried by me... I should explore this method more in the future, as it encourages mental engagement and enhances focus during practice. (RJ2)</i>	A challenge exercise, gain new insights, mental engagement

5.3.3 Mid-class Interview

Ru critically evaluates her prior engagement with Chinese piano repertoires as cursory and lacking depth before undertaking this study. Initially, her approach was superficial, focusing merely on the explicit instructions within the score, such as dynamics, without seeking to understand the underlying artistic or cultural motivations. This surface-level engagement led to frustration and difficulties in maintaining pace with the academic requirements of the study. However, with increased alignment with the instructor's guidance and a deeper investigation into the selected piece, Ru found her studies to become significantly more engaging. Furthermore, she underscores the importance of composing post-class memos and maintaining reflective journals as integral to her learning process. Ru elaborated:

...Previously, the responsibility for writing records fell to the teacher, and my engagement with these records post-class was cursory and lacked diligence. Now, assuming this task personally has instilled a more profound impact. Primarily, during practice sessions, encountering sections of the piece that elude my understanding prompts me to devise alternative strategies or solutions. A notable instance involved a segment of the music that failed to resonate with me. In response, I experimented by lifting my left hand and vocalizing the right hand's notes. Despite the initial discordance when attempting this integration, perseverance over several days led me to appreciate the efficacy of this technique. I am happy with the attempts.

Ru subsequently undertook numerous practice sessions aimed at refining her technical skills and enhancing sound quality, all the while striving to capture the musical style and convey her comprehension of the selected piece. This proactive approach enabled her to surmount anxieties and physical challenges. Ru also reflected on her initial participation in a cultural practice activity alongside the teacher-researcher and other participants. This experience was enjoyable for her, and the visit to the moon bridge helped her to envisage imagery that facilitated an emotional connection with the piece.

I am pleased to visit the Cantonese Opera Museum and experience Cantonese customs, and Guangzhou cuisine. Although the style of the piece I played may not fit well with this kind of Cantonese opera culture, one of the points during our trip was visiting the Moon Bridge, which just happened to match the style of a section in my piece. When I play it, I can imagine the scene of the Moon Bridge, the calm surface of the water, so it also guides my feelings and mindset.

Reflecting on her progress during the initial four weeks of working on the selected piece, she estimated that approximately 60% of it had been mastered. She recognized the necessity of devoting more focus to the final section, which embodies a fusion of various musical elements. The task of articulating the musical structure demands significant exploration. She aspires to deliver a comprehensive and well-organized musical expression of this selected piece in her final performance on stage, aiming to fully embody and convey its intricate composition.

5.3.4 Subsequent Four-week

The subsequent four weeks followed the pace from the first four-week with segment performance in detail elaborated. The teaching focus necessitates exploring a strategic approach guiding the musical climactic crescendo with cultural expression and emotional resonance. This transition into a propulsive climax is characterized by an intricate amalgamation of musical materials, leading to a nuanced process of blending. The execution of this segment requires careful consideration; it is imperative to not only navigate the increasing complexity of the musical materials but also to effectively convey this complexity through performance.

The presentation of this blending process is crucial, as it encapsulates the culmination of thematic development and the expressive depth of the piece. Achieving a coherent and impactful climax demands a deep understanding of the composition's structural dynamics as well as a proficient technical ability to integrate and express these elements seamlessly. This

phase of the piece serves as a pivotal moment, highlighting the performer's interpretative skills and the capacity to synthesize and project the music's evolving narrative. Table 5.4 shows Ru's progress during the subsequent four-week study.

Table 5.4 Ru's subsequent four-week study

Duration	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Week 5	Inadequate preparation; anxiety; sound effect; sensation; different timbre	<i>... primarily focused on the second part of the piece... I am less familiar with, leading to some anxiety ... Attention to fingering is essential ... The repetition for the second time should produce a different effect, creating a lively and bouncy sensation..., the left hand should evoke the feeling of a cello in an orchestra, while the right hand should resemble the timbre of a violin... The conclusion should be practiced to achieve a sense of phrasing (PM)</i>	Inadequate preparation cause anxiety; sound effect; mimic the timbre from cello and violin
	Concentrated; video recording	<i>My practice was concentrated, involving recording practice videos and diligently reviewing, followed by continuous correction... The process of enhancing the tone quality was quite satisfying, and ultimately, I was pleased with the outcome. (RJ1)</i>	Use video recording to enhance the practice effect, good for self-exploring

	Strengthen on the body gesture	<i>During the review of the videos, I noticed that my posture occasionally slumped or my shoulders tensed, which are issues I am in the process of correcting. I also realized that my tendency to move excessively while playing has added to the strain on my hands. (RJ1)</i>	Realized the importance of body energy usage
	Self-exploration; music techniques; body energy; attitudes	<i>I recorded the audio and found myself struggling a bit with the half-pedal and full-pedal techniques... I'm quite pleased that I've managed to memorize the overall direction of the piece, but there are still some details that I haven't perfected. My posture seems to affect the power in my hands, and my eagerness to progress has led me to overlook practicing the more challenging sections thoroughly... For the ending part, I've decided to practice slowly, ensuring that my fingertips remain close to the keys, or even considering changing the fingering technique. I need to remind myself to stay humble and patient, slow down to observe carefully, and listen to more recordings to enhance my musicality and sense of enjoyment from the piece. (RJ2)</i>	Pedal issues; happy with memorized the piece; realized the eagerness in progress which also trapped her with neglect nuance details; remind herself with a positive with calm attitude
Week 6	Teacher's attitude influence; emotional change; own idea appears;	<i>I felt relaxed without anxiety like before, partly because the teacher affirmed my new ideas at the start of this lesson. My experience with practicing piano each week has been changing, feeling increasingly pleasant to the ear, which in turn, encourages my own ideas. I believe there's still room for careful consideration regarding the use of pedals. (PM)</i>	Emotional changed; appreciated the affirmation; own idea; improvement on pedal use;
	A sudden enlightenment; communicate; eager to practice	<i>In recent practice sessions, I listened to recordings to capture the feel, but my playing sounded sticky, not light or nimble. So, before the class, I resolved to be thick-skinned, ready to accept</i>	Eager to communicate; a sudden enlightenment

		criticism in order to learn the correct technique. During the class, the teacher corrected my fingering and the use of my fingertips and wrists, which was an eye-opening experience for me. After class, I immediately went to the practice room to apply what I had learned. (PM)	
	Own interpretation; benefits from attempts with various methods in practicing	Visiting the practice room each time feels like opening a mystery box; this time, the piano keys were softer, which made the touch less satisfying...my memorization of the piece is nearly complete, and I've added some of my own interpretations to the ending... When practicing, it's important not to rush the process but to slow down, feel, and listen. It's beneficial to employ various methods of practice for comparison, rather than monotonously repeating the same exercises without any variation. (RJ1)	Metaphor, cares about the piano quality which was uncontrollable; own interpretation, strengthen the importance of listening and slow tempo in exercise
	mood influenced by piano quality; musical contrast; individuality in performance; proactive thinking in facing and overcome challenges	The quality of the piano also contributed to my good mood... The contrast between loud and soft became more pronounced, and occasionally I would incorporate some personal ideas, making the imitation of drum rhythms clearer... Actively thinking about problems leads to finding solutions, and there's still more to ponder and refine regarding tone quality. (RJ2)	Influenced by piano quality; enlarge the contrast in musical content with individuality; growth ability in facing challenges
Week 7	Satisfy; earn confidence with the teacher's encouragement with affirmation	I am very satisfied with today's class. After so many sessions, I have gradually become desensitized to the camera, and I am thankful for the teacher's continuous praise, tolerance, and reminders, which have incrementally bolstered my confidence.... Even though I did not share my personal thoughts with the teacher before the class, during the critique, the teacher directly	Desensitized with the camera; care about other's appraisal; sparks in the eye with teacher's affirmation; earn the confidence

		<i>highlighted the core points of my ideas, bringing a sparkle to my eyes and a gentle smile to my face. Therefore, I will carry this confidence into my practice, aiming to enhance the completeness of the work and make practicing feel less burdensome. (PM)</i>	
	Metronome; tempo control; reflect and structure practicing strategies	<i>Memorizing the score at a tempo of 120 and recording a video, then playing the first part with a metronome at a tempo of 90, accelerating only after two or three repetitions... Practicing slowly before playing quickly ensures that each note becomes clearer... After becoming proficient in the piece, in addition to musical interpretation, it is also important to spend time playing slowly with a metronome to ensure the accuracy of each note. (RJ1)</i>	Practice with metronome for tempo control, structure her own strategies in practicing
	Memorized performing; improve sound quality with different attempts; completeness; body gesture	<i>I played the Flower Drum from memory... I practiced different articulations to refine my tone and was quite satisfied with myself while recording the video... Listening back to the recording, I felt that the completeness of the performance had improved, with a clear contrast between loud and soft passages... However, the tempo was still somewhat unstable, and my left foot tended to move frequently, indicating that my lower body was not sufficiently steady. (RJ2)</i>	Memorized performing; different articulations with care of expression; improved completeness; body was not steady enough
Week8	Fruitful; immerse to the musical style; developed with encouragement	<i>This class was also fruitful... Before playing, the teacher set the stage for the musical mood and atmosphere of the piece, but I was unable to get into the right mindset and felt uncertain. At times, my playing was timid, lacking vitality and clarity in the notes on the score. The teacher incisively identified my issues. For the second and third attempts, although I became</i>	Repeat performing the piece for several times, developed with the identified issues and encouragement

progressively more open and my confidence increased, I felt my imagination was still lacking, and the contrast was not as distinct as it could be. During the fourth rendition, inspired by the teacher's encouragement, I played with more boldness and ended up being satisfied with my performance. (PM)

Emotional resonance; intentional cue for expressing music	<i>I playing the flower drum, and felt a surge of passion within... When recording videos, I reminded myself to maintain a mental cue for expressing the emotions of the piece... I let my musical emotions and expression with intention... (RJ1)</i>	Evoke passion; care about the musical expression
Envision a scene; accuracy	<i>I focused on visualizing a scene or image, which in turn guided my playing. Additionally, practicing slowly to ensure accuracy in every note was crucial. (RJ2)</i>	Narrative the selected piece with a scene or image; emphasis the accuracy on notes

Throughout the ensuing four-week period, Ru's development played a pivotal role in formulating her personal practice methodologies, effectively alleviating the anxiety associated with being recorded during performances. She acknowledges the enhancement of technical skills through the use of video recordings. Her proactive approach, which received commendation from the teacher-researcher, significantly bolstered her confidence in performing.

Ru dedicated herself to mastering tempo control, refining her body movements, and ensuring the precision of each note. Despite her diligent practice efforts, she also recognized the critical role of visualizing a specific scene or narrative, understanding that such imaginative engagement could greatly enrich her musical expression. This approach facilitated a deeper connection with the piece, allowing for a more nuanced and interpretive performance of the selected piano work.

5.3.5 Post-final Interview

Through the interview, Ru articulates a marked transnurture in her approach to stage performance, highlighting a significant shift from pre-performance anxiety to a state of calm and natural comfort. This evolution in her demeanor underscores a newfound level of confidence, albeit she acknowledges that this confidence remains somewhat superficial and has yet to penetrate deeply into her self-assurance with absolute certainty. Ru states:

I feel a significant transnurture in my stage presence; at least, my mindset has changed. Previously, I would become extremely nervous before even stepping onto the stage, trembling a bit during the performance. But this time, it seemed non-existent; I was calm when I went on stage, feeling more natural and comfortable... I was immersed in the performance, focusing on enjoying the music. However, this confidence might still be somewhat superficial, not yet deeply rooted in my heart with certainty.

Throughout the duration of an eight-week course, Ru identifies the acquisition of Yangge dance skills as a particularly distinctive achievement. This new skill not only invigorated her physical expression but also positively influenced her psychological state, leading to a more vibrant and livelier demeanor. The rhythmic and respiratory engagement in this dance form facilitated a deeper connection with her musical performance.

Furthermore, Ru notes that her engagement with Chinese piano compositions has enriched her cultural appreciation and curiosity. Prior to this experience, her cultural knowledge was primarily derived from passive sources such as museum exhibits, reading materials, and video content. However, the hands-on experience of learning and performing these works, coupled with the physical embodiment of the Yangge dance, has provided her with a more nuanced and immersive understanding of cultural expressions. This practical involvement has sparked a keen interest in exploring the musical styles and cultural nuances of Guangdong, illustrating a desire to integrate deeper cultural insights into her musical education.

T: Do you think performing Chinese piano works has deepened or stimulated your interest in understanding the culture?

R: Yes, it has. Previously, my understanding of culture might have come from visiting museums, reading simple materials, or watching videos. But now, having played the pieces and learned the Yangge dance, my experience and understanding have become more three-dimensional. I've also intensified my desire to understand the musical style of Guangdong and delve deeper into the cultural characteristics of Guangdong, hoping to learn more about music and culture.

Ru's reflections encapsulate a journey of personal and artistic growth, illustrating how practical engagement with music and dance can serve as a powerful conduit for cultural education and self-improvement. Her experience highlights the multifaceted benefits of integrating performance arts into cultural studies, suggesting that such an approach not only enhances technical skills but also fosters a deeper appreciation and understanding of cultural heritage.

5.3.6 Summary

Ru's transformative experience during an eight-week piano course, emphasized her engagement with the Chinese piano repertoire *The Flower Drum*. It highlights the initial challenges Ru faced, including performance anxiety and technical hurdles, and how targeted assignments led her to explore the cultural underpinnings of the piece.

Through reflective practice, including video recording and reviewing, Ru develops greater confidence and technical mastery. The narrative underscores the educational value of combining cultural immersion with musical instruction, highlighting Ru's evolution from a novice to a more confident and culturally aware performer. This approach not only enhances her musicality but also instills a profound appreciation for the cultural context surrounding the repertoire, illustrating the transformative impact of culturally informed pedagogy in music education.

Ru enhanced her musical interpretation and emotional connection by incorporating regional folk songs and the Yangge Dance. This journey underscores the importance of integrating cultural studies with performance arts in achieving a holistic understanding of musical expression and heritage.

5.4 CASE 3

5.4.1 Pre-study Interview

Fay (pseudonym), a second-year student, has dedicated nearly a decade to studying the piano. Initiating her musical exploration at the age of seven under the tutelage of a seasoned instructor, she engaged in a comprehensive curriculum that incorporated a significant number of etudes in addition to pieces required for graded piano examinations.

Reflecting on her engagement with Chinese piano repertoires, Fay acknowledged her performance of a mere four pieces within this genre. She recalled the guidance of the instructor, by vocalizing the melodies, assisted her in capturing the essence of the ethnic character inherent in the music. This pedagogical approach encompassed lessons on interpreting the musical phrasing, breath control, and rhythmic nuances, thereby enriching her understanding and execution of the pieces. She recognized that:

...I think the pentatonic scale gives a different feel compared to the usual pieces. The approach feels entirely revolutionary; it's completely different from Western compositions. Playing Chinese music seems to require greater freedom in the grasp of time and space...the space between the notes and the mood is different...When playing Chinese pieces, it feels like the imagery one must imagine becomes very extensive.

Last semester, Fay learned *Red Lilies Crimson and Bright*, an arrangement by Wang Jianzhong for solo piano, with experiences for recitals, competitions, and exams, which earned

her a comparably deep impression of this piece. However, compared to the *Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon*, which she also played previously, she admitted that:

Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon was definitely easier for me to pick up compared to the Red Lilies Crimson and Bright. Because of the environment I grew up in. In Chaozhou, one often hears Teochew opera, so there's an inherent familiarity. That's why I picked up Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon quickly and found it easier to play. When playing, it feels right; it resonates. Technically, Red lilies crimson and bright represented a breakthrough for me. However, what I found particularly challenging was capturing the style accurately. This was also reflected in feedback from judges during competitions, who noted that my performance lacked the ethnic characteristics of the Shaanxi region's music.

Motivated by her aspiration to delve into Chinese piano repertoires, Fay has strategically chosen to study *Pi Huang* by Zhang Zhao for her future endeavors. This selection underscores her ambition to acquaint herself with diverse regional styles, thereby enhancing her versatility as a performer. *Pi Huang* is celebrated for its innovative integration of ethnic musical elements with contemporary piano composition, marking a significant contribution to the evolution of modern Chinese piano music. Fay's engagement with such repertoires is indicative of her commitment to broadening her interpretative range and deepening her understanding of the intricate blend of tradition and innovation in Chinese music.

Fay undertook a cultural background study of *Pi Huang*, which facilitated the nurture of an initial conceptual image of the piece, informed by scholarly articles and online workshop clips conducted by the composer. This preparatory phase led her to annotate her score with paper notes corresponding to each section, serving as performance cues. These annotations, derived from her analytical work on the musical score, elucidated the narrative structure of the piece, enhancing her interpretive framework.

Despite this analytical clarity, a mere structural understanding and note accuracy were insufficient to fully embody the essence of *Pi Huang*. Zhang Zhao, the composer, underscored the necessity of transcending the literal musical scores to engage with the spiritual and emotive

dimensions that underpin the composition. This deeper exploration entails a fusion of technical mastery with an intuitive grasp of the composer's spiritual intentions, aiming to capture the soul of the piece beyond its notated form.

Hence, Fay's study journey with *Pi Huang* not only involves meticulous analysis of its musical architecture but also a profound engagement with the spiritual narrative interwoven with the notes, reflecting a holistic appreciation of the composition's depth and significance.

5.4.2 Initial Four-week

The primary challenge confronting Fay was the disconnect between her rigorous analytical groundwork and the expressive execution of the music. In the initial week of her engagement with *Pi Huang*, Fay's preliminary attempts at playing the entire piece revealed several technical inaccuracies, including erroneous notes, oversight of the foundational rhythm of phrases, and a misapplication of pedal techniques. Despite her diligent efforts in analytical preparation, these initial performances fell short of conveying the musical character inherent to the piece. Her performance, while reflective of her inherent gentleness, was marred by a deficiency in technical proficiency and confidence, failing to encapsulate the rich musical content of the composition.

Consequently, the pedagogical strategy shifted towards enhancing Fay's performative capabilities, specifically aiming to amplify her expressive range through targeted exercises designed to exaggerate emotional delivery. This approach emphasized the critical importance of aligning with the core emotional ambiance encapsulated in *Pi Huang*. The piece draws its melodic inspiration from traditional elements of Peking opera, specifically the Xipi and Erhuang styles, which are distinguished by their unique emotional expressions. Xipi is characterized by emotions that are relaxed, happy, lively, and passionate, serving as a

counterpoint to the more subdued and introspective mood of Erhuang, which evokes feelings of calmness, steadiness, conciseness, and seriousness.

This nuanced understanding of the emotional dichotomy inherent in Xipi and Erhuang styles necessitated a pedagogical focus on enabling Fay to navigate and express these contrasting emotional states effectively. By engaging in exercises that accentuate the emotional aspects of performance, the aim was to cultivate a deeper connection between Fay's technical execution and the expressive demands of "Pi Huang." This would not only enhance her technical proficiency but also enrich her interpretive depth, allowing her to convey the intricate emotional tapestry that defines the piece, thereby bringing the music to life with authenticity and emotional resonance.

The experimental study introduced innovative exercises that incorporated eye movements derived from Peking opera and the basic bodily interpretations associated with various characters, facilitating an immersive approach for Fay to embody the character and essence of the music she was performing. This methodological innovation aimed to bridge the gap between physical expression and musical interpretation, allowing Fay to explore a more integrated form of performance that combines both technical precision and emotional expressiveness. Table 5.5 shows Fay's progress during the initial four-week study.

Table 5.5 Fay's initial four-week study

Duration	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Week 1	Excite with anxiety; clear analytic work of her performing status	<i>...I felt extremely nervous! Excitement and anxiety coexisted... Firstly, regarding my state in class, I felt quite passionate, but in terms of my performance state, I didn't think it was particularly good. I was very worried and a bit anxious, unable to interpret the piece properly (although, indeed, I didn't manage</i>	states her status with logical expression of the deficiencies in musical expression with technique problems

to), and as I continued to play, I became even more confused. Overall, the problem still lies in my own grasp of the piece not being strong enough, and my proficiency not being high enough. There are still many deficiencies in understanding and technique that I need to ponder over more. I think a large part of this is due to my unfamiliarity with the regional style... Secondly, during the class, I discovered many areas for improvement: 1) My understanding of the background, structure, and emotional expression of this piece is not thorough enough; 2) The angle at which I strike the keys is incorrect, resulting in poor sound quality; 3) My strength is not sufficient, and my ability to control dynamics boldly and freely is lacking. I need to open up more to myself! (PM)

The connection with real life and creation; realized the components of musical charm	<i>While listening to Peking opera, I suddenly realized that it is very vivid and interesting, imbued with the breath of life. Therefore, I believe that the first step is to change myself more from an auditory perspective to better practice this piece which is highly dramatic in the style of Peking opera... The charm is a very important part. The throwing, retracting, and voice inside a sentence are indispensable. (RJ1)</i>	Vivid and interesting with a breath of life; focus on the charm with nuance details
The power from the composer's instruction; the influence of the narrative approach from the instructor; and the approach of	<i>I considered the scenes that came to mind while playing each section and received feedback from the music, which I feel represents a small step forward... When playing the introduction, Zhang Zhao mentioned that this is a process</i>	Scenes structured from the composer's hint, the teacher-researcher's narrative language; envisioning the picture of immersing herself inside; grasping the details of

envisioning the
imagery inspired
musical expression

from a mid-shot to a long shot and then to a close-up. In class, the teacher mentioned the continuous mountains by Dian Lake, conveying a sense of being away from the hustle and bustle. Integrating both, in my mind, I envisioned myself standing by Dian Lake, with the melodious flute sounds looking over the continuous mountains to looking up at the high mountains surrounded by mist and then seeing the doves flying around Dian Lake, picturesque like a poem. My previous grasp of this section was very rough, and only with a sense of imagery can the music be expressed in detail... Only with the establishment of imagery can the beauty of this section be felt, and the emotions required for this section be played more accurately. (RJ2)

expression only after with
the imagery;

Week 2	Self-criticized with strongly unsatisfied feelings about her performing status	<i>A class fraught with numerous issues... At first, I thought my understanding of the piece had deepened after listening to the recordings, but from the very beginning of the class, the emotions I expressed were inaccurate... There was no sense of imagery and places that should have been disconnected needed to be opened up, not held back. The emotions associated with the three "mi" are different, and measures 4 to 5 constitute a process from slow to fast. The pedal must be pressed down firmly without being released or changed; this kind of sound block is necessary. Listen to more Peking opera! Observe different roles! Imagine and immerse yourself in the scenes! Do not be</i>	Unsatisfied with her class performance status, self-criticized regarding musical expression, and sound effects with pedal usage; suggested that improve with three exclamation marks, expressing her strong feelings
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		<i>presumptuous! (PM)</i>	
	Paying attention to technique development	<i>I adjusted my breathing in the introduction, aligning my breath with the rhythm... I practiced slowly to correct these areas, and further practice is needed to enhance the explosive power at my fingertips. (RJ1)</i>	Breathing; slow tempo practice; enhance the fingertips' power
	Slow tempo practice with a realized body power evoking; new attempts inspired by Peking opera	<i>In this practice session, my attitude was not proactive enough... I need to practice slowly, releasing the power from my body... The sense of martial arts was not distinct enough, the robust feel of the percussion solo needed to be more intense, perhaps trying to strike down as if hitting a gong... Adjust the attitude, delve deeper into the score; also, and listen more to the singing and emotional nuances of Peking opera. (RJ2)</i>	Not proactive enough; motivated to try new attempts; wishes to get inspiration from Peking opera
Week3	Satisfied; relaxed mood; attention to the body energy usage	<i>My mood and condition are satisfactory, primarily due to the extensive practice. It is particularly important to avoid excessive body movement, as this can cause the music to waver, which would be counterproductive. (PM)</i>	Satisfied about her performing status owing to the extensive practice; making fun of herself regarding her body movement
	The importance of interpreting the music story of the selected piece	<i>The practice session was satisfactory, but there was a tendency to rush for quick results, which can lead to feeling dizzy and overwhelmed. It's important to slow down and truly feel the power conveyed by the piece from the heart. The sense of imagery wasn't clear enough, so, as the teacher mentioned, I was merely playing notes in many sections. It still requires time to accumulate and the visual impact of imagery in the mind to better form a complete performance... Trying to be the</i>	Keep in mind the importance of performing meticulously; try to capture the essentials from a director's angle, and let the music speak its own story

		<i>director for the pieces I play could prove to be an interesting approach. (RJ1)</i>	
	Enlightenment; enjoyment with the beauty of music	<i>The night's noisy piano music, with high and low parts playing octaves in succession and various voices intertwining, felt akin to the flashing swords and shadows often depicted in Peking opera's clapper talk. It made me realize that to achieve a performance of rich layers and strong expressiveness, one needs to break free from the rigid rhythms of the clapper talk itself... In this practice session, I felt good about my execution in the flowing water and slow sections, managing to bring out the "beauty" of those parts, akin to arriving in an idyllic Peach Blossom Spring, allowing one to revel in the music. (RJ2)</i>	the enlightenment from performing material with inspiration absorbed from Peking opera; enjoy the beauty of music while performing
Week 4	Self-assessment of performing; exaggerate the emotional expression; strengthen the core power	<i>My class participation was quite active, but I still need to open up more. The most crucial aspect of this lesson was to exaggerate the emotional expression throughout the entire piece... Practicing the horse stance to strengthen the core, sinking the power to find the fulcrum. (PM)</i>	Quite active while needing to be more open-minded; and exaggerate the emotional expression; body exercise for core training
	Emotional support; technique improvement; exaggerated expression exercises	<i>Emotional support can elevate the overall tone of the piano sound, imparting a greater sense of forward momentum, and making the process of pondering and solving issues less arduous... There are still many areas for improvement, with the biggest issue being the lack of balance between the small joints and the wrist... The problem remains largely technical, necessitating a stronger dynamic, and a careful</i>	Musical expression by emotional engagement; attention to the skill training while caring about the exaggerated exercise specifically

consideration of how to exaggerate expressions more specifically.

(RJ1)

Mindful engagement; body energy;	<i>Pay attention to the pedal work, ensuring it is controlled and responsive. When executing forceful accented strikes, make sure they are precise. The sense of urgency within should be constant; the effect is different when the hands act without the mind fully engaged... The use of bodily energy is insufficient; more energy can be released. (RJ2)</i>	Pedal usage; attention to the body energy usage; release of powerful body energy
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Through the use of post-class memos and reflective practice journals, Fay engaged in a process of self-reflection, documenting her experiences and insights gained from incorporating body energy into her musical performance. This introspective practice enabled her to critically assess the impact of these physical expressions on her musical interpretation, noting enhancements in both the depth and breadth of her expressive capabilities.

Fay's reflections underscore the transformative potential of integrating physical expression techniques into musical performance. The reflective process revealed that the conscious application of body energy contributed to a more nuanced and emotionally resonant performance and facilitated technical advancements in her play. Adopting a holistic approach that encompasses the physical and emotional aspects of performance, she discovered new dimensions of expressiveness and technical mastery. The initial four-week study highlights the symbiotic relationship between the physical embodiment of character and the interpretative expression of music, suggesting a promising avenue for enriching the performance experience and deepening the emotional impact of musical interpretation.

5.4.3 Mid-class Interview

Fay observed that the most profound influence over the initial four-week period of study was her evolving comprehension of the composition. The piece's inherent style and requirements significantly diverged from her initial understanding, resulting in a performance that often lacked the piece's characteristic assertiveness and fluidity. However, her interpretation and approach to the work have since deepened, particularly following her engagement with Peking opera videos, with a notable focus on the martial arts sequences. These explorations have significantly shifted her prior interpretations and have served as a considerable source of inspiration. Additionally, Fay has utilized post-class memos and reflective journals as critical tools for her practice, enabling her to strategically devise a practice plan. This methodical approach has led to a discernible enhancement in her performance capabilities. Fay also realized the importance of participating in cultural activities which provided her with fruitful imagery resources in music interpretation. She stated:

...I made a trip to Foshan and witnessed a lion dance performance. Initially, after listening to Peking opera, particularly the martial arts segments, I wasn't profoundly moved. However, after watching the lion dance, especially after experiencing the live performance of the gong and drum ensemble, I suddenly felt a deepening of the sense of imagery. This was particularly true for the scenes where two lions compete for the green, which became vividly represented in my mind while playing.

For the forthcoming four-week study period, Fay intends to pay more attention to concentrate on self-exploration, seeking to harmonize technical advancement with musical expressiveness. She aims to meticulously construct her interpretation of the selected piece through this integrated approach. Concurrently, she has the opportunity to attend a lecture by the composer soon, which will furnish her with invaluable firsthand material for continued scholarly investigation.

5.4.4 Subsequent Four-week

Fay started her subsequent study with a cultural practice activity that allowed her to the city where she grew up to explore the cultural connotations that underscore the cultural significance and emotional resonance, inspiring interest in extensive research on Chinese culture through music study.

She reviewed the Chiuchow opera which performed in the Chiuchow dialect, is one of the three main regional operatic genres in Guangdong, and Chiuchow *daluogu* (gong-and drum) music's influence in shaping her school music education in each phase from kindergarten onward. She acknowledged that:

The local environment nurtures its people, and these traditional cultures are deeply ingrained in my heart, benefiting my musical performance. Playing Chinese music crucially requires a sense of imagery and charm, and the local customs, traditional culture, and ambiance of Chiuchow precisely provide support for my performance.

During the subsequent four-week study, Fay was highly concentrating on the conveyance of emotions and an expression of culture. Table 5.6 shows Fay's progress during the subsequent four-week study.

Table 5.6 Fay's subsequent four-week study

Duration	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Week 5	Dissemination of	... <i>The dissemination of traditional</i>	Cultural practice; the

	culture through emotional resonance with musical expression	<i>music culture has enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the language of music ... Through studying and applying these cultural elements, I have come to realize that performance transcends the mere combination of notes and techniques; it is, more profoundly, a conveyance of emotions and an expression of culture. This learning process has also equipped me with the skills to integrate traditional cultural elements into my music, enriching my performances with a depth and resonance that bridges the past with the present. (PM)</i>	importance of convey culture through music expression;
	Sound effects; body energy; breath	<i>In general, I believe I did well in producing the desired sound effects. The area where I fall short is in the dissipation of energy; this refers to the release of breath and physical power during playing, rather than a decline in morale. (RJ1)</i>	Satisfied with the sound effects; concerns the body energy with breath
	Psychological status; self-assessment;	<i>In this practice session, my mood was good and my attitude positive, but I still lack in sight-reading, leading to hesitations in certain transitions which, in turn, caused impatience. Specifically, during the memorization and slow sections, I encountered stumbling blocks. I think the main issue is not fully understanding the transitions and their mechanisms, resulting in frantic trial and error. (RJ2)</i>	Positive psychological status; encounter technique problems with memorizing
Week 6	The importance of immersion; body power; cultural significant;	<i>I've learned quite a lot and identified some issues as well: The most crucial task is to memorize the score ... perform without the script and express myself... I need to open up more, exaggerate further, and immerse myself deeper. Forget who I am and don't just be myself; sink into the drama, and only by thrilling myself can I make others empathize... Avoid</i>	Memorizing; immersing into music as the role character; body energy usage; triumphant;

		<i>shrugging shoulders to increase force, as it causes shoulder soreness and arm stiffness, leading to blockages in several areas where the body's strength cannot be effectively utilized... The finale lacks a sense of triumphant conviction; practice squatting in horse stance. (PM)</i>	
	the connection between technical memorizing and emotional expressing; release the psychological pressure	<i>A strength in my approach was successfully memorizing the score. However, there remain areas for improvement. Memorization is one thing, but often, once the score is in my head, the emotional expression doesn't come through in my hands, resulting in a dry performance. Just as I begin to get into the right state, I quickly lose it again... In terms of memorization, I need to practice being more courageous. I shouldn't put too much pressure or constraints on myself, overthinking things. I should focus on expressing my own music. (RJ1)</i>	Memorizing successfully; the correlation between technical memorizing and emotional expression; release of pressure
	The importance of composer's instructions	<i>Prof. Zhang Zhao particularly emphasized during the masterclass on Pi Huang that one must adhere strictly to the score, as it is written with great detail. One should not play Pi Huang haphazardly... During practice, I made some adjustments to the entire score's pedaling in accordance with the music, as well as modifications to the rhythm's dynamics and intensity. (RJ2)</i>	Review the whole piece to underscore the composer's instruction from model performing; adjust from pedaling, rhythm, dynamic, and intensity
Week 7	A deep exploration of the selected piece underscores the composer's instructions; emphasizing the detailed information disseminated through the piece	<i>Today's class was relatively good, but my immersion into the sound was insufficient. It feels necessary to revisit the piece, including its creative background and imagery, to gain a deeper understanding once again... Effort still needs to be applied to the rhythm of the piece, with some accents not fully understood. Especially after listening to Zhang Zhao's lecture, I realized my attention</i>	A deep review on the selected piece, especially with the composer's illustration on this piece, including his creative imagery with profound cultural significant

		<p><i>to the score was not meticulous enough. It is essential to adhere strictly to the score, as it is written with great detail, and avoid playing indiscriminately. (PM)</i></p>	
	<p>Set up the <i>safe exit</i> for emergency blank in performance; technique development and emotional resonance convey the cultural spirit</p>	<p><i>In this practice session, the positive aspect was correcting the memorization errors and being able to play through the score smoothly. Areas for improvement include, firstly, moments of mental blankness where I find myself unable to continue, which reminds me of the need to establish some "safety exits" for such situations. Secondly, the presto section still lacks proficiency and requires repeated practice to consider how to perform it better. Lastly, in the finale, the sound effect was not strong or impactful enough. Perhaps it does not require too much sorrow; instead, a sense of eternal, radiant spirit should naturally emerge. (RJ1)</i></p>	<p>Memorizing smoothly; mental blank; structure safe exits to hint the performance; enhance the presto and finale part, with technique development and emotional resonance</p>
	<p>Slow tempo practice, the change of psychological status due to the final exams approaching</p>	<p><i>The practice session was not ideal, as I was easily confused and too focused on memorizing the score, failing to invest emotions into the piece. With the final exams approaching, there is a sense of anxiety and tension in my emotional and psychological state... The positive aspect was the smooth memorization of the score. Slow practice in sections like the fast triplets and presto has improved finger clarity and articulation, with noticeable effects. (RJ2)</i></p>	<p>Too much emphasis on memorizing the notes without concerning emotional expressing; anxiety and pressures because the final exams approaching, slow practice,</p>
Week 8	<p>Positive self-assessment</p>	<p><i>Today marks the final lesson, leaving me with mixed feelings. I am happy to have concluded the study of "Pi Huang," yet I'm somewhat melancholic about the swift passage of the term. However, my performance and engagement levels were present, showcasing the most concentrated</i></p>	<p>Mixed feeling on the concluding lesson; overall improve significantly; stressed her own idea in interpreting the selected piece</p>

energy and explosive power in the last two to three weeks of practice... Two months may seem both short and long, but it's during this time that my overall playing has improved significantly. From initially stumbling and barely understanding to now being able to convey the power that the score provides, I feel this is a commendable achievement for myself. I hope to truly showcase my best performance in the final presentation, playing Pi Huang with my own ideas and ingenuity. (PM)

Precise exercises including review the musical sheet thoroughly	<i>During this practice session, my attitude was earnest, and my focus was sharp, particularly on improving completeness and tackling specific technical challenges. Reflecting on previous notes and visualizing the imagery contributed to my practice... After memorizing the score, it was still necessary to refer back to the music sheet, continuing to play and observe it to further perfect my piece, solidifying its presence in my mind. (RJ1)</i>	Completeness; technical challenges; further exploration on the selected piece
the importance of reviewing all the post-memos, practicing reflective journals; own thoughts on the selected piece	<i>This practice was conducted according to the score's prescribed sequence, with targeted practice on specific sections. It also included a review of previous class content, summaries, and reflection journals, reconstructing a more fluid and comprehensive sense of imagery. In my view, Pi Huang is a composition brimming with vitality and expressiveness, exhibiting a fine balance between strength and gentility. Thus, a strong sense of conviction is essential in performing this piece to convey its essence effectively. Precision is undoubtedly a requirement to better present oneself and to accurately deliver the message of the score to the audience's ears. (RJ2)</i>	Review her notes from post-memos and reflective journals to strengthen in deepen the understanding of the selected piece; express her own thoughts and feelings about the piece

Fay's subsequent four-week journey with the selected piece *Pi Huang*, demonstrated a highly focused and serious approach, prioritizing the enhancement of performance integrity and the meticulous practice of sections presenting technical difficulties. This process was enriched by revisiting previous annotations and mentally reconstructing the visual aspects associated with the piece. Despite successful memorization efforts, the necessity of consulting the score to refine and perfect the rendition was underscored, ensuring a comprehensive internalization of the music.

The practice methodology was systematically structured around the piece-designated arrangement, incorporating a strategic, section-by-section rehearsal. This was complemented by a reflective review of past instructional content, post-class memos, and reflective journals, facilitating a reimagined, smoother, and more holistic visual and auditory representation of the piece.

Fay structured her own thoughts on *Pi Huang*, which is characterized as a composition of vibrant life force and compelling expressiveness, striking a harmonious balance between robustness and subtlety. She also realized the execution of this piece necessitates a pronounced sense of conviction and precision, critical for authentically expressing the work's essence and effectively communicating its thematic content to the audience.

5.4.5 Post-final Interview

Fay evaluated her concluding performance with a score of 80 out of 100, attributing this primarily to her successful execution of the correct notes. However, she acknowledged a deficiency in the full emotional expression and understanding conveyed through her performance. She attributed this shortfall to feelings of nervousness and the pressure associated with performance anxiety. This anxiety, she noted, paradoxically risks the loss of greater

achievements, reminiscent of the proverbial sacrifice of the watermelon for sesame seeds. Despite these challenges, she recognized a substantial transnurture in her approach to performance practice. This evolution has enabled her to engage with the music more confidently, driven by a newfound ability to visualize the imagery inherent in her performance.

Fay thought the learning outcomes from this study have been profoundly enriching. Initially, the completion of the piece in its fundamental entirety was achieved, followed by the realization that approximately 90% of the notated expressions could be successfully performed. Furthermore, she adopted a more open-minded approach, immersing herself in the emotions and characters within the music, which significantly facilitated her ability to let go of inhibitions. Additionally, the practice of post-class memos and reflective journals has been instrumental in enhancing her understanding of how to devise effective plans, thereby increasing her efficiency and enabling more focused and purposeful practice. Moreover, attending composers' public lectures and hearing the composers' personal insights on the creation and performance hints of the selected work has been immensely valuable.

To develop an understanding of Chinese piano compositions, Fay insisted that is imperative to first acquaint oneself with the stories behind the pieces. This involves watching videos to learn about the relevant cultural context and taking notes to deepen one's comprehension of the cultural background associated with the compositions. Secondly, an analysis of the composer's creative intentions and thoughts behind the music is essential for achieving emotional resonance during performance. Beyond these steps, Fay suggested the necessary to integrate personal interpretations into Chinese works, creating a sense of imagery and performing accordingly.

Cultural engagement can provide the necessary material for constructing this imagery. For example, after experiencing a traditional drum and gong performance, Fay gained a concrete understanding of vibrant and lively imagery, as well as the watching of lion dances and the

excitement associated with drumming and gong-beating. This experience can invigorate one's spirit and break through previously insurmountable limitations in performance. Fay expressed her interest in studying Chinese repertoires. She stated:

...After frequently engaging with Western pieces, the desire to explore Chinese music grew, partly due to my belief that Chinese works offer a wealth of aspects to uncover, particularly in terms of cultural background. My keen interest in history and the value I place on music culture merit in-depth investigation. Playing Chinese compositions allows me to savor distinct flavors, such as varying regional styles and types of music. I find these elements immensely fascinating, and they serve to deepen my love for Chinese culture, motivating me to pursue my studies further.

Through the words she stated, it can be found that cultural awareness and identity have been cultivated through the exploration of playing Chinese piano repertoires.

5.4.6 Summary

Fay's study journey has yielded significant insights into the approach and understanding of musical performance, particularly regarding Chinese piano repertoires. Fay's adoption of an open-minded approach allowed her to deeply engage with the emotional and character aspects of the music, thus overcoming previous inhibitions. The use of post-class memos and reflective journals significantly enhanced her planning skills, improving efficiency and focus in practice. Attending public lectures by composers and absorbing their insights on musical creation and performance provided invaluable understanding and inspiration.

Fay emphasizes the importance of familiarizing oneself with the stories and cultural contexts behind Chinese compositions as a foundational step towards understanding. This process involves engaging with multimedia resources to deepen cultural comprehension and analyzing composers' intentions to achieve emotional resonance during performance. She advocates for the integration of personal interpretations into the music, creating vivid imagery

that enriches the performance experience. Experiential learning, such as attending traditional performances, has enabled Fay to incorporate vibrant and dynamic elements into her playing, breaking through performance barriers and fostering a deeper appreciation for Chinese musical culture.

5.5 CASE 4

5.5.1 Pre-study Interview

Lana (pseudonym) commenced her piano instruction at the age of four within a kindergarten setting, motivated by an interest devoid of aspirations for stringent professional training. Her engagement in piano studies was interrupted during her middle and high school years, attributed to an overwhelming academic workload, leading to a hiatus of approximately four years. Subsequently, Lana resolved to pursue music as her major, subsequently receiving professional training from a high school music instructor during her second year in the same high school.

Reflecting upon her previous piano education, Lana recognized the pedagogical approach as liberally structured, permitting her autonomy in selecting the compositions she wished to explore. Despite this flexibility, she acknowledged that a significant portion of her repertoire originated from grade examination syllabi, supplemented by selections from alternative sources.

Lana expressed a lack of enthusiasm for Chinese piano compositions, having only performed three arrangements of folk songs at a rudimentary level. She initially critiqued these pieces for their rustic and buoyant characteristics, distinguishing them markedly from the Western compositions she predominantly engaged with. Nonetheless, her perspective

underwent a transnurture upon discerning cultural depth within the Chinese piano repertoire during her university studies, indicating a newfound appreciation. She stated:

“It has become evident to me that phenomena previously perceived as weird are now accessible and comprehensible. This evolution of understanding appears to have facilitated the discovery of significant insights. Recently, I listened a piano recital where a premiere of commissioned work of Chinese piano repertoire was presented. During this auditory experience, I was profoundly impacted by the expressive qualities inherent in Chinese musical compositions, an encounter that served as an exhilarating epiphany.

“Despite my unfamiliarity with both the thematic elements and the musical score of this piece, from its commencement, the melody resonated with me, exhibiting a memorable quality that necessitates only a single exposure for retention. Throughout the progression of the piece, its multifaceted expressiveness seemed to propel my engagement forward. Particularly striking was the moment when the composition reached its zenith of splendor, eliciting an emotional response so intense that it verged on tearfulness, induced by a depth of feeling that remained inexplicable. This experience served as a pivotal moment, challenging and ultimately altering my preconceived notions regarding the stylistic limitations of Chinese musical compositions.

Lana’s selected piece was *Numa Ame*, an original contemporary Chinese piano piece by composer Zhang Zhao, as her piece of focus since the previous semester. Her engagement with this selection transcends mere surface-level interpretation, venturing instead into a profound journey of technical enhancement and aesthetic refinement. Additionally, she is preparing to showcase this chosen piece in two piano competitions, underscoring her commitment to mastering its complexities and nuances.

5.5.2 Initial Four-week

Lana has been familiar with and proficient in the meticulous teaching and detailed handling of the selected piece since last semester, however, after a break for a few months, upon re-perform this piece, the nuanced details within various segments were performed in a manner both rough and imprecise. She noted the paradox that simplicity in music demands a direct and

unblemished mode of expression, which proves challenging. Nevertheless, she conceded that her habitual performance often renders certain aspects unduly complex and embellished, thereby obscuring the core significance intended to be communicated through the music. Table 5.7 shows Lana's reflections during the initial four-week study.

Table 5.7 Lana's initial four-week study

Duration	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Week 1	Anxiety; unsatisfied with performing	<i>I had never tried taking a professional course in the form of recorded lessons, so I was quite worried about not doing well... Many minor flaws have emerged from long periods without practice plus blind confidence, and some wrong notes also need to be corrected. (PM)</i>	Nervous to perform with video-recording; not satisfied about her performing
	Psychological preparing for the competition; the phenomenon of procedural memory supersedes conscious deliberation	<i>Simulate the state of mind required for piano competition performance, where in the lyrical sections, my keystrokes were somewhat hesitant, lacking in decisiveness... Being overly familiar with the piece led to a performance that was too hasty and overly flamboyant, with a lack of meticulous attention to detail and handling due to excessive self-confidence. (RJ1)</i>	Preparing for the competition; Overfamiliarity leads to negligence;
	Challenge occurred; recording practice; slow down the tempo with	<i>Practicing a piece for such a long time, I've found that sometimes it can lead to more issues... Familiarity with Numa Ame predisposed me towards</i>	Lost the freshness and enthusiasm for exploring the work in practice; the importance of recording;

	proactive thinking and listening	<i>complacency and neglect, thereby revealing the sections that were cursorily addressed and lacked finesse. However, through the processes of recording and diligent practice, prompt detection and rectification of these deficiencies were facilitated. This methodical approach enabled the piece "Numa Ame" to undergo a gradual refinement... The main focus was on slow practice (RJ2)</i>	slow practice
Week 2	Emphasis the importance from teacher's guidance with demonstration; integrate physical technique with musical expression to improve performance quality	<i>I felt more relaxed and the nervousness associated with facing the camera dissipated... teacher demonstrated it for me, I gained a conceptual understanding, but my execution still lacks precision... I need to pay more attention to the sensation of touching the keys during regular practice... It's essential to practice calmly and slowly, making sure every marking on the score is accurately executed... I struggled with the dynamics of the octaves, and when the teacher showed how to better exert force using a "flicking" motion, I initially couldn't grasp the feeling. However, after the demonstration, my attempts felt more effortless, and the sound became more focused. (PM)</i>	Get used to being captured with the camera; emphasis the importance from teacher's demonstration;
	Dramatic musical expression; emphasis the pedagogic approach to form the dedicated execution	<i>a competition is approaching, I am currently concentrating on musical contrast and tone color, as well as the accuracy of notes and rhythm mastery... This cannot be achieved without slow practice and careful score reading. (RJ1)</i>	Musical structure with content contrast alongside the fruitful tone color change; the importance of dedicated execution from the score to proactive thinking with listening
	Technique requirement; align hands with the mind	<i>during the competition, a judge commented on the precision of my keystrokes. I pondered this for a long time, sometimes, my mind is ready for each note, but my hands can't keep up, lacking in finger control. It's crucial to feel and master the control over the</i>	Precision of keystrokes; the disconnecting between hands and the mind

		<i>force of finger touches, developing it into a habit. (RJ2)</i>	
Week3	Technique and aesthetic challenges; inadequate breath control	<i>I felt as if Numa Ame had become somewhat unfamiliar to me after playing it for an extended period, leading to several technical issues: firstly, I now tend to conclude with a "weaker" finish on several melodic progressions, which feels somewhat uncomfortable and overly embellished. Secondly, the sound should naturally emanate from the force of the fingertips without any superfluous movements. Thirdly, a lack of rhythmic and dance-like sensation, and I tend to rush as I play further. My teacher noted that my breathing is too shallow, advising relaxation of the arms, deeper breathing, and keeping the shoulders from rising. It's crucial to adjust breathing timely. (PM)</i>	Uncomfortable ornate and lacked vigor on weak concluding melodic progressions; the power of fingertips; breathing was too shallow, advising relaxation of the arms, deeper breathing, and keeping the shoulders from rising. It's crucial to adjust breathing timely.
	Fluency with slow movement; Qi Flow; musical breath with expression	<i>Slowing down the first part of the performance might have contributed to the music's lack of fluidity, as it tests the performer's control over breathing and touch. I have yet to master the coordination between slow breathing and the notes, lacking integration between the two... (RJ1)</i>	Keep the pace with fluency in a slow tempo; Qi Flow; concentrate on breathing with note playing
	Reconnection with the emotional resonance; deliberate emphasis on slow rehearsal techniques;	<i>Playing after listening the recordings helped me gradually rediscover the feeling I used to have for this piece. On this foundation, I tried to integrate my current feelings into the piece, though some parts still lack finesse. I experimented numerous times with the beginning of the first part, searching for the most comfortable touch and listening experience. This session also focused on slow practice to enhance the piece's refinement, requiring further modifications in many areas. (RJ2)</i>	Recalled the feelings about this piece; slow tempo practice;

Week 4	Instructional guidance for competition; the improvement of musical expression; technical approach;	<i>This lesson focused on ensuring the integrity of the piece and refining the beginning and ending, in preparation for the competition this weekend. The teacher emphasized that a start is crucial for making a positive first impression on the judges; thus, the opening and the initial sections require meticulous attention. After adjustments, the first part has significantly improved in terms of overall breathing and musical flow...For the allegro sections, teacher suggested practicing finger agility and strength on the piano lid, emphasizing the need for me to ponder over and promptly correct my technique for rapid passages. (PM)</i>	Preparing for competition; paying attention to the teacher-research's instructions introspection and swift rectification of technical approaches for swift passages
	Self-introspect on musical expression with technique exercises	<i>the overall musicality and breath control now feel much smoother and more comfortable during performance...However, the grasp on some revised details remains imprecise and hesitant, indicating a need for segmented slow practice. My finger dexterity is lacking, a result of habits formed in childhood, leading to a sense of poor finger initiative and laziness. I recall the teacher stressing the importance of lifting fingers, relaxing the palm, and maintaining relaxation while playing. (RJ1)</i>	Feedback from daily practice with the link to the teaching content
	Clear strategies for competition and further practice	<i>My overall grasp of the piece has improved, and focusing on the details could enhance it further. There has been insufficient practice in sections; besides working on the piece's wholeness, each segment needs more practice, followed by integrating them after slow practice. Simulating this afternoon's competition and drawing from the experiences of the previous two contests, I aim to enrich the expression of the first part's content in</i>	Positive feedback; realized the insufficient practice for the detail sections; self-reflect on previous competition experience, and structure the performing strategies for the coming competition

Lana identified a deficit in her motivation to practice *Numa Ame*, attributing this to the extensive durations spent rehearsing the piece. The extensive familiarity acquired through continuous interaction with the composition precipitated a tendency towards complacency and neglect, resulting in the execution of certain passages in a perfunctory manner devoid of meticulousness. However, the integration of recording methodologies and deliberate practice strategies, augmented by insights derived from the instructor's feedback, enabled prompt recognition and rectification of these deficiencies.

This structured regimen of critique and improvement facilitated the progressive refinement of *Numa Ame*, illustrating the intricate balance between familiarity and the necessity for continuous critical engagement in the musical practice process.

5.5.3 Mid-class Interview

Lana acknowledges her interpretation of *Numa Ame* has shown signs of maturation. The initial four weeks of the study underscore instructional sessions enriched the comprehension of the musical pieces in question, fostering a nuanced perspective on the musical interpretation that was neglected in the previous experience. However, the protracted duration of singular-piece practice sessions has led to a predominance of fatigue in Lana's rehearsal experience. Despite a lack of intrinsic motivation for excessive practice, the looming competitive engagements necessitate an escalation in practice intensity, thereby engendering a degree of psychological strain.

Nevertheless, in reflecting upon the lessons and insights gleaned from piano practice, it becomes evident that Lana's predisposition towards kinetic expression—attributable to a deficiency in verbal articulation skills—renders her musical performance distinctly expressive.

Concurrently, the discipline of extensive writing has facilitated a modest enhancement in her ability to articulate, enabling the externalization of thoughts that were once confined to the realm of internal contemplation, thereby simplifying the expression of previously inarticulable ideas.

Lana recognized that engaging in cultural practice activities catalyzes the genesis of interpretative ideas in performance, potentially shaped by the immediate environmental and emotional resonance conditions. She stated:

The experiential state elicited during performance holds considerable significance for me, given the profound interconnectedness between my musical expression and cognitive processes. An illustrative instance of this dynamic is my visit to the Cantonese opera museum, where the immersion in an environment resonant with the ancient and traditional ethos of Chinese music fostered a sense of tranquility within me. This shift in experiential state, precipitated by the cultural and historical milieu, has the potential to assimilate into and subsequently augment my approach to musical performance.

During the cultural practice week, Lana was fortunate to go back to her hometown, the northeast part of China. The discourse on the ramifications of regional cultural disparities reveals a personal trans nurture contingent upon geographical context: in Guangdong, Lana regards herself as extroverted, whereas a return to the Northeast engenders a transition towards introversion. The warmth and hospitality inherent to the inhabitants of the Northeast, coupled with their inclination to present their finest aspects to outsiders, underscore the profound influence of regional culture. Moreover, experienced during skiing—characterized by the juxtaposition of warmth and coldness as sunlight reflects off the snow-laden ground—mirrors the ambiance encapsulated in *Numa Ame* exerts a tangible influence.

Upon recognizing the power of envisioning the picture, Lana endeavors to imbue her music with a semblance of vitality through the invocation of pertinent associative thought processes. She aspires to render music more accessible and comprehensible, bridging the gap between its perceived complexity and the audience's grasp. This ambition informs her performative

practice, guiding the integration of these reflections into her musical presentation for further study.

5.5.4 Subsequent four-week

In the subsequent four-week, Lana invested her energies into the nuanced articulation of her profound emotional experiences through the medium of musical performance. This period was marked by a concerted effort to intertwine her expressive endeavors with a rigorous exploration of the rich cultural narratives inherent in the composition's notations.

Lana's commitment to her craft extended beyond mere technical proficiency, embracing a holistic approach that sought to imbue her performances with a depth of narrative and emotional complexity. By employing a variety of interpretative strategies and imbuing her music with vivid storytelling, she endeavored to forge a deep emotional connection with her audience. This dual focus on emotional conveyance and cultural exploration within her performative practice aimed to enrich the audience's experience, fostering a resonant and multifaceted engagement with the music. Table.5.8 indicated Lana's study effort during the subsequent four-week study.

Table 5.8 Lana's subsequent four-week study

Duration	Experiential Statements	Contents	Exploratory Notes
Week 5	Cultural learning experience; Chinese musical instruments; mimic sounds; the visual allure of costumes; inspired the rich, sensory and cultural encounter intertwined with the selected piece	<p><i>the opportunity for cultural learning presented an invaluable experience. Within the exhibition hall in the Cantonese opera museum, what captivated me most were various ancient Chinese musical instruments, previously encountered only within the pages of music history books. These instruments, both alien and familiar, were vividly displayed within glass cases. Although there was no live performance, the timbre of each instrument could be experienced through headphones provided at the display, evoking a sensation akin to finally meeting a long-time online acquaintance in person and engaging in a direct conversation... This experience was particularly resonant given that Numa.Ame incorporates segments that mimic the sounds of different instruments, including Chinese drums and flutes, highlighting the diversity and interconnectivity of musical expression. Beyond the instruments, what drew my attention were the various vibrant and glittering costumes. A visually appealing stage requires not only exquisite sound and storytelling but also impactful visual effects for an immediate, intuitive impression. The costumes of Cantonese opera, with their dazzling variety, mirror the expressive</i></p>	The invaluable experience of cultural learning; the Chinese instruments and costumes in shaping the musical characters; inspired the imagery reminiscent of <i>Numa.Ame</i> ; shared essence of Chinese musical culture

		<p><i>dynamism of the music itself. The specific colors and styles corresponding to different roles created vivid, immediate imagery, reminiscent of the segment in Numa Ame that evokes the imagery of ethnic minorities dancing and singing around a bonfire. This parallel underscore the shared essence of Chinese musical culture, leaving us with precious auditory memories. (PM)</i></p>	
	<p>Aesthetic perception; enhance aesthetic sensibility;</p>	<p><i>It's been a while since I played the piano at home; the pitch is a bit off, and the keys feel strange, but the music produced is noticeably processed. The images in my mind need to be clearer and more precise before I start playing again. Some of the keystrokes are too heavy, lacking a sense of space, missing a bit of artistic conception. There needs to be some room left for imagination, not to play too rigidly. (RJ1)</i></p>	<p>Change the practice environment; positive feedback for musical quality; seeking for the sense of space;</p>
	<p>Slow rehearsal practice; enhance technique ability; body energy</p>	<p><i>...pressing the chords too firmly without lifting my hands to relax in time, and my palms being too tense. slow practice over these past few days, there have been a lot fewer wrong notes in the second part, and the rhythm has also become much more stable. However, more thought is needed to master the control of strength. (RJ2)</i></p>	<p>Self-reflect on physical movement; technical improvement; tension with the body energy</p>
Week 6	<p>The power of teacher's influence</p>	<p><i>The teacher suggested that since I desire significant musical changes, I should play more freely and uninhibitedly. The coolness effect was well achieved, and the teacher mentioned being able to feel the cold as I had described in previous interview. However, my staccato is still not satisfactory; the method of pressing the keys with my fingers is</i></p>	<p>Concerns the instructions, feedbacks and demonstrations from teacher perspective</p>

incorrect, my palms are too tense and not relaxed enough, leading to increased fatigue as I play. The teacher continuously demonstrated and assisted with my playing technique, gradually helping me find a better sensation for pressing the keys. (PM)

	Pursue musical expression with innermost feeling from the bottom of heart; to control the extent of the musical structure	<i>I want to change the way I play Numa Ame, adjust my mindset, and play with my heart, without being too constrained. The sense of imagery and musicality has improved from before. Although I aim for a more spontaneous and free performance, it should not exceed a certain extent as many rhythms towards the end tend to become unstable, and the finale lacks drive. (RJ1)</i>	care about the musical structure with balance while pursue the musical expression from the innermost feeling
	text-oriented; metronome assist; underscore the musicality	<i>Practicing the allegro sections with a metronome revealed that many notes were missed when playing quickly before. It's still necessary to follow the score and ensure every note is played... While using the metronome, musicality should not be neglected. (RJ2)</i>	text-oriented, use the metronome to assist the rhythm with musicality
Week 7	Understanding the music behind the score;	<i>Experiencing another student's performance of Numa Ame in composer Zhang Zhao's lecture, which differed entirely from my interpretation, was enlightening. Zhang continuously emphasized the importance of accurate score reading, advocating for a freedom of expression that is predicated upon a precise understanding of the musical score. This advice resonates significantly with my current state of playing Numa Ame, where many details and rhythms from the score have become blurred, necessitating a renewed engagement with the</i>	The importance of accurate reading, in terms of understanding the musical meaning with the composer's intent emotional with spirit expression.

		<i>score reading. (PM)</i>	
	Accuracy with musicality and its spirituality behind the score	<i>Having grown accustomed to a rough approach, I find myself unable to play without constantly referring to the score... I recognized the need for a stricter adherence to score reading, understanding that uninhibited expression must be founded upon accurate interpretation of the score. (RJ1)</i>	Re-read the musical score with a deep exploration on accuracy, underscore the musicality and spirituality
	Positive feedback in improving the accuracy of the score with musical expression	<i>Overall, the experience has been somewhat improved; with increased accuracy in score reading, the music no longer sounds as peculiar... Diligent score reading significantly aids in ensuring accuracy and enhancing musical expression. (RJ2)</i>	Improvement of accuracy in the selected piece, enhancing musical expression
Week 8	Interpret the work her own; immersion with concentration in musical expression underscores the cultural significance behind the score	<i>Time has swiftly passed, leaving me with a profound sense of having learned much, yet aware of the vast expanse of knowledge still awaiting my exploration. Over eight weeks, "Numa Ame" transitioned from being merely an acquaintance to an integral part of my essence, establishing an inseparable bond characterized by mutual affection. The importance of focus during performance cannot be overstated, as the inability to concentrate fails to resonate with the audience. Enhanced focus and immersion, especially during examinations, might alleviate some of the nervousness associated with public performances. The mastery of dynamic control throughout the piece requires further refinement to improve its overall cohesion. (PM)</i>	A sense of feeling changed, swift from other' to my own on interpreting the selected piece; summary of the essence of performing
	The stability of the music quality; completeness of the piece	<i>...concentrated on polishing specific details, a comprehensive play-through revealed numerous omissions, indicating a lack of stability in the piece's integrity.</i>	Polish the details, focus on the stability and completeness of the selected piece

<i>Following the meticulous detailing, it is time to memorize the score to enhance the entirety of the performance. (RJ1)</i>		
A detailed review process before the examination; reveals the mature potential ability of the student in presenting the selected piece	<i>Playing from the score and ensuring smoother transitions between sections is crucial. Repeated practice of segments prone to memory lapses before committing them to memory is essential. The integrity of the piece no longer presents significant issues; it is the distribution of dynamics throughout, particularly the underpowered finale, that requires more balanced allocation. The overall performance quality has markedly improved. Before the examination, a further review of the score will ensure the accuracy of my memorization. (RJ2)</i>	Review the whole piece with attention to structural design, and musical expression and ensure the accuracy of the score before the examination

Lana's developmental trajectory, as documented in her post-lesson summaries and reflective journals, evidences her steadfast determination and zeal to articulate the profound emotional landscape associated with *Numa Ame*. Her journey is characterized by a meticulous focus on acquiring technical proficiency, guided by the insightful demonstrations provided by the teacher-researcher.

Furthermore, the encouragement extended by the composer, advocating for a meticulous and accurate interpretation of the score, significantly enhances her drive to delve into the cultural depths and intrinsic values underlying the music. This approach not only augments her motivation but also emphasizes the importance of musicality and spiritual resonance, fostering a holistic understanding of the piece's cultural significance thereby fostering a comprehensive appreciation of the composition's inherent value and its broader cultural and emotional resonance.

5.5.5 Post-final Interview

Lana appraised her final performance with a score of 80 out of 100, acknowledging minor discrepancies in the execution of sections that demanded high technical proficiency. Nonetheless, she experienced a profound shift in her approach to performing, marked by an intense concentration and dedication to the piece's rendition. This shift was characterized by an automatic, almost instinctual drive to perform, unencumbered by prior concerns predominantly related to her capacity for effectively communicating the piece's emotional and musical subtleties. Rather than being bogged down by analytical considerations, Lana allowed herself to be guided by the raw emotions and imagery intrinsic to the music, focusing exclusively on the essence emanating from her deepest convictions and thoughts. This intuitive method markedly improved both her satisfaction with playing and the auditory enjoyment of the audience.

Lana attributes this notable evolution in her performance presence to a deliberate focus on refining her technical skills, recognizing that a robust technical foundation is essential for accurately realizing her artistic vision, thereby elevating the performance beyond simple sound reproduction. Furthermore, Lana thought the cultural practice left an indelible mark, altering her learning dynamic through the cultural excursion. She admitted that her personal performance committed closely to her state of being, the cultural practice offered a fresh perspective both intriguing and enlightening fostering her motivation for deeper cultural explorations.

Lana's impression of Chinese piano repertoires was significantly different from the Western classical pieces. Chinese piano repertoires offer a grounded and relatable nature, with emotional expressions that feel profoundly human and rich in narrative that may at times seem less accessible. Playing such a piece transcends mere adherence to the notes; it involves an

exchange of emotions, a crucial resonance of feelings embodying a shared cultural resonance that also enriches the musical experience. She elaborates:

...When I encounter a piece that resonates with me, my desire to understand its cultural context intensifies. Previously, ignorance might have bred indifference, but with knowledge comes a deeper curiosity to explore not just the piece but also the cultural narratives it carries. I am keen to perform music from various regions, ethnicities, and cultures, finding it fascinating. Sometimes, by engaging with the music of one ethnic group, you uncover something unique, prompting a question of what intriguing discoveries other cultures hold. This exploration is not just rewarding but also fills me with anticipation for what might be uncovered next.

5.5.5 Summary

Lana's study journey on the extended periods of practice on a singular musical piece have been observed to potentially engender additional challenges. The familiarity engendered by prolonged engagement with the piece led to a predisposition towards complacency and oversight, manifesting in segments that were superficially addressed and lacked refinement. Nevertheless, the employment of recording techniques alongside rigorous practice with teacher's instructions allowed for the timely identification and amendment of these shortcomings.

The cultural excursion significantly alters the educational landscape, transitioning from the monotonous regime of piano instruction, characterized by its spatial confinement and the execution of repetitive tasks, to an invigorating educational experience. This diversification, introduced through engagement with cultural activities, acts as a catalyst for enriched academic pursuits. Additionally, Lana's attendance at a lecture by the composer, wherein the creative motivations and interpretative directives were elucidated by the composer personally, substantially informed and refined her analytical approach to the musical score. This exposure marked a pivotal shift in her performance methodology—from a process dominated by the

meticulous consideration of each note and its subsequent execution, resulting in an analytical and somewhat detached mode of engagement, to an approach defined by complete absorption and pleasure in the act of performance.

Lana's approach to encountering music that resonates with her highlights the importance of cultural context in the cultivation of a musician's identity. Her shift from indifference to curiosity underscores a journey toward cultural literacy, where understanding the cultural background of a piece significantly enhances its interpretation. The distinctiveness of Chinese piano repertoires lies in their ability to evoke a profound sense of humanity and relatability through emotionally charged narratives, thus facilitating a deeper emotional exchange between the performer and the music.

Through engaging with music from Chinese cultural origins, Lana not only broadens her musical repertoire but also contributes to the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage. This exploration becomes a means of cultural exchange, where music serves as a bridge between distinct identities, fostering mutual understanding and respect. The anticipation of discovering new cultural dimensions through music underscores the ongoing nature of this journey, suggesting that the cultivation of cultural identity through music is a dynamic and evolving process, offering endless opportunities for growth and discovery.

5.6 CROSS CASE FINDINGS

The cross-case analysis is predicated upon identifying patterns of congruence and disparity across the experimental statements derived from each case study, to synthesize a compendium of thematic groups (Smith et al. 2022). This process endeavors to elucidate both the communal and distinct elements of the experiences shared by the participants involved.

Initially, the procedure involves a meticulous review of each dataset of experimental statements, with an emphasis on harmonizing the lexicon utilized across participants' contributions. Subsequently, there is a strategic reorganization of the experimental statements from each case study, ensuring that analogous statements are systematically aligned in a consistent sequence. This arrangement facilitates a more coherent cross-case analysis.

Following this, the analysis progresses to a rigorous examination of potential points of convergence concerning the themes related to the group, annotating sub-themes to delineate these connections. This step is crucial in highlighting and prioritizing the most salient group theme throughout the entire dataset.

The thematic categorizations underscore the complex trajectory of participants' experiences within this eight-week study, encompassing technical proficiency, cultural immersion, psychological fortitude, and artistic creativity. These themes elucidate aspects of musical training that involve the integration of technique and artistic expression, highlighting the importance of both cultural and personal expression within the learning process. The research findings suggest that students experience significant personal development as they interpret and convey their understanding of culture through pieces from the Chinese piano repertoire. This denotes an engagement with the cultural backdrop of each selected piece, facilitating a balance between technical skill and the infusion of emotional and psychological depth. Moreover, it accentuates the significance of the Chinese piano repertoires as a medium for cultural articulation, as well as the nurture of both individual cultural competence and identities. The shared elements are presented in the group-level themes in this cross-case findings, which are still illustrated with particular examples taken from individuals associated with evidence for each theme.

5.6.1 The Self-introspection with Slow-Down Practices as Foundation of Musical Mastery and Artistic Expression

All participants conceded a mere superficial familiarity with performing Chinese piano repertoire before they participated in this research initiative. Initially, their strategy for acquiring technical skills was firmly rooted in essential techniques. Their approach to mastering technical proficiency was grounded in fundamental practices such as slowing down the tempo to ensure fidelity to the musical score. This foundational method prioritizes the attainment of accuracy in rhythm, pitch, and articulation, and employs the use of a metronome to facilitate meticulous exercise, thereby underscoring the importance of developing rhythmic precision.

The specificity of the Chinese piano repertoire necessitates a nuanced approach that goes beyond the conventional emphasis on tempo, note accuracy, and articulation. Participants found themselves exploring and adapting to the unique expressive demands and stylistic conventions inherent in Chinese music. This exploration led to a broader understanding of technique mastery, encompassing not only the foundational elements of musical interpretation but also the incorporation of cultural and stylistic nuances specific to the Chinese piano repertoire. The journey of the participants thus reflects a comprehensive and contextualized approach to technique mastery, highlighting the importance of cultural sensitivity and adaptability in the pursuit of musical excellence.

As the participants progressed further into their exploration of the study, they discerned pronounced disparities between the technical and musical requisites of the Chinese piano repertoire and those of the Western classical pieces to which they had previously been accustomed. To some extent, the Chinese piano compositions imply the concept of Chinese philosophy which is incessant activity, wherein each component is dynamically interlinked, mirroring the principles of natural correspondence and interdependence. Therefore, the role of

the performer's self-awareness, amalgamating cognition and action as the foundational step in the execution of the repertoire is significant.

Utilizing slow-down practice as an example offers a nuanced perspective on the multifaceted process of mastering musical technique, while also fostering introspection. This approach highlights the importance of deliberate practice in refining technical skills and deepening one's understanding of the music. Conventionally, the notion of practicing at a reduced tempo is associated with a literal decrease in speed, facilitating technical advancement through the repetitive execution of identical movements. This process is widely recognized as a foundational strategy for enhancing precision and reliability in performance.

Yet, this approach transcends mere tempo reduction, it embodies a deliberate pedagogical technique aimed at fostering a deeper, more reflective understanding of the intricate interplay among muscular coordination, respiratory control, and sonic output. Slowing down the pace of practice is not solely about managing the velocity of execution but is fundamentally a means to engender a meticulous and meditative exploration of the physiological and acoustical aspects of musical performance.

By adopting a slower tempo, participants allow themselves to scrutinize each aspect of their technique with heightened awareness. This methodical slow-down enables a comprehensive analysis of how each finger movement, each nuance of pressure and position, contributes to the overall sound quality and expression. It allows for an introspective examination of how breath control can influence phrasing and dynamics, thereby enhancing the emotional depth and expressiveness of the performance. Crystal, Ru, Fay and Lana all acknowledged that the deliberately slow-tempo practice contribution as the foundation for their performance enhancement.

For example, Crystal uses the slow-down with exaggerated practice as a pedagogical approach that was assigned by the teacher-researcher in the aim of inspiring her awareness of

the nuances of tension and fluidity, both from a musical and auditory perspective. As Crystal commenced her performance, the teacher-researcher's involvement was manifested not solely through verbal directives but also via demonstrative gestures that were in harmony with the music's rhythm. The employment of circular arm movements by the teacher served as a visual representation of sound's path, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between physical movement and sonic vibrancy. These gestures functioned as non-verbal signals, reinforcing the significance of breath control within the context of musical execution. This instructional moment illuminated the critical principle that the performer's corporeal gestures contribute significantly to the sculpting of the musical landscape, thereby enhancing the student's comprehension of the integral role of bodily movement in enriching musical resonance.

Ru, Fay, and Lana's slow-down practice was reflected in their reflective journals as practicing strategies several times, from which they benefitted not only from technical proficiency but also the mastering of physical and psychological power. This practice strategy serves to illuminate the symbiotic relationship between physical gestures and musical sounds. It encourages participants to internalize the music deeply, understanding it not just as a sequence of notes to be played but as a rich tapestry of expressive possibilities to be explored. In doing so, participants develop a more intimate connection with the selected piece, leading to performances that are not only technically proficient but also emotionally resonant and musically compelling.

In summary, the slow-down practice within the musical rehearsal context emerges as an advanced tool for self-introspection, facilitating not only the attainment of technical proficiency but also engendering a deep-seated appreciation for the art of musical interpretation, particularly within the Chinese cultural tradition. This methodology highlights the criticality of engaging meticulously with both the physical mechanics of instrument play and the aesthetic and expressive aspects of musical creation. Consequently, this approach significantly

contributes to the comprehensive development of the musician, underscoring a balanced cultivation of both technical skills and artistic sensibilities.

5.6.2 Sound Exploration within Cultural Context

Exploration of sound within a cultural framework endeavors to elucidate the multifaceted role of sound as not merely an element of musical composition but as a profound conduit for cultural identity, societal practices, and historical narratives. Initiating with a process of introspection, participants naturally gravitate towards a deeper inquiry into the cultural dimensions of sound. This exploration delves into how musical elements are imbued with comprehensive layers of cultural, spiritual, or societal significance, thereby reflecting and perpetuating the identities, belief systems, and historical continuities inherent within communities.

This phenomenon is observed in all four participants' cases with their selected pieces. However, the exemplar was ultimately shown in Fay's study journey with the musical piece *Pi Huang*, which originates from the domain of Chinese Opera. The piano composition goes beyond a mere preference for a particular style of music to profoundly resonate with and evoke the rich tapestry of historical, cultural, and spiritual dimensions that are emblematic of Chinese society. The piece serves not only as a representation of artistic expression but also as a cultural artifact that encapsulates the essence of traditional Chinese operatic forms, embodying the intricate relationship between sound and cultural heritage. Through the medium of *Pi Huang*, listeners and performers alike are offered a sonic gateway into understanding the profound cultural narratives and aesthetic values that have been meticulously woven into the fabric of Chinese historical and societal context.

Fay's exploration of *Pi Huang* extends far beyond a mere technical analysis of its musical structure; it encompasses a deep and meaningful engagement with the spiritual and narrative

dimensions that are intricately woven into the composition's fabric. This journey into the heart of *Pi Huang* reveals a comprehensive appreciation of both the visible and latent layers of the piece, highlighting Fay's commitment to understanding the full spectrum of its cultural, historical, and spiritual import.

Through this journey, Fay seeks to uncover the symbiotic relationship between the musical and extramusical elements of *Pi Huang*, exploring how its melodic contours, rhythmic patterns, and textural nuances are imbued with symbolic meanings that resonate with the spiritual and historical narratives of Chinese society. Inspired by engaging in the extra-curricular cultural activity of lion dances with drumming and gong-beating, her emotional resonates and spirit was invigorated, which fostered her performance enhancement with bravery and confidence.

A similar phenomenon is observed with Lana, who studies *Numa Ame*, a term that translates to *the plain of the sun* in the language of the Chinese minority Hani group. Crystallizes tones that amalgamate the characteristics of both Hani and Yi minority music, this composition not only recounts the historical narrative of the Hani people but also conveys the composer's profound nostalgia for his homeland. By depicting sound as inseparable from the living environment of the ethnic minorities in Hani and Yi, the spiritual aspirations and ethnic characteristics are vividly brought to life behind the musical score. This approach facilitates participants with an immersive entry into the cultural studies of these two minorities through a musical journey, thereby augmenting participants' appreciation for the diversity inherent in Chinese musical elements.

Composer Zhang Zhao once characterized the commencement of *Numa Ame* in an open lecture, necessitating a state of inner tranquility, akin to being enveloped in the serene beauty of snow-clad highlands under the gentle caress of sunlight, were contrasting sensations of cold and warmth fuse seamlessly. Within this sanctuary of peace, only the whisper of the crisp breeze prevails, offering solace to the soul. Lana was actively engaged and inspired by the

composer's depiction. Before this lecture, Lana approached the piece relying predominantly on her intuitive sense, neglecting the nuanced demands of articulation. Such articulation is crucial not merely for delineating phrasal directions but also for crafting the overarching musical ambiance. Consequently, despite her precision in note execution, Lana sensed an incongruence in her performance. It was only upon reminiscing about her visit to Yunnan—the composer's homeland and a region reminiscent of her roots in Northeast China—that she experienced a profound connection with the cultural essence and environmental backdrop of these locales. This epiphany allowed her to weave her personal experiences with *Numa Ame*, thereby enriching her interpretation and infusing the performance with layers of cultural significance.

The exploration of sound within a cultural context emphasizes the profound connection between musical expressions and the cultural, historical, and social fabrics from which they emerge. This approach reveals how musical elements, beyond their auditory qualities, serve as carriers of cultural identity, embodying the traditions, narratives, and spiritual beliefs of communities. By delving into the specific cultural backgrounds and influences that shape compositions, researchers and musicians can uncover the rich tapestry of meanings and expressions encoded in music.

Through a detailed study of pieces like *Pi Huang* and *Numa Ame*, which integrate the musical characteristics of Chinese cultures and reflect the composer's nostalgia, ideal, and cultural heritage, the intricate relationship between sound production and cultural context becomes evident. Participants' engagement with these pieces, informed by personal and cultural connections, enhances the interpretative depth, allowing for performances that are not only technically proficient but also culturally resonant and emotionally compelling.

The sound exploration underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity and awareness in music study and performance, advocating for a holistic understanding that encompasses not just the technical aspects of music but also its cultural dimensions. It highlights how music

serves as a dynamic medium for the expression of cultural diversity, facilitating cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.

5.6.3 Creativity, Interpretation, and Cultural Continuity

The establishment of a cultural connection through the envisioning of scenes, derived from an in-depth exploration of the selected repertoires' cultural backgrounds, exemplifies a sophisticated approach to musical interpretation. This method, which involves mimicking the sounds of Chinese instruments, evoking emotional resonances with Chinese aesthetic sensibility, techniques regarding Chinese traditional musical structure, and empowering rhythm learning with body use, serves to amplify the cultural narratives intertwined with individual expression within the chosen piece. Such an approach not only enhances the performer's understanding and conveyance of the piece's inherent cultural significance but also enriches the listener's experience by providing a more nuanced and contextually grounded interpretation.

By delving into the cultural essence of the repertoire, including historical contexts, traditional motifs, and the characteristic timbres of indigenous instruments, performers can create a more authentic and compelling musical narrative. The act of mimicking Chinese instruments, for instance, is not merely a technical exercise but a profound gesture towards cultural immersion, allowing performers to bridge the gap between piano musical expression and traditional sonic landscapes.

The case study of Crystal's in-depth engagement with *Nocturne: Harboring Under the Maple Tree Bridge at Night* and Ru's immersive learning of the originates from *Flower Drums* serves as compelling evidence of the positive correlation between a participant's cultural engagement and the capacity for individual expression within a musical context. This analysis

underscores the significant impact that an immersive understanding of cultural elements can have on enhancing a performer's interpretative depth and personal articulation of a musical piece.

During Crystal's exploration of the nocturne, she not only approached the technical aspects of the piece but also delved into the cultural and historical narratives that the piece embodies. By integrating an appreciation of the cultural backdrop, which encompassing the imagery, symbolism, and emotional landscapes associated with the poem content into her performance, Crystal was able to infuse her interpretation with a rich layer of personal expression that resonated with authenticity and cultural sensitivity.

Similar phenomenon also applied to Ru's case in studying *Flower Drum*. This composition was significantly shaped by the Yan'an Yangge opera movement, which cumulating the piano solo piece that ingeniously incorporates the Anhui folk song *Fengyang Flower Drum* as its exuberant primary theme, while a modified version of *Jasmine Flower* serves as the second theme, imbued with beauty and lyricism. The consistent use of gongs and drums rhythms throughout *Flower Drum* enriches the piece with distinctive folk characteristics, encapsulating the vibrancy and energy of life in the liberated areas as depicted through the Yan'an Yangge opera movement.

Hence, Ru's immersion in the cultural essence of this composition was primarily manifested through her study of the Yangge Dance movement, intricately synchronized with the music underscored by the relentless cadence of gongs and drums. This deliberate fusion of dance and music, underpinned by the rhythmic foundation provided by gongs and drums, not only enhances Ru's understanding of the piece's cultural dimensions but also deepens her connection to the historical context from which the music originates. This engagement transcends mere technical proficiency, delving into the rich tapestry of cultural traditions that the piece embodies.

The phenomena from Crystal and Ru illustrate that engaging with the cultural dimensions of a musical work extends beyond a mere academic exercise; it fundamentally enriches the performer's connection to the piece, allowing for a more nuanced and expressive rendition. The positive correlation observed in Crystal's and Ru's study highlights the transformative potential of cultural engagement in elevating individual expression. Such an approach not only benefits the performer, by deepening their understanding and emotional resonance with the piece but also enhances the audience's experience, offering a more textured and meaningful engagement with the music.

These cases exemplify the broader implications for performers and educators alike, advocating for an integrated approach to musical study that encompasses both technical proficiency and cultural literacy. It suggests that fostering a deep connection with the cultural essence of musical compositions can catalyze more profound and expressive performances, thereby advancing the dialogue between music, culture, and individual creativity.

Furthermore, the evocation of emotional resonances rooted in the cultural and historical milieu of the piece serves to deepen the interpretative dimension, offering audiences an entry point into the emotional world of the music that transcends linguistic and cultural barriers. This technique underscores the role of music as a universal language capable of conveying complex cultural stories and emotions.

In summary, the integration of cultural insights into musical interpretation, through the envisioning of scenes, constitutes a pivotal strategy for enhancing the cultural narrative of a piece. This approach not only affirms the individual expression of the performer but also contributes to the broader discourse on the preservation and innovation of cultural heritage through musical performance. It highlights the potential of music as a medium for cultural dialogue and exchange, emphasizing the importance of cultural literacy and sensitivity in the global musical landscape.

5.6.4 Emotional and Psychological Aspects of Cultural Identity

The case studies through all four participants indicate that emotional and psychological dimensions of cultural identity engage with the intricate dynamics between an individual's self-perception and the cultural milieu in which cultural identity nurture is developed and expressed.

Through case studies centered on the engagement with selected Chinese piano repertoires, it becomes evident that the study process not only augments musical proficiency and the nuanced expression of individual performances within a cultural framework but also illuminates the reciprocal relationship between cultural identity and the spectrum of emotional experiences and psychological mechanisms. This influence extends to their musical preferences, levels of cultural appreciation, and the dimensions of their musical performances, reflecting the seated connection between cultural identity and personal musical expression.

Crystal's engagement with Chinese piano repertoires is marked by a journey from apprehension to profound appreciation, illustrating the intricate emotional dynamics involved in her musical development. Initially, Crystal approached the Chinese piano repertoires with enthusiasm but was simultaneously beset by fears of inadequate performance and errors due to her inexperience in this specific genre. This ambivalence led to a self-imposed denial and a negative self-perception that initially obstructed her expressive capabilities, casting a shadow over her interaction with the chosen piece during the initial weeks of practice.

However, a transformative learning experience over four weeks precipitated a significant shift in Crystal's musical understanding, technical proficiency, and, importantly, her attitudinal stance toward her engagement with the repertoire. She experienced an epiphany, recognizing that mere daily practice within the confines of a rehearsal space was insufficient. Crystal articulated a newfound perspective, emphasizing the necessity of immersing oneself in life's experiences to authentically convey one's emotions and thoughts through music. This realization marked a pivotal moment in her personal and musical growth.

Subsequently, Crystal's approach to practicing evolved from a task to be diligently executed to an activity of joy and self-expression. She actively participated in lectures and concerts, which not only enriched her musical insight but also fostered a sense of confidence in her expressive abilities. This external engagement provided a broader cultural and intellectual context that inspired her and reinforced her confidence in conveying musical narratives personally.

As Crystal delved deeper into the exploration and performance of Chinese piano repertoires, she developed a profound connection with them, recognizing their intrinsic ties to Chinese cultural heritage and everyday life. This connection led her to speculate that Chinese musicians might experience a more profound emotional resonance with these pieces, given their cultural and experiential proximity to the sources of this repertoire. Through this journey, Crystal illustrates the transformative power of cultural engagement and personal reflection in the artistic development and expression within the realm of musical performance.

Ru's study of *Flower Drum* parallels Crystal's journey, albeit with distinct challenges and revelations. Initially, Ru's experience was marred by a sense of inadequacy and frustration, particularly during the early stages of engagement with the chosen piece. Her reflective journals detail episodes of annoyance stemming from difficulties encountered in both classroom settings and individual practice sessions. These challenges were exacerbated by her inability to fully comprehend the instructor's guidance, leading to a pretense of understanding marked by unreflective nodding.

Despite these initial setbacks, Ru embarked on a proactive journey toward overcoming her limitations. She began to embrace various learning strategies, notably including the incorporation of dance movements and vocalizing the melody alongside instrumental accompaniment. These methodological shifts not only infused her practice sessions with joy and enthusiasm but also transformed the learning environment from one of tension to a more

relaxed and supportive atmosphere. As Ru's engagement deepened, she adopted a more open-minded approach to her musical study, which catalyzed the emergence of her interpretative ideas. This evolution in her musical understanding was significantly aided by the diverse practice methods she employed.

Encouragement and positive reinforcement from the instructor further propelled Ru towards a state of proactive thought and creative insight. This culminated in a profound moment of enlightenment, where Ru found herself fully immersed in her performance, experiencing a mindful flow that transcended mere practice to become a genuine expression of enjoyment and artistic interpretation on stage.

Looking forward, Ru aspires to broaden her repertoire to include Chinese piano compositions reflective of various regional styles. She views this as not only a means to enhance her musical proficiency but also as a valuable opportunity to promote Chinese cultural heritage through the medium of piano music. This perspective underscores the transformative potential of cultural engagement and personal growth within the domain of musical study, mirroring the thematic elements seen in Crystal's narrative but through Ru's unique experiential lens.

Fay experienced a degree of emotional turmoil akin to Ru. Fay acknowledged a profound dissatisfaction with her performance despite her diligent analytical preparation and cultural research on the selected piece *Pi Huang*. Her discontent stemmed primarily from an insecurity regarding the appropriate stylistic interpretation of the music. This concern was exacerbated by the previous feedback from a competition jury, which, while acknowledging her technical proficiency, critiqued her for a perceived lack of expressive musical style. Despite her aspirations for improvement, Fay found herself ensnared in habitual methodologies that hindered advancement, even in her engagement with *Pi Huang*.

In response to this challenge, the instructor recommended Fay to take a deeper, more introspective analysis of the composer's intentions behind *Pi Huang*, encouraging a broader exploration that extended beyond the written score to encompass the underlying cultural narratives. Additionally, an innovative class exercise incorporating eye movements and voice derived from Peking Opera, which facilitated a more profound connection with the music's expressive qualities in Fay's class. This experiential approach allowed Fay to not only perceive but also embody the tension and stylistic nuances characteristic of Peking Opera, bridging the gap between her initial misconceptions and the authentic essence of the piece.

A significant breakthrough in Fay's journey came from her participation in a cultural activity that involved Gong and Drum's performances accompanying a lion dance. This experience was pivotal, enabling her to channel her body's energy into her piano playing, thereby enhancing the dynamism and expressiveness of her performance. This newfound embodiment of the music's emotional and stylistic depth led to a dramatic transnurture in her approach to *Pi Huang*. Fay's performance evolved to become more liberated and expressive, characterized by an improved sound quality and a heightened sense of engagement with the music.

The most notable aspect of Fay's development was her ability to draw emotional and thematic parallels between the lion dance, the physicality of Peking Opera, and the musical narrative of *Pi Huang*. This integrative process, from conceptual understanding to physical expression, culminated in a performance that was both energetically charged and deeply satisfying. Fay's newfound appreciation for the richness of Chinese piano repertoire, coupled with her interest in exploring pieces with historical and regional significance, signifies a broader shift towards a holistic approach to musical study. This approach not only fosters a deeper cultural identity but also underscores the intrinsic value and potential for personal growth within the study of Chinese piano music.

Lana's journey in engaging with the selected piece *Numa Ame*, markedly diverges from the experiences of the other three participants. Before this study, Lana had already familiarized herself with *Numa Ame*, thus her encounter with the piece during this period was not an introduction but rather a continuation, aimed at refining and stylizing her performance for specific piano competitions. From the outset, Lana's interaction with *Numa Ame* appeared effortlessly natural, suggesting a certain level of musical competence. However, this initial impression belied the complexity and depth of engagement required to truly master the piece.

Her proficiency, while apparent, merely scratched the surface of the profound musical and expressive demands *Numa Ame* imposes on the performer. The need for polish and stylistic nuance indicated that Lana's journey with the piece was far from complete; it necessitated a deeper exploration into the subtleties of interpretation and expression that would elevate her performance from technically proficient to artistically profound. This phase of Lana's musical development underscores the distinction between superficial mastery and the nuanced understanding and execution that dedicated performance in competitive settings demands.

Lana acknowledged that her enthusiasm for the piece had waned due to the prolonged period of repetitive practice, leading her to play mechanically, merely to get through the exercise, without thoughtful engagement. This perfunctory approach and the absence of emotional resonance in her practice not only failed to advance her performance skills but also exacerbated her frustration due to the persistent emergence of minor flaws.

Motivated by the teacher-researcher's support and the invaluable opportunity to engage with the composer during a lecture in which he detailed the creative inspirations for *Numa Ame* and provided a demonstrative performance, Lana transitioned towards an investigative approach focused on articulating the piece's musical ambiance, emphasizing the cultural narratives embedded within the musical context. This shift was further influenced by Lana's reflective recollection of her emotionally resonant journey to Yunnan, a region that harbors the

composer's nostalgia and mirrors the wintry landscapes of her own hometown, themes poignantly encapsulated in *Numa Ame*.

This deep emotional connection illuminated Lana's personal interpretation of the piece, compelling her to fully immerse herself in rendering the envisioned scenes through her musical expression. Her engagement transcended technical execution, embodying a sincere depiction of the piece's emotional and cultural essence. This authentic conveyance of emotion not only enriched Lana's performance but also resonated with the audience, facilitating a profound communal experience of the cultural narratives and spiritual expressions inherent in *Numa Ame*. Through this process, Lana's performance became a bridge between the composer's intentions and the audience's reception, exemplifying the power of music to evoke shared emotional landscapes and cultural understanding.

All four cases illustrate the emotional and psychological facets of cultural identity are instrumental in shaping an individual's artistic expression, particularly within the realm of musical performance. How performers interpret and convey musical pieces is often a reflection of their cultural background and personal experiences, underscoring the significance of cultural identity in the creative process. This interconnection highlights the role of cultural identity not only in the development of technical skills and performance strategies but also in the nurture of an artistic voice that resonates with authenticity and cultural depth.

In sum, the exploration of the emotional and psychological aspects of cultural identity within the context of musical study and performance offers profound insights into how individuals navigate their cultural landscapes. It reveals the complex layers of influence that cultural identity exerts on emotional resonance, psychological development, and artistic expression, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and integrating these dimensions into the understanding of cultural and individual dynamics in music.

5.6.5 Summary

The cross-case findings elucidate a comprehensive framework for fostering students' cultural identity through Chinese piano repertoires, by integrating four thematic areas: self-introspection with slow-down practices, sound exploration within a cultural context, creativity and interpretation alongside cultural continuity, and the emotional and psychological facets of cultural identity. This framework suggests that the path to musical mastery and artistic expression is not solely dependent on technical skills but also on a profound understanding and incorporation of cultural narratives, emotional depth, and psychological insight into the learning and performance process.

Firstly, by emphasizing deliberate slow practice, students are encouraged to introspect with a deeper connection between their body power, thoughts, and the music, leading to performances that are technically sound and emotionally expressive. This approach not only improves musical proficiency but also aids in the personalization of the repertoire, allowing students to infuse their unique interpretations and cultural insights into their performances.

Secondly, the pursuit of sound within the cultural context highlights the importance of understanding the cultural knowledge behind musical pieces. Engaging with the historical and social narratives of Chinese piano repertoires enriches students' interpretations, enabling them to perform with authenticity and depth. Such exploration fosters a stronger cultural identity and appreciation for their cultural heritage.

Thirdly, encouraging creative engagement with the repertoire allows students to contribute to the ongoing evolution of cultural traditions. Through innovative interpretations, students play a role in maintaining the vibrancy of their cultural heritage while making it relevant for contemporary audiences. This process not only reinforces the students' cultural identity but also ensures the continuity and dynamism of cultural expressions.

Lastly, understanding the interplay between cultural identity and the emotional-psychological dimensions of performing arts enables students to approach their repertoire with greater depth. Recognizing and embracing the emotional resonances and psychological motivations behind musical pieces can lead to more authentic and compelling performances, strengthening the connection between the musician, the music, and the audience.

In sum, nurturing students' cultural identity through Chinese piano repertoires involves a holistic approach that transcends technical mastery to include emotional engagement, cultural understanding, and creative interpretation. By embracing these elements, students can achieve a level of artistic expression that is deeply personal and culturally resonant, enhancing their connection to their heritage and broadening their musical and personal horizons.



CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Exploring how to cultivate students' cultural identity via the pedagogy and acquisition of Chinese piano repertoires within tertiary education primarily delves into embodied experiences encountered by piano educators and learners. This chapter elucidates the research outcomes and discusses how the extant literature corroborates the alignment of emerging exemplary practices with the conceptual framework. Thereby, discussing the implications and concluding the research outcomes.

6.1 INTERCONNECTION BETWEEN PHASES I AND II

The interconnection between Phase I and Phase II within the context of this research on nurturing students' cultural identity through Chinese piano repertoires in higher education exemplifies a methodologically structured approach to bridging theoretical frameworks with practical application. This transition from theoretical exploration to empirical validation is foundational to enhancing the pedagogical strategies employed in music education, particularly within the realm of piano studies.

6.1.1 Phase I: theoretical foundation and consensus building

The initial phase of the research, characterized by the Delphi study, functions as a foundational element in the systematic assembly of a consensual understanding (Brandy, 2015; Green, 2014) among experts specialized in piano performance and piano pedagogy, particularly concerning the salient aspects of imparting Chinese piano repertoires. This phase is deeply rooted in these piano experts' pedagogical and experiential insights, which inherently mirror their perceptions

and internalization of cultural identity through the lens of music education. The significance of this phase is instrumental for several critical reasons:

Firstly, the Delphi study methodologically aggregated the collective wisdom and expertise of seasoned piano educators, facilitating a rich dialogue that culminates in a shared understanding of the core elements essential for teaching Chinese piano repertoires by a three-round iterative process. This process ensures that the teaching framework developed is not only comprehensive but also reflective of some practices that are universally recognized and respected within the academic and professional communities.

Secondly, by focusing on the teaching and learning experiences of the piano experts involved, the study profoundly acknowledges the intrinsic role that cultural identity plays in the dissemination of Chinese piano music. This emphasis underscores the notion that effective music education transcends technical mastery, extending into the realms of cultural expression and identity nurture. The insights illuminate the pathways through which educators can weave cultural narratives and values into their teaching methodologies, thereby enriching the learning experience which is also beneficial in recognizing student's cultural capital and teaching students through their strengths (Gay, 2018), benefit the consolidation of cultural power (Bond & Russell, 2019).

Thirdly, the consensus reached through the Delphi study provides invaluable guidance for the subsequent development of a curriculum that is both culturally responsive and pedagogically sound. The developed curriculum aims to equip students not only with the technical skills required to perform Chinese piano repertoires but also with a deep understanding of the cultural essence that these pieces embody. In doing this, the study contributes to the creation of an educational environment where students can explore and express their cultural identities through musical performance.

Fourthly, the Delphi phase also sets the stage for the next phase of research, wherein the theoretical framework and teaching strategies endorsed by the experts are subjected to empirical scrutiny. Through case studies and practical application in educational settings, the effectiveness of the consensus-driven curriculum can be rigorously evaluated, offering opportunities for refinement and adaptation based on real-world teaching and learning outcomes.

In summation, the findings derived from the Delphi study within this phase hold significant importance and project extensively for the formulation of curriculum, the delineation of pedagogical methodologies, and the expansive dialogue concerning the integration of cultural identity within the domain of piano education. These outcomes underscore the consensual approach to identifying and integrating key components of teaching Chinese piano repertoires and highlight the intrinsic value of embedding cultural identity into educational practices. Consequently, the insights garnered from this phase are instrumental in shaping a more nuanced, culturally responsive approach to piano pedagogy, thereby enriching the educational landscape and fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of cultural diversity through music education.

6.1.2 Phase II: case study and practical application

Advancing into Phase II, the study focus pivots towards a small-scale phenomenological case study within a one-on-one teaching setting by a teacher-researcher and four piano students. This progression underpins the integrity and applicability of the phase one findings. The significance of this phase unfolds across several dimensions:

Firstly, facilitates an in-depth exploration of the teaching framework based on pedagogical construction from phase I in one-on-one instructional contexts by embedding the research

within genuine teaching scenarios. This immersive and tailored teaching approach allows for an authentic assessment of teaching strategies and methodologies, thereby reflecting the nuanced dynamics of cultural awareness with personalized piano education. This phase endeavors to substantiate the theoretical constructs previously established, scrutinizing their efficacy and relevance in the context of actual teaching and learning experiences. This validation process is crucial for evaluating whether the principles and strategies developed are effectively fostering the intended educational outcomes, particularly in the cultivation of cultural identity through Chinese piano repertoires.

Secondly, the one-to-one teaching environment serves as a fertile ground for generating rich, qualitative insights into the teacher-student dynamic, instructional methodologies, and the learning process (Carey & Grant, 2015). Such insights are invaluable for understanding the complexities and challenges inherent in conveying not just technical piano skills, but also the cultural nuances embedded within the Chinese piano repertoire.

Beyond the specific purview of instructing Chinese piano repertoire, the revelations from this phase contribute to the enhancement of the wider pedagogical dialogue. Through the empirical demonstration of the practical implementation and validation of a teaching framework that is deeply rooted in cultural awareness within a one-to-one educational setting, this research unfurls invaluable perspectives on efficacious strategies for the incorporation of cultural identity within the broader spectrum of music education. This also implies the importance of a culturally nuanced teaching approach.

Thirdly, this empirical phase contributes to a feedback loop that is essential for tailoring piano teaching by incorporating elements of cultural identity through Chinese piano repertoires. The continuous cycle includes performance feedback, reflections, improvements, and re-assessments within the teaching process which is a powerful tool for students to learn

effectively, by making them aware of their strengths and areas for improvement, thereby facilitating personal growth in musicianship.

In essence, the transition into Phase II marks a critical juncture in the research, within the authentic context of one-on-one piano instruction. This phase is critical for validating and refining the proposed pedagogical framework and for contributing to the ongoing development of effective, culturally responsive teaching practices in music education.

6.2 DISCUSSION

The present study's overarching goal was to explore how to cultivate student's cultural identity through teaching and learning Chinese piano repertoires in a Chinese university setting. Furthermore, this study endeavored to furnish empirical support attesting to the reliability and validity of the conceptual framework, enriching it with both theoretical and novel elements derived from the experiences of piano experts and students alike. Employing the interpretative phenomenological analysis methodology, the qualitative data analysis substantiated the multifaceted dimensions of this educational endeavor (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2022).

The discourse on the pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning the Chinese piano repertoire, particularly embedded cultural awareness, is structured into a tripartite framework encompassing pre-study, in-process, and post-study phases. This delineation provides a systematic framework for a thorough exploration of the instructional journey. It commences with the preparatory activities before the initiation of the learning process, encompasses the ongoing engagement with the musical material and cultural context during the study, and culminates in a reflective evaluation upon the completion of the educational experience. This approach not only facilitates a holistic understanding of the learning process but also underscores the significance of cultural immersion and identity nurture within the realm of

music education (Pascale, 2013). Through this structured pedagogical journey, the study illuminates how the teaching and learning of the Chinese piano repertoire can serve as a conduit for the cultivation of cultural identity, thereby contributing to a broader discourse on music education and cultural identity and perhaps exposed as the discursive constructions of ideology and power (Davis, 2005).

6.2.1 Pre-study: tailored teaching and promoting self-regulated learning

The one-to-one instruction serves as a standard model of instrumental tuition as the primary method by which tertiary music students receive their practical skills and performance-based training (Carey & Grant, 2015). Therefore, the paradigms of tailoring teaching and self-regulated learning (Pike, 2017) underscore the imperative for customization within piano education catering to the technical treatment, musical preferences, interests, and goals of students individually. These two concepts, though closely intertwined, encapsulate distinct facets of a holistic educational approach.

Tailoring teaching is a consensus retrieved from phase I findings as one of the key components incorporated into the pedagogy of Chinese piano repertoires. It also matches Confucius's educational philosophy that teaching students by their aptitude is the essence of and continues to hold significant instructional value for contemporary education (Chen, 2019). Tailoring teaching involves guiding students according to their unique interests and abilities. This pedagogical approach in which piano teachers discern and acknowledge the diverse educational backgrounds, musical tastes, interests, and competencies of their students. Subsequently, they endeavor to enhance the learning experience and outcomes by judiciously modifying teaching methodologies, materials, and the tempo of instruction to align with individual student profiles.

Moreover, the tailored approach is underpinned by the learning of Chinese culture as the component of infusing moral education within music education, which is an implicit strategic deployment of the Party Central Committee to promote the development of education in the new era. It is an important teaching strategic measure to improve the quality of ideological and political work in Chinese universities (Xu, 2021). This tailored approach facilitates more efficacious and engaging pedagogical interactions, with the potential to elevate learning efficacies in music understanding within a cultural context.

Before the commencement of studying a new Chinese piano repertoire, piano teachers and students should cultivate a collaborative environment wherein dialogue is facilitated to articulate and align the objectives of the instructional and learning journey. Within this conversational framework, it is crucial to discuss which genre of the Chinese piano repertoires should be chosen and identify effective learning strategies that adapt to the diverse needs of the students (Cheng & Southcott, 2016). Typically, the difficulty level of the selected pieces ought to be positioned within students' stretch zone, which is slightly beyond their comfort zone (Vygotsky et al., 1978). This strategic placement encourages students to embrace challenges, venture into new experiences, undertake risks, and diverge from their standard, comfortable routines.

Moreover, piano teachers are tasked with the responsibility of acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the students' motivations (Zimmerman, 2002). This understanding should encompass both intrinsic factors, such as personal interests and aspirations in Chinese piano repertoire, and extrinsic factors, which may include competition rewards or recital needs. Such insights are invaluable for piano teachers in crafting a learning experience that resonates with the student's personal and educational aspirations.

However, from students' perspective, self-regulated learning was promoted, in which students were encouraged to assume an active and autonomous stance toward their Chinese

piano repertoires learning journey. This involves the articulation of personal objectives, engagement with materials that resonate with their unique interests and requisites, and the adoption of teaching methodologies that are congruent with their learning modalities which can facilitate the development of strategic, motivated, and independent students (Mieder & Bugos, 2017). The teacher-researcher serves as a collaborator, to provide instructions according to students' performance needs and the feedback from their routine diaries. Such a strategy motivates a more profound engagement with the musical piece and cultural knowledge, whilst promoting autonomous learning and the cultivation of critical thinking capabilities. Together, these pedagogical philosophies foster a nuanced and responsive educational milieu, tailored to optimize the academic and musical development of each student (Pike, 2017).

The facilitation of self-regulated learning entails strategic mentorship, including recommendations for students to compose reflective notes post-lessons and record their practice reflective journals twice a week. The reflective journal is perceived as a vehicle for self-reflection (Moon, 2006), which is designed to promote higher-order thinking as one of the active learning methods (Alt, et al., 2022). Zimmerman (2002) introduced a tripartite model of self-regulation, delineating a cyclical process wherein learners embark on self-regulated learning. This cycle commences as learners establish significant academic objectives, elect pertinent learning methodologies, and appraise their emotional states and motivational convictions essential for achieving these objectives. Therefore, a reflective journal form was structured based on the above content (see Appendix R), distributed to student participants, and asked them to record twice a week. The reflective journal in this study presented students' progress in fostering a sense of self-awareness and introspection, which incrementally cultivates genuine self-evaluation, and receptiveness to modifications in their educational trajectory, culminating in the emergence of self-regulated learners (Nilson, 2013).

6.2.2 In-process: cultural inspirations fertilized the musical interpretation

The interpretative phenomenological analysis generated several themes from teachers' teaching and students' learning experience in Chinese piano repertoires. The findings of this current study could offer a range of ideas and reflections to assist piano teachers in guiding their students' learning with Chinese piano repertoires and fostering cultural interest. Through this holistic educational paradigm, learners are not only equipped with the skills necessary for musical interpretation but are also encouraged to engage with the music in a way that reflects its cultural origins and significance. This process cultivates students who are capable of conveying the essence and nuances of music with authenticity and cultural sensitivity, thereby enriching their performances and contributing to the preservation and appreciation of musical heritage.

Piano teaching has historically been grounded in a traditional paradigm, often characterized as the Master-Apprentice model (Persson, 1996). Within this conventional framework, the instructional dynamic positions the teacher in the role of the master, whose responsibilities include demonstrating, directing, offering critiques, and providing inspiration. Concurrently, students, embodying the role of apprentices, are tasked with emulating the master's techniques and striving for the master's endorsement through attentive observation and listening to the master's exemplary performances (Aicher, 1998). Nonetheless, the present investigation diverges from this traditional methodology by employing a teaching framework developed through expert insights. Here, the teacher-researcher implements these informed teaching strategies within a case study context, thereby re-conceptualizing learning as an interactive and evolving process.

The learning delves into the nuanced processes of engaging with Chinese piano repertoires, underscoring the significance of emotional resonance, imaginative interpretation, and introspective observation. Each of these elements is instrumental in enhancing the musical

experience and augmenting the performer's expressive capabilities. Through a profound interpretation grounded in the performer's unique understanding and emotional expression, a reciprocal emotional resonance can be elicited from the audience. This phenomenon underscores the complex relationship among technical proficiency, emotional depth, and cultural comprehension in the realm of musical performance.

6.2.2.1 From score-oriented to interpreting music behind the notes

The fundamental strategies for learning Chinese piano repertoires are similar to other repertoires. It started with recognizing innurture from the musical scores and performing correctly. However, as for advanced performers, such as undergraduate piano major students, the performing standard is merely not just satisfied in performing the basic musical innurture which is score-oriented, but in interpreting with their own understanding beyond the notes.

Firstly, it is important to enhance personal emotional connection with Chinese piano repertoires. As some piano teachers mentioned in phase I, music performance should not be isolated from life matters. Chinese piano repertoires are also valuably inseparable from the nourishment of Chinese traditional music culture which also inheritance and promotion of Chinese traditional music culture (Lu, 2022). The emotional resonance in Chinese piano repertoires is significant. Most of the respondents from the two-phase study recognized that Chinese piano repertoires own regional style that evokes their emotional response to the regional culture with dialect modulate in music.

Secondly, it transcends mere technical execution to foster a deep connection with the music's emotional and cultural essence. This engagement is vital for delivering performances that are not only technically proficient but also emotionally compelling and culturally meaningful. For instance, concerning the concept of Qi in Chinese thought which is applied in

music flow enhancing the comprehensive understanding within the cultural context. The cultural richness and historical depth of Chinese piano repertoires necessitate a nuanced approach to performance, one that is sensitive to the emotional and cultural narratives inherent in the music (Bai, 2022).

Thirdly, as elucidated by several piano teachers in their pedagogical methodologies for teaching Chinese piano repertoires, being a storyteller with a narrative explanation of the selected piece was frequently employed. Within this storytelling paradigm, the piano teacher's cultural cognizance was intricately woven into their instruction, thereby facilitating an approach to transfer Chinese cultural knowledge that leveraged personal experiences and competencies (Luo, 2018). As the Delphi consensus illustrated the exploration of cultural connotations requires teachers to lead students in delving into the cultural meanings embedded within the repertoire. The narrative explanation is designed to evoke student's emotional resonance and foster an interest in Chinese culture which is also identified in the following case study. For instance, in case one, Crystal (the student participant) was introduced to the piano piece *Harboring Under the Maple Bridge at Night*, which finds its origins in a poem from the Tang Dynasty. This repertoire was narratively deconstructed, phrase by phrase, aiming to deepen personal comprehension while simultaneously kindling an emotional resonance with both the poem and the musical interpretation. Through the deconstructing phrase-by-phrase practice, Crystal became confident in grasping the nuance of emotional change expressed by tone color motion, and finally, she devoted herself to interpreting this repertoire with personal understanding which led to fearless success in interpreting the music beyond the note that also aroused audience emotional resonance on this repertoire.

6.2.2.2 Imaginative engagement for interpretive depth in selected Chinese piano repertoire

The effective expression of piano repertoires' core ideas necessitates that performers actively enhance their imaginative faculties to discern and comprehend the understanding of repertoires, thereby fostering artistic inspiration, aesthetic appreciation, and the cultivation of personal sentiment (Zhang, 2024). This process transcends the mere straightforward interpretation of scores because the score only serves as the tangible documentation of music. For advanced performers, an in-depth exploration of the composer's intended spirit and emotional landscape as encapsulated within the score, aims for a more profound embodiment of these elements is required for the interpretive process. The practice of immersing oneself in imaginative scenarios is instrumental in this process, enabling them to infuse the selected repertoire with life and expression. This imaginative engagement, as detailed by Chaffin, Imreh, and Crawford (2002), involves creating vivid mental imagery that aligns with the music's emotional and thematic content, thereby elevating the performance from mere technical execution to expressive storytelling.

In the context of Chinese piano repertoires, the cultural cues that refer to musical expressions formed during the development of specific musical cultures (Wang et al., 2021) incorporate cultural and aesthetic imagery offering performers a more immersive and culturally enriched musical experience. In the exploration of imaginative engagement and its contribution to interpretive depth within the realm of Chinese piano repertoire, a compelling instance is provided by case two, involving Ru and her interaction with the piece *The Flower Drum*. This repertoire, an amalgamation of two folk songs intertwined with the rhythmic patterns of regional Yangge dance, initially faced resistance from Ru. She preferred to focus on mastering the technical aspect of the fingertip staccato technique, aiming for a crisp sound production through brief contact with the keys (Lin, 2002). Despite her efforts, the exclusive emphasis on technical precision without a corresponding understanding of the piece's cultural and emotive

significance led to a period of frustration, as documented in her post-class memos and reflective practice journals.

The turning point in Ru's journey toward a deeper musical understanding and expression occurred when the teacher-researcher used a tambourine to assist her in performing impromptu in class. Thereafter, she decided to immerse herself in the cultural origins of the piece. By learning the Yangge dance, singing folk songs, and incorporating basic dance movements into her performance, Ru experienced a breakthrough. This immersive approach enabled her to not only physically embody the music but also to culturally contextualize her performance. The act of engaging with the dance and songs allowed her to visualize and feel as though she were part of the flower drum dance, thereby unlocking the emotive and cultural dimensions of the piece. Consequently, Ru's performance captures the essence of the drum sounds through her nuanced approach to the keyboard, thereby illustrating the profound impact of imaginative engagement on interpretive depth in performing selected Chinese piano repertoire.

This analysis underscores the vital role of cultural immersion and imaginative engagement in enhancing the interpretive depth of musical performances, particularly in pieces deeply rooted in specific cultural traditions. It highlights the limitations of focusing solely on technical aspects of performance without integrating the emotional and cultural contexts that give the music its full meaning and resonance.

6.2.2.3 Reflective journals assist in exploring inner-self

The incorporation of reflective journals to enhance mindful piano practice effectively, and serve as a method of intro-observation facilitates a structured yet personal means for students to chronicle their musical experiences, reflections, and emotional responses (Pike, 2017). This practice not only aids students in delving deeper into their subjective relationship with music

but also allows them to meticulously trace their artistic growth and the evolution of their interpretative decisions over time.

The benefits of reflective journaling in music education are supported by scholarly research, highlighting its role in promoting self-awareness, critical reflection, and emotional intelligence. According to Moon (2006), these components are essential in nurturing not only a student's artistic development but also their personal growth. The act of reflection, particularly within the domain of Chinese piano repertoire, transcends mere technical skill enhancement, opening avenues for students to explore and articulate their personal and cultural connections to the music.

Documenting these reflective thoughts empowers students to cultivate a nuanced understanding of their musical engagement, exploring the depths of their artistic self and their connection to the selected Chinese piano repertoire (Gaunt, 2008). Such introspective examination is pivotal in developing their identity, providing clarity on their unique expressive voice and how it resonates with the cultural and emotional layers embedded in the music they perform. This deeper engagement enriches students' expressive range, embedding a sense of cultural identity and emotional depth into their performances. In case three, Fay gained an innovative class exercise incorporating eye movements and voice derived from Peking Opera, which facilitated a more profound connection with the music's expressive qualities in the selected repertoires, bridging the gap between her initial misconceptions and the authentic essence of the piece. According to Fay's reflective journal in practice, she had an epiphany that her previous learning experience from the textbooks could also be applied in interpreting the selected piece, from which she felt a sense of satisfaction and happiness.

From a music educational standpoint, reflective journals serve as a valuable tool for teachers, enabling them to closely monitor their students' progress and inner musings about their musical journey. These insights allow teachers to offer more personalized instructional

feedback and adjust the teaching pace to better align with each student's learning trajectory and emotional readiness, thus fostering a more tailored and effective learning environment.

In sum, the practice of reflective journaling in piano practice stands as a pivotal element in nurturing a reflective, emotionally intelligent, and culturally aware musician. Through this introspective and honest dialogue, students are encouraged to engage deeply with their musical inner self, fostering a holistic development that spans both their artistic capabilities and their personal growth.

6.2.2.4 Integrated cultural activities to foster students' interest in cultural exploration

The integration of cultural activities, including teacher-led local cultural excursions, presents students with opportunities to both observe and engage directly in cultural events. Such experiences are instrumental in enhancing students' motivation toward the in-depth exploration of cultural contexts, serving to augment both their extrinsic motivation for cultural learning and their intrinsic motivation for applying newly acquired cultural insights in the interpretation of piano repertoires.

Participation in these cultural journeys facilitates a firsthand experience of the cultural nuances and practices that inform the creation and performance of music, thereby enriching students' understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural expressions. This experiential learning approach, as highlighted by Dewey (1997), emphasizes the importance of active participation and direct engagement in the learning process, asserting that such experiences are foundational to the acquisition of knowledge and the development of personal and educational growth.

Moreover, the application of fresh cultural ideas to piano repertoire interpretation aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky et al., 1978), which posits that social

interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests that learners achieve higher levels of understanding and skill development through social interactions and cultural experiences that challenge them to move beyond their current capabilities (Eun, 2019). Lana's case exemplifies the profound impact of engaging with diverse regional cultures on her musical interpretation. Her encounters across various cultural landscapes have endowed her with a rich reservoir of inspiration, instrumental in formulating novel interpretative approaches to the piece at hand. Immersion in the vivid tapestry of her recollected experiences, derived from both the natural environments and her social interactions with indigenous populations, has significantly enhanced her understanding of regional music culture. This comprehensive cultural immersion has facilitated Lana's ability to surmount the technical and musical challenges associated with performing the selected piece, illustrating the integral role of cultural experiences in shaping musical interpretation and execution.

Furthermore, Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory underscore the significance of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in educational settings. The theory delineates how activities that satisfy basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness can foster intrinsic motivation, which results in high-quality learning and creativity, leading to more meaningful and sustained engagement in learning activities. Students' performance and their reflection on the cultural excursion proved their intrinsic motivation for learning and related to their cultural interests have significantly improved.

Therefore, through the incorporation of cultural activities into the teaching and learning Chinese piano repertoires framework, teachers can significantly bolster students' motivation for deep cultural engagement and innovative musical interpretation, enriching their educational experience and fostering a profound connection to the cultural dimensions of the music they study and perform.

6.2.3 Post-Study: Developing an effective feedback loop for consolidating cultural identity within the teaching and learning process

Upon review of the nurturing cultural identity within the teaching and learning process, it is imperative to construct an effective feedback loop. The feedback loop facilitates a continuous dialogue between piano teachers and students. Schön's (1987) concept of reflective practice is reflection-in-action, which enables the practitioner to respond during the action-present to make a difference in the outcome. From a Daoist standpoint from a Chinese cultural perspective, reflective practice requires the practitioner to think and act morally in accordance and concordance with the innate disposition of all things (Tan, 2020). These concepts of reflective practices are particularly relevant here, suggesting that professionals, including educators, can improve their practice through the cyclical process of action, reflection, and learning. This reflective cycle enables educators to critically assess their teaching approaches, particularly in nurturing students' cultural identities, and adjust their strategies based on feedback from students and their own observations of students' engagement and progress. Besides, this iterative process of feedback is crucial for assessing how cultural identities have been explored, understood, and expressed through piano education via the teaching and learning process.

An effective feedback loop serves not only as a mechanism for assessment but also as a tool for ongoing improvement and adaptation of the teaching to better meet the needs and cultural backgrounds of the students. According to Shute (2008), well-designed feedback can significantly enhance learning by providing innurture on performance and suggestions for improvement. In the context of learning Chinese piano repertoires, feedback becomes a vital component in ensuring that the teaching approaches and materials are relevant, and enriching to the students' cultural understanding.

Furthermore, the feedback model proposed by Hattie and Timperley (2007) with the framework which described as feed up-feedback-feedforward on the process and self-

regulation level (Lipsch-Wijnen & Dirkx, 2022) was adopted to the context of teaching and learning piano repertoires. Feedback is not only addressing technical and musical proficiency but also focuses on how students are integrating cultural understanding into their performances. This approach ensures that feedback is comprehensive, addressing both the musical and cultural dimensions of students' learning experiences.

By constructing an effective feedback loop, piano teachers can ensure that the teaching and learning process remains responsive to the needs of students, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural identity through musical education. This reflective and adaptive approach to teaching and learning enriches students' educational experiences, promoting a more nuanced and empathetic engagement with music from Chinese cultural backgrounds.

The feedback collected through this loop can also inform pedagogical strategies that are sensitive to cultural nuances and responsive to the diverse needs of learners. Gay (2018) highlights the importance of culturally responsive teaching, which uses cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them. Culturally responsive teaching in music education expects students to develop knowledge and skill and their continued connection with their cultural identities not only as individuals but also with shared responsibility for cultural communities embedded in holistic education (Lind & Mckoy, 2016). In this regard, feedback plays a crucial role in tailoring teaching methods and content to enhance cultural relevance and student engagement.

In summary, establishing an effective feedback loop is essential for the critical review and ongoing refinement of cultural identity construction within the educational process. Through reflective practices and continuous engagement with both teachers and students, such a

feedback mechanism ensures that the process is not only culturally inclusive but also dynamically evolving to reflect the diverse identities and perspectives of the students.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS

Nurturing students' cultural identity through the pedagogical approach of teaching Chinese piano repertoires presents a multifaceted array of implications that extend to both teachers and students. The implications are pivotal considerations emanating from teaching and learning perspectives while also identifying avenues for future research in this domain.

6.3.1 Implications from teacher's perspective

From the teacher's perspective, engaging students in the exploration of Chinese piano repertoires facilitates the preservation and propagation of cultural heritage. As Chen (2015) said, traditional Chinese music, literature, and art serve as conduits for transmitting cultural values, norms, and narratives across generations. By incorporating these repertoires with relevant Chinese piano repertoires, a sense of cultural pride and appreciation could be instilled among students, which fosters a deeper connection between individual student and music cultural inheritance (Yu, 2014).

Additionally, teaching Chinese piano repertoires provides piano teachers with a platform to promote critical thinking and creativity by encouraging students to analyze, interpret, and contextualize cultural matters within historical, social, and linguistic frameworks. Teachers often use metaphors as illustrations, implementing with envisioned imaginations in pedagogy. This process is considered necessary (Zheng & Leung, 2023).

To enhance students' engagement and interest in cultural studies, piano teachers can also incorporate extracurricular activities that serve as an adjunct to the regular curriculum. Such as planning an excursion that leads students to immerse in the exploration of local culture, offering a practical and immersive approach to learning that can significantly augment the theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom. By facilitating direct interaction with cultural matters, traditions, and communities, teachers can create a dynamic learning environment that not only enriches students' understanding of diverse cultures but also inspires them through experiential learning. This approach aligns with the educational theories that emphasize the importance of experiential learning in fostering a deeper connection with the subject matter (Kolb, 1995). Engaging students in activities outside the conventional classroom setting encourages them to apply theoretical concepts in real-world contexts, thereby enhancing their critical thinking and analytical skills. Furthermore, such experiential learning opportunities can catalyze personal growth and self-discovery among students, as they navigate through different cultural landscapes and perspectives (Dewey, 1997). Therefore, the integration of extracurricular activities focused on cultural exploration can be an effective strategy for nurturing a more profound and comprehensive understanding of cultural studies among students.

6.3.2 Implications from students' perspective

From the perspective of students, delving into Chinese repertoires transcends mere musical study, opening up pathways for identity nurture and fostering a deepened cross-cultural understanding. As Tuo (2023) elucidates, for students with an intrinsic interest in Chinese culture, engaging with Chinese repertoires can affirm their cultural identity and instill a profound sense of belonging. This connection to the music becomes a reflective mirror (Liu,

2016), motivating and allowing students to see aspects of their own identity within the broader tapestry of Chinese cultural expression.

Moreover, the exploration of Chinese piano repertoires presents a unique opportunity for cultural immersion and understanding, even for students who might initially be indifferent or unfamiliar with these musical landscapes. Allwood (2018) argues that through meaningful engagement with these cultural materials, students are not only able to cultivate a deeper appreciation for their own cultural heritage but are also propelled into a broader orbit of human experiences, reflecting the diversity and complexity inherent in global cultures. This process of engagement enables students to navigate and understand cultural nuances more intricately, thereby enriching their personal and musical identity.

In essence, the study of Chinese piano repertoires from the student's perspective is a holistic educational experience that transcends traditional boundaries of music education. The process of learning gradually mirrors one's mind shifting the attention from the challenge of the music technique to the state of the mind (Matsunobu, 2013) which serves as a conduit for identity nurture, cross-cultural understanding, and linguistic proficiency, emphasizing the importance of cultural immersion in the development of a well-rounded musician. Through this immersive study, students are equipped with the tools to navigate and appreciate the complexities of global cultures, enriching their musical journey and personal growth.

6.3.3 Implications from the role of traditional culture in shaping Chinese piano education

The influence of traditional culture on the evolution and ethos of contemporary educational paradigms is both profound and nuanced. It operates on a subconscious level, accruing over time and permeating various facets of daily life, including learning, working, and leisure

activities (Nisbett et al., 2001) This subtle infusion of cultural norms and values into the collective consciousness can significantly shape the thought processes and behavioral patterns of individuals (Peng et al., 2001) thereby molding the character and direction of modern piano education. As such, the manifestation of piano education varies across different cultural landscapes, reflecting the unique cultural heritage and developmental context of each region.

In the context of China, the diversification of piano education strategies should take into account the distinctive cultural and developmental profiles of various locales. Tailoring the educational framework to harmonize with the local cultural ethos and development stage ensures a more resonant and effective educational outcome. By aligning the educational system with traditional cultural values, forms, and styles, educators can elicit a more positive and meaningful response from students. Moreover, the perception and appreciation of piano education are inevitably colored by the cultural and social environment in which they are situated. It necessitates the formulation of piano education values and philosophies that are sensitive to the cultural specificities of different regions. National characteristics and values play a pivotal role in shaping these educational philosophies, underscoring the importance of a culturally congruent approach to piano education.

The dynamics of cultural exchange, interaction, and integration among nations also contribute to the evolving landscape of educational ideals and values. This cross-cultural fertilization can profoundly influence the development of modern piano education, prompting shifts in educational paradigms and practices. Culture not only influences the creative aspects of piano composition but also imposes limitations on the educational content. For instance, the assimilation of Western musical techniques and styles has been a significant factor in the development of piano music in China. Western piano compositions have become central to the modern piano education curriculum in China, serving as benchmarks for study and reinterpretation.

However, the influence of regional traditional cultures extends beyond the creative realm to impact the cognitive frameworks of piano educators. These cultural underpinnings shape educators' thinking habits, value systems, and aesthetic preferences, which in turn influence the overarching goals and content of piano education. In summary, the interplay between traditional culture and piano education underscores the need for a culturally informed and adaptive educational approach, capable of fostering a rich and diverse musical landscape.

6.4 LIMITATIONS

The limitations of this study refer to the generalizability due to the qualitative nature of study. While this study provides in-depth insights and evidence drawn from the experiences, emotions, and behaviors of both teachers and students in the cultivation of cultural identity through Chinese piano repertoires, the use of non-random samples limits the extent to which the findings can be generalized to a larger population. Furthermore, the data in this study are intrinsically tied to the specific context in which they were collected, suggesting that replication of the study might yield divergent results.

6.5 CONCLUSION

To address the two proposed research questions, this study embarked on a comprehensive two-phase investigation aimed at deeply examining the methods and efficacy of fostering cultural identities through the pedagogy and study of Chinese piano repertoires within a Chinese university context. This exploration was conducted via qualitative research methodologies, capturing insights from the perspectives from piano teachers and students in Chinese universities distinctly.

Phase I was aligned with the first research question (RQ1): What teaching strategies and practices do Chinese piano teachers think are effective in nurturing music students' cultural identity in Chinese university settings? This initial phase utilized a Delphi survey methodology, designed to converge expert opinion on pivotal teaching strategies and practices.

The Delphi process, executed over three rounds, culminated in the identification of ten key elements deemed essential for integrating into the pedagogical approaches for Chinese piano repertoire. Ten elements include:

1. Tailored Teaching, by emphasizing the customizing instructional approaches to fit the unique needs of students.
2. Integration of Eastern and Western Teaching Methods, by combining the strengths of Eastern and Western pedagogical strategies to enrich the learning experience.
3. Cross-artistic teaching Methods, which draw on various forms of art in order to enhance students' musical interpretation and art experience.
4. Emphasis on Technique Proficiency and Performance Expression, focusing on the technical mastery and expressive performance of music.
5. Emphasizing the influence of teachers and role models, particularly within the traditional Master-Apprentice model, is deeply rooted in Chinese culture. This concept, as articulated by Han Yu, outlines the teacher's role as one who propagates the doctrine, imparts professional knowledge, and resolves doubts (師者，所以傳道授業解惑也, translated into English by Thomas, 2017). In this context, the inspirational impact of piano teachers and role models plays a crucial role in shaping students' musical and cultural identities. The close mentorship and guidance provided by teachers not only enhance students' technical skills but also instill cultural values and artistic principles, fostering a deep connection to the traditions and practices of Chinese music. By leveraging this model, educators can profoundly influence

the development of their students, guiding them not only in their musical growth but also in their understanding and appreciation of the broader cultural heritage.

6. Exploration of Cultural Connotations, which delves into the cultural significance and meanings embedded within Chinese piano repertoires.

7. Connection to Real Life, which requires the student to pay attention to connect their musical understanding which stems from real-life experiences and cultural contexts.

8. Cultivation of Cultural Awareness, by promoting an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and heritage through piano repertoires. Thereby, enhancing students' awareness of their own and others' cultures.

9. Observation and Assessment of Cultural Identification, by monitoring and evaluating the progress of students in recognizing and internalizing cultural identities.

10. Transnuture into Cultural Competency, with the guidance of students toward achieving a nuanced understanding and ability to navigate diverse cultural landscapes proficiently.

Based on these ten elements, a teaching framework was constructed (Figure 5.1), consisting of seven categories: tailored teaching, Chinese piano repertoires, emphasis on teaching elements, teacher's instructions, students' explorations, in-depth cultural connotations, and extracurricular activities to cultivate cultural competence. This teaching framework draws a clear consensus on teaching strategies and pedagogical patterns regarding nurturing students' cultural identity via Chinese piano repertoires.

This teaching framework was applied in Phase II, to examine and answer RQ 2: How do piano students act with reference to the identified teaching strategies in constructing their cultural identity and shed light on developing their musicality with the influence of Chinese culture?

The Phase II case study highlighted the significance of student engagement and experiences, serving as compelling evidence of the efficacy of the identified pedagogical strategies in fostering the development of students' cultural identities. The analysis of data from each participating student was conducted using interpretative phenomenological analysis, facilitating a deep exploration of the nuanced and multifaceted nature of the student's experiences throughout the eight-week study. The findings distilled the themes through individual cases and cross-cases and revealed a complex journey encompassing elements of technical mastery, cultural immersion, psychological resilience, and artistic innovation.

Key thematic findings emerged from the study, encompassing: reflective self-examination coupled with deliberate slow tempo practice as a cornerstone of musical proficiency and artistic expression; the exploration of sonority within a cultural framework; the interplay between creativity, interpretative insight, and cultural continuity; and the emotional and psychological dimensions integral to forging a cultural identity.

The identified thematic dimensions underscore the multifaceted nature of learning and highlight the essential interconnection between technical skill, personal reflection, cultural understanding, and artistic creativity in the nurture of a nuanced cultural identity, thereby, portraying a clear pathway that students construct their cultural identity while learning Chinese piano repertoires.

The findings of the second phase indicate that students undergo significant personal growth as they navigate the interpretation and expression of cultural nuances embedded within selections from the Chinese piano repertoire. This process entails a profound engagement with the cultural context inherent to each chosen piece, thereby achieving a delicate equilibrium between technical precision and the infusion of emotional and psychological depth into their performances.

Furthermore, the study accentuates the vital role of the Chinese piano repertoire as a conduit for cultural expression, as well as in the cultivation of individual cultural competencies and identities. This underscores the repertoire's instrumental role in enriching students' musicality with the subtleties of Chinese cultural elements, thus illuminating the potential for holistic development in students' musical talents and cultural understandings.

In the detailed exploration of the two-phase study, while recognizing the paramount importance of the components previously discussed, an essential finding has been made regarding the necessity of establishing a sustainable feedback loop to augment the efficacy of the teaching and learning dynamic, particularly in the context of nurturing students' cultural identity. The significance of feedback in the educational process cannot be overstated, as it plays a pivotal role in the advancement of student learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Notably, feedback mechanisms are inherently present in one-to-one instrumental instruction, where personalized guidance and responses can significantly influence learning outcomes have been confirmed through this study.

Effective feedback, is characterized by its accessibility to learners and its purposeful nature, aimed at facilitating understanding and supporting learning across both formal and informal settings. The art of delivering feedback that is both understandable and purposeful necessitates a thoughtful consideration of the dialogue between teacher and student, ensuring that it serves to reinforce learning objectives and student development.

Expanding upon this foundation, the current study underscores the importance of crafting feedback strategies tailored to the cultivation of students' cultural identities, particularly through the teaching of Chinese piano repertoires. This endeavor requires an approach to feedback that goes beyond mere technical proficiency, embedding cultural understanding and appreciation into the learning experience. For instance, when teaching Chinese piano repertoire, piano teachers have the opportunity to provide feedback that not only addresses technical

aspects but also delves into the cultural, historical, and emotional contexts of the pieces by using narrative discourse or other innovative teaching approaches. Such feedback can guide students in developing a deeper connection to the music, fostering an appreciation for the cultural heritage it represents and encouraging a more nuanced expression of cultural identity through their performances.

Moreover, the establishment of a sustainable feedback loop in this context involves creating opportunities for continuous and iterative feedback that adapts to the evolving needs and understandings of the students. This could include peer-performance seminars where students share their performing ideas with interpretations and receive feedback from their peers, or the integration of reflective practices where students critically assess their own performances in light of cultural learning goals. Through these methods, feedback becomes a catalyst for cultural exploration and expression, enriching the educational experience and contributing to the holistic development of students as culturally competent individuals. Therefore, a revised teaching framework is proposed (Figure 6.1), considering the feedback loop issues.

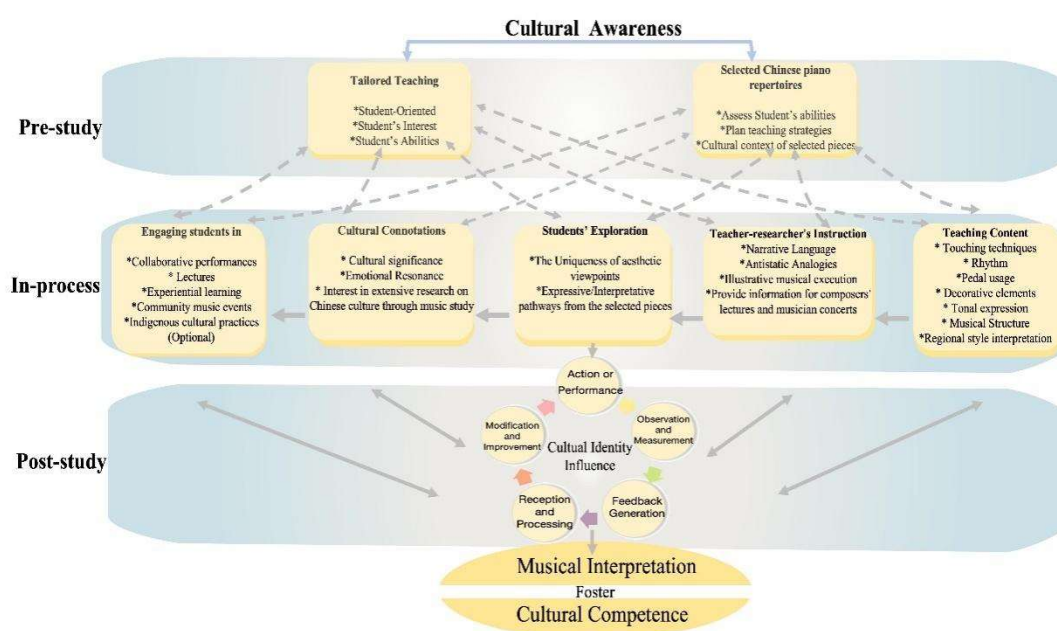


Figure 6.1. Revised Teaching Framework

In conclusion, the study highlights the critical role of a sustainable feedback loop in enhancing the teaching and learning process, particularly in the context of nurturing cultural identity through music education. By prioritizing effective, purposeful, and culturally informed feedback, piano teachers can support students in navigating the complex interplay between musical skill and cultural expression, thereby enriching their learning journey and promoting the development of a profound cultural identity.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.6.1 Recommendations for Piano Teaching

Considering piano teaching, especially in emphasizing the cultivation of students' cultural identity, and engaging with diverse cultural perspectives, the pedagogical practices should be inclusive, reflective, and adaptable. The research presents initial substantiation for the deployment of a specifically crafted teaching paradigm, replete with an array of strategies that have demonstrated efficacy in this endeavor.

First of all, tailored teaching with culturally aware teaching that meticulously incorporates cultural elements within piano repertoires is crucial. This approach ensures that students have a chance approach to their cultures as well as those of others within their learning materials, thereby fostering a conducive environment for the exploration and articulation of cultural identities. Activities designed to bolster this exploration, including field trips, culturally themed assignments, and peer-led discussions on cultural perspectives, serve to augment students' intercultural understanding and respect, facilitating a richer, more inclusive educational experience.

Secondly, maintaining an open-minded stance towards the adaptation of pedagogical strategies in alignment with the dynamic needs and feedback of students is essential. Such

flexibility is instrumental in nurturing students' intrinsic motivation and encouraging an active, reflective engagement with musical performance. This approach is indicative of a holistic educational model that is deeply influenced by principles of Chinese cultural pedagogy, where the goal is not merely technical mastery but the cultivation of a well-rounded, culturally cognizant individual.

Thirdly, encouraging students to explore the connections between piano performing with other disciplines, such as history, literature, and social sciences, as well as connecting to the connection with real-life matters, to deepen their comprehension of the cultural context surrounding the musical pieces, enriching their educational journey.

In sum, these pedagogical recommendations underscore the thoughts that the study of piano extends beyond the acquisition of technical proficiency and academic knowledge; it is also a profound medium for promoting cultural awareness, appreciation, and identity development. Such an educational endeavor necessitates meticulous planning, a willingness to embrace change, and a committed effort toward understanding and honoring the diversity of cultural perspectives. This approach is not only for enhancing personal ability in music competence but also contributes to the broader development of students as culturally informed individuals.

6.6.2 Recommendations for Future Study

Regarding future research, several promising avenues exist for exploring how teaching Chinese piano repertoires can nurture cultural identity. One primary consideration involves conducting longitudinal studies that meticulously assess the enduring influence of engagement with Chinese piano repertoires on the evolution of students' cultural identities, as well as their academic trajectories. Such research could offer invaluable insights into the temporal dynamics

of cultural identity development, providing a deeper understanding of how sustained exposure to cultural repertoires shapes both individual and collective identities over time. By examining these long-term effects, future studies could contribute significantly to the field, revealing how cultural engagement through music education impacts students' personal growth and cultural awareness throughout their educational journey.

Furthermore, undertaking comparative analyses, aiming to evaluate the relative efficacy of diverse teaching methodologies in promoting cultural engagement and comprehension among student populations with varied cultural backgrounds. This line of inquiry is particularly pertinent in multicultural educational settings, where the goal is to cultivate a rich, inclusive environment that values and integrates multiple cultural perspectives.

Additionally, to participate in interdisciplinary research collaborations that bridge the realms of music education with fields such as psychology, sociology, and anthropology. Such collaborative efforts could unveil the complex socio-psychological processes underpinning cultural identity nurture and intercultural communication skills. Investigating these processes in the context of learning Chinese piano repertoires might reveal how piano education can act as a conduit for broader socio-cultural learning and identity development.

In essence, the pedagogical practice of integrating Chinese piano repertoires into the curriculum carries multifaceted implications, touching upon educational methodologies, social integration, and psychological attribution. As research in this area progresses, it holds the potential to offer nuanced insights into the complex mechanisms of cultural identity construction within musical educational settings. Such advancements will undoubtedly contribute to formulating evidence-based teaching strategies championing cultural inclusivity and preparing students to navigate the global landscape as culturally proficient individuals. This endeavor aligns with the broader educational objective of nurturing global citizens

equipped with the cultural agility required to flourish in a diverse and interconnected global community.



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Appendix A

The Delphi Phase I Round 1 Questions (English Version)

Learning and teaching experience on Chinese piano repertoires

Learning experience

1. Could you please briefly introduce some Chinese piano repertoires that impressed you and give your reasons?
2. How do Chinese piano repertoires impact your performing experience?

(Prompt: physically, emotionally, mentally, technically)

Teaching experience

3. How often do you assign Chinese piano repertoires to your students? (Prompt: course requirement, competition requirement, personal interests, etc.) Has the proportion of Chinese piano repertoires used in your piano teaching changed in the past ten years? If any, what are the changes?
4. What specific objectives or requirements do you have for Chinese piano repertoire teaching?

Embodied experience in cultural practice

5. To what extent do Chinese cultural experiences influence your ideas on performing and teaching Chinese piano repertoires? (Prompts: traditional architecture, clothing, cuisines, Chinese paintings, Chinese literature, dramas, Chinese opera, calligraphy, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, etc.)

6. Have you ever experienced or learned about Chinese folk songs, dances, traditional instruments, or cooperating with people playing Chinese traditional instruments? If so, can you describe your experience, please?

7. Have you tried to compose or rearrange piano works with Chinese elements?

8. Have you ever organized or encouraged students to participate in cultural events so as to promote their understanding of Chinese culture and thus their learning of Chinese piano repertoires? If so, please share the details.

Coping strategy

9. When you teach Chinese piano music, do you pay attention to students' Chinese cultural understanding? Do your students have a sense of Chinese cultural identity? To what extent do you think that cultural identity affects your teaching and students' learning process? Please share your experience.

10. Current educational policy has put a significant emphasis on promoting Chinese traditional culture. From your point of view, how does teaching Chinese piano music contribute to this focus?

Appendix B

The Delphi Phase I Round 1 Questions (Chinese Version)

中国钢琴曲目的学习与教学经验

学习经验

1. 请介绍几首给您留下深刻印象的中国钢琴作品并陈述理由。
2. 您认为学习中国钢琴作品，与西方钢琴作品相比有什么不同，会在哪些方面有不同的感受？（例如：身体上、情感上、精神上、技术上）

教学经验

3. 您通常多久给学生布置一次中国钢琴作品？请简述布置作品的理由。（例如：课程大纲要求、比赛要求、个人喜好等）近十年来，中国钢琴作品在您的钢琴教学中使用比例有没有变化？如有，有何变化？
4. 您对中国钢琴作品的教学有什么具体的目的和要求？

文化实践

5. 哪些中国传统文化领域影响并链接了您对于中国钢琴作品的演奏及教学？（例如：传统建筑、服饰、美食、中国画、文学、戏剧、戏曲、书法、儒家、道家、佛教思想等）
6. 您是否体验或学习过民族民间歌舞、戏曲、传统乐器，或与中国传统乐器合作过？如有，请您分享相关的经验。
7. 您是否尝试过创作或编创与中国元素相关的钢琴作品？
8. 您是否曾组织或鼓励学生参加任何了解中国文化的相关活动，以促进中国钢琴作品的学习？如有，请分享您的经验。

教学中的文化认同

9. 在教授中国钢琴作品时，您是否关注学生对中国文化的学习与理解？他们是否具有中国文化认同的意识？您认为文化认同是否会影响中国钢琴音乐的教学互动？请分享相关的经验。
10. 基于当前教育政策对弘扬中华优秀传统文化的重视，您认为中国钢琴作品教学将如何为此做出贡献？

Appendix C

The Delphi Phase I Round 2 Questions (English Version)

The design of the second round Delphi questionnaire is based on the results of the first-round open-ended questionnaire, aimed at further collecting the opinions of experts. In this round, Likert scales and multiple-choice questions are employed to systematically gather the viewpoints of experts. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gain a deeper understanding from experts' perspectives on key issues and to provide a more accurate measurement and analysis of the differences in their opinions.

1.To what extent do you think the Chinese piano repertoires are the fusion of Chinese and Western musical cultures? **【Scale question】**

- a.extremely disagree
- b.disagree
- c.slightly disagree
- d.slightly agree
- e.agree
- f.extremely agree

2.To what extent do you think the teaching steps for Chinese piano repertoires and non-Chinese piano repertoires are similar? **【Scale question】**

- a.totally different
- b.different
- c.slightly different
- d.slightly the same
- e.same
- f.exactly the same

3.To what extent do you think learning Chinese piano repertoires arouses emotional resonance? **【Scale question】**

- a.extremely low
- b.low

- c.slightly low
- d.slightly high
- e.high
- f.extremely high

4.To what extent do you think the emotional resonance aroused by performing Chinese piano repertoires lights up performers' interest in further studying Chinese culture? 【Scale question】

- a.extremely low
- b.low
- c.slightly low
- d.slightly high
- e.high
- f.extremely high

5.How important do you think it is to explore the cultural connotations of China in the teaching of Chinese piano works? 【Scale question】

- a.extremely low
- b.low
- c.slightly low
- d.slightly high
- e.high
- f.extremely high

6.Does your university require the study of Chinese piano repertoires as part of the examination requirements?

- a.Yse
- b.No
- c.Not sure

7.What are the reasons for assigning Chinese piano repertoires? 【Multiple-choice】

- a.align with Chinese cultural education policies
- b.To cultivate a sense of Chinese cultural identity



- c.For examination, competition, and concert requirements
- d.Based on the students' learning abilities and interests
- e.To explore Chinese music culture with regional characteristics
- f.To promote Chinese piano works and culture
- g.Others (please specify)

8.What are the teaching goals of Chinese piano repertoires? **【Multiple-choice】**

- a.Basic understanding of Chinese piano music
- b.Deepening the understanding of Chinese music and culture through Chinese piano pieces
- c.Promoting Chinese piano works and culture
- d.Nurturing a sense of cultural identity
- e.Others (please specify)

9.What are the teaching requirements for Chinese piano repertoire? **【Multiple-choice】**

- a.Emphasize rhythm
- b.Emphasize ornamentation
- c.Emphasize touch and keyboard skills
- d.Emphasize tone expression
- e.Emphasize pedal usage
- f.Emphasize the structure of the piece
- g.Emphasize the expression of regional music styles
- h.Others (please specify)

10. To what extent do you think narrative language helps students to construct their understanding of Chinese piano repertoires? **【Scale question】**

- a.extremely insignificant
- b.insignificant
- c.slightly insignificant
- d.slightly significant
- e.significant
- f.extremely significant

11. How frequently do you use "analogous art" in teaching Chinese piano repertoires? ("Analogous art" refers to an artistic technique or expression method that conveys new meanings, inspires thought, or generates a deep understanding through comparing and associating different elements, themes, or concepts.) **【Scale question】**

- a.Never Use
- b.Rarely Use
- c.Occasionally Use
- d.Frequently Use
- e.Regularly Use
- f.Always Use

12. Which factors do you think influence your understanding, interpretation, and teaching of Chinese piano repertoires? **【Multiple-choice】**

- a.Chinese cultural thoughts such as Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, etc.
- b.Other art fields in China (traditional architecture, traditional clothing, Chinese painting, Chinese literature, Chinese opera, calligraphy, etc.)
- c.Daily life
- d.Natural scenery of different regions
- e.Others (please specify)

13. To what extent do you think the composer's own explanation of their creative compositions or performance guidance is important for understanding their works? **【Scale question】**

- a.very unimportant
- b.unimportant
- c.slightly unimportant
- d.slightly important
- e.important
- f.very important

14. How important do you think cultural awareness is for learning Chinese piano repertoires? (Cultural Awareness: Cultural awareness refers to an individual's recognition and understanding of their own and others' cultural backgrounds, values, and beliefs. In academia,

it emphasizes enhancing individuals' sensitivity to and understanding of the characteristics and differences of various cultures through education and learning.) **【Scale question】**

- a.very unimportant
- b.unimportant
- c.slightly unimportant
- d.slightly important
- e.important
- f.very important

15. To what extent do you think cultural awareness impacts the sustainable development of Chinese piano music? **【Scale question】**

- a.no impact
- b.minimal impact
- c.mild impact
- d.moderate impact
- e.significant impact
- f.extremely impact

16. Ways to cultivate cultural awareness in music education include. **【Multiple-choice】**

- a.Collaboration with Chinese folk instruments
- b.Learning through classroom lectures
- c.Learning through experiential activities in class
- d.Participation in relevant social music activities
- e.Others (please specify)

17.The main ways to discern students' cultural identity are: **【Multiple-choice】**

- a.Through informal chats and observations
- b.formalized questioning and answering
- c.Others (please specify)

18.The main ways to cultivate students' cultural identity include: **【Multiple-choice】**

- a.Integrating cultural topics closely with students' interests
- b.Enhancing students' learning abilities and accumulating cultural knowledge



- c.Realizing the importance of integrating ideological and political education with professional learning
- d.Utilizing the cultural influence of teachers in interpreting Chinese piano works
- e.Recognizing the importance of role models (such as composers, performers, educators, researchers)
- f.Exploring the connection between music and real life based on cultural awareness
- g.Others (please specify)

19.To what extent do you think learning Chinese piano repertoires benefit to cultivate one's cultural competency? (Cultural competency refers to an individual's ability to effectively understand, respect, and respond to people from different cultural backgrounds in cross-cultural interactions and exchanges. This not only requires a deep sense of cultural awareness but also the corresponding communication and adaptation skills.) **【Scale question】**

- a.extremely low
- b.low
- c.slightly low
- d.slightly high
- e.high
- f.extremely high

Appendix D

The Delphi Phase I Round 2 Questions(Chinese Version)

第二轮德尔菲问卷的设计基于第一轮开放性问卷的结果，旨在进一步收集专家们的意见。在这一轮中采用了里克特量表和多选题的形式，以更系统化和量化的方式收集专家们的观点。本轮问卷旨在能够更深入了解专家们对关键问题的看法，并对他们之间的意见分歧进行更准确的衡量和分析。

1. 您认为中国钢琴作品多大程度上是中西方音乐文化融合的产物？【量表题】

- a. 非常不认同
- b. 不认同
- c. 有些不认同
- d. 有些认同
- e. 认同
- f. 非常认同

2. 您认为在教学步骤上，中国钢琴作品与非中国钢琴作品具有多大程度的相似性？【量表题】

- a. 完全不相似
- b. 不相似
- c. 较少相似
- d. 较多相似
- e. 相似
- f. 完全相似

3. 您认为学习中国钢琴作品时在多大程度上能引起情感共鸣？【量表题】

- a. 极低
- b. 低
- c. 较低
- d. 较高
- e. 高
- f. 极高

4. 您认为演奏中国钢琴曲目所引起的情感共鸣在多大程度上激发了演奏者进一步研究中国文化的兴趣？【量表题】

- a. 极低
- b. 低
- c. 较低
- d. 较高
- e. 高
- f. 极高

5. 您认为在中国钢琴作品教学中挖掘中国文化内涵有多重要？【量表题】

- a. 极低
- b. 低
- c. 较低
- d. 较高
- e. 高
- f. 极高

6. 您所在的大学是否将学习中国钢琴作品作为考试要求？

- a. 是
- b. 否
- c. 不清楚

7. 布置中国钢琴作品的原因？【多选题】

- a. 契合中国文化教育政策
- b. 培养中国文化认同
- c. 考试、比赛和音乐会的要求
- d. 根据学生的学习能力与兴趣
- e. 探究带有地域特色的中国音乐文化
- f. 推广中国钢琴作品及文化
- g. 其他原因（请陈述）

8. 中国钢琴作品的教学目标？【多选题】

- a. 对中国钢琴音乐的基本理解

- b. 以中国钢琴作品为媒介，深化对中国音乐和文化的理解
- c. 推广中国钢琴作品及文化
- d. 培养文化认同感
- e. 其他（请陈述）

9. 中国钢琴作品的教学要求：【多选题】

- a. 注重节奏性
- b. 注重装饰性
- c. 注重触键技巧
- d. 注重音色表达
- e. 注重踏板运用
- f. 注重作品结构
- g. 注重区域音乐风格的表达
- h. 其他（请陈述）

10. 您认为叙事性语言在多大程度上帮助学生构建对中国钢琴作品理解？【量表题】

- a. 极其不重要
- b. 不重要
- c. 微不足道
- d. 稍微显著
- e. 重要
- f. 非常重要

11. “类比艺术”在您教学中国钢琴作品过程中的使用频率？（“类比艺术”是指一种艺术手法或表现方式，通过将不同的元素、主题或概念进行比较和联想，以传达新的意义、启发思考或产生深层次的理解。）【量表题】

- a. 从不使用
- b. 很少使用
- c. 偶尔使用
- d. 经常使用
- e. 常常使用
- f. 持续/始终使用

12. 您认为影响以下那些因素影响了您对中国钢琴作品理解、演绎和教学？【多选题】

- a. 儒家、道家、佛教等中国文化思想
- b. 中国其他艺术领域（传统建筑、传统服饰、中国绘画、中国文学、中国戏曲、书法等）
- c. 日常生活
- d. 不同地域的自然景色
- e. 其他（请陈述）

13. 您认为作曲家本人阐述的创作理念或演奏指导，对理解其作品的重要程度？【量表题】

- a. 非常不重要
- b. 不重要
- c. 比较不重要
- d. 比较重要
- e. 重要
- f. 非常重要

14. 您认为文化意识对学习中国钢琴作品的重要程度？（文化意识定义：文化意识指的是个体对自己和他人文化背景、价值观和信仰的认识和理解。在学术领域，强调的是通过教育和学习提升个体对不同文化特点和差异的敏感度和认识）【量表题】

- a. 非常不重要
- b. 不重要
- c. 比较不重要
- d. 比较重要
- e. 重要
- f. 非常重要

15. 您认为文化意识对于中国钢琴音乐可持续发展的影响程度？【量表题】

- a. 无影响
- b. 微小影响
- c. 轻微影响
- d. 中等影响
- e. 显著影响
- f. 极大影响

16. 在音乐教育中培养文化意识的途径有：【多选题】

- a. 与中国民族乐器的合作
- b. 通过课堂讲授式的学习
- c. 通过课堂体验式的学习
- d. 参与相关社会音乐活动
- e. 其他（请陈述）

17. 发现学生文化认同的主要途径是：

- a. 通过非正式的闲谈观察
- a. 形式化的提问与回答
- f. 其他（请陈述）

18. 培养学生文化认同的主要途径有：

- a. 把文化议题与学生的兴趣紧密结合
- b. 增强学生的学习能力，积累文化知识
- c. 认识到思政课程学习与专业结合的重要性
- d. 发挥教师对中国钢琴作品解读的文化影响力
- e. 认识到榜样力量的重要性（如作曲家、演奏家、教育家、研究者）
- f. 在文化意识的基础上，探寻音乐与现实生活的联结
- g. 其他（请陈述）

19. 您认为学习中国钢琴曲目在多大程度上有助于培养个人的文化能力？（文化能力，指的是个体在跨文化交流和互动中能够有效理解、尊重和回应不同文化背景下的人的能力。这不仅要求个体具备深刻的文化意识，还需要具备相应的沟通和适应技能。）

- a. 极低
- b. 低
- c. 较低
- d. 较高
- e. 高
- f. 极高



Appendix E

The Delphi Phase I Round 3 Questions (English Version)

The design of the Round 3 Delphi questionnaire is based on the results of the previous two rounds, aimed at further clarifying the opinions of experts, fostering in-depth consideration among experts on key issues, striving to achieve a higher degree of consensus, and ultimately determining the questions or solutions.

1. Most piano instructors tailor their teaching of Chinese piano repertoires to the abilities and interests of their students, fostering a deeper understanding and cultural identification with Chinese music and culture, even though not all university piano curricula necessarily mandate the study of these works.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

2. Chinese piano repertoires, embodying a fusion of Eastern and Western musical cultures, require the development of teaching methods more suited to Chinese universities, rather than relying solely on Western piano teaching approaches.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

3. Studying Chinese piano repertoires helps to evoke emotional resonance in Chinese students and stimulate their interest in an in-depth exploration of Chinese culture, making it a critical step in teaching to guide students in thoroughly examining the Chinese cultural connotations embedded within these works.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

4. In guiding students to practice and perform Chinese piano compositions, emphasis should be placed on key touch techniques, tonal expression, interpretation of regional styles, and pedal usage, while also focusing on the teaching of rhythm, decorative elements, and the structure of the compositions.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

5. When teaching Chinese piano repertoires, instructors typically utilize narrative language and artistic analogies and also integrate the composer's creative philosophy and performance guidance. Teachers base their approach on an understanding of other Chinese art forms, such as architecture, apparel, painting, literature, opera, and calligraphy, as well as knowledge of Chinese cultural ideologies, everyday life, and regional landscapes, to aid students in comprehending these piano works.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

6. For learning Chinese piano repertoires and fostering the sustainable development of Chinese piano music, nurturing cultural awareness is essential. Effective methods include collaborative performances with Chinese traditional instruments, classroom instruction and experiential learning, as well as participation in relevant social music activities.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

7. The influence of teachers and role models plays a pivotal role in fostering cultural identity in students. This includes teachers demonstrating and interpreting Chinese piano repertoires and sharing case studies of relevant musicians and researchers with students.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

8. An effective approach to nurturing students' cultural identity involves guiding them to connect real-life experiences with music and setting cultural topics based on their interests and hobbies.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

9. Effective methods for observing students' cultural identification include informal conversations and formal questioning, along with assessing through the musical expression demonstrated in their performances.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

10. Through studying Chinese piano repertoires, students can enhance their cultural identity, awareness, and understanding, which can then be transformed into their personal cultural competencies.

- a. Completely Agree
- b. Partially Agree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)
- c. Completely Disagree (Please add your viewpoints and reasons)

Appendix F

The Delphi Phase I Round 3 Questions (Chinese Version)

第三轮德尔菲问卷的设计是基于前两轮问卷的结果，旨在进一步理清专家的意见，促进专家们对关键问题进行深入思考，争取达成更高层次的共识，并最终确定问题或方案。

1. 大部分高校钢琴教师会根据学生能力和兴趣教授中国钢琴作品，以促进学生对音乐和文化的深入理解和文化认同，即使未必所有大学钢琴专业的教学大纲中都对学习中国钢琴作品有要求。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

2. 中国钢琴作品虽然体现了中西音乐文化融合，但其教学应该探索出更适用于中国大学的方法，而非完全依赖西方钢琴教学方式。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

3. 学习中国钢琴作品有助于激发中国学生的情感共鸣和其对中国文化深入研究的兴趣，因此在教学中带领学生深入探讨作品的文化内涵是关键步骤。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

4. 在指导学生练习和演奏中国钢琴作品时，重点应放在触键技巧、音色表达、区域风格诠释和踏板使用上，同时也要注重节奏、装饰性元素和作品结构的教學。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

5. 在教授中国钢琴作品时，教师通常使用叙事性语言和艺术类比，同时也结需合作曲家的创作理念和演奏指导。教师主要基于对中国其他艺术领域（如建筑、服饰、绘画、文学、戏曲、书法）的理解，以及中国文化思想、日常生活和地域景观的知识，来辅助学生理解中国钢琴作品。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

6. 对于学习中国钢琴作品和促进中国钢琴音乐的持续发展，培养文化意识至关重要。有效的培养方法包括：合作表演中国民族乐器、课堂讲授与体验式学习，以及参与相关社会音乐活动。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

7. 教师和榜样的力量在培养学生文化认同中发挥关键作用。方法包括：教师示范解读中国钢琴作品，向学生分享相关音乐家和研究者案例。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

8. 在培养学生的文化认同时，引导学生将现实生活与音乐相联系，并根据学生的兴趣爱好设置文化议题也是有效的手段。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

9. 观察学生文化认同程度的有效方法包括：非正式交谈和形式化提问。除此之外，也能够通过学生演奏中的音乐表达去评估。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

10. 通过对中国钢琴作品的学习，学生能够增强其文化认同、文化意识和文化理解，并转化成其个人的文化能力。

- a. 完全同意
- b. 不完全同意（请补充您的观点及理由）
- c. 完全不同意（请补充您的观点及理由）

Appendix G

Interview Protocols (English Version)

Pre-study Interview protocol

Date: 2023.11.01

Location: Room 403 piano room,
College of Art, GDUFS

1. Please introduce your piano learning experience.
2. While learning piano, have you studied any Chinese piano works? If so, please introduce the repertoire and share your learning experience.
3. What are your thoughts on studying Chinese piano works?
Hint: Is it necessary? Why study them? What expectations or goals do you have?
4. Introduce the piece you are currently assigned, and describe your current progress.

Mid-Interview protocol

Date: 2023.11.30

Location: Room 403
College of Art, GDUFS

1. Following the completion of a four-week course, what are your reflections on the learning outcomes achieved thus far? Furthermore, how do post-lesson summaries and reflective practice notes contribute to the development of your performance experience?
2. Beyond the study of musical pieces, please share your experiences and thoughts on participating in cultural practice activities.
3. In your perspective, do cultural practice activities influence your understanding of culture, and do they offer any insights or inspiration regarding piano performance?
4. What are your expectations and thoughts regarding the upcoming four weeks of coursework and the final examination?

Post -Exam Interview protocol

After completing eight sessions culminating in a performance examination on stage, this session of performance practice research has concluded.

Date:2023.12.23

Performing Location: Theater

Interview Location: Room 403

College of Art, GDUFS

1. Please discuss your interpretation and performance of the piece on stage.

Hint: a. Compared to your previous performance experiences, were there any changes? If so, what were these changes?

b. How did you feel about being on stage?

2. Reflecting on the eight-week course, what do you perceive as your key learning?

Hint: How have post-session summaries and reflective practice notes influenced the nurture of your performance experience, and will you continue to engage in such reflective practices after concluding this performance practice research?

3. Looking back at the eight weeks of instruction, what aspects of the teaching have left a lasting impression on you? Please provide detailed insights.

4. In the context of constructing an understanding of Chinese compositions, please share your insights and experiences from this learning endeavor.

5. Has performing Chinese piano compositions enhanced your personal interest in cultural understanding? If so, in what aspects?

6. In your view, do cultural practice activities impact your understanding of culture and offer insights into piano performance? Please elaborate, drawing on the compositions explored in this performance practice research.

7. Do you plan to maintain your interest in studying Chinese piano compositions in the future? What are your expectations and thoughts in this regard?

Appendix H

Interview Protocols (Chinese Version)

第一次访谈

时间：2023. 11. 01

地点：钢琴课室 403

艺术学院，广东外语外贸大学

1. 请介绍你个人的学琴情况。
2. 学琴过程中，有学习过中国钢琴作品么？（如有，请介绍曲目以及学习经验）
3. 对于学习中国钢琴作品有什么想法

Hint：是否是必须的

为什么学习

有什么期待或者目标

4. 目前布置的作品介绍，以及当前的学习进度

第二次访谈

时间：2023. 11. 30

地点：钢琴课室 403

艺术学院，广东外语外贸大学

1. 经过了四周的课程，你得到到目前为止，有什么收获？
进一步：课后总结、练习反思笔记对演奏经验的形成有什么影响
2. 除了作品演奏学习之外，请谈谈你参与文化实践活动的体会和想法
3. 对你来说，文化实践活动是否会影响你对文化的理解，以及对钢琴演奏是否会有启发呢？
4. 对未来四周的课程以及期末考试有什么样的期待和想法？

第三次访谈

经过了八次课程，最后以在舞台上演奏考试的形式，结束本次演奏实践研究

时间：2023. 12. 23

演奏地点：小剧场

地点：钢琴课室 403

艺术学院，广东外语外贸大学

1. 请谈谈自己在舞台上的作品诠释表现

Hint: a. 与以前的演奏经验相比, 有变化么? 如有, 有什么样的变化

b. 舞台感受如何?

2. 经过了八周的课程, 你觉得有什么收获?

Hint: 课后总结、练习反思笔记对演奏经验的形成有什么影响, 结束演奏实践研究之后会否坚持做课后总结和练习反思呢?

3. 回顾这八周课程, 你觉得是什么样的教学给你留下了印象? 请进行细节讲述。

4. 对于如何建构对中国作品的理解, 请谈谈本次学习的心得体会

5. 演奏中国钢琴作品, 有没有加强个人对文化理解的兴趣?

如有, 在那些方面?

6. 对你来说, 文化实践活动是否会影响你对文化的理解, 以及对钢琴演奏是否会有启发呢, 请结合本次演奏实践研究的作品谈谈

7. 未来是否会保持对中国钢琴作品的学习兴趣, 有什么样的期待和想法?

Appendix I

Practice Reflective Journal (English Version)

Choose a Title: Select a title that reflects the main theme or key points of your reflection.

Date and Location: Record the date and location where you're writing the journal. This could be important when you look back at the journal later.

Introduction: Provide a brief background introduction to what you will be reflecting on. This could be an experience, event, conversation, or any other situation that triggered your reflection. (For example, the environment of the piano room, the lighting, the condition of the piano, etc.)

Description: Detail the piano practice situation. This section should be factual, without judgments or explanations.

Feelings and Thoughts: Discuss your initial reactions, emotions, and thoughts about the piano practice experience. How did it make you feel at the time? What were your thoughts about what was happening?

Evaluation: Evaluate the piano practice experience. What were the good and bad aspects of this experience? What went well? What could have been done better? Here, you are making judgments about the experience.

Analysis: Analyze the event or experience. Why did things happen in this way? What factors might have influenced the outcome? How does this experience connect with your prior knowledge or experiences? Here, you are delving deeper into the reasons or principles behind the experience.

Conclusion: Summarize what you have learned from the reflection. What could you have done differently? What insights do you have about yourself, and how does this affect your thinking or behavior?

Action Plan: Describe what steps you can take to apply what you've learned to future actions. How will you change your behavior or thinking to reflect this reflection? What specific steps will you take to improve or continue building on your piano practice experience?

Personal Goals: You may choose to set some personal goals related to your reflection. What do you hope to achieve or commit to before the next reflective journal entry?

Additional Notes*: Any additional thoughts, perspectives, or questions that emerged during your reflection can be added at the end.

Please remember, the reflective journal is personal and subjective; thus, your format can be flexible based on your preferences and the context of your writing. Keep in mind that regular entries can help you see your development over time. (Note: If new ideas or moments of insight occur during the reflection process, please include them in this entry.)

Title	
Date	
Location	
Introduction	
Description	
Feelings and Thoughts	
Evaluation	
Analysis	
Conclusion	
Action Plan	
Personal Goals	
Additional Notes*	

Appendix J

Practice Reflective Journal (Chinese Version)

1. 主题: 选择一个反映你反思主题或要点的标题。
 2. 日期和地点: 记录你写日记的日期和地点。这在你以后回顾日记时可能很重要。
 3. 引言: 对你将要反思的内容的简短背景介绍。这可能是一个经历、事件、对话或其他任何引发你反思的情境。(例如, 琴房的环境, 灯光, 琴的状态, 等等)
 4. 描述: 详细描述练琴情况。这部分应该是事实性的, 不包含评判或解释。
 5. 感受和思考: 讨论你对练琴经历的初步反应、情绪和思考。当时它让你感觉如何? 你对正在发生的事情有什么想法?
 6. 评价: 评估这次练琴的经历。这次经历的好坏之处是什么? 进行得顺利的是什麼? 哪些方面可以做得更好? 在这里, 你正在对经历进行判断。
 7. 分析: 分析事件或经历。为什么事情会以这种方式发生? 可能影响结果的因素有哪些? 这次经历如何与你之前的知识或经历联系起来? 在这里, 你正在更深入地探究经历背后的原因或原理。
 8. 结论: 总结你从反思中学到的内容。你能做得不同的是什麼? 你对自己有什么了解, 这如何影响你的思考或行为?
 9. 行动计划: 描述你可以采取哪些步骤将所学应用到未来的行动中。你将如何改变你的行为或思维以反映这次反思? 你将采取哪些具体步骤来改善或继续构建你的练琴经历?
 10. 个人目标: 你可以选择设置一些与你的反思相关的个人目标。你希望在下一次反思性日记条目之前实现或致力于什麼?
 11. 额外笔记: 在你反思期间出现的任何额外想法、观点或问题可以在最后添加。
- 请记住, 反思性日记是个人的且主观的; 因此, 你的格式可以根据你的喜好和你写作的背景灵活调整。请记住, 定期条目可以帮助你看到随时间的发展。(注意: 是你在反思过程中出现的新想法, 或者灵光一现, 请在这个条目)

标题	
日期	
地点	
引言	
描述	
感受和思考	
评价	
分析	
结论	
行动计划	
个人目标	
额外笔记*	