Investigating the Traditional and Institutional Pedagogies of the Instrumental

Accompaniment of Cantonese Opera (*Pai-he*) and their Applications in Hong Kong

by

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Statement of Originality

I, MA, Sin Yee, 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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Abstract

Cantonese opera is a traditional genre of Chinese *Xiqu* (戲曲, literally "theatre and music"), which was inscribed in the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list by UNESCO in 2009. In addition to singing, acting, reciting, and acrobatic fighting, *pai-he* (拍和, literally "beating and echoing," referring to music instrumental accompaniment) plays a vital role in supporting and interacting with the actors or singers during Cantonese opera performances. In contrast to other musical genres, pai-he not only serves as an accompaniment but also shows a closely interactive and equally important relationship with the vocal part. The reason is that pai-he players must follow the melody of the vocal part instead of strictly following the score, allowing for flexibility and improvisation.

Similar to other traditional music genres, oral tradition, more specifically, apprenticeship, was the primary approach to transmitting Cantonese operatic knowledge across generations. While apprenticeships are fading out, institutions are serving an imperative role in nurturing Cantonese opera artists. Previous literature has discussed and introduced the musical elements and performance practices of Cantonese operatic music and the techniques applied in *pai-he*. However, no previous research has investigated and documented how *pai-he* was transmitted traditionally and how it is currently taught in institutions. Thus, this study aims to fill the research gap by examining and documenting the traditional and current institutional pedagogical practices for teaching *pai-he*. In addition, this study aims to propose a comprehensive pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* in modern society by incorporating the advantages of traditional and current practices for teaching and learning, thereby providing insights for tutors and institutions to review and consider their pedagogies and plans for teaching.

This study consists of two inter-related phases. Phase I is a multiple-case study that explores the traditional approaches for teaching and learning *pai-he* by interviewing *pai-he* musicians and observing their lessons. The findings reveal the informal learning contexts and approaches for learning *pai-he*, such as participation in music gatherings, performance rehearsals, or even late-night meals, incorporating different levels of self-learning, self-analysis, and repeat practices by observing and imitating their masters'/tutors' performances. Phase II is a single-case study that involves interviews and observations with the teachers and their lessons to investigate the institutional practice for teaching and learning *pai-he*. The findings of Phase II demonstrate different levels of transformative and transfer pedagogies applied in institutional practice. Employing authentic learning activities is one of the examples of transformative pedagogies, which enable students to learn through hands-on experiences in simulated practical contexts similar to real-life scenarios. The transfer pedagogies, on the other hand, entail imitating teachers' styles and are commonly used to support weak students alongside didactic instructions.

On the basis of the research findings and extensive literature review, a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* in modern society is developed, thereby addressing the gap in the literature. However, the study also reveals major issues and challenges in the development of Cantonese opera, including the impact of Westernization and the proficiency of community tutors. Further research is recommended to employ the proposed pedagogical model in teaching other musical genres and explore the sustainable development of Cantonese opera.

Keywords: Cantonese opera, *pai-he*, instrumental pedagogy, traditional music

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Cantonese opera is one of the traditional genres of Chinese *Xiqu* (戲曲, literally 'theatre and music'), inscribed in the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list by UNESCO in 2009. Cantonese opera consists of 'four skills', including singing, acting, reciting and acrobatic fighting, along with various actors with different costumes, face painting and props (Siu & Lovrick, 2014). *Pai-he* (拍和, literally 'beating and echoing', referring to music instrumental accompaniment) is a vital part of Cantonese opera, supporting and interacting with the actors or singers throughout the performances. The primary function of *pai-he* is to enrich the vocal part throughout the music (Lai & Loo, 1995). Lai and Loo (1995) further elaborated that the Chinese meaning of *pai* (拍, beating) refers to 'partnering', and *he* (和, echoing) not only means echoing but also responding and holds the connotation of harmonious. *Pai-he*'s 'partnering' and 'harmonious' nature shows a closely interactive and equally important relationship with the vocal part. *Pai-he* consists of percussion and melodic sections. Various instruments in the two sections have different roles in playing the music, and diverse techniques are applied in different situations to accompany the vocal part.

The musical forms of Cantonese opera include aria types, fixed tunes and narrative music (Leung, 2023), with the former two types commonly used in most Cantonese opera music (Yung, 1983b). Yung (1983a) regarded the above three musical forms as pre-existent materials, with nearly thirty kinds of aria types and at least several hundred fixed tunes in the repertoire of Cantonese opera. Nonetheless, the pre-existent materials, especially the aria types, are specified

with the name instead of having musical notations marked on the scripts. This process allows flexibility for the performers to compose or improvise as they sing. Unlike the instrumental accompaniment of Western operas, *pai-he* players must follow the vocal part melody instead of strictly following the score. In addition, each type of musical form has different formats and structures that the performers must follow, such as specific preludes and interludes. The *pai-he* players must be familiar with this knowledge and understand what techniques to apply under different scenarios. The next chapter details the structures of the aforementioned musical forms and *pai-he* techniques.

Similar to other traditional music, which contains rich cultural value, transmitting Cantonese opera to future generations is crucial for sustainability. Education serves an essential role in the process of transmission. Leung (2015a; 2015b) has documented the transmission of Cantonese opera under apprenticeship and institutional tradition, respectively; these two revealed that apprenticeship has been diminishing, whereas the institutional tradition is becoming more common. This finding shows that the education context has been shifted from the traditional informal to the modern and formal setting, which inevitably influences the pedagogies applied given that pedagogy is an indispensable element closely related to and is influenced by the context of education. As part of Cantonese opera, *pai-he* learners adopt learning approaches similar to those of Cantonese opera actors and singers.

Traditionally, apprenticeship was the primary approach for teaching and learning Cantonese opera, which the apprentice followed and learned from the master (Ip, 2008). No systematic teaching pedagogies or fixed schedules existed for teaching, and it was solely dependent on the master's arrangement (San, 1993; Leung, 2023). With the development of modern society, the institutions' programmes provide standardised teaching curricula and schedules for teachers and

lecturers, and students are required to fulfil the course requirements to graduate (Leung, 2015a). Apart from the formal teaching and learning context offered by the institution, a study conducted by Carey et al. (2013) documented two primary pedagogies applied in the institution for training musicians, namely transformative pedagogy and transfer pedagogy.

Meanwhile, conflicts exist between the institution's professional training and traditional practices, leading to difficulties for graduates entering the Cantonese opera field (Yuen, 2008). This phenomenon has become a challenge for the Cantonese opera veterans to transmit the knowledge to the younger generation and the juniors. Although different Cantonese opera courses are offered by various organisations in the community, admission to the institution is the primary means to receive professional training and certificate recognition in tertiary education.

Although Cantonese opera has been valued by the governments of Hong Kong, Macau and Guangdong Province given its inscription into the list of Human Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2009, no previous research is investigating and documenting how *pai-he* was transmitted traditionally and in current institutional practices. Thus, this study aims to bridge the research gap by examining and documenting the traditional and current institutional pedagogical practices for teaching *pai-he*. This study also aims to propose a comprehensive pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* in modern society by incorporating the advantages of both traditional and current practices for teaching and learning, providing insights for tutors and institutions to review and consider their pedagogies and plans for teaching.

1.2 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this research is limited to the pedagogies of instrumental accompaniment of

Cantonese opera instead of all genres of Chinese *Xiqu*. It is also limited to the case in Hong Kong only and involves a small number of participants. For Phase I, a limited number of interviewees are involved in the study, which is an inevitable issue because the number of *pai-he* tutors in Hong Kong is small. For Phase II, a case study approach was adopted. Although Yin (2009) argued that a single-case study may be risky because it cannot compare with other cases and hence cannot avoid criticism for its uniqueness, only one institution in Hong Kong offers the *pai-he* programme. A single-case study design can emphasise the current unique and representative case. Although other institutions in China also offer the *pai-he* programme, their evolving *pai-he* approach differs from the traditional *pai-he* characteristics, such as replacing *gongche* notations with numbered notation system and writing the melodies on the score instead of allowing musicians to improvise (Leung, 2015a; Wong, 2009). Thus, this study will only focus on the case in Hong Kong to investigate the *pai-he* pedagogies that keep *pai-he*'s traditional features. Hence, conducting a multi-case study for the current project is not feasible for Phase II.

Moreover, the following terminologies used in this study are critically clarified:

(1) Cantonese opera and Cantonese operatic singing: According to Chan (2007), the musical structure of Cantonese opera and Cantonese operatic music are basically the same. Apart from singing and reciting, Cantonese opera encompasses acrobatic fighting, along with different costumes, face painting and props (Chan, 2007; Siu & Lovrick, 2014). By contrast, Cantonese operatic singing only involves little stage gestures and movements, apart from singing and reciting (Chan, 2007). Given that the scope of this study is only confined to the pedagogies of *pai-he*, the differentiation between Cantonese opera and Cantonese operatic singing is considered to have minimal significance within this context.

(2) Master, tutor and teacher: These terms applied in this study describe the roles of teachers and learners across different educational contexts. For the context of apprenticeship, the terms 'master' and 'apprentice' are employed. In community courses, as designed primarily for amateurs, the terms 'tutor' and 'student' are adopted owing to the informal community-oriented setting. The conventional terms 'teacher' and 'student' are used in the institutional setting, as it is a formal educational context.

(3) Institution: In this study, the term 'institutions' is used, as it encompasses a wide coverage of organisations founded for religious, educational, professional or social purposes. To maintain clarity and precision in this chapter, the term 'institution' is used to refer to conservatoires and academies that offer music degree programmes.

1.3 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

With the previously mentioned circumstances, this study aims to explore the traditional pedagogy of *pai-he* in Cantonese opera and how it is transmitted in the modern institutional setting. This study also aims to propose a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* in modern society by compiling the advantages of pedagogies used in the traditional approach and institutional training, to preserve the conventional traits of apprenticeship and fit in the modern setting of institutions. This study will provide insights for *pai-he* tutors and institutions to review and consider the pedagogies and plans for teaching *pai-he*.

This study consists of two inter-related phases. The first phase of the study examines the nature of *pai-he* and documents its traditional pedagogies through a multiple-case study, with the following research questions:

(1) How do learners learn *pai-he* in the traditional approach?

(2) What are the traditional practices and strategies for teaching *pai-he*?

The second phase of this study further investigates the pedagogies of the institutional practice through a single case study involving an institution, focusing on the following research questions:

(1) To what extent does the case employ transformative and/or transfer pedagogies?

(2) What are the commonalities and differences between traditional pedagogy and institutional practices for teaching *pai-he*?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Yung (2001) stated the core values of Cantonese opera related research as follows: (1) to affirm the status of Cantonese opera in China and world music, (2) to serve as the foundation for Cantonese opera's development, (3) to provide evidence for the societal and cultural environment of Cantonese opera research and (4) to provide evidence for understanding human's basic musicality (p. 4). Scholars and ethnomusicologists have been conducting research on various aspects of Cantonese opera. Despite the notable pieces of literature analysing different aspects of Cantonese operatic music and the techniques of *pai-he*, a limited body of literature was conducted regarding the pedagogy of *pai-he*.

Apart from the academic purposes and importance of researching Cantonese opera, as suggested by Yung (2001), delving into the practical transmission of this traditional art form is also vital,

with pedagogy playing a vital role. The transmission approaches of the traditional music genres, including Cantonese opera, have been transforming over time. Traditionally, the transmission of traditional music relied on oral tradition; for example, Cantonese opera was transmitted through apprenticeship. In today's society, apprenticeship is diminishing, and institutions are now playing an imperative role in nurturing Cantonese opera artists (Leung, 2015b). Meanwhile, a gap exists between the traditional and modern institutional practices for training musicians. Both traditional and institutional approaches have advantages and limitations to teaching and learning *pai-he*. Combining the advantages of both approaches may contribute to bridging the research gap in the academic field of Cantonese opera, hence providing insights for tutors and institutions regarding the pedagogies of *pai-he*.

1.5 Thesis Overview

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter 2 is a literature review that focuses on the nature of *pai-he* and the transmission approaches of traditional music in terms of Indigenous pedagogy and institutional tradition. Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework of this study. Chapter 3 illustrates the methodological design of the entire study as follows: Phase I is a multiple-case study comprising seven semi-structured interviews with *pai-he* tutors and three structured observations of their lessons; meanwhile, Phase II is a single-case study conducted at an institution in Hong Kong, involving two semi-structured interviews with the teachers and structured observations of their lessons. Chapter 4 presents the findings of Phase I, including the nature of Cantonese operatic music, the traditional approaches for learning *pai-he*, the traditional practices and strategies for teaching *pai-he* and the challenges faced in the field. Chapter 5 highlights the findings of Phase II, covering the institution's programme structure, pedagogies

applied in the institution and the comparison between traditional pedagogies and institutional tradition. Chapter 6 discusses the findings from the previous chapters with reference to the existing literature and proposes a pedagogical model for *pai-he*. The final chapter concludes this research project and states the implications for future research and application in music education.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews the related literature concerning the nature of *pai-he* and the transmission of traditional music. In the first part of this chapter, the transmission of different traditional music genres is discussed in terms of Indigenous pedagogy and institutional tradition. Second, the nature of *pai-he* is illustrated by introducing the musical forms and musical structures of Cantonese operatic music and the common techniques applied in *pai-he*. By the end of this chapter, a theoretical framework is formulated to guide this study, involving multiple theories, such as Bowman and Powell's (2007) embodied knowledge transmission method, Matsunobu's (2011) pedagogy of *kata* (literally "form" or "mold")*,* Suzuki's mother tongue method, and Schippers's (2010) Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework.

2.1 Transmission of Traditional Music

This section provides an overview of the transmission of traditional music, including Cantonese opera, in terms of Indigenous pedagogy and institutional tradition. In this study, "traditional music" refers to the non-Western European music genres worldwide. Scholars within the ethnomusicology field use various terms to describe traditional music, such as Indigenous music, non-Western music, world music, and folk music. While these terms may encompass different music genres, they are generally categorised as traditional music genres. Wong (2019) highlighted the paradox of the term "world music," which encompasses all traditional music genres worldwide, without necessarily indicating widespread transmission or historical connections among these genres. To avoid confusion, this study adopts the term "traditional music."

2.1.1 Indigenous Pedagogy

Indigenous pedagogy encompasses three core notions, including "look, listen, and learn" (Burton & Point, 2006, p. 37). Wabie et al. (2023) shared similar viewpoints and highlighted the primary characteristics of Indigenous pedagogies, which focus on the notions of learning by doing and learning from one another. Bouvier (2023) suggested that the notions of Indigenous systems enable the reconceptualization and diversity of learning. Kamanski (2008) pointed out that Indigenous pedagogies underscore the involvement of oral traditions, experiential learning, student-centredness, and holistic personal growth and development. While Indigenous pedagogy does not incorporate the Western values of formal and systematic teaching, learning, and assessment concepts, oral traditions and authentic assessments are the typical components involved.

2.1.1.1 Oral Traditions

Scholars have been sharing similar views on the definition of oral tradition. Henige (1982) pointed out that the process of oral tradition refers to recollections from the past to pass on to at least a few generations. Finnegan (1992) further elaborated that oral traditions are verbal and nonwritten, belonging to specific nonelite groups. McLucas (2010) defined oral tradition as passing on through aural memory without documentation. Junda and Stephens (2014) summarised the meaning of oral tradition as transmitting culture or materials orally. Leung (2015b) further added that Indigenous people learn through listening and seeing in oral tradition. Specifically, in the transmission of traditional music, Bohlman (1988) highlighted that the transmission of traditional music relied heavily on memory and the mnemonic devices that support it. The use of aural approaches are inevitable in transmitting knowledge under oral tradition.

Oral tradition was the primary approach to transmitting traditional music across generations in different cultures. Bohlman (1988) underscored the correlation of oral tradition with traditional music, asserting that oral tradition is an essential component of traditional music. He further elaborated that oral tradition serves as a fundamental basis for the transmission of music within societies that do not employ written systems for communication. For instance, Finnish folk musicians and runo singers primarily learned orally from their families without using notations (Hill, 2009), the transmission of Andean *altiplano* music relied on oral tradition (Ryan, 2011), the traditional Indigenous music and dance in Buganda was transmitted orally (Kigozi, 2018), and Athabascan music was transmitted in person and aurally in general (Tuttle & Lundström, 2018). The teaching and learning process under oral tradition is informal. Leung (2023)

summarised the features of informal learning by using Cantonese opera as an example, including frequent self-reflection and self-analysis, constant listening and imitation, and memorization. Ryan (2011) elaborated similar learning approaches to Andean *altiplano* music, focusing on imitation and repetition of practice. The recordings are often involved in transmitting musical knowledge from generation to generation (Tuttle & Lundström, 2018; Schippers, 2010). In addition, Chan (1991) narrated that the transmission of Cantonese opera knowledge, particularly the knowledge related to the musical forms, was transmitted through oral tradition, without much reliance on written notations. Furthermore, knowledge was imparted orally and aurally, instead of utilizing the written notations widely, under oral tradition.

Although apprenticeship does not have the same definition as oral tradition, the informal nature in terms of the teaching and learning process is similar. Apprenticeship not only focuses on transmitting knowledge but also emphasises the quasiparental relationship between the master and the apprentice, in which the apprentice is regarded as one of the family members (Leung, 2015b). In addition to oral tradition, apprenticeship incorporates the notions of experiential learning in transmitting traditional art genres, as illustrated by Rimer (1998), emphasizing "training by doing, rather than by explanation" (p. 35). Rimer (1998) revealed that in the *nō* theatre (a Japanese traditional art form that encompasses singing, dancing, mime, acting, and chanting), performers generally learned by imitating the master's movements, gestures, and intonations. The apprentices were expected to copy and imitate the master repeatedly and to internalise the skills gradually and integrate them as their own knowledge. Meanwhile, *nō* actors admitted that they learn the words of the performing repertoire by memorization yet often could not fully comprehend the exact meanings of the texts, which Rimer (1998) referred to as "rote learning" (Rimer, 1998, p. 37).

Similarly, apprenticeship was common in transmitting Cantonese opera, especially in the early 20th century in Hong Kong (Ip, 2008; Leung, 2015b). The teaching schedule is not fixed and mostly depends on the master's personality, teaching style, artistic level, environment, and the apprentice's talent (San, 1993). In addition, the apprentice's attitude is vital in the master–apprentice relationship because teaching is not the centre of the activity; moreover, the apprentice must take the initiative to learn through constant observation and questioning (Leung, 2015b). The setting of apprenticeship was usually one-to-one or one-to-a-few apprentices to pass on the in-depth knowledge, hidden regulations, and common practices of the Cantonese opera industry to the apprentice for their future career pathway to the troupe (Leung, 2015a).

As shown in the above examples, oral tradition and apprenticeship incorporate the concepts of informal teaching and learning, which emphasise learning by doing orally and aurally rather than systematically with written notations. Moreover, experiential learning is an essential component of apprenticeship because it enables the apprentices to familiarise themselves with the conventional practice of the traditional genre.

Although oral tradition is the primary transmission approach that preserves historical and cultural values, it has some limitations. Bohlman (1988) discussed the adverse impacts of memory on oral tradition, specifically highlighting the phenomenon of forgetting. Ensuring the accuracy of the memory of the transmitted knowledge is challenging. Given that oral tradition relies on passing down knowledge orally, the accuracy of the knowledge transmitted from one generation to the next is crucial, assuming that the knowledge transmitted by the prior generation was precisely recalled and conveyed. Nettl (1986) added that mishearing or misunderstanding knowledge or making errors in performances may result in distorting the meaning or the form of the previous version of knowledge, consequently developing new versions. In other words, the

imperfection of memory might lead to the transmission of inaccurate or altered knowledge across generations.

2.1.1.2 Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment is defined as an alternative assessment that emphasises a student's ability to apply knowledge and skills in a real-life environment (O'Malley & Valdez-Pierce, 1996). Svinicki (2004) described the definition of authentic assessment in detail, on the basis of the six characteristics of assessment established by Wiggin (1998): (1) realistic, (2) requires judgment and innovation, (3) expects the student to "do" the subject, (4) is conducted in situations similar to the contexts in which the related skills are performed, (5) requires the student to demonstrate a wide range of skills that are related to the complex problem, and (6) allows for feedback, practice, and second chances to solve the problem being addressed (pp. 22–24). Alaniz and Cerling (2023) added that authentic assessment can also be referred to as "performance assessment," which encompasses products created by learners, such as hands-on experiments, speeches, presentations, and/or portfolios (p. 36).

The authentic assessment can be associated with Indigenous pedagogy. Barnhardt and Kawagley (2005) highlighted the importance of direct real-life experiences in traditional Indigenous pedagogies, which resemble the features of authentic assessment. The previous sections noted that oral tradition and apprenticeship do not involve formal teaching and learning concepts. While no concrete system has been established for assessing learners' understanding within these methods, authentic assessment can be applied, given the nature of informal teaching and experiential learning.

Scholars have been exploring the realm of authentic assessments and have shed light on the following associated benefits (Ajjawi et al., 2020; Alaniz & Cerling, 2023; Villarroel et al., 2020):

(1) In general, learners widely accept authentic assessment as a reasonable approach because it effectively motivates them to delve into deeper and more productive learning.

(2) Authentic assessment incorporates relatively unstructured and unpredictable challenges in comparison with the traditional forms of assessments. It helps learners to prepare for their professional development.

(3) Authentic assessment requires learners to formulate unique conceptions and responses rather than choosing from pre-existing options, thereby enabling students to engage in a more complex and comprehensive setting to think independently and creatively.

(4) Authentic assessment enables learners to enhance their problem solving and critical thinking skills.

(5) Authentic assessment facilitates learners to reflect on and evaluate themselves, and provides meaningful insights into how they can apply the acquired knowledge in real-life situations.

(6) Authentic assessment helps the learners to be equipped with relevant skills and competencies, preparing them for lifelong learning.

2.1.2 Institutional Tradition

Education is essential in transmitting traditional art forms to the next generation. However, the teaching approaches of traditional music have been inevitably evolving and have changed over

the decades. While oral tradition and apprenticeship in certain cultures are fading out, the institutions play a crucial role in nurturing traditional music musicians in modern society. In this study, the term "institutions" is used because it encompasses a wide coverage of organizations founded for religious, educational, professional, or social purposes. The term "institution" is used to refer to conservatoires and academies that provide music degree program to maintain clarity and precision in this chapter.

2.1.2.1 Features of Institutions

Institutions offer a formal setting for teaching and learning, which contrasts with the nature of oral tradition. The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (n.d.) defined formal learning as an approach with well-organised and structured features that provide explicit learning objectives for learners to acquire knowledge, skills, and/or competencies. Leung (2020) summarised the characteristics of conservatoires, which shared similar traits to the definition of formal learning as stated by the OECD. They offer a deliberate curriculum, such as clear teaching and learning objectives, fixed learning schedules, the study duration of each program, and admission and graduation requirements (Leung, 2020). Rubinoff (2017) also highlighted the institutions' standardised curriculum, covering fundamental theory, knowledge of solfege and harmony, and practical musical techniques of each major instrument, which was in line with the French Republic's broader educational reforms and was common among the European countries in the 19th century. Apart from the curriculum, assessment is another indispensable element of the conservatoires, such as the standard grading system (Leung, 2020). González Royo and Bautista (2020) also placed emphasis on the importance of different types of assessments and evaluations in conservatoires, such as summative assessment, formative

assessment, and self-assessment. These standardised curricula and assessments play a crucial role in fulfilling the graduation requirements and indicating students' successful completion of the academic programs.

2.1.2.2 Pedagogies Applied in Institutions

A study conducted by Lastovetska-Solanska et al. (2022) has provided an overview of the pedagogy applied in institutions, particularly in music education. They outlined the current trends in music education, particularly in higher education institutions (pp. 168–169):

(1) Integration vector of program development: It covers a wide range of educational aspects, including examination of the interrelationships between culture and society, understanding of the psychology of students, cultivation of the aesthetic and psychological foundations of concert performances, recognition of the significance of composition and its performance within the spiritual culture of society, identification of the ethnic and national characteristics of the works, and integration of innovative technologies into the learning process.

(2) Theoretical vector of program development: It encompasses the study of the historical fundamentals of performance skills, the application of theoretical knowledge to performing practice (and vice versa), the analysis of intonation and rhythmic structure in compositions, and the understanding of an author's style and its implementation in compositions.

(3) Practical vector of program development: It is centred around key categories, involving the advancement of pedagogical techniques for teaching future concert performers, the

ideological comprehension of interpretation as a creative process, and the collaborative relationship between composers and performers.

(4) Vector of material and technical support: It encompasses the facilitation of the requisite conditions for the preservation and further development of artistic culture, alongside the employment of innovative technologies within the learning process.

Another study conducted by Carey et al. (2013) focused on the pedagogies applied particularly in the conservatoire on the basis of their analysis of the video recordings of music lessons in the conservatoire. They proposed two primary pedagogies used in the conservatoire, namely, transformative pedagogy and transfer pedagogy. Transformative pedagogy is a learning-oriented approach that highlights students' understanding of the learning context to enhance their ability throughout the process of acquiring new knowledge or skills, which is more open and exploratory in nature. By contrast, transfer pedagogy is less flexible than transformative pedagogy. It is assessment oriented, focusing on giving students instructions and emphasizing mimicry throughout the teaching process.

Carey et al. (2013) summarised the advantages and drawbacks of transformative and transfer pedagogies. Transformative pedagogy maximises the learning experiences because it is adaptive and flexible for students to learn and enables them to deal with diverse challenges. It also enables teachers to play a mentoring role, guiding students to achieve their career goals and assisting them in transitioning to a professional career as a musician. Adefila et al. (2023) added that transformative pedagogy can enhance students' problem-solving skills, creativity, and critical thinking skills because of the experiential learning nature offered. Moreover, Carey et al. (2013) reported that teachers tend to apply transformative pedagogy in teaching more advanced students because of its flexible and exploratory nature and adopt transfer pedagogy in teaching junior

students, utilizing its didactic and mimicry features to consolidate students' understanding. Meanwhile, using transfer pedagogy might result in students getting used to the instructional method offered by their teachers. While this may not necessarily be detrimental to all students learning, it could lead to the teacher not fully considering other teaching pedagogies, which might result in narrow learning outcomes.

2.1.2.3 Traditional Music in Institutions

Nettl (1986) discussed the world music programs offered by Western-style conservatoires in various countries, such as South India and Ghana. The conservatoires were first established to teach the Western music genres, including Western classical music, opera, symphony orchestra, chamber music, and solo performance. Other genres, such as church music, contemporary art music, jazz, popular music and world music, were subsequently included in the second half of the 20th century, which incorporated Western notions of teaching practices and curriculum in teaching non-Western traditional music (Nettl, 1986; Schippers, 2010). In recent decades, there has been a growing trend in institutions to integrate a comprehensive range of music disciplines and genres, including traditional music genres, into their curricula and music degree programs with nationally recognised qualifications, as noted by Keegan-Phipps and Lastovetska-Solanska et al. (2022). Nettl (1986) pointed out that the institutional practice of nurturing musicians is efficient. In Leung's (2015a) study, evidence was presented suggesting that students in the conservatoire could acquire skills and knowledge in a relatively shorter period through a progressive learning process. This approach not only saved teachers time, because they could conduct classes instead of individual one-on-one apprenticeship teaching, but also proved to be efficient for students' learning.

Institutional training is becoming more common for nurturing musicians in modern society for certain cultures because the oral traditions are fading out. Meanwhile, scholars have been raising concerns about various impacts brought by Westernization and institutionalization. The concepts of Westernization and institutionalization, despite the differences in their definitions, are closely related and often discussed together in the literature, concerning the development of traditional music programs in the institutions. Within the context of the music realm, Westernization involves the adoption or imposition of Western art music conventions, values, practices and systems, which is also considered "artification," as Hill (2009) mentioned (p. 207). Institutions, as a notable example of formal education in the Western academic system, have drawn scholars' attention and wide discussions across the decades, particularly with the involvement of traditional music in the institutions' curricula. Keegan-Phipps (2007) described this situation as institutionalization, which had become more common throughout the 20th century.

The influences of Westernization and institutionalization are evident in terms of the transmission approach, aesthetic values, and performance practices. First, the transmission of traditional music transformed from an informal to a formal method and context. As indicated in the previous section, numerous traditional genres relied on oral tradition for transmission, whereas the institutions employ a formalised setting for teaching and learning. Schippers (2010) described the mode of transmission in conservatoire as primarily notation based and atomistic. This transmission involves the use of didactic pieces of music, such as graded exercises and etudes, and explicit music theories, alongside the formal structure of the curriculum; moreover, students are often given material to learn in notation without prior exposure to the actual sound (Schippers, 2010). Leung's (2015a) study revealed that the transmission of Cantonese opera had been greatly influenced by the conservatoire tradition because of Western music notions and

Westernised pedagogy, such as employing the numbered notation system in teaching instead of the traditional *gongche* notations. Bouvier (2023) discussed the underlying reasons for the tension between formal Western academic systems and informal Indigenous knowledge systems and ascribed this issue to the incorporation of different methods and conceptions of validating knowledge; thus, the two systems have diverse perspectives on what is considered knowledge.

Second, the aesthetic values of traditional music are influenced by the notions of Western classical music. Wabie et al. (2023) also criticised that Western educational institutions often neglect the Indigenous cultural values and essence. Rubinoff (2017) reported on the Western classical music principles and values of orchestral discipline in the conservatoire, which reinforce obedience to the composer and conductors. Moreover, Western classical music values led to restricting teaching improvisations and room for various performative freedoms and a lack of creative opportunities in the setting of conservatoires (Hill, 2009). Schippers (2010) noted a similar situation in the jazz program offered by the conservatoire and stated that "institutionalised jazz is being criticised widely for being technically correct but creatively poor" (p. 116). Rubinoff (2017) elaborated that the conservatoires put greater emphasis on practical practices and musical techniques but often overlook the aesthetic aspect of the performances. Similar to other traditional music genres, jazz encompasses various improvisations, which are infeasible to be notated with precise and fixed notations. The influence of Western music concepts, such as involving the scores and notations in teaching and learning jazz at the conservatoire, inevitably influences the creative process of improvisation, although conservatoire training improves students' technical skills.

Third, the performance practices of traditional music are reconstructed or reformulated under Westernization and institutionalization. Bohlman (1988) and Keegan-Phipps (2007) were

concerned about the development directions of traditional music, such as establishing orchestras for traditional music, which ultimately distorts the traditional essence and performing styles of these genres. Bohlman (1988) used German–American music as an example, illustrating how, within numerous German–American communities in the Midwest, church choirs often performed in social contexts beyond the church settings, blending their religious repertoire with secular folk songs. Institutionalization, at the same time, supports such kind of reformulated repertoires of the German–American music tradition. Cantonese opera is another notable example that undergoes reformulation or reconstruction concerning its repertoires, performing style, and instrumentation, as Yu (2001) described. In recent decades, numerous albums and recordings from mainland China have utilised orchestral accompaniment as *pai-he*, instead of the traditional instrumentation of melodic and percussion sections only (Yu, 2001). As documented in Yu's (2001) literature, some Cantonese opera practitioners appreciate the rich musical texture performed by the orchestral accompaniment, while some criticise such accompaniment approach as "kind of weird and is different from Cantonese opera" (pp.283–284).

The above impacts brought about by Westernization and institutionalization are not only on the transmission approaches, aesthetic values, and performance practices but also on the development of the genres and more challenges in the long run. Take Cantonese operatic music as an example; in addition to the development of repertoire, Leung (2020) pointed out that the performance training provided by the conservatoire may account for the difficulty of graduates in entering the Cantonese opera field and seeking employment because they are unfamiliar with the conventional practices of the industry's operations. While oral traditions and apprenticeships play a crucial role in transmitting Cantonese opera, the formal training provided by institutions does not incorporate these methods, making it difficult for students to establish themselves in the

field. In other words, apprentices in the oral tradition can expand and build up their networks with the practitioners of the field under the guidance of a master (Leung, 2015b), while it is challenging for institution students to do so.

With the extensive literature on Indigenous pedagogy and institutional tradition, the above sections have demonstrated the characteristics, advantages, and limitations or influences of Indigenous pedagogy and institutional tradition. The next section delves into the nature of *pai-he* and Cantonese operatic music.

2.2 Nature of *Pai-he*

Pai-he (拍和, literally "beating and echoing") refers to the instrumental accompaniment of Cantonese opera. As mentioned in Chapter 1, *pai* (拍, beating) refers to "partnering," and *he* (和, echoing) not only means echoing but also responding and holding the connotation of harmonious (Lai & Loo, 1995) to interact with the singers or actors, in addition to serving as musical accompaniment. Mak (2010) emphasised the distinction between *pai-he* and accompaniment, stating that the former involves *zhui-qiang* (追腔, literally "chasing melody," which means the *pai-he* musicians immediately follow and imitate the melody of the vocal part), which is not restricted by the score, while the latter is just playing the melodies according to the written scores, especially particular musical forms.

Instead of a full orchestra, *pai-he* is in an ensemble setting, which consists of the melodic section and percussion section. The leader of the percussion section is known as *zhang-ban* (掌板, literally "holding the beats"), while the leader of the melodic section is regarded as *tou-jia* (頭架, literally "head desk"). Other percussion and melodic section players are regarded as *xia-shou* (下手, literally "lower hand") and *xia-jia* (下架, literally "lower desk") respectively (Leung, 2023).

2.2.1 Musical Forms of Cantonese Operatic Music

Cantonese operatic music has three primary types of musical forms: fixed tunes, aria types, and narrative music (Yung, 1983a; Chan, 2007). In addition to the musical forms, the vocal parts are often incorporated with different types of speech deliveries, including plain speech, supported speech, percussion speech, poetic or versified speech, rhymed speech, patter speech, and comic

rhymed speech (Chan, 1991).

2.2.1.1 Fixed Tunes

The fixed tunes comprise pre-existing melodies, which are employed by the scriptwriter with the text (Yung, 1983b). While playing the fixed tunes, the *pai-he* musicians mostly play in unison, except the *xian-feng-yin* (先鋒音, literally "pioneer notes," referring to the notes that play before the main melody), which can be played by the *tou-jia* musician only (Huang, 2006).

According to Yung (1983b), there are at least several hundred fixed tunes repertoire. The fixed tunes cover *pai-zi* (牌子), *da-diao* (大調), and *xiao-qu* (小曲) (Chan & Wong, 2020). *Pai-zi* refers to the fixed tunes from *Kun-ju opera* (崑劇) and Peking opera (京劇); examples include *Yin-gao* (陰告) and *Yin-tai-shang* (銀台上) (Chan & Wong, 2020). According to Chan and Wong (2020), *da-diao* (大調) refers to the music derived from long traditional repertoires, such as *The Drunken Concubine* (貴妃醉酒), *Blaming My Gallant* (罵玉郎), and *A Tearful Farewell by the Autumn River* (秋江哭別). The same melody can be adopted in different Cantonese operatic music pieces. For instance, *The Story of the Jade Hairpin* (玉簪記) and *Reunion in the Nunnery* from *The Flower Princess* (帝女花之庵遇) included *A Tearful Farewell by the Autumn River* tune. Chan and Wong (2020) defined *xiao-qu* as music taken from traditional solo instruments or ensemble music, such as *Meditations in the Boudoir* (妝台秋思), *Lovers' Sorrow* (雙星恨), and *Autumn Moon over a Placid Lake* (平湖秋月). Take *Meditations in the Boudoir* as an example; it is used in *Double Suicide* from *The Flower Princess* (帝女花之香夭) and *A Comedy of Errors in*

the Flower Fields (花田錯會), with a similar melody but different lyrics.

2.2.1.2 Aria Type

The aria type can also be regarded as *ban-qiang-ti*, in which the "*ban*" refers to the beat, and the "*qiang*" refers to the melodies (Ko & Leung, 2021, p. 24). Cantonese operatic music has more than 30 different aria types (Yung, 1983a). The aria type consists of *bang-zi* (梆子) and *er-huang* (二黃) (Chan & Wong, 2020), which practitioners usually refer to as the *bang-huang* (梆黃) (Wong, 2009). Ko and Leung (2021) listed some examples of *bang-zi*, such as *shi-gong-man-ban* (士工慢板), *fan-xian-zhong-ban* (反線中板), and *yi-fan-zhong-ban* (乙反中板); while the examples of *er-huang* include *er-huang-man-ban* (二黃慢板), *fan-xian-er-huang* (反線二黃), and *er-huang-shou-ban* (二黃首板).

Regardless of the distinctions among the aria types, they share some commonalities. Aria type music does not rely on pre-existing melodies and is flexible for performers to improvise (Chan, 1991; Yung, 1983b). This type is one of the unique characteristics of traditional Cantonese opera, which contrasts with the Western music system of relying on the score that provides detailed scores for performers. Lee (2021) highlighted that most aria type music should not be notated because it restricts the performers' improvisation and the interaction between the vocal part and *pai-he*. Instead, the melodies of aria type music are interpreted on the basis of the linguistic tones of the couplets composed (Yung, 1983b). Consequently, the application of the same aria type to different texts can result in different melodic contours. Moreover, the melisma, ornaments, and *chen-zi* (襯字, literally "lining words", which means additional syllables) can be added or

omitted flexibly in the aria type (Chan, 1991; Ko & Leung, 2021).

While the aria type is flexible to perform, some conventional rules cannot be violated. First, the melodic contour must be consistent with the linguistic tones of the text so that the meaning of the text would not be misunderstood. Second, the melodic contour and ending notes must adhere to the verse structure of each aria type. In general, the aria type has various types of verse structure, such as ten-word, seven-word, and eight-word structures, which consist of upper lines and lower lines that end with an oblique tone and an even tone, respectively (Ko & Leung, 2021). While the musical contour is upon the performers to interpret on the basis of the text, the ending notes of each upper line and lower line are specified in accordance with the characters. For instance, *shi-gong-man-ban* comprises a ten-word structure, in which the *ping-hou* (平喉, referring to male voice) melody ends with *che* (尺, *gongche* notation, equivalent to *re*) and *sang* (上, *gongche* notation, equivalent to *dol*) in the upper line and lower line respectively, while the *zi-hou* (子喉, referring to female voice) melody ends with *sang* and *he* (合, *gongche* notation, equivalent to *sol*) in the upper line and lower line, respectively.

By contrast, under special circumstances, notating the melody with *gongche* is feasible because it allows the *pai-he* musicians to maintain coherence (Hunag, 2009; Lee, 2021). Huang (2006) listed some examples of *zhuan-qiang* (專腔, literally "specialised cavity," referring to the specific melody), such as *jiao-zi-qiang* (教子腔), *ji-ta-qiang* (祭塔腔), and *hui-long-qiang* (迴龍腔), which refer to the specific melodies used to fill in the text and lyrics; at the same time, they belong to the aria type.

2.2.1.3 Narrative Music

Narrative music refers to traditional Chinese folk forms, such as *nan-yin* (南音, literally "southern music"), where the artists sing and narrate stories on the street to attract pedestrians who will listen and offer financial support for their performances (Leung, 2023). Moreover, *nan-yin* was commonly seen in teahouses, brothels, and opium divans (Cheng, 2019). By the end of the *nan-yin* passage, it is typical to shift to the aria type and connect with the coming passage. Apart from *nan-yin*, other types of narrative music are used in Cantonese opera, such as *mu-yu* (木魚, literally "wooden fish"), which allows the performer to sing without accompaniment at an ad libitum pace, *long-zhou* (龍舟, literally "dragon boat"), and *ban-yan* (板眼, literally "beat and eye") (Chan, 1991; Cheng, 2019).

2.2.2 Musical Structure of Cantonese Operatic Music

The musical structure of Cantonese opera completely differs from Western opera (Yung, 1983a). Chan (1991) added that Cantonese operatic music has no functional harmony or orchestration. The following section summarises the instrumentation arrangement and tuning, score notations, beat system, and modes of Cantonese operatic music.

2.2.2.1 Instrumentation and Tuning

According to *Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera* (1984), the instrumentation of *pai-he* had undergone significant changes over time. Prior to 1910, the instrumentation of *pai-he* consisted of 7–10 players only, with *er-xian, zu-ti-qin, yue-qin, san-xian, di-zi, suo-na, da-luo-*

gu, and *su-luo-gu.* Later when the Cantonese dialect was employed in Cantonese opera, the instrumentation was expanded to include *hou-guan, er-hu, ye-hu,* and *yang-qin* because these instruments possess wider pitch ranges and sound similar to the tone of the Cantonese dialect. From the 20th century onward, the instrumentation was further expanded with the application of Western musical instruments, at first using violin and trumpet, later gradually incorporating xylophone, Hawaiian guitar (or known as lap slide guitar), clarinet, and saxophone.

Today's *pai-he* instrumentation has two types of instrument combinations, including *ying-gong* (硬弓, literally "hard bow") and *ruan-gong* (軟弓, literally "soft bow"). The *ying-gong* instrumentation resembles the instrumentation used before 1910, as aforementioned, which is led by the *tou-jia* who play the *er-xian*, and adopts *gao-bian-da-luo-gu* as the percussion instrument instead of *su-luo-gu.* It is commonly applied in accompanying fighting scenes or spiritual expressions. By contrast, the *ruan-gong* instrumentation was developed in recent decades and is led by the *tou-jia* playing the *gao-hu* or the violin (with open strings: F, C, G, D), along with other Chinese and Western instruments, such as *yang-qin*, *di-zi*, *dong-xiao*, *pi-pa*, *ruan*, tenor saxophone, and cello. The *ruan-gong* instrumentation is frequently used in accompanying expressive scenes (*Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera*, 1984). In addition to the *ying-gong* and *ruan-gong* instrumentation, other types of instrumentations are applied for *pai-he*, depending on the scenes and musical forms, such as the *tou-jia* playing the *ye-hu* to lead other instruments in *nan-yin*.

As mentioned previously, nowadays, *pai-he*'s instrumentation incorporates the percussion and melodic sections. According to Chan (1999), Cantonese opera practitioners had been referring to the percussion section as "Chinese music" and the melodic section as "Western music" from the

1920s to 1930s, since Western musical instruments were used as part of the melodic section, apart from the Chinese musical instruments. By contrast, the percussion section mainly adopted the Chinese percussion instruments; thus, it was referred to as "Chinese music." Most of the musicians in the melodic section focused on playing one single instrument only, while others had to switch between instruments based on the changes in atmosphere and emotions of the pieces. The *dizi* player, who is responsible for playing *dizi* and *xiao* in various musical forms, is a typical example. In general, the *dizi* is used to perform the fixed tunes, while the *xiao* is used to play the aria type passages.

Given that Cantonese operatic music has no music conductors, the *zhang-ban* and *tou-jia* players serve a crucial role in leading the rest of the players to accompany the vocal parts. The *zhang-ban* musician is usually responsible for playing the woodblock and demonstrating different gestures with the bamboo sticks to lead the *xia-shou* players to play the appropriate percussion patterns at the right time (Chan, 1991). The role of *zhang-ban* is even more important in Cantonese opera performances than that of Cantonese operatic singing performances, which involve the actors' stage movements, gestures, and acrobatic fighting scenes. By contrast, the *tou-jia* player is responsible for leading the melodic section musicians, such as playing the advanced notes as mentioned previously, which is especially important in aria type music. Meanwhile, the other players in the melodic section only serve to enrich the *tou-jia*'s playing (Chan, 1991).

Furthermore, the tuning of Cantonese operatic music is known as "C20" or *da-peng-xian* (大棚線) because the tuning is 20 vibrations per second above the equivalent notes on a modern piano with Western equal tempered tuning (Chan, 1991; Wong, 2009). In other words, it is

approximately equivalent to A = 445 Hertz tuning.

2.2.2.2 Notation System

The notation systems of Cantonese operatic music are different from those of Western opera. Chan (1991) pointed out the distinction between the two genres, that is, Cantonese opera emphasises the performers' improvisation, while Western opera, since the Romantic Period, focuses on the composers' ideas but restricts the performers' possibilities and creativity for improvisation. In contrast to Western musicians, Cantonese opera professionals regard the score as the script and *kuk* (曲, literally songs). The script provides the text for Cantonese opera performances while the *kuk* is used in Cantonese operatic singing. The scripts and *kuk* are notated with little musical notation.

In general, the script and *kuk* consist of texts and *gongche* notations. Similar to other musical notations in different genres, the *gongche* notation is used to notate the melody of the pieces. Meanwhile, in contrast to Western operatic music, all *pai-he* players use the same score instead of having detailed part scores among the musicians. The *pai-he* musicians can also improvise within the outline of the score depending on the flow of the music and the actors' performance. Moreover, *gongche* notations have no bar lines, written rhythms, or dynamic markings. Instead, only *ding* (叮, literally "tinkling sound," which refers to the other beats of a rhythmic unit) and *ban* (板, literally "board," which means the first beat of the rhythmic unit) are illustrated on the score to provide the rhythmic reference for performers. However, the exact rhythmic pattern or time value of each note is generally not written on the score (Chan, 1991; Ko & Leung, 2021), enabling the performers to interpret the music based on their interpretation and personal styles.

The fundamental premise is that the *pai-he* musicians should not rigidly follow the notations, and they should simultaneously listen to the performers' melodic lines while playing, especially when playing the aria type passages.

2.2.2.3 Beat System

Cantonese operatic music adopts a set of beat systems instead of presenting with tempo markings and time signatures. Different combinations of *dingban* represent four types of passage, as summarised by Ko and Leung (2021): One *ban* and three *dings* (一板三叮) are equivalent to the 4/4 time signature, representing *man-ban* (慢板, literally "slow tempo"); one *ban* and one ding (一板一叮) are the same as the 2/4 time signature, referring to *zhong-ban* (中板, literally "moderate tempo"); *ban* only means 1/4 time signature, referring to *liu-shui-ban* (流水板, literally "running water tempo"); without any *ban* and *ding* indicates a passage in an *ad libitum* tempo, also known as *san-ban* (散板, literally "scattered tempo"). However, the above passage types are not equivalent to the actual tempo of the music (Chan & Wong, 2020; Wong, 2009). *Pai-he* players must also pay close attention to the tempo that the actors or singers have set.

2.2.2.4 Modes of Cantonese Operatic Music

Instead of a key signature, *xian* (線, literally "string") indicates the keys and modes of Cantonese operatic music, including *zheng-xian* (正線, literally "just string"), *fan-xian* (反線, literally "anti-string"), *yi-fan-xian* (乙反線), and *shi-gong-xian* (士工線) (Wong, 2009). Music in *zheng-xian* is almost equivalent to the key of C to C#, *fan-xian* refers to the key of G to G#, and *shi-gong-xian*

is equivalent to the key of B flat to B. *Yi-fan-xian* is a heptatonic scale that emphasises *ti* and *fa* but deemphasises *la* and *mi* to express a sorrowful emotion. The *yi-fan-xian* can also be regarded as *ku-hou* (苦喉, literally "bitter voice") because of its sorrowful emotions (Wong, 2009, p. 125).

2.2.3 Common Approaches and Techniques Used in *Pai-he*

With the complexity and characteristics of the musical forms of Cantonese operatic music, various approaches and techniques are applied. Chan (1991, p.147) identified two types of accompaniment approaches, including the "obligatory accompaniment practice" and "optional accompaniment practice," which provide an overview of which aspects the musicians must follow and which allow for greater flexibility. Other Cantonese opera practitioners and scholars also mentioned the general techniques of *pai-he* (Cui, 2001; Huang, 2006; Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera, 1984; Lai & Loo 1995).

2.2.3.1 Obligatory Accompaniment Practice

The obligatory accompaniment practice refers to the *pai-he* approaches that the musicians must adopt (Chan, 1999). Regardless of the flexibility of improvisation and interpretation of the music, the performers must follow some mandatory rules, especially in the aria type passages. Some fixed preludes or interludes must be played. Most aria types start with a particular prelude and incorporate fixed interludes throughout the passage. Lai and Loo (1995) defined prelude as the melodies right before the vocal part, which can be long or short depending on the aria types and can appear in the same music piece more than once; while interludes are usually short and

appear in between the gaps of the singing part. In contrast to Western music, the preludes and interludes are not written in the Cantonese operatic music script or *kuk*, and they vary with different aria types. While each prelude and interlude involve a fixed skeletal melody, the ornaments can be added flexibly (Chan, 1999; Huang, 2006).

Take *shi-gong-gun-hua* as an example; the interlude between the upper and lower lines applied depends on the ending note of the previous melody, such as using the *sang* interlude (上字序, an interlude ending with *dol*) when following a melody ending with *dol*, using the *che* interlude (尺字序, an interlude ending with *re*) following a melody ending with *re*, and so forth. This rule applies in other notes such as *sol*, *re*, and *mi*. Meanwhile, these rules may not be applicable in exceptional cases, particularly in key changes. For instance, if the interlude follows a melody ending with *sol* in *fan-xian*, the *che* interlude will be used to bridge the *fan-xian* passage to the *zheng-xian* passage because the *che* in *zheng-xian* is equivalent to *he* in *fan-xian* (Huang, 2006). Chan (1999) also noted that the interludes under the *bang-zi*, *er-huang*, and *yi-fan* systems differ. Consequently, *shi-gong* interludes must be employed within the context of *shi-gong* aria types, while *er-huang* interludes should be adopted into *er-huang* aria types, and *yi-fan* interludes are used specifically in *yi-fan* mode aria types. The interludes must be matched with their corresponding aria types.

2.2.3.2 Optional Accompaniment Practice

The optional accompaniment practice refers to the interludes that are more flexible for players to

choose and play (Chan, 1999). This accompaniment practice is common in aria type passages, where different actors or singers have their own interpretation of the text and sing different melodies because they are derived from the linguistic tones of the text written by the scriptwriter instead of relying on pre-existing melodies (Yung, 1983a). Apart from the obligatory preludes and interludes mentioned previously, some interludes can be an imitation of the vocal part. Thus, *pai-he* musicians have to pay close attention to the vocal part melodies, instead of performing on the basis of written musical notations (Huang, 2006), which requires *pai-he* musicians' high level of aural skills. Chan (1999) also noted that the imitation of the vocal part does not have to be exactly the same in every single pitch and rhythm, and ornaments can be added accordingly.

2.2.3.3 General Techniques in *Pai-he*

The primary function of *pai-he* is to enrich and interact with the vocal part, which shows its "partnering" and "harmonious" relationship with the vocal part (Lai & Loo, 1995). The common *pai-he* techniques were gradually formed since the 1930s, in which *pai-he* is flexible that preparing or arranging the melody on the script and *kuk* for *pai-he* musicians is not necessary, and improvisation is allowed among the performers (Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera, 1984). Table 2.1 summarises the common *pai-he* techniques proposed by various Cantonese opera practitioners and scholars (Cui, 2001; Huang, 2006; Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera, 1984; Lai & Loo, 1995).

Table 2.1

Summary of the general pai-he techniques

	Pai-he techniques

Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera (1984)	1. *Sui/Zhui* (隨/追, literally "following/ chasing") 2. *Bu* (補, literally "filling up") 3. *Yin* (引, literally "leading") 4. *Qi* (齊, literally "unison")
Lai and Loo (1995)	1. *Bu* (補, literally "filling up") 2. *Yin* (引, literally "leading") 3. *Da* (搭, literally "connecting") 4. *Qi* (齊, literally "unison") 5. *Sui* (隨, literally "following")
Cui (2001)	1. *Yin* (引, literally "leading") 2. *Lian* (連, literally "connect") 3. *Bu* (補, literally "filling up") 4. *Guo* (裹, literally "wrapping") 5. *Tuo* (托, literally "holding") 6. *Qi* (齊, literally "unison") 7. *Qing* (清, literally "clear") 8. *Gen* (跟, literally "following") 9. *Tiao* (跳, literally "jumping") 10. *Zhui* (追, literally "chasing")
Huang (2006)	1. *Sui* (隨, literally "following") 2. *Ti* (提, literally "giving hints") 3. *Bu* (補, literally "filling up") 4. *Yin* (引, literally "leading")

Comparing the four pieces of literature reveals some essential *pai-he* techniques that the scholars and practitioners shared similar viewpoints with, as shown in Table 2.1:

(1) *Sui/Zhui*: It is also named *zhui-qiang* (追腔, literally "chasing melody"), which means the

  pai-he musicians immediately follow and imitate the melody of the vocal part (Chan,

  1991; Lai & Loo, 1995). Huang (2006) underscored *zhui-qiang* as a unique characteristic

  of Cantonese operatic music. It can further be classified into two types, including *ji-zhui*

(急追, literally "rapidly follow") and *man-zhui* (慢追, literally "slowly follow"). Cui (2001) proposed a similar concept in *gen* (跟, literally "follow"), which is similar to *man-zhui*. In *ji-zhui*, *pai-he* musicians have to follow and imitate the vocal part melody with a delay of half-beat, while in *man-zhui,* they have to perform it with a delay of ¾ beat (Lai & Loo, 1995). The use of *ji-zhui* and *man-zhui* depends on the tempo of the passage. By contrast, the tempo of the passage is influenced by the dramatic effect of the text and the atmosphere of the scene (Chan, 1991). The faster and more intense the atmosphere of the passage, the faster the imitative melodies played, and the fewer the ornaments (Chan, 1991; Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera, 1984).

(2) *Bu*: It is applied when the vocal part is paused and rested to avoid interrupting the music. The musicians fill up the empty beats or bars with improvised melodies and interludes or most likely imitate the vocal part melody with the ornaments (Cui, 2001; Huang, 2006; Lai & Loo, 1995), such as *jia-hua* (加花, literally "add flower," referring to the additional notes that decorate the melody), acciaccatura, slide, tremolo, and escape tone (Chan, 1991). Moreover, if the vocal part omits the beats, the *bu* technique can be applied to polish the music to sound more complete and facilitate the vocal part to sing on the intended beat (Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera, 1984).

(3) *Yin*: It is used to lead the vocal part to sing the following melody, usually with several notes imitating the vocal part melody with ornamentations (Cui, 2001; Huang, 2006; Lai & Loo, 1995). In other words, the musicians play a short melody right before the singer sings. The *yin* technique is similar to the notions of *ti* (Huang, 2006) and *da* (Lai & Loo, 1995), which gives hints for the vocal part to sing and plays the leading role in the music. In addition to leading, it serves as the connection between the previous and following

melody, similar to the meaning of transition in Western music, but this connection might not bring out a huge change in the following section as a function of transformation. Instead, it connects the previous melody and brings out the following melody for the vocal part, which is similar to the *lian* technique (Cui, 2001).

In addition, *qi* is another common technique mentioned among practitioners and scholars (Cui, 2001; Introduction to Vocal Music of Cantonese Opera, 1984; Lai & Loo, 1995). It refers to the unison of *pai-he* musicians and the vocal part. The intonation, breathing, tone, volume, emotions, and pitch of the ending note are all the same among musicians and singers (Cui, 2001; Lai & Loo, 1995).

Furthermore, Cui (2001) added the following *pai-he* techniques, as shown in Table 2.1: *guo*, which means using *jia-hua* within the original melody to enrich and shape the music more fluently; *tuo*, which plays a slightly different melody or rhythm based on the singing melody to contrast with the singing part; *qing*, which refers to pausing the *pai-he* part and allowing the singers to sing without accompaniment; *tiao*, which means skipping some notes while playing the singing part's melody and trying to catch up with the singer's melody.

In summary, *pai-he* emphasises the immediate interactions among the performers, showing its "partnering" and "harmonious" nature, aligning with the literature established by Lai and Loo (1995). It is flexible for the performers to improvise within the conventional rules and perform in their styles. With the uniqueness of the Cantonese operatic music form and techniques used in *pai-he*, it must be transmitted to the next generations through education.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework combines multiple theories and learning methods to formulate this research design. First, Bowman and Powell's (2007) embodied knowledge transmission method is employed to describe the process of learning. Second, Matsunobu's (2011) pedagogy of *kata* (literally "form" or "mold") and Suzuki's mother tongue method are applied to analyse the approaches for learning *pai-he* specifically. Third, part of Schippers's (2010) Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework is employed to illustrate the interactions between the teacher and learner.

The learners can observe and learn technical and nontechnical skills from their teacher, who serves as a model for them. Frequent observation and imitation are ordinary practices for learning Cantonese operatic music (Leung, 2023). The *kata* pedagogy's philosophical concept is primarily for the artistry transmission of Japanese arts, focusing on following the model by imitation and repeating practice through the body (Matsunobu, 2011). The imitation of models is not limited to artistic skills but extends to learning their model's moral and ethical values. Similarly, some essential values in the traditional troupe are partly similar to the philosophical principles of *kata*. The seniors in the Cantonese opera field highly value and expect respectful and modest attitudes from the learners and junior members (Leung, 2023). Apart from observation and imitation, constant repeating practice throughout the learning process of *pai-he* is vital, as emphasised by Suzuki's mother tongue method. In addition to imitation and consistently repeating practice, the mother tongue method suggests specifically playing music by ear (Hermann & Suzuki, 1981). Playing by ear is crucial for *pai-he* learners because some

techniques require players' high aural skills to accompany the singers by instantly imitating the previous melodies sung (Leung, 2023). Moreover, this learning context enables learners to master complex techniques through the repertoire, as suggested by the mother tongue method (Hermann & Suzuki, 1981). It is common for Cantonese operatic singers in the troupe to propose the repertoire instead of being decided by the *pai-he* players. Instead of practicing etudes, *pai-he* learners have to learn the techniques through the chosen repertoire. Thus, such well-rounded setting allows *pai-he* learners to acquire artistic knowledge and understand the rules and setting of the troupe.

The above learning approaches adopted from the pedagogy of *kata* and the mother tongue method are similar to embodied learning, as described by Bowman and Powell (2007). Bowman and Powell (2007) believed that listening and performing can achieve embodied minds, in which both types of musical engagement are not only bodily experiences but also at a body–mind level that requires learners to reflect and think throughout the learning process. In this theoretical framework, following the model requires observations, such as listening to how the master plays music. While observing and listening to the model, learners have to consider and reflect on how to follow and imitate, together with repeating practices on those techniques, achieving a body–mind level to "think with our bodies" (Small, 1998, p. 140).

From the perspective of the teacher, the context allows the teacher to interact with the learner in terms of the modes of transmission and dimensions of interaction, referring to Schippers's (2010) Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework. The indicators from Schippers's (2010) framework consist of a series of spectra to illustrate the situations for transmitting world music traditions. Thus, the interactions between the teacher and learner in *pai-he* can be described as one of the genres of traditional music. According to Schippers's (2010) framework, the mode of

transmission includes the indicators (1) from atomistic or analytical to holistic teaching strategies, (2) from written to aural teaching approaches, and (3) from tangible to intangible music knowledge. For dimensions of interaction, the continuums include (1) from large to small power distance between the teacher and students, (2) from individual-centred to collective-centred lesson settings, (3) from avoiding to tolerating uncertainty in teaching, and (4) from long-term orientation to short-term orientation in learning.

On the basis of the previous notions and theories, a theoretical framework (Figure 2.1) has been formulated to support the current study. Different levels of interactions occur between the model/ teacher and learner. The single-headed arrow indicates the learner to follow the model/ teacher and observe, which is an embodied learning process. The observations include two dimensions, technical skills (on the right) and nontechnical skills, including social, moral and ethical values from the model (on the left). The columns on the right form a learning cycle, showing learners to learn techniques through repertoire through imitation and playing by ear, followed by repeated practice referring to the model, back and forth, until the learner successfully achieves the requirements of the model/teacher. The double-headed arrow describes the interactions between the model/teacher and the learner, which includes dimensions of interaction and modes of transmission.

Figure 2.1

Theoretical framework of instrumental learning
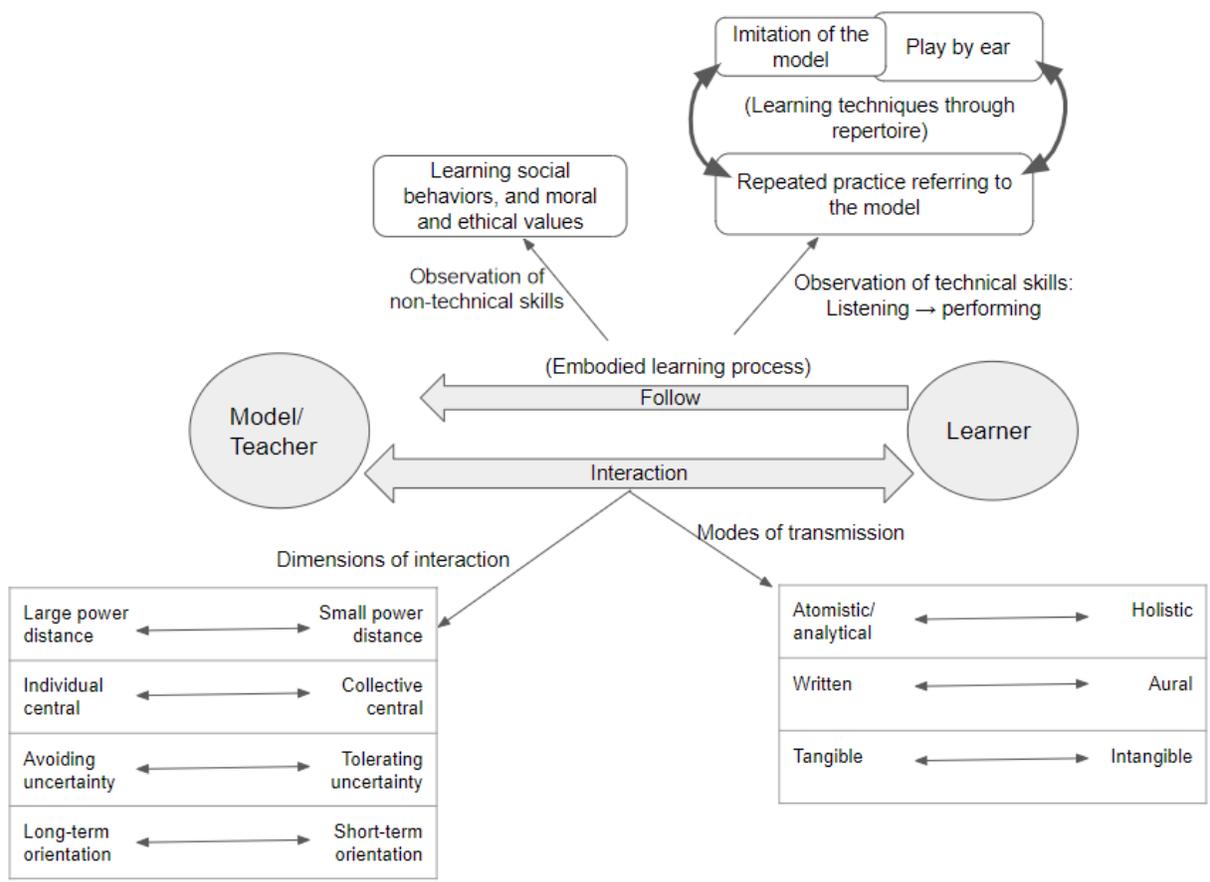
2.4 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature covering the transmission of traditional music and the nature of *pai-he*, which are relevant to this study. An extensive literature has shown the traditional aesthetics and essence of Cantonese opera and the complexity of *pai-he* techniques, which are flexible and allow the performers to perform in their own style and improvise within the conventional rules. The literature also indicates an interactive relationship between *pai-he* and the vocal part. *Pai-he* is not merely an accompaniment; rather, it has a partnering relationship with the vocal part, which is one of the unique characteristics of Cantonese opera.

Similar to other traditional music genres, Cantonese operatic music employed Indigenous pedagogical approaches for its transmission, most notably, apprenticeship. It incorporates the notions of oral tradition, with informal teaching and learning contexts alongside the transmission approaches. With the development of modern society, apprenticeship is fading out, and institutional training plays an important role in nurturing new Cantonese opera artists. Thus, investigating how to transmit *pai-he* to future generations through education in the modern setting is vital. Meanwhile, literature has also shown the influences of institutional training on the transmission of traditional music around the globe, especially under the influences of Westernization and institutionalization. The imposition of Western concepts, such as standardised curriculums and formalised teaching methods and Western music performance values, has led to a transformation in the approach to transmitting traditional music and its performance practices. The informal transmission methods of the traditional genres have been influenced by Westernization and institutionalization, resulting in a more formalised structure, along with the standard curriculum and teaching offered by the institutions. Furthermore, the performance practice of traditional music is shaped by Westernization and institutionalization, leading to the

transformation of traditional performing styles and values in alignment with Western music concepts, consequently resulting in the loss of the original unique characteristics of traditional genres. The influences of Westernization and institutionalization are not only evident in affecting the traditional music genres themselves but also have a long-term impact on the stakeholders within the field, particularly the students. As revealed in the literature, especially in the Cantonese opera field, the graduates from the institutions found it difficult to seek employment among the troupes because of the differences between the traditions of the field and the training offered by the institutions.

Within the context of Westernization and institutionalization are various impacts and challenges that arise. Thus, the pedagogies for teaching and learning the traditional music genres within the institutional tradition should be explored by utilizing the advantages offered by the institutions and the advantages of oral tradition. At the same time, how the traditional essence of the genres can be maintained must be investigated.

Chapter 3: Methodology

A systematic review of relevant literature reveals that no research has been conducted to investigate and document the teaching and learning of *pai-he* in Cantonese opera, despite Cantonese opera being valued by the governments of Hong Kong, Macau, and Guangdong Province since it was inscribed into the list of Human Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2009. The documentation of this area may reveal the traditional practices of transmission of instrumental accompaniment in Cantonese opera, and it may imply how modern pedagogy should be undertaken with experiences. Thus, this study aims to bridge the research gap by examining and documenting traditional and current institutional pedagogical practices for teaching *pai-he*. In addition, this study aims to propose a comprehensive pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* in modern society by incorporating the advantages of traditional and current practices for teaching and learning, thereby providing insights for tutors and institutions to review and consider their pedagogies and plans for teaching.

This study consists of two interrelated phases, primarily employing qualitative research methods to propose a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* in the modern setting. This chapter first reviews the research objectives and research questions of Phases I and II, then outlines the research methods and design, research procedures, data collection methods, and data analysis approaches of both phases. Last, this chapter describes the ethical concerns of this study and demonstrates how the participants' data and identities are protected. The first phase of this study serves as a springboard to link Phase II in investigating how teaching and learning are conducted in institutional practice. The data collected from Phases I and II are then compared further to formulate the proposed pedagogical model.

3.1 Phase I

The first phase of the project investigates the nature of *pai-he* and documents the traditional pedagogies of teaching, and it is led by the following research questions:

1) How do learners learn *pai-he* in the traditional approach?

2) What are the traditional practices and strategies for teaching *pai-he*?

3.1.1 Research Design

Despite Cantonese opera's historical and artistic value, it is not modern society's most prevalent art form. The target participants in Phase I are *pai-he* tutors who have been engaging in the Cantonese operatic field as a *tou-jia* player for at least 30 years. Meanwhile, the population of tutors teaching *pai-he* is small, which is impractical for conducting a quantitative study with a large sample sise. By contrast, a descriptive approach to qualitative research is preferable because this study focuses on pedagogies and thus is unsuitable for presenting statistical data. Moreover, qualitative approaches collect greater in-depth data within a real-life context compared with other research methods (Cohen et al., 2018).

A multiple-case study (Yin, 2014) was adopted to address the above research questions. Specifically, semistructured interviews, unstructured interviews, and structured observations were employed for data collection. Yin (2014) classified four primary types of case study designs, including the single-case design, embedded single-case design, multiple-case design, and embedded multiple-case design. The multiple-case design generally incorporates more than one case. It can address the limitations of single-case designs by allowing for comparisons

between cases, and thus the multiple-case design is often considered more comprehensive (Cohen et al., 2018; Yin, 2014). The multiple-case design was chosen as the research design of the first phase of this study to gather sufficient data for investigating the general traditional practices for teaching and learning *pai-he*.

3.1.2 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

As mentioned, semistructured interviews, unstructured interviews, and structured observations were adopted to collect data. This multiple-case study consists of seven individual cases who were *tou-jia* musicians. The participants were engaged in semistructured interviews, and among them, three consented to structured observations within their classroom settings. The seven participants were identified through purposive sampling. As Maxwell (2013) noted, initiating and negotiating with the "gatekeepers" or "gaining access" to the research setting is crucial during data collection (p. 90). Thus, the purposive sampling methods for selecting participants involved the author's supervisor and the author's connection and *pai-he* engagement. Moreover, Maxwell (2013) summarised the five primary purposes for purposive sampling:

(1) to ensure that the selection reflects the representativeness or typicality of the settings, individuals, or events; (2) to encompass sufficiently the diversity within the population and to guarantee that the findings accurately reflect the entire range of differences; (3) to choose purposely individuals or cases that are essential for evaluating the initial theories of the study or those that have been formulated during the course of the research; (4) to establish specific contrasts to shed light on the causes of differences among settings or individuals; and (5) to select groups or participants with whom the researcher can form

the most effective relationships, i.e., those that will optimally facilitate the answering of the research questions (pp. 98–99).

The first phase of this research referred to Maxwell's (2013) suggestions to set the criteria for selecting the participants based on their representativeness in teaching and learning *pai-he* experiences. For this study, the selection criterion includes *pai-he* musicians with over 30 years of involvement in Cantonese operatic music and more than 20 years of teaching experience in *pai-he*.

A code is given to each participant to protect their identity, and their teaching experiences are as follows:

Table 3.1

Demographic information of the participants

Participants	Teaching experiences	Interviews	Observations
Mr. L	• Currently teaching *pai-he* courses • Currently teaching a few apprentices	✓✓	✓
Mr. P	• Currently teaching a few apprentices • Will start a new *pai-he* course soon	✓✓	
Mr. Q	• Previous *pai-he* teaching experience in the conservatoire	✓	
Mr. R	• Currently teaching *pai-he* courses	✓✓	✓

Mr. S	● Currently teaching *pai-he* courses	✓		✓
Mr. T	● Currently teaching his kindred spirits in music gatherings	✓		
Mr. W	● Previous *pai-he* teaching experience in the conservatoire ● Currently organizing a troupe to nurture Cantonese opera actors and musicians	✓✓		

Note. The interview column shows the number of interviews conducted with the participants. The single check mark (✓) denotes that the participant was interviewed once, while the double check mark (✓✓) indicates that the participant was interviewed twice. The observation column demonstrated whether the participant's lesson was observed.

The three *pai-he* tutors for lesson observations were primarily delivering *pai-he* courses for amateurs.

3.1.2.1 Semistructured and Unstructured Interviews

In this multiple-case study, the semistructured interviews were conducted with the seven invited *pai-he* tutors, and the unstructured interviews were conducted with the tutors and their students. As Cohen et al. (2018) suggested, one of the purposes of conducting interviews is to comprehend or assess a person, situation, or event in a particular aspect. To understand the traditional pedagogical approaches for teaching and learning *pai-he*, delivering interviews with the *pai-he* tutors and students is the most direct and effective method to understand how they teach and/or learn. Cohen et al. (2018) summarised various types of interviews and identified the five primary

types of interviews that are commonly used, including structured interviews, semistructured interviews, unstructured interviews, nondirective interviews, and focused interviews. The semistructured interviews and unstructured interviews were adopted to collect data for this study because Bryman (2016) highlighted the flexibility of these two types of interviews to enable the interviewer to ask open-ended questions and follow-up questions. Moreover, the semistructured interview facilitates participants in monitoring the direction of the interview, while the researcher also has an interview schedule to monitor the interview (Newby, 2010), which allows the interviewer to go deeper into specific issues by asking open-ended questions for follow-up questions. Participants can verify and rectify if any misunderstanding occurs between them. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) added that semistructured interviews allow participants to raise unanticipated answers that the researcher did not consider. By contrast, unstructured interviews offer a more open setting, which enables greater flexibility and freedom for the interviewer (Cohen et al., 2018). Chauhan (2022) further added that unstructured interviews are conversation like and can gain rapport for the interviewer because the interviewees are more comfortable with the natural flow of the unstructured interviews.

As the first phase of this study aims to investigate the traditional practices for teaching and learning *pai-he*, semistructured interviews allow the researcher to ask predetermined questions regarding the interviewees' teaching and learning experiences and flexibly probe other related aspects when the researcher hears some unexpected responses. Unstructured interviews allow the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the teaching and learning environment, particularly during observation periods. If the researcher observes any unexpected phenomena, they can inquire about these issues through unstructured interviews, which resemble casual

conversations and help build rapport with the interviewees.

3.1.2.2 Procedures of the Interviews

The interview procedures referred to Brinkmann's and Kvale's (2015) seven stages of interview investigation (p. 125):

(1) Thematizing: The purposes and objectives of the interview were formulated on the basis of the research questions.

(2) Designing: The plan of the study, including its ethical implications, was considered.

(3) Interviewing: Interviews were conducted with the interview guide, and the interpersonal relationship of the interview situation was considered.

(4) Transcribing: The transcriptions from oral speech to text were prepared.

(5) Analysing: The approaches for analysing the transcripts of the interviews were determined on the basis of the aims and objectives of the study.

(6) Verifying: The validity, reliability, and generalizability of the data gathered from the interviews were considered.

(7) Reporting: The study findings, methods adopted, and the considerations regarding moral aspects were presented.

The aims and objectives of the interviews were first constructed on the basis of the two research questions to investigate how the tutors teach *pai-he* and how they learned *pai-he* in the past. The seven participants were successively identified and invited to attend the first round of semistructured interviews from late October 2023 to January 2024, each lasting approximately 40–60 minutes. The second round of semistructured interviews was arranged in March 2024. The

invitation emails and messages were delivered to the selected participants before the interviews. The interview venues, dates, and times were discussed through emails and messages once they agreed to participate in this study. Before the interviews, the author sought the interviewees' permission and consent to audiotape the interview, to which one of them declined to be recorded; thus, only the field notes were taken during that interview.

While the unstructured interviews had no predetermined interview questions, the interview protocol was designed for the semistructured interviews on the basis of the mentioned theoretical framework in Chapter 2. Initially, the seven semistructured interviews were conducted with the selected *pai-he* musicians in the first round of interviews. The semistructured interview question list covers four major aspects: (1) learning experiences of *pai-he*, (2) teaching experiences of *pai-he*, (3) teaching planning and strategies, and (4) evaluations of students. First, to explore the traditional learning strategies in *pai-he*, the most direct approach is asking interviewees to share their past experiences. Second, to investigate the traditional teaching strategies of *pai-he,* the interview must delve into the interviewees' teaching experiences, including their teaching planning and their evaluations of students (Gardner, 2012). In addition, teaching objectives and materials are also crucial because they are indispensable in the planning stage before teaching (Sadighi et al., 2018). These two elements are also associated with teachers' decision-making in their forthcoming teaching plans. Thus, the related interview questions were designed and covered under the third and fourth aspects of the interview protocol, respectively. Furthermore, some interview questions were designed on the basis of the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 to triangulate with the findings of the observations.

Subsequently, the second round of semistructured interviews was conducted with four of the interviewees because some unexpected issues were revealed in terms of the challenges faced in the development of Cantonese opera in the first round of the interviews. As Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) narrated, semistructured interviews allow interviewees to raise unanticipated answers that the researcher did not consider. Thus, the interview question list (Table 3.2) was later modified, and a second round of interviews was conducted with the four interviewees, as shown in Table 3.1. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) also pointed out that the interviews can be stopped when data saturation has been reached, which means similar themes are analysed among the data collected. Given that the four interviewees provided similar points of view regarding the issues and challenges encountered in the development of Cantonese opera, the second round of interviews was not conducted with all seven interviewees.

Table 3.2

Interview questions of Phase I

Initial interview questions	Added interview questions
1. How did you learn *pai-he* when you were an apprentice/ learner?	7. What are your views on the young *pai-he* musicians nowadays?
2. How did your master discuss the musical ideas with you?	8. What are your views on contemporary Cantonese opera pieces?
3. What is your experience in teaching *pai-he*?	
4. Why do you teach *pai-he*?	

5. How do you plan your *pai-he* lessons for

   your students?

6. How do you evaluate students'

   performance?

In addition to the semistructured interviews, a series of unstructured interviews was conducted

with tutors and students during the observation period when necessary and feasible to delve

further into their perceptions and experiences regarding the teaching and learning of *pai-he*. The

unstructured interviews were not recorded but were jotted as part of the field notes immediately

after each unstructured interview.

After the semistructured interviews were completed, the conversations were transcribed and

delivered to the interviewees for their endorsement and review in case any misconceptions or

inaccurate terminologies were written. The interviewees were informed that they had the right to

revise the transcripts. After being reviewed by the interviewees, the transcripts were edited in

accordance with the interviewees' suggestions. Given that the interviews were conducted in

Cantonese, which is the mother language of the interviewees, the transcripts were translated into

English and entered into NVivo 14 for data analysis. Details of the data analysis process are

discussed in the latter section of this chapter.

Methodological triangulation was adopted to verify the credibility of the study. This process is

discussed in detail at the end of this chapter. In addition, the validity of the interview questions

was verified on the basis of the previous literature and the theoretical framework stated in Chapter 2.

3.1.2.3 Structured Observations

Observation was regarded as a crucial method in collecting valid data in this study. Cohen et al. (2018) stated the advantages of conducting observations in research, enabling the researcher to collect data on the physical setting, human setting, interactional setting, and program setting. Yin (2014) particularly highlighted the relevance of incorporating observational data to enrich the case study and enable new aspects of understanding of the study's topic. Flick (2015) classified five dimensions of observation, namely, (1) from structured, systematic, and quantitative observation to unstructured, unsystematic, and qualitative observation; (2) from participant observation to nonparticipant observation; (3) from overt to covert observation; (4) from natural settings to the unnatural and artificial setting of observations; and (5) from self-observation to observation of others. The first phase of the current study adopted the first dimension classified by Flick (2015), applying structured observation for data collection.

Structured observations allow the researcher to observe the participants' behaviours directly and systematically based on the constructed observational schedule (Bryman, 2016). The researcher can also analyse the observed situation's patterns, frequencies, and trends by generating numerical data from the observational schedule (Cohen et al., 2018). Meanwhile, Bryman (2016) raised concerns among scholars regarding the tendency for structured observation to generate substantial fragmented data because the meaning behind the fragments of the behaviours revealed in the structured observation is difficult to interpret. Miles et al. (2020) suggested that

vignettes can capture representative moments or actions through a narrative approach. Thus, the structured observation adopted in this study encompasses not only counting the behaviours' frequencies but also writing field notes to record the vignettes in the observation schedule to document the traditional teaching and learning approaches in *pai-he* for the observed lessons systematically. Furthermore, another purpose of conducting structured observations is to triangulate with the data collected from the interviews regarding *pai-he* approaches in teaching. Meanwhile, to avoid interfering with the participants' teaching and learning progress and schedules, the researcher was not enrolled in the observed programs, and nonparticipant observation was adopted.

The observation schedule (Figures 3.1 and 3.2) was designed on the basis of the theoretical framework mentioned in Chapter 2, which involves two main sections. The first section is an observation list that includes various items to be observed in each lesson, while the second section consists of a series of continuums, representing the whole observed period instead of each lesson. The observation list in the first part includes (1) teaching techniques through repertoire and (2) playing by ear. First, teaching techniques through repertoire includes five different behaviours as the subitems: repeating practice of the whole piece, specific passage, specific melody, specific techniques, and referring to the teacher. Second, playing by ear consists of five other behaviours, namely, teacher's demonstration, students' imitation, practice of aural skills, practice with the score, and practice without the score. The observation list in the first section was divided into 10-minute intervals, in which the teacher's and students' behaviours and interactions were observed every 10 minutes. The frequency of each behaviour was counted, and observation field notes were jotted to describe the vignettes in detail in the "others" column.

As aforementioned, the second section of the observation schedule contains various continuums that illustrate the observed period's overall behaviours instead of each observed lesson. The continuums include (1) dimensions of interaction among the teacher and students and (2) modes of transmission. Under the dimensions of interaction, the continuums demonstrate the large/small power distance between the teacher and students, individual/collective-centred lesson settings, avoiding/tolerating uncertainty in teaching, and long-term/short-term orientation in learning. The mode of transmission describes the atomistic/holistic teaching strategies, written/aural teaching approaches, and tangible/intangible music knowledge in the continuums.

Figure 3.1

Observation Schedule Section I

Time Period		0–10 mins	10–20 mins	20–30 mins	30–40 mins	40–50 mins	50–60 mins	60–70 mins	70–80 mins	80–90 mins
Teaching techniques through repertoire	Repeating practice of the whole piece									
	Repeating the practice of a specific passage									
	Repeating the practice of a specific melody									
	Repeating the practice of specific techniques									
	Repeating practice referring to the									

Time Period		0–10 mins	10–20 mins	20–30 mins	30–40 mins	40–50 mins	50–60 mins	60–70 mins	70–80 mins	80–90 mins
	teacher									
	Others:									
Playing by ear	Teacher's demonstration									
	Students' imitation									
	Practice aural skills									
	Practice with the score									
	Practice without the score									

Time Period		0–10 mins	10–20 mins	20–30 mins	30–40 mins	40–50 mins	50–60 mins	60–70 mins	70–80 mins	80–90 mins
	Others:									

Figure 3.2

Observation Schedule Section II

Dimensions of interaction

Large power distance $\longleftrightarrow$ Small power distance

Individual central $\longleftrightarrow$ Collective central

Avoiding uncertainty $\longleftrightarrow$ Tolerating uncertainty

Long-term orientation $\longleftrightarrow$ Short-term orientation

Modes of transmission

Atomistic/analytical $\longleftrightarrow$ Holistic

Notion-based $\longleftrightarrow$ Aural

Tangible $\longleftrightarrow$ Intangible

3.1.2.4 Procedures of the Observations

The structured observations occurred at the three selected *pai-he* tutors' studios from November 2023 to March 2024, in which one of the tutors only allowed the researcher to observe one lesson. Each observation period ranged from 1 hour 40 minutes to 2 hours, depending on the tutors' lesson schedules.

In the first part of the observation schedule, multiple columns indicate different behaviours within a 10-minute interval. The interval recording and duration recording (Cohen et al., 2018) were adopted to mark the observed behaviours, interactions, and scenarios. Interval recording

emphasises entering the data in the suitable category at fixed intervals to record what has

happened during a particular interval, and duration recording is used to record continuous

behaviours that might last longer than one single time interval (Cohen et al., 2018). As illustrated

in Figure 3.3, marking has various types based on the duration of each behaviour or event. First,

the frequency of short-lived behaviours was represented by tally marks. For example, "teaching

aural skills" is a short-duration behaviour that typically lasts for two to three minutes. Second,

other continuous behaviours last longer, as illustrated in Figure 3.3. For instance, "repeating

practice of the whole piece" is a long-lived event, usually lasting at least 20 minutes, and

"teaching with the score" lasts for the entire lesson. These long-duration behaviours were marked

by shading the column with colour instead of marking it with tally marks. Third, other

behaviours or interactions that are not included in the observation schedule were recorded with

vignettes in the "others" column.

Figure 3.3

Example observation schedule part I (excerpt)

Time Period	0–10 mins	10–20 mins	20–30 mins	30–40 mins	40–50 mins
Teaching aural skills	|||				||
Repeating practice of the whole piece		▓▓▓	▓▓▓		
Teaching with the score	▓▓▓	▓▓▓	▓▓▓	▓▓▓	▓▓▓

Time Period	0–10 mins	10–20 mins	20–30 mins	30–40 mins	40–50 mins
Others:					A student asked, "What are the ending notes of *shi-gong-man-ban*?" The tutor introduced the structure and format of *shi-gong-man-ban*

The second part of the observation schedule includes various dimensions of continuums describing the observed situations and interactions throughout the lesson, as indicated in Figure 3.3. Instead of marking the frequencies of each behaviour or describing the vignettes for each 10-minute interval, the researcher made judgments about the observed behaviours of the whole lesson by referring to the characteristics of each side of the dimensions, as Schippers's (2010) Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework suggested. For instance, Figure 3.4 demonstrates one of the dimensions of "modes of transmission". With the characteristics of "notation-based" and "aural" illustrated, the research noted that the tutor spent most of the time relying on the score to teach. Thus, the yellow cross was marked to tend to the notation-based side.

Figure 3.4

Example observation schedule part II (excerpt)

Modes of transmission

Notation-based ←————————✖————————→ Aural

Notation-based	Aural
● Central body of work exits in prescriptive notation that is used by performers ● Students may be given material to learn in notation without prior exposure to actual sound	● No or little notation is used ● Tonal material largely improvised (or "restructured") ● All music and exercises are first or even only presented in actual sound (live or recorded)

Although video recording and reviewing the observed lessons for the data analysis stage is more reliable, all participants showed discomfort with their lessons being recorded. Thus, all the observations relied on the researcher's observation and field notes.

3.2 Phase II

The second phase of this study is a case study, focusing on the following research questions:

1) To what extent does the case employ transformative and/or transfer pedagogies?

2) What are the commonalities and differences between traditional pedagogy and institutional practices for teaching *pai-he*?

3.2.1 Research Design

The aforementioned research questions for Phase II were addressed by conducting a single-case study to explore the pedagogies of teaching *pai-he* in the institutional setting and compare them with the traditional approaches from Phase I. Although conducting a multiple-case study can gain a fuller and greater understanding of the research topic (Cohen et al, 2018), a single-case study approach was chosen for the current study. Yin (2014) noted that a single case design may be risky because it cannot compare with other cases and hence cannot avoid being criticised for being unique. However, only one institution offers the *pai-he* program in Hong Kong. A single-case study design can emphasise the current unique and representative case, as Yin (2014) described. Although other institutions in China also offer *pai-he* programs, their Cantonese operatic training approaches have been evolving and thus differ from the traditional *pai-he* characteristics, such as replacing *gongche* notations with numbered notation system and limiting the flexibility of the aria type melodies with well-written scores, instead of allowing musicians and artists to improvise (Leung, 2015a; Liang, 2010; Wong, 2009). Thus, this study only focuses on the case in Hong Kong to investigate the *pai-he* pedagogies that keep the traditional features of Cantonese opera. Hence, conducting a multiple-case study for the current project is not feasible.

3.2.2 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Prior to the start of the second phase of this study, an invitation email was sent to the dean of the school of Chinese opera of the institution to ask for consent to engage in this study. I have explained the aims and objectives of the current study and how the institution's valuable insights can contribute to this research. Once the dean agreed to participate, I started contacting and discussing with the program teachers to schedule the time for conducting lesson observations and interviews through email.

This single-case study encompasses semistructured interviews, unstructured interviews, and structured, nonparticipant observations of the lessons. The semistructured interviews were conducted with two of the institution's teachers, and unstructured interviews were conducted with the teachers and students who volunteered to participate. The semistructured interviews were conducted at the institution in June 2024, each ranging from approximately 40–60 minutes. The invitation emails and messages were delivered to the interviewees prior to the interviews. The interview venues, dates, and times were discussed through emails and messages once they agreed to participate in this study. One of the teachers refused to participate in semistructured interviews. Before the interviews, the author sought the interviewees' permission and consent to audiotape the interview. The interview content was then transcribed into Chinese transcripts and returned to each interviewee for their endorsement and review in case any misunderstanding of terminologies was written. The interviewees were informed that they had the right to revise the transcripts. In addition, unstructured interviews were conducted with the teachers and students during the lesson observations to explore further their thoughts regarding teaching and learning *pai-he*. The unstructured interviews were not recorded, but the field notes were immediately

taken after each unstructured interview.

The structured observations were conducted at the selected institution for around three weeks, from late April 2024 to early May 2024. Given that the researcher is not enrolled in the observed programs, nonparticipant observation was preferred to avoid influencing the participants' teaching and learning schedules. Each observation period lasted 2 hours. Under the administrative arrangement of the institution, the lesson observations only involve the "accompaniment training" and "accompaniment internship" courses of the first-year students of the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) Degree in Chinese Opera Program and the Professional Diploma in Cantonese Opera. Despite the reliability of video recording and reviewing the observed lessons for the data analysis, the participating institution did not permit it. Thus, all the observations relied on the researcher's observation and field notes, without video recording the lessons.

A code is given to each participant to protect their identity, and their demographic information is as follows:

Table 3.3

Demographic information of the teachers in the institution

Participants	Teaching experiences	Interviews	Observations
Mr. X	● Have been engaging in the Cantonese opera field	✓	✓

	for 40 years		
	● Have been teaching at the institution for around six years		
	● Currently teaching professional diploma program		
Ms. Y	● Have been engaging in the Cantonese opera field for 40 years		✓
	● Currently teaching professional diploma program		
Mr. Z	● Have been engaging in the Cantonese opera field for 30 years	✓	✓
	● Have been teaching at the institution for around 10 years		
	● Currently teaching bachelor's degree program		

Note. This table demonstrates the demographic information of the teachers in the institution. The right columns show whether interviews and/or observations of their lessons were conducted.

Table 3.4

Demographic information of the students in the institution

Students	Musical Background
Ms. A	● Currently majoring in *pipa* and minoring in cello ● More than 10 years of studying *pai-he* in Guangdong
Ms. B	● Currently majoring in *pipa* and also playing piano ● No prior experience in *pai-he* but had been participating in Chinese orchestra

Ms. C	- Currently majoring in *yangqin* and minoring in Chinese percussion - No prior experience in *pai-he* but had been participating in Chinese orchestra
Mr. D	- Currently majoring in *gaohu* - Around three years of *pai-he* experiences
Mr. E	- Currently majoring in Chinese percussion - Around five years of *pai-he* experiences
Mr. F	- Currently majoring in Chinese percussion - No prior experience in *pai-he* but had been participating in Chinese orchestra and Western orchestra as a percussion player
Mr. G	- Currently majoring in Chinese percussion - No prior experience in *pai-he* but had been participating and working in Chinese orchestra and Western orchestra as a percussion player

Note. This table illustrates the demographic background of the students who voluntarily participated in the unstructured interviews.

3.2.2.1 Semistructured and Unstructured Interviews

Similar to the first phase of this study, semistructured and unstructured interviews were employed for data collection because they enable the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of people, situations, or events in specific aspects flexibly through open-ended questions and follow-up questions (Bryman, 2016; Cohen et al., 2018). To explore to what extent the institution adopts transformative and/or transfer pedagogical practice of teaching *pai-he* and further compare them with the traditional approaches for teaching and learning, the

semistructured interviews and unstructured interviews are appropriate and adequate to investigate how the teachers deliver their lessons and the rationale behind such teaching practices. Moreover, conducting unstructured interviews with the students provides an extensive understanding of the teaching effectiveness of the institutional pedagogies. To establish a relationship of trust and gain rapport with the interviewees, unstructured interviews are often advantageous because they are similar to daily conservations; hence, the interviewees are more comfortable with the natural flows (Chauhan, 2022; Cohen et al., 2018).

3.2.2.2 Procedures of the Interviews

The interview procedures of Phases I and II are similar and refer to Brinkmann's and Kvale's (2015) seven stages of interview investigation, which incorporate thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying, and reporting.

The interview question list consists of three major parts, covering the program structure, teaching planning, and advantages and challenges in teaching at the institution (Table 3.5). To provide an overview of the background of this case study, the program structure of the institution must be examined. Given that this case study focuses on the pedagogies applied in the institution, the investigation of teachers' teaching planning was also included as part of the interview questions. In addition, as aforementioned in Chapter 2, some scholars highlighted the challenges of transmitting the traditional art forms in the conservatoire (Hill, 2009; Rubinoff, 2017). Thus, institution teachers' thoughts and opinions regarding the advantages and difficulties of teaching *pai-he* through semistructured interviews must also be investigated.

Table 3.5

Interview Questions of Phase II

Interview Questions
1. Can you briefly describe the structure of the *pai-he* music program?
2. What do you think about institutional training for *pai-he* students?
3. How do you plan your lessons?
4. How do you support your students in learning *pai-he*?
5. What are the advantages and difficulties of teaching *pai-he* in the institution?

Similar to Phase I, the semistructured interviews were transcribed and delivered to the interviewees for their endorsement and review in case any misconceptions or inaccurate terminologies were written. The interviewees were informed that they had the right to revise the transcripts. After being reviewed by the interviewees, the transcripts were edited in accordance with the interviewees' suggestions. Given that the interviews were conducted in Cantonese, the transcripts were translated into English and entered into NVivo 14 for data analysis. Details of the data analysis are discussed in the latter section of this chapter.

While the unstructured interviews had no predetermined interview questions, the unstructured interviews were conducted during and after the lesson observations with teachers and students, based on the observed scenarios, when necessary and feasible. Given that the researcher is an outsider to the selected institution, rapport with the participants must be gained. Chauhan (2022)

highlighted that unstructured interviews are conversation-like and can gain rapport for the interviewer because the interviewees are more comfortable with the natural flow of the unstructured interviews. Cohen et al. (2018) also elaborated that unstructured interviews provide greater flexibility and freedom for the interviewer to delve deeper into the context.

Given that the first phase of this study aims to investigate the traditional practices for teaching and learning *pai-he*, semistructured interviews allow the researcher to ask predetermined questions regarding the interviewees' teaching and learning experiences, and flexibly probe other related aspects when the researcher hears some unexpected responses. Unstructured interviews allow the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the teaching and learning environment, particularly during observation periods. If the researcher observes any unexpected phenomena, they can inquire about these issues through unstructured interviews, which resemble casual conversations and help build rapport with the interviewees.

The unstructured interviews were not recorded but were jotted as part of the field notes immediately after each unstructured interview.

3.2.2.3 Structured Observations

The observation schedule was constructed on the basis of the features of transfer and transformative pedagogies proposed by Carey et al. (2013). The schedule consists of three parts (Figures 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7), in which the first two parts are observation lists that include various items to be observed in each lesson in a 10-minute interval, and the last part consists of a series of continuums, representing the whole observed period instead of each lesson.

Figure 3.5

Observation Schedule Section I

Time Period		0–10 mins	10–20 mins	20–30 mins	30–40 mins	40–50 mins	50–60 mins	60–70 mins	70–80 mins	80–90 mins	90–100 mins	100–110 mins	110–120 mins
Support for learning	Require students to take notes												
	Notes taken by the teachers												
	Others:												
Approach to diagnosis	Address students' learning												

difficulty												
Advise students												
Provide feedback to students												
Others:												

Figure 3.6

Observation Schedule Section II

Time Period	0–10 mins	10–20 mins	20–30 mins	30–40 mins	40–50 mins	50–60 mins	60–70 mins	70–80 mins	80–90 mins	90–100 mins	100–110 mins	110–120 mins

Exploration of performance										
Exploration of idea										
Purpose of practice										
Knowledge building										
Concern for excellence										
Others:										

Figure 3.7

Observation Schedule Section III

i) Exploration of performance

Closed exploration ⟵————————————————⟶ Open exploration

ii) Exploration of ideas

Closed exploration ⟵————————————————⟶ Open exploration

iii) Purpose of practice

Mimicry of teacher's style ⟵————————————————⟶ Personal and artistic development

iv) Knowledge building

Facts and information ⟵————————————————⟶ Authentic learning activities

v) Concern for excellence

Performance outcome ⟵————————————————⟶ Learning outcome

The first section of the observation schedule includes the behaviours of transfer pedagogies, namely, support for learning and approach to diagnosis. Under these two aspects, specific behaviours were observed, including (1) requiring students to take notes, (2) addressing students' learning difficulties, (3) advising students, and (4) providing feedback to students. Other observed transfer pedagogical approaches were indicated in the "others" columns. The second section of the observation schedule correlates with the third section, which was categorised into (1) exploration of performance, which means how the teachers explore the forms and presentations of performance with students; (2) exploration of ideas, which refers to how the teachers investigate the musical ideas with students; (3) purpose of practice, which describes whether the teachers require students to mimic their styles or encourage students to cultivate their own artistic styles; (4) knowledge building, which illustrates how the teachers impart the knowledge to students; and (5) concern for excellence, which indicates whether teachers' concern is centred on students' performances or learning process. The continuums represent the tendency of the transfer or transformative pedagogies applied during the lesson observations. Similar to the first section of the observation schedule, other observed behaviours and interactions throughout the lessons were also noted as vignettes in the "others" columns.

3.2.2.4 Procedures of the Observations

By using the observation schedule, the observed behaviours and interactions were marked. As mentioned above, the observation schedule had three sections. Figure 3.8 illustrates an

example of the first section, which records the observation of teachers' transfer pedagogical approaches and the related behaviours with tally marks (|). The interval recording and duration recording approaches (Cohen et al., 2018) were applied to observe the short-lived behaviours within a 10-minute interval and continuous behaviours. In addition to counting the frequency of the behaviours, other observed vignettes were recorded by writing field notes in the "others" column.

Figure 3.8

Example of the observation schedule part I (excerpt)

Time Period		0–10 mins	10–20 mins	20–30 mins	30–40 mins
Support for Learning	Require students to take notes	|||	|	||	|||
	Notes taken by the teachers	||	|||	|	|
	Others:		The teacher reminds students about the structure and the ending notes of *shi-gong-man-ban*.		

Similarly, the second section of the observation schedule also adopted a 10-minute interval recording strategy and recorded the frequencies of the observed behaviours and interactions, and the vignettes. After the observations, the researcher made judgments about the observed

behaviours of the first two sections of the observation schedule and represented them through

the four continuums in the third section (Figure 3.9), based on the characteristics of

transformative and transfer pedagogies stated by Carey et al. (2013), to describe the tendency.

Figure 3.9

Example of the observation schedule part III (excerpt)
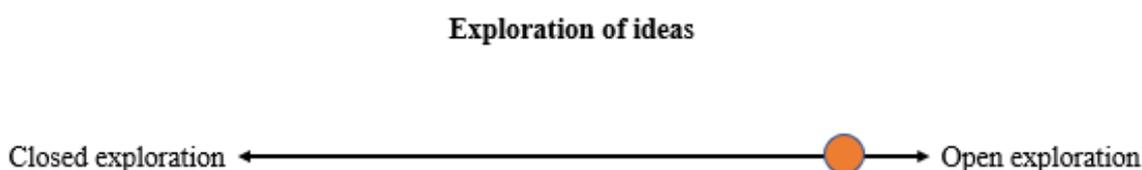
3.3 Data analysis for both phases

Given that the data from both phases of this study were mainly collected through interviews

and observations, the data analysis process was similar.

3.3.1 Data Analysis Tools

Various tools, including an audio recording device, an artificial intelligence (AI) transcription

application, NVivo 14, and Microsoft Word, were used to analyse the data. In Phase I, two

rounds of semistructured interviews, which consisted of 10 audio recordings, were conducted.

Phase II consisted of two audio-recorded interviews, each lasting approximately 30–60

minutes. The recordings were all transcribed by using the AI transcription application and

edited and stored in Microsoft Word document formats. The data were then entered into

NVivo 14 for further analysis. The code books of Phases I and II were then generated

(Appendices).

With the development of technologies, AI has become a helpful tool in daily life. AI transcription application is one example that significantly reduces the time spent on editing interview transcripts, and thus, it was employed in this study. In addition to transcribing the interview transcripts, NVivo 14 was used to manage the qualitative data collected from the interviews and observations. NVivo is one of the common computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) used to organise qualitative data and ideas. Maxwell (2013) pointed out that these CAQDAS programs are useful in storing and retrieving large amounts of data and coding the qualitative data. Cohen et al. (2018) added that the CAQDAS are flexible in systematically arranging the data and files for projects and research. In addition, computer technological methods strengthen validity in terms of managing the samples and reliability in terms of verifying the trustworthiness of the collected data without losing the contextual factors (Gibbs, 2018).

3.3.2 Data analysis procedures

The qualitative data collected in this study cover semistructured interview transcripts and field notes, unstructured interview field notes, and structured observation schedules. The data collected from the semistructured interviews was first transcribed into Chinese transcripts and delivered to each interviewee for endorsement and review in case any misconceptions or inaccurate terminologies were written. After being reviewed by the interviewees, the transcripts were edited in accordance with the interviewees' suggestions. Then, the transcripts

were translated into English and entered into NVivo 14 for data analysis. By contrast, given that the unstructured interviews were not recorded, no full transcripts were written. Instead, the interview field notes were transcribed and imported into the NVivo 14 together with the semistructured interview transcripts and observation field notes for further analysis.

After transcribing and managing the data into files systematically through NVivo 14, open coding, in vivo coding, and axial coding were successively adopted to analyse the data (Cohen et al., 2018). Coding of data analysis not only enables the researcher to analyse similar information but also allows the researcher to search or retrieve the data from the codes (Gibbs, 2018). Given that this study consisted of qualitative data, different levels of coding methods were adopted for analysing the data. The codes were first generated from the interview transcripts and observation field notes through open coding to categorise the concepts with the corresponding concise codes, and in vivo coding was applied to document the words or short phrases from the data when necessary (Miles et al., 2018). The codes with similar meanings and concepts were then grouped into categories through axial coding. Next, thematic analysis was employed to identify the relationships and connections among the codes (Cohen et al., 2018). Various themes were then identified on the basis of the findings' relationships and theme patterns among the categories.

The first phase of this study is a multiple-case design, which encompasses seven individual cases. The presentation of the findings made reference to Yin's (2014) multiple-case study format that covers the cross-case analysis. Under each identified theme, the examples were drawn from the seven cases. By contrast, the second phase of this study is a single-case design, involving an institution as the only case. It adopts Yin's (2014) recommended format

for reporting the single-case study with descriptions and analysis of the case.

3.3.3 Credibility

The credibility of this study was ensured by adopting methodological triangulation using different methods, namely, interviews and observations, on the same participants in Phases I and II (Cohen et al., 2018). Cohen et al. (2018) identified six typical types of triangulations based on the previous literature, including time triangulation, space triangulation, combined levels of triangulation, theoretical triangulation, investigator triangulation, and methodological triangulation. Maxwell (2013) pointed out that triangulation is the process of employing various methodologies to cross-verify each other, determining whether the diverse approaches, each with their unique advantages and drawbacks, can support the same outcomes and conclusions. It can also reduce the risk that the research findings only reflect the biases of a particular method and enables the researcher to gain an improved understanding of the issues under the study. Maxwell (2013) also highlighted the advantages of observation and interviews, stating that the former method is typical for narrating settings, behaviours, and events, while the latter is commonly used to understand the perspectives and goals of the participants. In this study, the researcher conducted semistructured and unstructured interviews with the participants throughout the observation period to gain an in-depth and more comprehensive understanding of the teaching and learning practices of *pai-he*. The data collected also triangulate with each other to ensure the credibility of this study.

3.4 Research Ethics

After completion of data collection and analysis, all the interview audio recordings, transcripts, and observation field notes were secured in a password-protected computer that only the researcher could access. While transcribing the interviews and analysing the field notes, the participants' identities remained anonymous, and codes were used to represent the participants instead of revealing their identities on the transcripts; moreover, all participants were informed and assured that their identities would remain confidential upon publishing the research findings. The consent of all the participants and participating institution was obtained before the commencement of the interviews and observations. All participants were informed that participation in this study was voluntary, and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. The researcher also explained the objectives of this study and assured the participants that no harmful effects would occur. The benefits of this study are beneficial to the music education field, especially in teaching Cantonese operatic music. Moreover, the proposal of this study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Education University of Hong Kong in October 2023.

Chapter 4: Phase I Findings

This chapter demonstrates the findings collected and analysed on the basis of the semistructured interviews and structured observations in Phase I. Data were entered into NVivo 14 for further analysis. After analysing the data collected from the interviews and lesson observations, the following themes were identified: (1) the nature of Cantonese operatic music, (2) the traditional approaches for learning *pai-he*, (3) the traditional practices and strategies for teaching *pai-he*, and (4) the challenges faced in the field.

Given that this study focuses on exploring the pedagogies for teaching the melodic section of *pai-he* only, the interviews and observations were mainly related to the teaching and learning strategies in terms of the melodic instruments. The seven selected participants include experienced *tou-jia* players, and three are current *pai-he* tutors who offer courses for amateurs. Semistructured interviews were conducted with all participants, and structured observations were conducted to observe the *pai-he* courses.

4.1 Nature of Cantonese Operatic Music

4.1.1 Flexible Nature

Traditionally, singers and *pai-he* musicians do not have fixed or standardised scores, thus allowing the performers to perform according to their interpretations and personal styles. Mr. R described this kind of flexibility as "showing the sparks among the *pai-he* musicians and singers," which is one of the main stylistic features of Cantonese operatic music. The interviewees shared similar perspectives on the flexible nature of Cantonese operatic music:

> Different singers can have various interpretations of singing the same lyrics… So the *pai-he* players cannot rely on the score but must listen closely to the singer's melodies and breathing. (Mr. R)

> The spirit of *pai-he* is that the music is flexible but not very neat like Western music. (Mr. Q)

This also gives freedom for the *pai-he* musicians to interpret and accompany the singers:

> There is no legitimate *pai-he* approach. You see, every *tou-jia* player has different *pai-he* approaches… every *tou-jia* has their style, but they do have general rules… and to improvise within these [rules]… And when you listen to different musicians and ensembles, they are all not the same. They are all 'improvising', but they 'improvise' beautifully because the skeleton melody doesn't change. [demonstrate *jia-hua* with another skeleton melody] You see, that skeleton melody didn't change; it was just *jia-hua*, but how we interpret and perform our *jia-hua* are not the same… This kind of "improvising" is the beautiful part of Cantonese music and its main difficulty. (Mr. P)

> It allows us [*pai-he* musicians] to do improvisations on the same skeleton melody, such as *jia-hua*, ornamentations, and other technical skills; however, they are not written on the score. (Mr. W)

Given the flexibility of Cantonese operatic music, the leaders of each *pai-he* section have to lead the other musicians during performances:

> The *tou-jia* player has to lead *xia-jia* players in the melodic section to play. Thus, the *xia-jia* players have to listen to the *tou-jia* actively and follow their melodies immediately; however, the melodies are not a must to be completely the same as the *tou-jia* but allow variations within the skeleton melody… In the past, we used to be very concentrated and listen to the *tou-jia* actively and immediately follow their melodies. (Mr. Q)

4.1.2 Interactive nature

Cantonese operatic music also encompasses interactive features, in which the *pai-he* players interact with the singers constantly:

> It is like people communicating with each other. Cantonese operatic music should be like this. (Mr. R)

> We are always "chasing" the singing part. While "chasing," it is unnecessary to completely follow the singer's melodies. Still, we fully follow the singer's emotions

to create the improvisational heterophonic texture… and interact with each other, like a conversation. (Mr. Q)

A *pai-he* player must understand and demonstrate Cantonese operatic music's flexible and interactive nature. In addition, the interviewees shared the same point of view on the relationship between the *pai-he* musicians and singers that the emotions and expressions among them should be consistent with achieving "blending into one:"

> The reason why the musicians' performances in the past were so impressive is that they were able to blend into one with the singer's melodies. (Mr. Q)

Mr. W particularly described the bonding between *pai-he* players and singers:

> When the singer is crying, the *pai-he* player should be "crying" with his instrument, while when the singer is laughing, the *pai-he* player should also be "laughing." The best *pai-he* player should be able to do so. (Mr. W)

4.2 Traditional Approaches for Learning *Pai-he*

4.2.1 Learning Setting

Traditionally, learners were not learning *pai-he* under the conservatoire setting. Some interviewees learned *pai-he* through apprenticeship:

> After the formal acknowledgment ceremony of my master, I started following him to learn. (Mr. P)

> There was not much teaching or learning materials at the earlier stage. I mainly ask my master whenever I have questions and to remember what he told me… However, the learning process is not academic and does not have procedures or schedules. So, it is important to learn by asking questions. (Mr. R)

> After playing in music clubs and gatherings for a certain period, I started following my current master to learn. (Mr. W)

Instead of a classroom setting or receiving formal lessons, the learners usually learn *pai-he* informally in the Cantonese opera troupes. They gained their *pai-he* experiences through

engagement in the troupe and learning from the experienced musicians:

> We would have a meal together every time after the troupe performances. Those experienced older musicians would share their *pai-he* experiences, Cantonese opera theories, singing, and percussion with us. I would listen closely to their sharing and memorise them. (Mr. L)

> I joined those troupes and followed them to play...Whenever I had questions, I would ask those experienced older musicians and veterans. (Mr. S)

> After learning for two years (in the university program), Mr. T continued learning in a Cantonese opera troupe as a *zhonghu* player for around four to five years. Eventually, he served as a *tou-jia* for eight to ten years. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

Some interviewees learned in the interest classes for amateurs offered by different

organizations:

> Mr. T learned *pai-he* from a university music program, one-to-one learning. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

> I didn't learn [*pai-he*] legitimately… I learned Cantonese operatic singing and *pai-he* in those music clubs. I observed their playing and found *pai-he* interesting. Since I was so young, people there were more willing to teach me. (Mr. W)

Meanwhile, the interviewees commonly reported learning in various contexts instead of in a

single place. They usually would also learn in the music gatherings organised by different

Cantonese opera amateurs:

> At first, I played in the unions, such as motorbike night clubs and sororities or clan associations. I was in the association, learning percussion from amateurs… Then, I was referred to follow another master…It was one-on-one, sometimes one-on-two, with another female classmate together, but not teaching a group of students…During the music gatherings, the masters nearby would give you (us) some tips and advice…After the music gatherings, we usually have a late-night meal and then play Mahjong. I followed them to learn and would ask them whenever I didn't understand…we most likely asked the masters how to play and raised questions when we were having last-night meals. (Mr. P)

> Now (in the conservatoire), we have teaching procedures for each year of students and a syllabus of what to teach. In the past, apprenticeships did not have these kinds of arrangements… We basically learned in those music gatherings with other amateurs, especially when my father was also playing. I would follow him to those gatherings.

(Mr. Q)

After playing in the troupe for several years, I started playing in the music clubs. However, nobody really taught me how to play in detail… About those Cantonese operatic music knowledge, I mainly learned through asking those *pai-he* veterans. (Mr. S)

Many music clubs were offering free music gatherings for Cantonese operatic music amateurs. We learned in those music gatherings… Then, I followed my current master to learn, but he didn't organise lessons for me… I followed him to the music gatherings to learn instead. (Mr. W)

Regardless of different informal learning scenarios, the interviewees shared similar experiences and approaches to learning and practicing *pai-he*, which they mainly learn in practical practice. They were "learning by doing" instead of receiving formal lessons to learn the theories. This kind of informal learning environment is also considered a social educational context that enables the learners to interact with other Cantonese opera practitioners, musicians, or amateurs and to learn with each other.

4.2.2 Relationship With the Master/Tutor and Other Learners

The context, as mentioned above, also allows the learner to maintain close relationships with their master and other learners over a long period. The interviewees narrated their relationships among themselves:

[I regarded them] as tutors as well as friends. After the music gatherings, we usually have a late-night meal, then play Mahjong… Until now, we sometimes have music gatherings together so that he (my master) would not abandon [the techniques]...We (other apprentices and I) used to have gatherings together during the festivals and birthdays. We see each other as siblings, and we are very close. (Mr. P)

He (my father) had many apprentices around the world. We still keep in touch and help each other… Those music gatherings did not offer money; they were for entertainment only. We had late-night meals every time after the music gatherings. (Mr. Q)

I had close relationships with my master. (Mr. T)

> I always invited him (my master) for dim sum, and he shared his experiences and thoughts on Cantonese opera. I would then reflect on them. When I raised questions, he would also demonstrate for me… I know them (other apprentices) so well, and we keep in touch. (Mr. W)

The observed *pai-he* tutors' classes had a similar phenomenon that shows close relationships among the students and the tutors. Both groups of students have created a WhatsApp group for communication, such as informing each other about the lesson arrangements and sharing and discussing the lesson notes, materials, and other Cantonese opera-related information among themselves. Apart from the learning, they organised different gatherings, including music gatherings, Lunar New Year celebrations, and birthday celebrations and gatherings for the tutors. They prepare Christmas gifts and red pockets for the tutors during Christmas Eve and the Lunar New Year festivals.

4.2.3 Attitude Toward Learning Pai-he

The interviewees have been keen on watching and listening to Cantonese operatic music at their younger ages. Some of their family members were working in the Cantonese opera field and influenced the interviewees to engage in related activities. Hence, they had been listening to various Cantonese operatic music.

As they were interested in Cantonese opera, they had an attitude of initiative to learn *pai-he*:

> I usually proactively learn and practice whenever I am free. (Mr. L)

> I think it is essential to learn spontaneously... When you learn Cantonese operatic music, you need to explore it on your own and keep thinking about why it is like this. (Mr. R)

> The whole [learning] process is all about spontaneous learning… and practice on my

own… but no one would teach you systematically at that time. (Mr. W)

4.2.4 Learning Process

Under the informal social educational context and with the interviewees' initiative attitude, they reported that they primarily learned and practiced *pai-he* by referring to their masters or albums and recordings. This process involves different levels of observations and imitations, self-learning, and self-analysis approaches throughout their learning process.

The interviewees usually observed their masters and listened to their performances closely to imitate them as much as possible:

> I followed him (my master). He was the *tou-jia* and taught me how to play. He required me to listen to how he was playing and imitate him. (Mr. P)
>
> I also listened to and followed the albums to play. I also recorded my father's audio recordings for my reference. I followed and imitated his performances, bowing, dynamics, etc… I repeatedly listened to the recordings to imitate him. (Mr. Q)
>
> Nobody taught me how to play, but they asked me to observe their performances and to imitate and follow them. (Mr. S)
>
> I listened to many recordings and tried to imitate them… I paid attention to his (my master's) performance and closely observed how he played since I always followed him everywhere when he engaged in the performances and music gatherings. (Mr. W)

Meanwhile, the interviewees reflected that they did not simply observe, follow, and imitate their masters or the recordings. Some interviewees also applied various self-learning strategies by looking for different resources to deepen their understanding of Cantonese opera:

> While learning *pai-he*, I found some Cantonese operatic singing books for self-learning. (Mr. Q)
>
> And most of the time, I explore it by myself. I also listen to many albums and watch Cantonese operas in the theaters. (Mr. R)

> I mainly relied on listening to recordings and albums to learn by myself. (Mr. S)

> As I was learning, I realised I did not have enough understanding [of Cantonese operatic music]. So, I started reading books and looking for more information. And finally, I understood more [about *pai-he*]... Also, we were aware of a program offered by RTHK, in which a Cantonese opera veteran introduced the percussion instruments of Cantonese operatic music. This helped us a lot in learning percussion. (Mr. W)

They were usually associated with different levels of self-analysis and reflection:

> As I listen to the recordings, I explore how to *pai-he* by myself… I learned to "borrow" from "the predecessors" (experienced veterans)… for example, a musician liked to use the *liu* note a lot and to emphasise it. Another musician would not do that but played beautifully, very melodious. I used to listen to them and learn from their strengths. These are called "borrowing." They are all analysed by myself. No teacher told me those. I kept listening, and when I heard some good ones, I would "borrow" them. (Mr. P)

> While imitating [my master], I comprehended and did some musical analysis on my own. (Mr. Q)

> I also keep reflecting on whether there are any formats, theories, or musical analysis in Cantonese operatic music, just like Western music. I think strictly following the traditional approaches is not entirely correct, but we also need to link up with modern ones. (Mr. R)

> I explored how to *pai-he* by myself. I listened to many recordings and albums and then analysed the musical elements myself. (Mr. S)

> We relied on the recordings to analyse and learn how to count the beats. (Mr. W)

Moreover, some interviewees reported that they could learn by transcribing Cantonese opera pieces by themselves:

> Some of them [practitioners in the troupe] had a booklet that copied the scores of the pieces. I would also borrow them and copy them for my reference. (Mr. L)

Some interviewees did not simply transcribe the pieces by copying directly. They also listened to their masters' demonstrations and wrote them down:

> Mr. T would use the Walkman to record his master's demonstrations for his reference. He would also transcribe the demonstrations in numbered notations… Through transcribing the recordings, Mr. T analysed his master's techniques and learned from

him. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

My little brother also copied and transcribed the percussion mnemonics so we could understand more deeply. (Mr. W)

4.2.5 Practice Strategies

Similar to learning other genres of music, substantive practicing with the music group is the fundamental element in learning *pai-he*. The music gatherings provided many opportunities for them to practice:

> In the past, we spent five or six nights joining those music gatherings, each lasting for three to four hours. This practice is much more effective than studying in a four-year *pai-he* program. (Mr. P)

> I learned the most, especially while working, just like my master told me. Following him to the music gatherings allowed me to learn many things. He was the *tou-jia*, and we, as *xia-jia*, were led by him and kept playing. This way, I can listen closely to and learn from his performance. This is how I practice and cumulate my *pai-he* experiences. (Mr. Q)

> We also need opportunities to play so others can tell us whether we are playing right. (Mr. R)

> I have many opportunities to practice in those music clubs and music gatherings. (Mr. W)

Some interviewees reported similar practicing chances in the troupe:

> Not only my master but other musicians in the troupe also taught me and advised me whenever I played wrong or had questions… Whenever we had time, we would practice together. For example, if we were to perform a specific piece that night, we would practice it that day. (Mr. L)

> Their troupe provides many opportunities for them to play, which allows Mr. T to practice a lot. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

Given the sufficient occasions for practicing *pai-he*, the interviewees also described various concrete practice approaches throughout their learning process. Some of them revealed that repeating practice and listening over a long time had developed their inner hearing (耳軌):

> During our free time, we would also practice Cantonese music, which allows us to develop our musical ear…Those melodies were stuck in my head. I would hum the melodies in my daily life. (Mr. L)

> When I was learning at the beginning, I was so interested in Cantonese operatic music. In my daily life, like when I was walking, I would hum the melodies and memorise the percussion mnemonics all the time. (Mr. P)

> Those [Cantonese operatic music] melodies were already in my mind… I had been listening to many recordings and practicing with references to those recordings. Then I was able to memorise the melodies and play them. (Mr. W)

Some interviewees described such musical sense as "conditioned reflex," "responses," and "habit." They instinctively play the melodies on their instruments whenever they hear the singer's melody without further conscious thinking. Some of them narrated:

> Sometimes, when I'm playing, I can't recall what notes I've played. Sometimes, my students asked if I could write down the notes I just played, but I couldn't remember… It is like a conditioned reflex… Practicing and playing more would make it into a habit. We can recall and play the related melody whenever we hear certain pitches. (Mr. P)

> I first relied on practicing aural skills… When I heard a melody, I would try to look for the pitches on the *erhu*. After practicing for months, I could do it more accurately… So later on, when the singers started to sing, I could relate to the melodies and play on the instrument. It is like a response, perhaps a spontaneous response. My fingers' responses are all based on my previous aural training. (Mr. W)

4.2.6 Learning Content

Pai-he consists of the melodic section and percussion section. Although this study focuses on investigating the pedagogies of the melodic instruments, some interviewees highlighted the importance of understanding the percussion section, especially the percussion patterns.

> Knowledge of percussion instruments is also important for *pai-he*, no matter what instruments you are playing... My father taught me those when I was a kid. All percussion patterns must be memorised. You won't be able to play the percussion by just looking at the score. (Mr. L)

Although other interviewees mainly serve as *tou-jia* players in the field, some also reported

their past learning experiences in the percussion section:

> I was legitimately learning percussion section instruments for around five to six years. (Mr. P)

> Before I started playing *erhu*, I was learning percussion instruments. (Mr. W)

Apart from the percussion knowledge, the participants' *pai-he* learning content can be categorised into two main parts: the practical and the cognitive content. The practical content refers to instrumental techniques and skills. Some interviewees specifically learned the practical content by seeking other professional teachers, while some interviewees' masters would teach them.

> My master taught me how to hold the *yangqin* hammers. Apart from that, I also visited other teachers to learn the practical technical skills of each instrument, including practicing scales and the accuracy of the pitches, dynamics, and posture of playing the instrument. And for *erhu*, we also need to practice bowing techniques. (Mr. L)

> He [my master] taught me technical skills [of *erhu*]. (Mr. P)

> I followed some teachers to learn the violin and the Western violin repertoire. I also learned the practical skills of *erhu* from other teachers. Those *erhu* repertoire are the pieces that we play in Chinese music. (Mr. Q)

> When learning practical skills, I looked for teachers to teach me performance. We need a systematic system to learn those practical skills step by step. (Mr. R)

Mr. Q particularly underscored the importance of learning practical content:

> When it comes to *pai-he*, we must first play that instrument well. You need to be familiar with all your instrument's practical techniques and basic skills before learning *pai-he*. (Mr. Q)

The cognitive content covers Cantonese operatic music's theories and basic knowledge, such as the general *pai-he* approaches and the structures and formats of different types of *bang-huang*.

> Those experienced musicians also told us about *bang-huang* during the meals that we need to derive the melody through the tone of the texts, which requires our level of

> aural and listening skills. (Mr. L)

> He (my master) taught us how to *pai-he*. For example, he taught a *xiao* player which places were not appropriate to play the melodies and how to play for other passages of the music… and taught us about how to play that interlude. (Mr. P)

> He (my master) gave me one lesson. It was just one lesson. I compiled my doubts and difficulties and asked him. Then, he also taught me everything about *bang-huang*, such as the typical interludes, preludes, and other structures. (Mr. Q)

> Regarding Cantonese operatic music knowledge, such as the format and structure of *er-huang*, I mainly learned them by asking those *pai-he* veterans. (Mr. S)

> He (my master) taught the theories in Cantonese opera (e.g., the formats of different genres of Cantonese opera). He also taught the techniques for *pai-he*, (e.g., *jia-hua* and *zhui-qiang*). (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

However, learning the cognitive content was relatively informal because the interviewees mainly acquired Cantonese operatic music theories through practice in the troupe, music gatherings, or even on other occasions, such as during meals, as mentioned in the previous section.

In addition to the practical and cognitive content, Mr. P added that his master specifically taught him some "ancient content:"

> He (my master) taught me those "ancient things…" Things related to *er-xian* are "ancient things…" Regarding the "classical vocal style" in Cantonese operatic singing, we will most likely use *er-xian*. (Mr. P)

Apart from learning the *pai-he* techniques, some interviewees highlighted the significance of understanding Cantonese operatic singing knowledge:

> If you're able to sing, you will understand many things, for example, when you know how to sing, you can almost know the pitches, which means you are most likely able to *pai-he*. As long as you know how to sing, you can play [*pai-he*]. (Mr. P)

4.3 Traditional Practices and Strategies for Teaching *Pai-he*

In this section, master and tutor refer to the person who teaches the learners, depending on the context. The learners regard the person who taught them as a master in apprenticeship, while the person delivering *pai-he* courses is regarded as a tutor. Mr. W also stated another difference between a master and a tutor: "Those who receive the tuition fees and offer lessons are considered tutors, whereas masters are teaching their apprentice unconditionally, and as they see your potential, they are willing to pass their knowledge to you." In addition, some interviewees indicated that professional *pai-he* musicians in the troupe and experienced amateurs in the music gatherings were willing to teach other players. However, no clear concept to regard them as masters, tutors, or teachers exists.

With the aforementioned informal learning contexts, the teaching settings vary in different scenarios, including teaching through apprenticeship, teaching in music gatherings and troupes, and teaching *pai-he* courses. Among the three settings, the latest one shows the most significant difference from the former: the *pai-he* tutors must prepare the teaching materials and design the lesson procedures in advance. Teaching in apprenticeship and music gatherings is usually unplanned, but the learners are advised whenever the master hears any problems during the practices.

4.3.1 Teaching Strategies

Although each master or tutor has their own teaching beliefs and style, their teaching has some common elements. The traditional teaching strategies fall into two main categories, namely, teaching through repertoire and playing by ear, based on the theoretical framework of

this study.

4.3.1.1 Teaching Through Repertoire

Teaching through repertoire is a common *pai-he* teaching practice among different teaching contexts. In the *pai-he* course teaching setting, the tutors consider and decide the repertoire in advance. By contrast, the teachings of apprenticeship, music gatherings, and troupes are usually not planned by the masters beforehand, and the singers chose the repertoire instead. Their masters would teach the learners whenever they perceived any problems. While teaching the repertoire, the masters/tutors would apply the strategies of repeating practice on (1) the whole piece, (2) the specific passage(s), (3) the specific melody, (4) the specific technique(s), and (5) referring to the master/tutor, which means the master/tutor would guide the learners to practice together and require them to follow closely while playing. Among these dimensions, the last one was the most common. As mentioned in the previous section, the interviewees reported their informal learning strategies in apprenticeship and music gatherings because their masters required them to refer to themselves and follow. Some interviewees teach a few apprentices or young musicians in the music gathering and the troupe. They mentioned similar teaching practices on how their masters taught them:

> Some young professional players regarded me as their master. I require them to follow me to play when we work or have music gatherings. I would tell them which part they can improve on or point out their mistakes, just like I learned about *pai-he* in the troupes. But it is not a lesson setting. (Mr. L)

> I have a few apprentices… They follow me to work… They already know some basic knowledge. They just sit there and play, and I would tell them the problems, if I hear any, when we are working. When we are working together, if they perceive any problems or questions, they will ask me… Some of them are not officially apprentices yet, which means they are us to play and learn, and I will teach them how to play… And more importantly, I need to explain why we need to play in this way instead of that. (Mr. P)

> Our troupe aims to nurture young actors and musicians, and I would also advise them to improve themselves... When we work together, I play with them so they can listen to me playing. (Mr. W)

The *pai-he* tutors, Mr. L, Mr. R, and Mr. S, also required the students to refer to their playing while practicing during the lessons. There were different "referring to the tutor" levels, depending on the students' performances and music familiarity. The most common one is the tutors playing their instruments together with the students to guide them and allow them to play by referring to the tutors:

> While the students are practicing, Mr. L plays the violin simultaneously to lead the students. He always asks the students to listen to and follow his performance while playing. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson)

> Mr. S plays the *gaohu* and leads the students while practicing. He reminds the students to keep a steady tempo by following his playing. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson)

Sometimes, Mr. L and Mr. R would sing the *gongche* notes while playing the violin, especially when the students' performances of rhythms and melodies played were ambiguous:

> Some students are unfamiliar with the passage on page 5. Mr. L started singing *gongche* [notes] and playing the violin simultaneously. Most of the students can follow him and pick up again. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 20 November, 2023)

> Some students are uncertain about the rhythms… Some students are unsure what pitches to play to fill the empty beat… Mr. R is playing the violin and singing the *gongche* notes simultaneously to guide the students. Most of the students can follow again. (Observation field notes, Mr. R's lesson, 19 March, 2024)

Mr. S applied similar strategies to assist the students and keep them on the right track:

> Some students are lost. Mr. S stopped playing the *gaohu* and started singing the *gongche* for the students to follow. Mr. S asks the students to practice two more times. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 13 January, 2024)

When the students were getting more familiar, the tutors would play the instruments and sing the lyrics simultaneously instead of singing the *gongche* notes:

> The students have already practiced the passage on page 2 twice. This is the third time Mr. L continues to play the violin and sing the lyrics simultaneously instead of singing the *gongche*. The students are following and playing. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 11 December, 2023)

> Mr. S stopped singing the *gongche* when students could follow and play. He is singing the lyrics and playing the *gaohu*. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 20 January, 2024)

Apart from practicing the instruments by referring to the teacher, Mr. L sometimes required students to sing and read the percussion mnemonics to help them understand the relationships among the singing, melodic and percussion instruments, how to count the beat, and familiarise themselves with the concept of maintaining a steady tempo.

> Mr. L asked the students to sing the *gongche* while he played the violin and required students to pay attention to how he *pai-he*. Some students were rushing while singing. Mr. L required the students to sing again and, at the same time, clap the beat together with him. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 26 February, 2024)

> Mr. L required students to read the percussion mnemonics twice while he played the violin. Mr. L explained, "Your melodies do not align with percussion mnemonics. You must understand the relationship between the melodies and the percussion. Here, you must follow the pulse according to the percussion patterns." Some students still cannot follow to read the percussion mnemonics accurately. Mr. L read the percussion patterns and asked the students to focus on the pulse and follow to sing the melody. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 22 January, 2024)

In addition to the repeating practice referring to the teacher, the other four dimensions of repeating practice under teaching through repertoire were more commonly used in the *pai-he* tutors' lessons than in the teachings under apprenticeship or music gatherings. The *pai-he* tutors would apply them, considering the students' familiarity with the music. For instance, they would focus on practicing the technical skills with the students when they could not play the particular skills well:

> Students are unfamiliar with the running notes on page 2. Mr. L applied repeating practice of specific techniques four times. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 20 November, 2023)

> Students cannot play the arpeggios on *yangqin*. Mr. L required students to practice five times. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 22 January, 2024)

> Some students cannot shift positions and are unfamiliar with the finger positions on the *gaohu*. Mr. S required students to practice three times. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 20 January, 2024)

The repeating practice of the whole piece was frequently observed in Mr. R's and Mr. S's lessons for warming up with Cantonese music pieces and etudes, respectively.

Mr. R narrated his teaching flow in general, which could also be observed in his lesson:

> Every lesson, we will start by practicing fixed tunes to warm up. Then, I will teach the knowledge about *bang-huang*. Next, we will play the repertoire, and I will teach them how to apply the *pai-he* skills alongside them and the formats of each passage in the piece. (Mr. R)

> Mr. R has spent around 40 minutes practicing the fixed tunes with the students. He would comment on students' performances after playing each Cantonese music piece. (Observation field notes, Mr. R's lesson, 19 March, 2024)

By contrast, Mr. S usually required students to practice the etude for warming up:

> The etude is usually practiced three times, each faster than the previous one, starting from a slow tempo. He would point out students' technical problems when he heard any. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lessons)

Sometimes, Mr. L also applied repeating practice of the whole piece, especially after teaching it, to help them consolidate the knowledge learned in the past few lessons and familiarise themselves with it. Sometimes, it would also be associated with repeating practice of specific melodies and techniques:

> Mr. L spent 40 minutes practicing the whole piece with the students. Whenever he heard any problems, he would point them out and require students to practice again… Mr. L pointed out that students' tempo were unstable and getting faster and faster. He asked the students to practice the passage on page 9 again. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 4 December, 2023)

> In the last 45 minutes, Mr. L asked the students to practice the whole piece. However, students are unfamiliar with the piece, especially pages 8–12… Students were lost on page 9, and Mr. L paused and practiced that passage with the students twice… He said, "You are unfamiliar with the rhythm of the last three lines on page 9, so you can't move on to the following passage. Let's play this melody twice." (Observation

field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 19 February, 2024)

Meanwhile, Mr. S used to consolidate students' learned content by repeating practices of the passages instead of practicing the whole piece. He would usually first teach a certain passage and require students to practice multiple times and then move on to teach and practice the next one:

> After teaching the *er-huang* passage on pages 3–4, Mr. S asked the students to practice the passage twice… Mr. S taught the fixed tune passage "Tears of Red Candle" on page 5 and required students to practice four times. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 6 January, 2024)

> After teaching the *fan-xian-zhong-ban*, Mr. S required the students to practice three times. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 3 February, 2024)

Whenever the tutors perceived any problems in students' performances, they would pause and point them out, sometimes with the help of repeating practice of particular melodies or techniques:

> Mr. S pointed out that the rhythms at the beginning of page 7 were inaccurate, especially the running notes. He asked the students to practice that melody again, five times… Students are playing the high pitches out of tune. Mr. S asked them to play again four times. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 27 January, 2024)

> Students are not able to *zhui-qiang* at the right tempo. Mr. S required the students to practice this technique twice while he was singing the lyrics. Then, he required the students to play the melody instead of *zhui-qiang*, which is only several words. However, students cannot play and connect the right tempo after *zhui-qiang*. Mr. S required students to practice *zhui-qiang* three more times. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 3 February, 2024)

Mr. L and Mr. R would more specifically give suggestions on how to improve them:

> Mr. L said "You shouldn't play tremolo on the last note of the first melody on page one... Play in *zheng-xian*, not *fan-xian* anymore in the last three lines of page eight." (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, November 27, 2023)

> Mr. L said "Pay attention to the tempo; you are rushing. You may consider singing the lyrics while playing so that you will be in sync with the singer and will not rush." (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, December 4, 2023)

> Mr. R commented on the *yangqin* player "You should play tremolos on the notes that

you consider important, instead of on the last notes of every phrase." (Observation field notes, Mr. R's lesson, 19 March, 2024)

As shown above, the most common approach is repeating practice referring to the master/tutor, which was generally applied among different teaching settings. The other dimensions of repeating practice were more commonly employed in the *pai-he* course, and the *pai-he* tutors would also plan their lessons, such as choosing the repertoire for their teaching. Conversely, the teachings under apprenticeship, music gatherings, and troupes were usually not planned previously, and the singers chose the repertoire instead of for the masters' purpose of teaching. Although the masters were teaching the learners through the repertoire, the repeating practices of specific melodies and technique(s) were more common when the learners practiced on their own rather than with their masters.

4.3.1.2 Playing by Ear

Playing by ear is another teaching strategy that has been applied in different teaching settings; it includes (1) master's/tutor's demonstration, (2) students' imitation, (3) practicing aural skills, and (4) teaching with/without the score, referring to the theoretical framework.

Master's/Tutor's Demonstrations

Regardless of the teaching settings under different scenarios, the masters and *pai-he* tutors adopted different levels of demonstration as one of the ordinary teaching approaches. In apprenticeship, the masters would require the learners to observe their demonstrations and required them to follow. However, instead of planning their teaching materials, they would teach and demonstrate whenever they thought it was necessary or when the learner raised questions:

> Mr. T's master would first sing and play the violin simultaneously for demonstration. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

> When learning percussions, they [other *pai-he* players] would demonstrate the percussion mnemonics… Whenever I asked any question, he [my master] would demonstrate them for me. (Mr. W)

The masters usually require the learners to follow their demonstrations, sometimes without explanations:

> He [my master] never explained why… He demonstrated a lot, showing me that I could play in this way or that way in the same place. It was pretty messy and confusing at first…. And he didn't tell me why I should play this way or that way or why sometimes there are several options for the same place. (Mr. R)

As observed in the *pai-he* tutors' teaching, they had similar approaches to demonstrations; however, they would show more explanations, especially when teaching new content:

> Mr. L would demonstrate the passages he would teach in every lesson. He would usually sing the lyrics and play the violin simultaneously and imitate the percussion patterns when there were any. He would remind students of the structures and formats of each *bang-huang* passage. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson)

> Mr. S would demonstrate the new passages on the *gaohu* once before asking the students to play. He would sing the lyrics and play the *gaohu* simultaneously and percussion mnemonics whenever there were any. Sometimes, he would tap his foot to count the beat while demonstrating. (Observational field notes, Mr. S's lesson)

Mr. R's demonstrations were observed more frequently after pointing out students' problems:

> Some students cannot catch up with the fast tempo. Mr. R demonstrates the bowing techniques for them… Mr. R said that the tempo played was insecure and then demonstrated the appropriate tempo. (Observational field notes, Mr. R's lesson, 19 March, 2024)

When students were confused or lost, they would repeatedly demonstrate the particular melodies or techniques:

> Some students cannot catch up with the beat by listening to the percussion mnemonics. Mr. L demonstrates the prelude on page 3. He is playing the prelude on the violin and reading the percussion mnemonics at once for demonstration. He has demonstrated it three times. Some students requested him to demonstrate one more time so that they could record his playing. Mr. L demonstrated once again. (Observational field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 11 December, 2023)

Some students' rhythms were played inaccurately. Mr. R paused and demonstrated the correct rhythm by singing the melody. (Observation field notes, Mr. R's lesson, 19 March, 2024)

Some students are unsure what pitches to play for the *zhui-qiang* technique on page 6. Mr. S paused and demonstrated how to play *zhui-qiang* for the students. He sings the lyrics, plays the *gaohu* simultaneously, and explains the relationship between the singing part and *pai-he*. He has demonstrated the correct version twice and demonstrated the inaccurate version that students just played. (Observational field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 17 February, 2024)

Sometimes, they would consider students' needs and abilities to adjust their demonstration strategies:

The students cannot play the running notes and reflect that too many notes are on the score, so they cannot catch up. Mr. L demonstrates that melody on the violin once and sings the *gongche* once. (Observational field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 22 January, 2024)

Mr. L usually demonstrates on the violin. However, some students are unsure how to do arpeggios on the *yangqin*, so he demonstrates with the *yangqin*. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 22 January, 2024)

In addition, the tutors emphasised introducing percussion knowledge to the students. Although they did not require students to memorise the percussion patterns, they would demonstrate them and play their instruments simultaneously to allow them to understand the relationship between the percussion and melodic section in *pai-he*.

Mr. L starts to teach the new content. He demonstrates the first passage for the students with his violin and reads the percussion mnemonics in the preludes. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lessons)

Mr. R introduced and demonstrated the percussion mnemonics before the preludes… He also demonstrates the *pai-he* skills by singing lyrics and playing the violin simultaneously. (Observation field notes, Mr. R's lesson, 19 March, 2024)

Mr. S first demonstrated the percussion instruments at the piece's beginning and then started to play the *gaohu* simultaneously. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lessons)

Mr. Q specifically pointed out the advantages of demonstrations while teaching:

Some masters could not present how to do so in his words, but they could demonstrate how. When he demonstrated, the apprentice followed and tried to imitate him as much as possible. (Mr. Q)

Students' imitation

Master's/tutor's demonstrations were usually associated with students' imitation throughout the teaching process. Teaching under apprenticeship, music gatherings, and troupes, the masters and experienced musicians would ask the learners to imitate their playing to learn *pai-he*.

> When he (my master) demonstrated, I would follow his playing and try to imitate him. This way, you would be able to learn. (Mr. Q)

> They (the experienced musicians) always asked me to pay attention and imitate them when I was learning in the troupe. (Mr. S)

Meanwhile, in the *pai-he* courses, the three tutors did not specifically require the students to imitate them. Some students showed initiative in imitating the tutor's demonstration:

> Mr. L is demonstrating the *yi-fan-zhong-ban* passage on the violin and singing. He introduced the characteristics of *yi-fan-xian* and the pitch of *yi*. Some students hum the melodies, and some sing the lyrics. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 8 January, 2024)

> Mr. L is demonstrating the first page of the new piece by singing the lyrics and playing the violin simultaneously. He also emphasises the importance of the percussion patterns while playing the interludes to connect the two passages. When he is demonstrating the percussion patterns and playing the interlude simultaneously, some students imitate Mr. L by humming the interlude melody, and some students read the percussion mnemonics and count the *ding-ban* simultaneously. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 22 January, 2024)

> Mr. S stopped and told the students that their interlude rhythms were inaccurate when moving to the following passage. He is demonstrating how to connect the interlude to the following passage. Some students jot down the notes, and some imitate Mr. S by singing the melody. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 27 January, 2024)

> Mr. S demonstrates the new passage by playing the *gaohu* and singing simultaneously. Some students are following him to sing. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 3 February, 2024)

By contrast, some students showed unfavorable reactions toward the imitations:

> Mr. L demonstrated how to count the beat more accurately. Two students try to catch up with the beat by clapping and singing simultaneously. Another one is tapping his foot while singing together. In the meantime, another student complains that those students are disturbing. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 22 January, 2024)

> Some students are trying to imitate Mr. L's demonstration of arpeggios on the *yangqin*. Meanwhile, one of the students complained that she could not hear Mr. L's demonstration clearly because they were trying on the *yangqin*. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 29 January, 2024)

Practice aural skills

As the interviewees mentioned, with the flexible and interactive nature of *pai-he*, aural skills are one of the primary components of learning *pai-he*. As illustrated in the previous section, some interviewees revealed their experiences developing their inner ear and musical senses, which are closely related to their aural skills. Mr. R stated the importance of *pai-he* musicians' aural skills:

> As a *pai-he* player, you need to listen closely to the singer's breathing and be able to predict the pitches that the singer will sing. For example, what note is followed by *mi sol la do*?... You need to know it's most likely to be *sol*… You should have these kinds of ideas and melodies in your mind… And sometimes, the singer would sing at a higher pitch when the emotion is getting agitated, then the *pai-he* players should be able to identify the pitches and follow the singer. (Mr. R)

The interviewees have different strategies for teaching aural skills, mainly training students' listening competence. Mr. S narrated his approach during the interview:

> I teach and strengthen my students' aural skills by requiring them to listen to my singing. I first asked them to play the melodies on the *gaohu* with what I had just sung. Most of them were not able to do so at first. Then, I would hum the melodies instead of singing the lyrics and ask them to try again. Lastly, I would demonstrate the correct pitches for them. They could do it gradually after practicing with them for a long time. (Mr. S)

In addition, Mr. S had another strategy to enhance students' aural skills, as observed in his lesson:

> Before introducing the new *yi-fan-nan-yin* passage, Mr. S asked if students remembered how to play the prelude. The students could not recall the melody. Instead of demonstrating, Mr. S sang the melody of the prelude and asked the students to guess what the pitches were in *gongche* notations. Some students could answer and tried to play it on the *gaohu*. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 17 February, 2024)

In Mr. L's class, some students were curious about deriving the pitches from the text and raised the questions. Mr. L taught the aural skills from another perspective, first to understand Cantonese tones:

> A student asks how to interpret the lyrics into *gongche* notations. Mr. L explains the concept of different tones in Cantonese and introduces how to derive the pitches from the tones of Cantonese. Some students found it confusing. Mr. L continues to explain and demonstrate how to derive the tones from students' names. After demonstrating two students' names, he asked them to try to think of the pitches of their names. One student can do so. Mr. L explains again and emphasises paying attention to the intervals between the words. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 20 November, 2023)

As observed, Mr. L attempted to teach the concepts of deriving the pitches from the texts again after four months. However, some students still found it difficult:

> Two students ask Mr. L how to identify the pitches based on the lyrics. Mr. L introduces the tones in Cantonese and represents them in *gongche* notations. All students are jotting the notes. After the explanation, Mr. L asks three students to identify the pitches of their names. The students answer incorrectly, and Mr. L reveals the correct ones. Some students express that it is very challenging. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 4 March, 2024)

Mr. L pointed out that teaching aural skills is challenging because many students could not understand them. He had adjusted and tried different teaching strategies to teach the students:

> It is complicated to teach [aural skills] since they are unfamiliar with Cantonese tones. You see, some students still cannot identify the tones after I have explained in this lesson. So, I have been thinking about how to teach and sometimes try some new methods. For example, today, I asked them (the students) to sing *gongche* together while learning the new passage. Also, I asked them to fill in the melodies I had sung additionally for this piece of Cantonese music. (Unstructured interview, Mr. L)

> After Mr. L demonstrated a Cantonese music piece once, he required the students to listen to his demonstration again. He is singing in *gongche* notations, and students

have to jot down the added melodies not written on the score. Most students can do so, while one keeps asking Mr. L to repeat twice. (Observation field notes, 4 March, 2024)

Although Mr. W did not organise and teach students in *pai-he* courses, he indicated his strategies for strengthening the learners' aural skills when they were playing in the troupe:

> Sometimes, I won't follow the score to play, so they must listen to my playing actively and cannot rely on the score. This way, they can employ the traditional improvisation techniques we learned in the past. This can train their aural skills. (Mr. W)

In addition to the listening skills, Mr. T highlighted the ability to respond to the music instantly by understanding the roles of each instrument, which involves music analysis skills. He described his teaching strategies:

> Developing their musical sense: You need to be aware of the musical contour once the singer starts singing. You should also be able to predict what they will sing next. Also, you need to understand the role of your instrument. For example, when the *tou-jia* is playing the *gaohu* with a complicated melody with many notes, then the *yangqin* player should be able to respond immediately by playing a simpler melody to bring out the music instead of playing a melody as complicated as the *tou-jia* does… Teaching strategies: (1) Analyse the modes of the Cantonese music pieces, (2) introduce the roles of different melodic instruments of *pai-he* (e.g., the role of bass instruments such as cello and *ruan*; the relationship between *yangqin* and *tou-jia*), and (3) write the possible improvisation melodies on the score. After a certain period, the learners should be able to analyse and play the improvisation melodies without writing them down. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

Mr. R described the importance of strengthening such skills:

> In fact, as a *pai-he* player, you need to understand the role of your own instrument and what notes you should play. But before that, you need to enrich your knowledge of music. I think this point should be promoted to polish the quality of the music, and at the same time, you should not write everything down on the score. (Mr. R)

Teaching With/Without the Score

As mentioned in the literature review, the concept of musical scores in Cantonese operatic music differs from Western opera music. Traditionally, the music notations are usually not written in the aria type, and even some musical notations are provided in the fixed tunes; the

rhythms are not written precisely to enable the singers and musicians to improvise flexibly.

As Cantonese opera music develops, its repertoire becomes richer and more diverse. Some

newly composed Cantonese opera pieces are written in more detail, in which the musical

notations are indicated on the score, even for the aria types. Thus, the strategies for teaching

with/without the score are also partly influenced by the choices of pieces.

Some interviewees asserted the importance of maintaining the traditional *pai-he* approach,

which is flexible and interactive. Thus, their teaching strategies tend not to rely on the score:

> We should not follow the score to play when performing Cantonese operatic music...
> We need to listen to the *tou-jia* and know where the beats are. And we also need to
> pay attention to the phrases' last syllable and look for patterns. I would teach all these
> instead of relying on the score to play. Especially when it comes to *bang-huang*, there
> are many variations.…The scriptwriters in the past only wrote the texts, and it is for
> you to read by yourself and sing it out. (Mr. P)

> I would remind them which places cannot be played by entirely referring to the score
> and should listen to what the singer is singing instead. They should be able to listen to
> the *tou-jia* and the singers instead of relying on the score to play, especially in *bang-
> huang*. (Mr. W)

Meanwhile, some interviewees considered the difficulties in playing without the score from

the student's perspective:

> The contemporary pieces all have *gongche* notations, making learning easier for
> students. Some new Cantonese opera teachers might not be able to play those pieces
> without musical notations, and students might not be able to do so or have no idea
> which preludes and interludes should be played. The well-written *gongche* notations
> on the score are much easier for them to learn. (Mr. L)

> I think those contemporary pieces are good teaching materials for students since all
> the *gongche* notations are well written on the score, which is easier for students,
> especially beginners, to learn. Those old pieces without *gongche* notations are too
> difficult for them to learn, and they cannot play, especially when their aural skills are
> not well-trained. (Mr. S)

The interviewees' points of view are consistent with the observed lessons, which mainly

relied on teaching with the score:

> Mr. L's teaching relies on the score in every lesson. He introduces the format and structure of each aria type among the pieces; however, he requires students to pay attention to the score. When he realises the melodies are inaccurate or wrongly written on the scores, he will revise them in advance and upload them to the WhatsApp group for students' reference. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lessons)

> Mr. R's lesson primarily adopted his teaching based on the score. (Observation field notes, Mr. R's lesson)

> Overall, Mr. S usually teaches students by using the score. Although he would seldom teach students to play without the score, such as listening to the prelude he had just played, he required the students to listen and then sing the *gongche* and play on the instrument without providing the score. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lessons)

Mr. R recalled his change in teaching *pai-he*, changing from teaching aurally to relying on the score to teach in recent years:

> In the past, I insisted that we should focus on learning the traditional features of Cantonese opera. In terms of teaching *pai-he*, we must learn how to *zhui-qiang*. So, I required my students to play aurally but not rely on the [*gongche*] notations on the score. I asked them to listen to the singer closely and play the melodies on their instruments, just like how we learned *pai-he* in the past… However, it is hard to require them (my students) to do so. Because many scores provide the *gongche* notations, they won't memorise the pitches aurally. So, I would start with teaching some contemporary pieces with *gongche* notations. As they have learned more knowledge and understand more about Cantonese operatic music and have better technical skills, I would teach them the traditional approaches of *pai-he*. (Mr. R)

4.3.2 Teaching Content

As mentioned previously, the learners under apprenticeship, music gatherings, and the troupe had no concrete learning materials. At the same time, the *pai-he* tutors would prepare the teaching materials for their students. The previous section illustrated the learning content when the interviewees were learning *pai-he*. Regardless of the repertoire choices, the teaching content of the observed *pai-he* classes can be identified as practical and cognitive, similar to their previous learning content. Some interviewees underscored that acquiring practical and cognitive content is crucial:

I emphasised that you cannot say it's boring. You need to learn both cognitive and practical content. It is a must. The practical content is all about practicing, you need to know how to play your instrument and understand those techniques. (Mr. P)

When it comes to *pai-he*, we must be familiar with our own instrument, having sufficient understanding toward the technical skills… The *pai-he* strategies are also equally important. (Mr. Q)

4.3.2.1 Practical Content

The practical content involves instrumental knowledge and technical skills. The *pai-he* tutors usually spend less time teaching them compared with the cognitive content. Mr. S's lesson usually takes approximately 20 minutes to practice the technical skills:

> Mr. S's lesson starts with revising the scales of *zheng-xian, fan-xian, che-wu-xian,* and *shi-gong-xian,* each practicing two to three times. Then, Mr. S would practice the etude with the students, which was retrieved from an *erhu* book for practicing students' quick bowing techniques. While practicing the scales and the etude, Mr. S usually reminds students to pay attention to the accuracy of the pitches and explains the intervals among the pitches. Moreover, the etude is usually practiced three times, each faster than the previous one, starting from a slow tempo. Mr. S would tap his foot to give students the tempo throughout the practice. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lessons)

Mr. S expressed the importance of consolidating the practical skills:

> These basic technical skills are important. Playing with accurate pitches and keeping a steady tempo are difficult for them [the students]... Practicing scales and etudes can train their skills… Practicing scales enables students to get familiar with the positions of *gaohu,* and practicing the etude can enhance their bowing techniques… The better your technical skills, the easier you can *pai-he*. (Mr. S)

Mr. L also highlighted the importance of learning practical content. Instead of including the practical content in the *pai-he* courses, Mr. L offered other courses for teaching the instrumental skills of *yangqin* and *erhu*. Nonetheless, he sometimes would remind students about the *yangqin* skills during the *pai-he* lessons:

> Mr. L listens to each student's performance individually. He reminds some students to hold the *yangqin* hammers properly and reminds some students to pay attention to the *yangqin* techniques. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 8 January, 2024)

However, some interviewees reflected that they expected the students to have basic practical knowledge of their instruments:

> You see others teaching *pai-he*; they usually teach the students to play fixed tunes in *zheng-xian,* then *fan-xian, che-wu-xian,* and *shi-gong-xian*. These are practical content only. If they (students) don't even know these things, I won't teach them. If they need me to teach them some technical skills of those instruments, I won't teach them too. (Mr. P)

> Firstly, I have to teach the student how to read the score if the student has no idea. But I won't teach students who don't know how to play that instrument since teaching *pai-he* is not the same as teaching an instrument. (Mr. W)

4.3.2.2 Cognitive Content

The cognitive content comprises the basic knowledge of Cantonese operatic music, such as the structures and formats of each *bang-huang*, and the *pai-he* techniques. Some interviewees shared their experiences and views on teaching cognitive content:

> It is a must to learn everything about cognitive content, and you need to understand them first. At least you need to understand *bang-zi* and *er-huang* concepts, and how to play. This point is very important. And when you sing *bang-huang*, the melodies are not the same. (Mr. P)

> Also, I will teach the students about the musical forms of Cantonese operatic music. Teaching fixed tunes is similar to teaching an instrument, as you just have to follow the score and play. However, when it comes to accompanying Cantonese operatic music, all those ornaments and other technical skills, as well as the melodies, are not written on the score. When I teach, I won't write them down as well; however, I will tell you how. (Mr. W)

In the observation, the tutors would spend most of the time teaching the cognitive content, such as introducing the fundamentals of Cantonese operatic music. For instance, when Mr. L started to teach a new piece, he would first introduce the background of that piece of music. Then, he would teach some Cantonese operatic music knowledge and theories in the repertoire, including the structure and variations of the *bang-huang* passages and the musical

symbols:

> Mr. L is introducing the fermata, crescendo, and decrescendo signs. (Observation field notes, 20 November, 2023)

> He is explaining the structure of *fan-xian-zhong-ban*: the format of the couplets, ending notes of each couplet, preludes with percussion mnemonics, interludes, and variations, and how to *jiahua*… explaining the repeating sign. (Observation field notes, 27 November, 2023)

> He is introducing the signs of percussion instruments… Revising on *he, shi, che,* and *sang* interludes… introducing other variations of *shi-gong-man-ban* interludes. (Observation field notes, 4 December, 2023)

Mr. S also introduced similar cognitive content in his lessons:

> Mr. S introduces how to play *zhui-qiang* and emphasises the timing of playing *zhui-qiang*… He is explaining the format of the *er-huang* passage. (Observation field notes, 6 January, 2024)

> He is introducing and demonstrating how to add advanced notes and other variations… Mr. S keeps reminding students that the pulse for *zhui-qiang* is inaccurate (Observation field notes, 20 January, 2024)

> He is clarifying the musical notations (sharp and trill)... He reminds students of how to play the prelude of *fan-xian-zhong-ban* and how to play *zhui-qiang*. (Observation field notes, 3 February, 2024)

> Mr. S is describing the pitches of *yi* and *fan* in the *yi-fan* mode and teaching students how to play them on the *gaohu*… He is introducing different variations for playing the interlude. (Observation field notes, 17 January, 2024)

Apart from introducing the cognitive content orally, Mr. R has designed a set of handouts for

his students:

> With my teaching experiences, I have summarised and designed some handouts for my students. It covers the format and structure of each *bang-huang* type, which is clear for them to understand and to complement my teaching. (Mr. R)

> Mr. R is explaining the Cantonese operatic music theories and knowledge during the lesson by using his handouts. He also required the students to practice the preludes of the *bang-huang* type, apart from listening to his explanations. (Observation field notes, 19 March, 2024)

4.3.3 Teaching Style

By summarizing the above teaching approaches and teaching content observed and illustrated by the interviewees, the following *pai-he* teaching styles are identified on the basis of two perspectives, namely, the dimensions of interaction and the modes of transmission (Schippers, 2010), referring to the theoretical framework.

4.3.3.1 Dimensions of Interaction

The dimensions of interaction between the master/tutor and the learner consist of four spectra to indicate the interactions, as adopted from Schippers's (2010) Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework: (1) from large to small power distance, which refers to the power distance between the master/tutor and learners; (2) from individual to collective central, which means whether achievements and development of music practice are individual or as a group; (3) from avoiding uncertainty to tolerating uncertainty, which indicates the tolerance of uncertainties regarding the musical ideas; and (4) from long-term orientation to short-term orientation, which illustrates whether the progress or goals are in the long run or short term.

First, the power distance between the current tutors and the learners is smaller than they did with their masters in the past, as observed in the *pai-he* lessons. Although the tutors did not insist on being addressed as "masters," most students still call them as such, while a few of them would call them "teachers." Moreover, the *pai-he* tutors usually sat at the same level as the students instead of maintaining a certain physical distance between them. Sometimes, Mr. L would approach the students individually and listen to their performances, and Mr. S would help some students tune their *gaohu* or replace the broken string. Another indication of the

small power distance between the tutors and students is that they were valued as peers or equal participants most of the time. For instance, Mr. S and his students were very close that they always made jokes among themselves. Mr. R also recalled having late-night meals with his students after lessons before the pandemic outbreak. Furthermore, Mr. S and Mr. L valued their students' concerns and thoughts throughout the learning process. They have adjusted their teaching on the basis of the students' preferences and requests:

> I have changed my teaching strategies. I spent more time teaching and practicing basic technical skills with students in the past, but many were impatient and would like to learn the pieces directly. The better your basic technical skills are, the easier it will be for you to be a good *pai-he* player. (Mr. L)

> I have modified my teaching strategies. In the past, I focused more on basic technical skills in my lessons. However, people nowadays cannot bear the hardship. They regarded basic technical skills as dull and wanted to learn pieces directly. So, I spend less time playing basic technical skills nowadays. If their basic technical skills are well practiced, it is much easier to play any songs. (Mr. S)

By contrast, the power distance between the master and apprentice was relatively larger under the apprenticeship. Given that apprenticeship had no planned teaching and learning schedule, the masters would not undisputedly direct the learners' learning process. Meanwhile, the ceremony of acknowledging the master and formal wordings of addressing the master was crucial. Mr. P described his ceremony of regarding his master:

> I regard him as my master… I need to serve a cup of tea to him and bow down on my knees. That's the official ceremony of acknowledging one as a master. (Mr. P)

Second, the interactions among the masters/tutors and learners mostly tend to be collectively central. The *pai-he* teaching and learning process in various settings was mostly conducted in groups instead of individually. Although under apprenticeship, music gatherings, and troupe, no lessons were organised for the learners, and they had to learn with other musicians and singers because *pai-he* is used to accompany the singing parts instead of solo practices. The

interactions between the master and learners are not limited to teaching and learning *pai-he*

but are extended to social interactions:

> We would have a meal together every time after the troupe performances. Those experienced older musicians would share their *pai-he* experiences, Cantonese opera theories, singing, and percussion with us. (Mr. L)

> After the music gatherings, we usually have a late-night meal and then play Mahjong. (Mr. P)

In the *pai-he* courses, the class settings are in groups instead of one-on-one teaching. Under

this group setting, the tutors tend to focus on the achievement of the whole class of students.

For instance, when they perceived any mistakes in students' playing, they would require all

students to practice repeatedly instead of asking them to play and practice one by one, as

observed in their lessons.

Third, the tutors' teaching styles tend to tolerate uncertainty, while the masters' teaching

styles tend to avoid it. Generally, the *pai-he* tutors did not expect strict obedience to follow

themselves. Some of them allow discussions on musical ideas and interpretation and choices

of learning repertoire.

> Some students said they heard Mr. S's performance and liked the piece *Reunion in the Nunnery* so much. They asked Mr. S if they could learn this piece. Mr. S promised to teach it after finishing teaching the current piece. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 17 February, 2024)

> I won't force my students to follow my interpretation strictly. Students should have their own thoughts and interpretations that others must not interfere with. (Mr. W)

By contrast, under apprenticeship, not every master is open to allowing various musical

interpretations for their apprentices.

> Sometimes, he [my master] insists that I must follow his style because he believes his style is the best. He pays great attention to detail and is meticulous, even with some minor musical interpretation. For example, how to *jia-hua*, the *glissandos*, and dynamics. (Mr. W)

Meanwhile, some masters are less critical in discussing the musical interpretations with the interviewees:

> Every musician, especially *tou-jia* players, has their styles. So, my master didn't restrict me from following him completely. I could learn from others freely. (Mr. L)

> My master did not require me to follow him exactly, instead, he just told me how to do it, and I can interpret the music myself, as long as I follow the rules. (Mr. P)

> He [my master] thought that every musician has their feelings toward the music. So, he didn't force me to follow his playing exactly. (Mr. R)

In addition, the masters usually stick to their established teaching strategies until their apprentice can achieve them after practicing repeatedly instead of incorporating different teaching styles. They usually would explain how to do so:

> Every time when I couldn't play certain melodies, my master would ask me to practice repeatedly, starting from slow to fast. (Mr. L)

> Every time when I couldn't play well, he would explain how I could improve, such as adjusting my finger positions… If I couldn't do so, he would point out my problems and ask me to do it again until I succeeded. (Mr. R)

> When I hadn't managed to do it yet, he [my master] would continue to demonstrate for me repeatedly and show me how my fingers should be positioned, how to do better in my bowing, and so on. He would keep using this same approach until I could do it. (Mr. W)

Furthermore, under apprenticeship, the masters expected their apprentices to respect and obey them without questioning their authority. Mr. R recalled his learning journey with his master:

> You know, in the past, if you questioned your master, he would ask you to follow somebody else and quit following him [laughter]. We did what our master taught, even if he didn't tell us why we should do so. (Mr. R)

Fourth, the goals and learning progress in *pai-he* courses tended to be short-term, whereas the apprenticeship focused on the apprentices' long-term development. As observed in the *pai-he* courses, the tutors frequently gave students feedback on their performances during the

lessons. As aforementioned, they would listen to students' performances closely and point out their inaccuracies or mistakes when they heard any, which was focusing on students' immediate performances rather than evaluating their achievements in the long run. Given that the courses were organised for amateurs, the students had no graded progression. The more evident short-term goals could be observed in Mr. L's lessons that he would prepare semiannual performances and weekly four-hour music gatherings for students. Meanwhile, in apprenticeship, the masters' expectations toward the apprentices focused on their professions' long-term development:

> He hoped I could become a professional *pai-he* musician. Many masters have this kind of expectation toward their apprentice. (Mr. L)

> He hoped I could be like him, playing as great as him. (Mr. W)

4.3.3.2 Modes of Transmission

Three spectra are applied to describe the masters' and tutors' approaches in their teaching, including (1) from atomistic/analytical to holistic, which means the strategies are from didactic and progressive to a less systematic but comprehensive; (2) from written to aural, which refers to the notated scores to relying on aural approaches; and (3) from tangible to intangible, which describes the teaching from theory and focuses on technical skills to spiritual values and expressions of the music.

First, the masters' and tutors' teaching approaches tend to be holistic modes of transmission, and the latter is more prominent. Although Mr. S would practice the etude and scales with the students to strengthen their practical skills, the time spent for each lesson was approximately 20 minutes. Similar to Mr. L's lesson, both of them mainly used the repertoires as the basis of

teaching. Their teachings were less systematic or progressive because there was no teaching progress from simple to complex planned by the tutors nor any formal curriculum, lesson structures, or exams designed for students. Moreover, although both tutors would introduce basic Cantonese operatic music knowledge in the lessons and point out students' mistakes, their teaching process involved more demonstrations and practicing by referring to themselves rather than explaining or describing how to play by words. By contrast, the masters' teaching approaches are more holistic, leaving more room for the apprentices to construct their musical knowledge. As mentioned previously, the interviewees primarily learned by listening to not only their masters but also other players in the troupe or music gatherings. They would also take the initiative to look for recordings and albums for their references to practice. The learners had to develop and consolidate their understanding by themselves instead of being taught step-by-step by their masters.

Second, the *pai-he* tutors tend to apply notation-based teaching approaches considerably, while the masters in apprenticeship tend to teach aurally. Although tutors often adopt different strategies to enhance students' aural skills, they mainly rely on the score to teach them. The observed tutors agreed that teaching with the score is more accessible for students to learn, as they mentioned during the interviews and observations:

> The contemporary pieces all have *gongche* notations, making learning easier for students. (Mr. L)

> Since all the *gongche* notations are well written on the score, it is easier for students, especially beginners, to learn. (Mr. S)

> In every lesson, Mr. L would teach and practice according to the score with the students. Other aural techniques, such as improvisation, are rarely observed. (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lessons)

> Mr. R mainly relies on teaching with the score throughout the lesson while teaching

the fixed tunes and the preludes of each *bang-huang* type. (Observation field notes, Mr. R's lesson)

Mr. S required students to play by referring to the score in his lessons. Sometimes, he would point out some mistakes written on the score and ask the students to write down the revised version and play according to the score. Other aural techniques, such as improvisation, are seldom observed. However, he required students to jot down the melodies and play accordingly instead of playing by ear. (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lessons)

By contrast, under apprenticeship, the masters seldom write down their improvised melodies playing on the score but demonstrate them to the learners instead. This teaching approach enhanced the learners' aural skills. Some learners would record them and follow the recordings to practice:

I also recorded his (my master's) audio recordings for my reference. I followed and imitated his performances, imitating his bowing and dynamics. (Mr. Q)

Meanwhile, some would transcribe the melodies on their own and practice:

Mr. T would use the Walkman to record his master's demonstrations and transcribe the demonstrations in numbered notations… Through transcribing the recordings, Mr. T analysed his master's techniques and learned from him. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

He (my master) did not write the scores for me. It's all about my observation and listening. Sometimes, I would write down the melodies on my own after listening to his demonstrations. (Mr. W)

Third, the tutors' teaching strategies tend to be slightly geared toward tangible modes of transmission, while the masters' teaching tends to be intangible. As mentioned previously, the observed *pai-he* tutors would explain the theories of Cantonese operatic music, such as the structure and format for each type of *bang-huang*. They would also enhance students' technical skills. For instance, Mr. S would require the students to practice etude and scales, and Mr. L would remind students of some fundamental practical skills during the lessons. However, they did not spend much time in the lesson to deliver such content. In contrast to

the masters, the *pai-he* tutors barely teach or encourage students to improvise music or

explain the expressions of the pieces. Some masters especially highlighted the importance of

musical expressions:

> Firstly, he emphasises the importance of musical expressions. He didn't like it when musicians were showing off their instrumental skills. He believes that all *pai-he* musicians are as a whole, so the *tou-jia* is responsible for guiding the *xia-jia* players and achieving the musical effects together. Secondly, we need to assist the performers and help them to *pai-he*. Thirdly, he also emphasises the sense of rhythm, which must be in sync with the percussion instruments. These are all his requirements… Overall speaking, he believes that musical expression is more important than technical skills. (Mr. W)

Some masters considered tangible and intangible elements to be equally significant:

> They think practical content and cognitive content are both important… *Tou-jia* players, especially, must be familiar with various instruments, such as *er-xian*, *zhu-ti-qin*, etc. So, I need to be familiar with those positions as well… Regarding cognitive content, they recommended many books for me to read. (Mr. P)

4.3.4 Reflections on Teaching

Reflecting on teaching is crucial in education because it improves future teaching plans and

helps students understand their needs and learning progress. The interviewees' experiences

with *pai-he* teaching also illustrated their reflections on different aspects. Some of them

looked back on their teaching motivations, which came from their students' learning

motivation:

> Actually, I started teaching *pai-he* because my students from the singing class suggested it to me. They were interested in learning pai-he with me. (Mr. L)

> At that time, many students were learning Cantonese operatic singing with me. They also would like to learn *pai-he*, so I started teaching. (Mr. R)

Some interviewees would like to teach as they perceived the need to educate the *pai-he*

musicians:

> People who started to learn *pai-he* nowadays are not really good. They have no idea

how to *pai-he* and don't understand the styles and characteristics of Cantonese operatic music. If we follow the score to play, it is just karaoke, not *pai-he*. So, I hope I can teach them these concepts… and even those trained by the conservatoire, their technical skills are really good, but their understanding of the cognitive content is not enough. And they cannot play in the Cantonese operatic music style. (Mr. P)

In the music gatherings, I realised some musicians have problems with their playing, yet some have been in the field for years, so I couldn't really "teach" them. But for the young musicians, I would tell them how to improve or point out their problems. I think there should be someone telling them what the problems are, to improve our overall performance and qualities. However, I also noticed that there is much *pai-he* knowledge that some people do not pay attention to. That's why I accepted the conservatoire's invitation to give lectures. (Mr. W)

Throughout the interviewees' teaching journey, they have been reflecting on how to improve

students' learning progress:

Every time after the lesson, I summarise my teachings and consider what to teach in the next lesson. For example, how can I make you (my students) memorise the percussion mnemonics? Although I understand it is difficult to ask the students to memorise them all, I would keep thinking about what I could do to teach them better. (Mr. L)

I would reflect on which part they (my students) couldn't do well or their common mistakes. Then, I would think about what approaches I could use to make them understand and how I could present the ideas clearly so they could understand and improve. (Mr. R)

When students raise questions, I think about why they asked them. I would also have a look at their assignments. For example, I reflect on whether my teaching was delivered clearly and if there are mistakes. So, I mainly reflect on the problems raised by the students and the problems found in their assignments so that I can do better in the next lesson. (Mr. W)

4.4 Challenges Faced in the Field

The interviewees expressed various points of view on the challenges in developing Cantonese

operatic music and nurturing the *pai-he* musicians.

4.4.1 Developing Cantonese Operatic Music

Creating new Cantonese operatic music pieces significantly contributes to the genre's development. However, the quality of the contemporary pieces has drawn the practitioners' attention. First, some interviewees noted that the quality of the contemporary pieces is inconsistent with the traditional style because some involve excessive Western elements and neglect the traditional marrow. Mr. R described the aesthetic differences between traditional and modern music as "It is like Chinese blocks and LEGO. Both of them are good enough and have their unique characteristics. However, putting LEGO on those Chinese blocks doesn't feel right. Similar to Cantonese operatic music, the spirit should be consistent."

Mr. R further elaborated on the rationale behind this issue, that people are trying to come up with new ideas in creating Cantonese operatic music:

> We all want to be innovative. However, everyone's direction is different, lacking the "build-up" of that particular idea. In the past, veteran Cantonese opera actors had their own personal styles because they had spent a long time building up their innovative ideas, which people nowadays cannot do. Some people are unfamiliar with the basics of classical traditional Cantonese opera and claim to be innovative and try to create something new, which is meaningless. You see, many tunes composed by Wong Yuet Sang were based on the Western musical format, yet his melodies are "very Cantonese music," which keeps the styles and interactions of Cantonese music, like people are communicating with each other. Cantonese operatic music should be like this. (Mr. R)

The development of the new Cantonese opera pieces significantly impacts the learning process of the singers and *pai-he* musicians because they rely on teaching and learning from repertoire, as mentioned previously. Mr. W was aware of some pieces that were of poor quality:

> Playing those contemporary pieces with the wrong musical formats will negatively influence the *pai-he* musicians' musical sense in Cantonese operatic music. Then, they will also tend to play by relying on the score, and they will be unable to play the traditional techniques, such as improvisation… Some scriptwriters are unfamiliar with the formats of *bang-huang*, and when the recordings of that piece came out, some singers followed and sang, and many people thought it was right. I think we should correct them. Also, sometimes the scriptwriters revise the melodies of the fixed tunes

to fit the texts, which I think is unacceptable too. (Mr. W)

Mr. R also revealed another reason behind this, which is related to the incapable teachers

without rich experience and pedagogical knowledge:

> Many people are inexperienced because they have been learning for three or four years only, and they started teaching others to sing. So, they need some scriptwriters or music arrangers to design the melodies for them. However, some qualities are poor; for example, the musical contour is weird and violates basic music theories. (Mr. R)

Mr. R added another point on the mindset of people who create mediocre pieces:

> Many people want to earn a living but are too impatient to earn money. So, they wrote some weird scripts, claiming that those were innovative elements, and applied for the funding. This is unsatisfactory, especially regarding their attitudes. (Mr. R)

Second, the contemporary pieces are usually well written with *gongche* notations. Some

interviewees revealed other reasons for the creation of contemporary pieces with very

detailed *gongche* notations, which blurs the traditional flexible nature of *pai-he*:

> It is easier for learners to learn with well-written *gongche* notations. You know, in the past, the prominent actors and singers would record the albums. Today, however, many rich wives would like to request to write contemporary pieces to sing and record in the albums and give away to others. However, many of them are not capable of singing, so the scriptwriters could only write down all the melodies clearly for them. (Mr. P)

> Many people get used to relying on the score. If the [*gongche*] notations are already well written, then I could spend more time on my technical skills instead. (Mr. R)

Thus, the choice of the repertoire for teaching *pai-he* is crucial. Meanwhile, the interviewees

showed different perspectives regarding the choices of pieces. Some criticised the detailed

written Cantonese operatic music scores because they lost the traditional features and

restricted the *pai-he* musicians' and singers' personal styles.

> So, if everything is well written on the score, it loses the unique characteristics of Cantonese operatic music… However, people nowadays just rely on the score to play. Playing with the score can save you so much time but restrict the variety of your performances, which is rigid and inflexible. Cantonese operatic music should be interactive, especially in *bang-huang*… When you write down all the notations on the

score, everything will be performed neatly, losing the spark of those traditional styles and features… Without personal styles are just "canned art." Not all of them are like this, but some of them are. (Mr. R)

The scriptwriter's written melodies might not suit every singer to sing; however, everyone just follows the score to sing. This leads to the problem of singers being unable to develop their personal style. (Mr. W)

Regardless of their critical opinions, they mentioned the necessity of including new musical ideas in Cantonese operatic music:

Should we use chords in Cantonese operatic music? One or two moments are fine, but you cannot make the whole piece like that. I think this point should be promoted to polish the quality of the music, and at the same time, you should not write everything down on the score. (Mr. R)

I think there are many varieties of newly composed Cantonese operatic music nowadays, which is necessary. When it comes to fixed tunes, it is right to have a variety of innovative ideas since there are no restrictions. However, the traditional format of *bang-huang* should be followed. (Mr. W)

Some interviewees showed a relatively optimistic attitude toward the development of contemporary pieces. Some of them think Cantonese opera is a diverse genre because it absorbs other musical elements and has been evolving over the decades:

Cantonese operatic music will inevitably become more diverse nowadays. The pieces have different aesthetic values (e.g., music modes). We can think from an alternative angle. While the traditional genres have rich historical values, their performance values might be limited because they have been the same for decades. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

The *pai-he* tutors, Mr. L and Mr. S, shared similar positive points of view:

I think those contemporary pieces are innovative, and the style is more fashionable, unlike in the past. They are old-school. I think we should follow the trend. (Mr. L)

To me, there is no "tradition" in music. Interestingly, like Mahler's symphonies, people at that time could not accept his music. But after decades or a century, people would accept or even like his music. A similar situation would happen in the development of Cantonese operatic music. Those contemporary pieces included many modern Chinese musical elements, which the old musicians could not accept because they could not play those advanced common skills in Chinese music and were unwilling to practice. That's why they cannot accept those contemporary pieces. (Mr. S)

Meanwhile, Mr. S also admitted the drawbacks of writing the scores in detail:

> Those contemporary pieces do have disadvantages. For example, you cannot improvise and must strictly follow the score. (Mr. S)

They would choose the contemporary pieces as their teaching materials. They think

contemporary pieces are easy for students to learn *pai-he*, especially for beginners. Mr. L

explained:

> The reasons why I chose some contemporary pieces for teaching are: (1) It is the trend of learning and performing contemporary pieces. Some people have already learned the old pieces, if they continue to teach those, then some students might stop learning. Sometimes some teachers would teach one or two old pieces. (2) The contemporary pieces are all provided with the *gongche* notations, which is easier for students to learn. Some new Cantonese opera teachers might not be able to play those pieces without musical notations, and students might not be able to do so or have no idea which interludes should be played. The well-written *gongche* notations on the score are much easier for them to learn. Of course, *pai-he* is not just like that, but we have some accompanying skills. (Mr. L)

> Those contemporary pieces are good teaching materials for students since all the *gongche* notations are well written on the score, which is easier for students, especially beginners, to learn. Those old pieces without *gongche* notations are too difficult to learn, and they cannot play, especially when their aural skills are not well-trained. (Mr. S)

Regardless of the tutors' viewpoints, some students found some contemporary pieces'

melodies hard to memorise. Some students from Mr. L's class reflected:

> It's not easy to pass the contemporary pieces to future generations if the melodies are too hard to memorise. The traditional pieces are easier to remember because they are combined with those *bang-huang* passages that we're so familiar with, for example, *fan-xian-zhong-ban* and *fan-xian-er-huang*, I can easily recall those melodies. (Unstructured interview, Mr. A)

> It is difficult for this piece to become famous if the audiences are unfamiliar with the melodies. (Unstructured interview, Ms. B)

> It's too new, I still can't recall the melodies, even though I've been practicing for a while. (Unstructured interview, Ms. C)

4.4.2 Nurturing Pai-he Musicians

Various factors contribute to the challenges in nurturing young musicians and singers. Some

interviewees reflected that some young *pai-he* musicians could not meet the veterans'

expectations. Mr. R stated:

> The main problem of those young new *pai-he* musicians is that they cannot predict
> what the singer will sing next. As you sing slightly differently than the original
> recordings, they cannot play. Of course, some of them are good, but some are bad. I
> realised they don't have pitches in mind, so they cannot do well. (Mr. R)

Some interviewees criticised the capabilities of young musicians and singers, who rely on the

score to play or sing:

> Some younger musicians can only play according to the score but cannot play by
> looking at the text only. They can only follow their teachers and perform the same
> without showing or developing their styles. (Mr. R)

> But nowadays, our musicians cannot respond as quickly as those musicians in the
> past… Nowadays, those actors cannot design their singing styles on their own but rely
> on the music designers to do that for them. Like the *pai-he* musicians, they rely on the
> melodies written on the score. The trend of Cantonese operatic music nowadays relies
> on the scores, and the music is becoming symphonies' orchestration. (Mr. Q)

> They used to rely on the score. Have room for improvement in improvisation.
> (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

Some criticised their negative attitudes:

> I don't think it is possible to train them because most of them just care about their
> work and earning a living, so they don't have the time to investigate and improve
> themselves further. Why could people in the past earn a living and at the same time
> develop their work, but people nowadays cannot? (Mr. Q)

> They are too impatient to succeed and not flexible enough to apply the learned
> knowledge to new situations. Again, not all of them are like this, but most are. (Mr. R)

> Learning process: looking for shortcuts. (Interview field notes, Mr. T)

In addition, Mr. Q further elaborated on the difficulties faced in conservatoire training, which

is mainly about the limited time of the programs:

> My former colleague who was teaching in the conservatoire said that we could spend

10 years nurturing a prise-winning pianist under the training offered by the conservatoire. Meanwhile, the same amount of time is much more challenging to nurture a *tou-jia* player… Since the students can only learn the basic knowledge and skills of *pai-he* during their study period in the conservatoire but lack experiences… Also, as a *tou-jia*, you need to master several instruments, apart from the violin and gaohu, you should be able to play *er-xian*, *nan-hu*, *ye-hu*, etc. You need to learn all those performing styles and techniques, and other theories. The four-year program offered by the conservatoire is not enough for you to work with different singer's styles after graduation.

  (Mr. Q)

Some interviewees also revealed that the *pai-he* programs offered by the conservatoire was

not the students' first choice:

Many conservatoire students who enrolled in the Cantonese operatic music program would like to enroll in the Chinese music program at first, but they got rejected, and that's why they applied for the Cantonese opera program. (Mr. Q)

As I know, many young musicians trained by the conservatoire chose this *pai-he* program, just because the Chinese music department rejected them. So, their technical level is not as good as those from the Chinese music department. Of course, not all of them are like this, but some are. (Mr. R)

Regardless of the criticism, some interviewees pointed out the technical performing strengths

of the young musicians:

I think their instrumental skills are very good because of their training. (Mr. L)

I think the younger *pai-he* musicians are good at playing the contemporary pieces and have good technical skills. (Mr. S)

In addition to the above challenges, Mr. R indicated the importance of "building up the

image" of Cantonese opera:

The way people see Cantonese opera is still inferior to Western music and opera. Although Cantonese opera's image is improving nowadays, it is not as good as Western music. In the past, people in the Cantonese opera field generally had low educational backgrounds, so they could not present the good sides of Cantonese opera to others. We need to build this image so that more people will be willing to dive into this field. Although more Cantonese opera audiences and young people are joining the field, the quality is not as good as in the past. In the long run, this is a problem. (Mr. R)

4.4.3 Suggestions

The interviewees have discussed the challenges and difficulties in developing Cantonese operatic music and nurturing the *pai-he* musicians. Moreover, they also proposed two suggestions for improving the aforementioned concerns.

To improve *pai-he* musicians' improvisation skills, Mr. Q suggested including composition courses in teaching:

> I've earned a diploma in music composition, which I think is very useful and could be included in teaching… Improvisation is actually music composing. Understanding some music composition concepts can help you clearly understand improvising melodies. (Mr. Q)

Moreover, the interviewees suggested musicians learn and consolidate the fundamentals of traditional styles of Cantonese opera before innovating new ideas:

> Even though we have been a *pai-he* musician for over 20 years, we still have to learn. We need to learn the good things from other genres of music, both traditional and contemporary. After acquiring the knowledge, you have to be able to apply it to Cantonese operatic music and enhance the music. If you can do that, you are a good musician. (Mr. Q)

> Creating new elements is not wrong, but it has to be based on traditional spirits. I think those younger musicians should play and learn more about the old pieces before creating new ideas so that they will be able to identify which good elements to keep and which parts need to be improved. Both young Cantonese opera actors and musicians should face this problem. (Mr. R)

> However, they [young musicians] are unfamiliar with the traditional pieces, which they cannot play without *gongche* notations. They tend to rely on the score and cannot remember those preludes and interludes. I think they should familiarise themselves with the traditional pieces. (Mr. S)

4.5 Summary

The findings in Phase I interpret the flexible and interactive characteristics of *pai-he*, which also demonstrate the importance of a high level of aural skills and competence. Thus, transmitting these traditional marrows to future generations is crucial through education. The

findings reflect that teaching and learning *pai-he* could occur in various scenarios apart from apprenticeship and *pai-he* courses, such as troupe performances, music gatherings, or social gatherings. Despite some contexts that may seem informal and ordinary, the learning process was practical rather than theoretical, and the learners mainly learned by doing it in actual practice instead of acquiring the theories step by step or through a curriculum. Although different learners have their own learning pace, the findings show similar traditional learning strategies, such as listening and practicing referring to the recordings or albums, self-analysing and transcribing the learning content, and repeating practice to develop their inner ear and musical sense. Although some practitioners see these learning experiences as unsystematic and informal, they believe it is the most suitable approach to learning *pai-he*. Moreover, the learners' attitudes are essential in learning *pai-he*. Most of them are motivated to learn and take the initiative to acquire knowledge, such as joining music gatherings to enrich their *pai-he* experiences and practicing on their own.

Regarding the traditional teaching practice, the findings show that teaching through repertoire has always been the principal approach in teaching, and the collectivism in teaching and learning *pai-he* remains. Meanwhile, the teaching styles and some of the teaching strategies have been evolving significantly throughout the decades: (1) the power distance between the masters and learners in the past was more significant than that of the current tutors and students; (2) the teaching in the past tend to avoid uncertainty while the current tutors tend to tolerate uncertainty; (3) the goals set by the masters tended to be long-term while the tutors tended to have short-term goals for students; (4) the teaching evolved from aurally to notation-based; and (5) the teaching focus shifted from intangible musical elements to tangible technical skills. Among these changes, the last two points involve and influence the training of learners' aural skills because the traditional flexible and interactive features in *pai-*

he require a high level of aural competence. In addition, the choices of teaching repertoire account for the influence of teaching strategies because most of the new Cantonese operatic music pieces are well-written with *gongche* notations, and learners can rely on the score to practice instead of practicing their aural skills.

The findings also reveal two major challenges encountered in transmitting *pai-he*, in which different stakeholders in the Cantonese opera field are involved, interrelated, and influence each other. First, although some practitioners showed optimistic points of view, some were critical of developing new Cantonese operatic music pieces and nurturing new *pai-he* musicians. Some practitioners criticised new Cantonese operatic music pieces on: (1) their quality, which is inconsistent with the traditional style and neglects the traditional characteristics; and (2) the presentation of the score, in which the *gongche* notations are written in detail, that restricts the musicians' room for improvisation, violating the traditional flexible nature of *pai-he*. Second, nurturing new *pai-he* musicians is challenging. Some criticised their attitudes and incapability to learn *pai-he*. For instance, some learners from the conservatoire did not consider becoming a *pai-he* musician as their first choice, and they believed that they were beyond capable in *pai-he* and did not maintain a modest attitude toward learning. Moreover, they used to rely on well-written scores and have high technical skills but did not possess as high aural skills as the traditional musicians used to. In addition, some practitioners also pointed out the program time limitations offered by the conservatoire, which also accounted for the challenges in nurturing *pai-he* musicians.

This study investigates the traditional practices of teaching and learning pai-he. This serves as a springboard to link to Phase II, which will investigate the teaching pedagogies used in institutions. Additionally, the findings from both phases will be compared to formulate a

comprehensive pedagogical model for teaching pai-he in modern society.

Chapter 5: Phase II Findings

This chapter documents the findings based on a single case study conducted at an institution in Hong Kong. This single case study involves semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews and structured observations. The data have been entered into Nvivo 14 for further analysis. The following themes are identified after data analysis: (1) institutional programme structure, (2) pedagogies applied in the institution and (3) comparison between traditional pedagogies and institutional tradition.

5.1 Institutional Programme Structure

The case study was conducted at the School of Chinese Opera of an institution, which offers various programmes that nurture *pai-he* musicians, namely the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) Degree in Chinese Opera, the Diploma in Cantonese Opera Foundations and the Professional Diploma in Cantonese Opera. The bachelor's degree programme takes four years to complete, and the one-year foundation diploma programme serves as a stepping stone for students' further admission to the bachelor's programme. The professional diploma is a two-year programme designed for students who seek to pursue professional development in Cantonese opera. Students can choose 'performance' or 'music' in these programmes as their specialised study area, with the former study area referring to acting in Cantonese opera and the latter referring to *pai-he*. Regardless of the courses offered in the same programme, those offered for performance-majored students primarily focused on singing and acting, whilst the music-majored students primarily attended instrumental and accompaniment courses.

With the limitations of administrative arrangements offered by the institution, the lesson observations were conducted in two courses of the bachelor's and professional diploma programmes only.

5.1.1 Student Enrolment

The institution's students possessed diverse musical backgrounds. The professional diploma programme comprises four Year 1 students, and the bachelor's programme comprises five Year 1 students. Some students had more than ten years of experience, whereas some were

relatively new to *pai-he*, with roughly two to three years of experience. Additionally, some were complete beginners without any prior experience but were more experienced in engaging in Chinese orchestras or playing Western musical instruments. Some students pursued the Cantonese opera field and became a *pai-he* musician:

> Before being admitted to this institution, I was at another school in Guangdong, which also offers Cantonese operatic music training. I have been engaging in *pai-he* for more than ten years. I want to become a professional musician after graduation. (Unstructured interview, student A)
>
> I used to be a *yangqin* player in the Chinese orchestra. My *yangqin* teacher always engaged in Cantonese music ensembles; so, I applied to the School of Chinese Opera under her influence. I would like to become a *pai-he* player and further study for a master's programme after graduation. (Unstructured interview, student C)
>
> I am a *pai-he* musician who has played in various music gatherings for around three years. I would like to strengthen my *pai-he* skills and become a professional player; that's why I applied to this programme. (Unstructured interview, student D)

By contrast, certain students admitted that entering the school of Chinese opera was not their first choice:

> At first, I applied to the School of Music and hoped to become a piano major student. However, they rejected me; so, I applied to the School of Chinese Opera with *pipa*, which is my second choice. (Unstructured interview, student B)

5.1.2 Programme Curriculum

As aforementioned, the institution of this case study offered various programmes for training. The curricula were similar despite the differences in each programme's structure, aiming to nurture Cantonese opera actors and musicians. The curriculum involved standardised teaching content, other learning activities, assessments and graduation requirements. Furthermore, the institution had an evaluation system to evaluate their overall programme and for further improvement.

5.1.2.1 Teaching Content

Regardless of the differences among different programme structures, the teaching content for

music students covers all the Cantonese operatic music theories within the respective

programme duration. Some teachers indicated that their teaching content primarily involved

all the aria types of Cantonese opera.

> In the Diploma programme, we teach *bang-zi* [梆子] in the first year and *er-huang* [二黃] in the second year. We will teach them the format and structure of each aria type. (Mr. X)

> We teach them [students] from the easier to more complex topics: starting with *gun-hua* [滾花], *man-ban* [慢板], *zhong-ban* [中板] and then *er-huang* [二黃]. (Mr. Z)

Mr. Z further elaborated on the rationale behind this arrangement, according to the

complexity of each topic:

> The reason why we choose to teach *gun-hua* in the first year is that *gun-hua* is a form of *san-ban* [散板, literally free tempo]. This allows them [students] to first learn and understand the nine tones of Cantonese by playing *gun-hua* without the constraint of the rhythms and beats. After consolidating their fundamentals, we can move on to teach other aria types, to teach them how to *zhui-qiang* [追腔], how to decide which advanced notes to play, etc… We teachers, all agree that *er-huang* is the most difficult aria type since it contains many types of *zhuan-qiang*. In terms of *shi-gong* [士工] type, *zhong-ban* is a bit more difficult than others because of its variations. In the first year, we teach *gun-hua* and *shi-gong-man-ban* [士工慢板]; in the second year, we teach *zhong-ban*, followed by *er-huang*. This is the teaching content for the bachelor's programme. (Mr. Z)

Apart from the *pai-he* skills and Cantonese operatic music theories, instrumental courses

were offered to strengthen students' instrumental techniques and enable them to learn a wider

variety of musical instruments.

> Speaking of the professional diploma programme, they are two-year programmes, with majors and minor instrument courses. Basically, if the student plays the *gaohu* [高胡], we would suggest he/she learn percussion as the minor instrument, but it's

compulsory because playing the *gaohu* means they are likely to be a *tou-jia* [頭架], who must be able to listen to percussion patterns. The bachelor's degree programme is the same, but only the first and second years have minor instrument lessons. (Mr. X)

5.1.2.2 Other Learning Activities

The institution organised exchange tours for students to learn from other Chinese opera practitioners and students from other schools. The teachers described the learning objectives of the exchange tours as follows:

> In terms of the bachelor's degree students, you (they) must have at least one opportunity for exchange, within the four-year study period. Apart from Hangzhou, we have visited America and other places in the past, but the pandemic has influenced our plans. We are planning to have exchange activities in Shanghai, Beijing, etc., in the future. We aim to provide opportunities for students to learn more different things related to opera and to promote our Cantonese opera to others. (Mr. Z)

The teachers and students narrated the benefits of participating in the exchange tours, which broaden students' horizons with exposure to other traditional genres, apart from Cantonese opera:

> We have benefited a lot from the Hangzhou exchange activity. Our performance students have learned some *Kunju* repertoire, and our music students have learned more about the *Yue* opera [越劇]. (Mr. X)

> I'm glad that we were able to learn other genres of traditional opera from the Hangzhou trip. I have learned and engaged in playing a Kunju [崑劇] repertoire as a percussion player. (Unstructured interview, student F)

> The best part of this tour is learning the percussion for other traditional operas, such as *jing-luo-gu* [京鑼鼓]. We also had the opportunity to appreciate *Yue* opera performances. (Unstructured interview, student G)

The institution also offered opportunities for students to perform on stage. The biannual performances were organised for all-year students in the School of Chinese Opera.

> We have biannual performances held for students. It is a platform for them to gain performing experiences. The performance repertoires were taught in the lessons and rehearsed in the accompaniment practicum course. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

5.1.2.3 Assessments and Graduation Requirements

Under the institutional setting, assessments generally comprise two types, including practical tests and written tests. The practical tests mainly assess students' performance skills and *pai-he* skills, such as performing specific pieces and excerpts, and playing *pai-he* for *chang-qiang* (唱腔, literally 'singing cavity').

> The mid-term test involves the content learned in the first seven weeks; for example, I have taught the *shi-gong-man-ban* of *zi-hou* [子喉]; then, I will pick an excerpt of the piece and require them to *pai-he*, while another teacher sings for the *chang-qiang* part. (Mr. Z)

Although Cantonese operatic music is flexible and varies among different performers, the marking criteria for practical tests were based on students' *pai-he* skills in terms of accuracy, improvisation and *zhui-qiang* competence.

> We have clear marking criteria, including the accuracy of playing preludes and interludes, and the interaction between the singer and player, such as whether the *zhui-qiang* and *jia-hua* [加花] were played appropriately. We allow students to interpret the music and *jia-hua*, and we will correct and explain if we hear any issues. For example, when we say your (student's) advance note is unclear, in the sense that other *xia-jia* [下架] players don't know what melody you are going to play next. Some musical contours are almost fixed. If you [students] would like to create new ones, then, it should be predictable, which means the *xia-jia* players will be able to play without a written score. (Mr. Z)

Meanwhile, the written tests focused on assessing students' understanding of the notions and theories of Cantonese operatic music, such as the formats and structures of the aria type passages, writing the melodies for an aria type excerpt and writing percussion patterns.

> In the *pai-zi* [牌子] lesson, I will teach them how to play the percussion instruments. During the exam, they are required to write down the percussion patterns and the melodies. In this course, they are required to take the written test only. (Mr. X)

> For the final exam, we also include a written test, in addition to the practical exam. The written test is more about the theories; for example, it tests students'

understanding of each aria type, like the caesura, ending notes, preludes and interludes; as well as the percussion patterns. We also require students to dictate the preludes of the aria type and some questions related to different scenarios that might happen in actual performance, and they are expected to write how the prelude could be altered for that particular situation, etc. (Mr. Z)

The graduation requirements for all the programmes were similar, mainly passing all the courses within the study period. Apart from the Cantonese operatic music courses and activities, other non-music-related courses were offered to students, including cultural study courses and language courses. Organising a recital was also mandatory for students in certain programmes as partial fulfilment of the graduation requirements.

Our graduation requirement includes passing all the courses and holding a graduation recital for the bachelor's students. For the graduation recital, at least 50% of the duration of the recital should be related to Cantonese opera. (Mr. Z)

5.1.2.4 Programme Evaluation

Programme evaluation was one of the crucial aspects of the institution's curriculum, with the aim of reviewing its effectiveness and seeking further improvements. Different levels of evaluations were conducted among the programmes, teachers and students.

Firstly, regarding the evaluations of programmes, the teachers reflected on the changes and adjustments that have been done to the programmes' curriculum. Mr. Z narrated the earliest programme curriculum, which emphasised the practical teaching and learning approaches:

Before the establishment of the School of Chinese Opera, we focused more on practical practice, such as ensemble experiences, performance opportunities and music gatherings. We used to hold weekly performances at the restaurant in the past. (Mr. Z)

Mr. Z introduced the institution's current programme curriculum based on the teachers' previous evaluations, that the original courses were insufficient to deliver the Cantonese

operatic theories:

> In the past, the accompaniment training course you've observed, was not in the curriculum… In the old syllabus, we only had the accompaniment practicum course, and we could only spend three lessons teaching students the theories of aria types, which was not enough. (Mr. Z)

In addition, the teachers aimed to provide other opportunities for students to learn through

practical approaches, with reference to their earliest programme curriculum:

> We understand the advantage of our oldest syllabus is providing a lot of practical practice experience for students. So, our newest programme curriculum was designed and arranged based on this objective, such as the accompaniment training course. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

> By contrast, we have rearranged and spent extra time on providing practical practices for students, such as the accompaniment training course, which enables students to practice the performance repertoire and consolidate their understanding of the theories learned in other courses through practical practices. So, our courses are all interrelated and consistent. (Mr. Z)

Furthermore, Mr. X added that their current curriculum also considered the popularity of

certain instrumentalists; hence, they aimed to nurture these players:

> Now, our new course has added a requirement: the percussion students must learn the
>
> *suona* [嗩吶]*,* because there are not many students who can play the *suona* now. (Mr.
>
> X)

Secondly, the teachers at the institution frequently reflect on and evaluate their teaching plans

based on students' learning progress to achieve the most effective teaching strategies.

> Although we have a teaching schedule, we also have to adjust our teaching plans according to students' learning progress. Sometimes, we won't strictly stick to the teaching schedule. For example, when I have been teaching *man-ban* for four lessons and they are still not familiar with the topic, then, I will spend more time teaching them about this topic. (Mr. X)

The teachers would put the remarks on the evaluation forms and discuss them among

themselves to adjust their future teaching plans:

> We also include an evaluation form in the course outline, which is for our reference only, to evaluate students' lesson performance and their learning progress. We will adjust our teaching schedule based on the remarks on this evaluation form and for the follow-up to address their learning difficulties. For instance, if many students find certain topics too challenging, we will mark this down on the evaluation form, and we will adjust the teaching schedule for the students next year… Our full-time teachers will discuss and review on the issues written on the evaluation form together. (Mr. Z)

Thirdly, the institution valued the students' feedback and opinions in the evaluation process.

Students could express their thoughts to the dean of the School of Chinese Opera:

> Our dean of the School of Opera used to have an annual dinner with our students to offer a platform for students to express their thoughts and feedback on our programme and course arrangement. Then, our teachers will discuss and follow up with these issues. (Mr. Z)

> Teachers here are very friendly and open-minded, and they like hearing feedback and comments from us, in order to improve our programme. (Unstructured interview, student G)

5.1.3 Advantages of Institutional Tradition

The teachers and students mentioned various advantages of teaching and learning Cantonese

operatic music under the institution's tradition, namely the systematic teaching, teachers'

qualifications and rich resources offered by the institution.

5.1.3.1 Systematic Teaching and Curriculum

Firstly, some teachers and students agreed that systematic teaching and learning in Cantonese

operatic music are well-rounded and effective. Mr. Z compared his current teaching setting

with his past learning experiences under apprenticeship and pointed out that students can

progressively learn *pai-he* through both theoretical lessons and practical practice:

> We teach systematically through an analysis of Cantonese opera theories, and we teach step-by-step from easy to complex concepts. Unlike our masters in the past, many of them would just tell you how to do it verbally, instead of writing the score or

notes for you… Personally, I think this rearrangement of programme structure is good so that students can apply the knowledge learned from the theory courses to practical practice. (Mr. Z)

Some students also found the learning schedule and curriculum well-rounded and informative. One of them specifically described their curriculum as a 'systematic package':

To me, this programme is like a systematic package, which I can have a taste of various experiences, such as performance and rehearsal opportunities, learning resources, exchange tours, Cantonese opera workshops, etc. (Unstructured interview, student G)

Although I have been playing *pai-he* for years, I didn't understand the structures of each aria type. I was taught unsystematically that 'they are what they used to be', but no one explained why or analysed the structures of those aria types. Since being admitted to this school, I have learned Cantonese operatic music knowledge more systematically, which improves my playing as well. (Unstructured interview, student A)

The best part of studying at the School of Chinese Opera is that we can systematically learn the features of each aria type. After this semester, I have understood the structure and each *man-ban* and have some basic ideas on how to play. (Unstructured interview, student C)

5.1.3.2 Teachers' Qualifications

The teachers' qualifications are another advantage of the institutional practice. Mr. Z mentioned his colleagues were all professional Cantonese opera veterans and experienced in teaching:

I think our teacher qualifications are one of the advantages of the institution. Our teachers are all very experienced Cantonese opera artists and also in teaching. (Mr. Z)

Some students also expressed similar views that the institution provided a high standard of teaching:

I think the teachers here are very good. They can sing and play various musical instruments very well. We have learned a lot from them. (Unstructured interview, student D)

Our teachers are very professional and teach us many things. I have improved my

techniques as a percussion player, and I also have had the chance to learn *suona*. I am glad that I can learn from the professional musicians. (Unstructured interview, student E)

Some students further elaborated that the teachers, being professional actors and musicians at the same time, can build up their connection with other Cantonese opera practitioners and assist them in their career development.

> Teachers here are all professionals and have been engaged in the field for years. When they bring us to join their music gatherings, we can meet other Cantonese operatic musicians… When the *tou-jia* think we are qualified players, we can have more job opportunities in the future… People always say, 'Knowing people is better than knowing words'. (Unstructured interview, student A)

> I think the best part is that we have many opportunities to practice practically, even outside the campus. Our teachers are all practitioners in the field and they always allow us to learn more by following them to engage in those performances, rehearsals and music gatherings. This can help me to understand the conventions of the field, which I think is very good. (Unstructured interview, student F)

5.1.3.3 Rich Resources

Thirdly, the institution offered several resources to assist teaching and learning. Some teachers illustrated the rich teaching tools for teachers to deliver their lessons:

> The technologies help us a lot. Our classrooms have big screens and speakers provided. We can connect our teaching notes on the iPad to the screen and show them clearly to students… The technologies nowadays are very well-developed, which makes it convenient for us to record and play the recordings with just a phone and a speaker. As you can see, I usually record my singing audio in advance and play it for students to *pai-he* so that I can focus on their performance or guide them by playing the violin. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

Some teachers and students also elaborated that the venues and instruments offered are sufficient for learning and practicing:

> One of the advantages is that we basically have all the instruments we need, so students can learn from each other… We also have rich resources for rehearsals or music gatherings. It is not easy to look for a place that is spacious enough and suitable to rehearse, outside the campus. We have somehow wasted these resources provided by the school; so, why don't we use these rooms for music gatherings and practice?

(Mr. X)

There are all kinds of percussion instruments here. I can practice with my classmates whenever the rooms are empty. (Unstructured interview, student F)

I think we have fruitful resources here in the institution. I can find and practice any kind of percussion instrument here. Also, I can find all the books and references needed in our library. (Unstructured interview, student G)

5.1.4 Limitations and Challenges Faced under the Institutional Tradition

Meanwhile, some teachers expressed their concern regarding the difficulties of teaching *pai-he* in the institution, including programme limitations, collaboration among teachers and addressing students' learning attitudes and weaknesses.

5.1.4.1 Programme Limitations

Both teachers and students at the institution have expressed concerns regarding the limited duration of the courses offered. The teachers particularly highlighted the challenges they face in delivering all comprehensive contents within such a constrained study period:

> The four-year programme is not enough for students to learn, and the Qualification Framework of the academy restricts it. They [students] also have to study for other language studies. (Mr. X)

> With the establishment of the School of Chinese Opera, the programme structure must follow the requirements of the Qualifications Framework… I think the Qualification Framework restricts us, that non-music studies reduce our music lessons' time. So, we are missing a course to consolidate students' understanding through practical practice, not only solely limited to the music students or performance students but providing a platform for all music and performance students to practice practically together without any constraints. However, the course duration is limited. (Mr. Z)

Some students also indicated a similar issue and ascribed it to the time spent on studying non-music related studies:

> I think we have too many cultural study courses unrelated to my major (*pai-he*

studies). There are too many assignments, and I want to spend more time studying and practicing *pai-he* instead. I don't understand why we need to study them. (Unstructured interview, student C)

I don't want to take those English courses. How are they related to percussion? We won't even talk in English when we are working in the troupes in the future. I would rather spend all day learning and practicing the percussion instruments. (Unstructured interview, student E)

Some teachers added that certain courses offered to music students are not tailor-made, as they had to consider and accommodate the performance of students' abilities.

There is an accompaniment practicum course designed for the students to perform various repertoires every year. However, the repertoire must be chosen based on the personal characteristics of the actors, but not for the purpose of training music students as the main focus, although it also aims to offer practical *pai-he* practice for the music students. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

But sometimes, we also have to consider the actors' abilities in terms of the choice of performance repertoire. So, we cannot guarantee that we will pick the repertoire with the theories that the students just learned within the semester. For example, if the actors have to sing fixed tunes, then, the music students would not be able to apply their learned aria type knowledge. (Mr. Z)

5.1.4.2 Collaboration among Teachers

Moreover, some teachers reflected on the challenges of collaborating with other teachers. As mentioned, the Cantonese opera programmes offer students the option to major in either performance or music. Some teachers focused on teaching the performance majors, whilst some were responsible for instructing the music majors. Meanwhile, some teachers revealed that the teaching content provided by the performance teachers was inconsistent with that delivered by music teachers.

Cantonese operatic singing is very flexible, and the melodies of different singers vary. To teach them [students] *pai-he*, I must sing, but the *chang-qiang* I sing in class might differ from what the actors learned from their performance teachers. Different versions of the *chang-qiang* often confuse the students, especially those whose aural skills are not strong enough to play by ear. So, they rely on me to write the melodies

for them to play. If the actors sing differently, we have to ask the music students to revise the score repeatedly. Of course, we cannot blame them (music students), as some of them are new to Cantonese opera. In addition to the need for improvement in the actors' singing skills, their teachers also have their own teaching schedules, which involve a variety of repertoires, instead of focusing on the biannual performance repertoire only. We have talked about this issue with the performance teachers for years, but they have insisted on keeping their schedules. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

Another problem is that we have chosen this repertoire for the coming performance; so, we teach our music students this repertoire. However, the performance teachers are not teaching the actors with the same repertoire or spend more time teaching other repertoires that are not related to the performance. This creates a problem that performance students are not learning the same repertoire as the music students. (Mr. X)

Furthermore, a teacher elaborated that apart from the difficulties of collaborating with the performance teachers, they also found it challenging when working with the part-time teachers, because of the different teaching beliefs:

Another difficulty is that we also have some part-time teachers. However, we sometimes have different views regarding teaching. For example, the students are still unfamiliar with the *shi-gong-man-ban* even though we have been teaching this topic for several lessons. Some colleagues think we should spend more time teaching this topic, whilst some of them disagree since they believe that students need time to process and should continue to teach a new topic due to our tight teaching schedule. (Mr. Z)

5.1.4.3 Students' Learning Attitudes and Weaknesses

Some teachers criticised some students' negative learning attitudes toward Cantonese operatic music. Some teachers revealed that certain students pursue their studies at their institution primarily for the prestige of its recognition instead of being interested in the Cantonese opera programme itself.

Although the class of students you observed was pretty good, some students are here (admitted to this programme) because of the recognition of this academy. All they want is that piece of paper (the certificate). We all know that, but there's not much we can do about it. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

> For example, we have a student who is in his third year of bachelor's study. Although he is a *tou-jia*, he is not even able to play a *shi-gong-man-ban* passage without reading the score because he doesn't like Cantonese opera. The only reason why he was admitted to the School of Opera is that he was rejected by the School of Music. In this case, we cannot force him to like Cantonese opera, and it is meaningless to scold him. (Mr. X)

Some teachers perceived certain music students' inactive learning attitudes and low learning motivations.

> Some students are not willing to revise and analyse the music on their own as part of the assignments. (Mr. X)

> Many students nowadays are not willing to spend extra time learning after classes or outside the campus. (Mr. Z)

> I doubt if any students really work on the '20 words' exercise [an optional assignment that encourages students to look for Chinese words and think about the pitches of each word] every day, as I suggested [laughter]. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

Mr. X used the metaphor 'lacking the east wind' to describe this issue, which is a Chinese idiom that describes a situation where everything is ready, except for one crucial element. He further elaborated the sufficient resources offered for students in learning; still, some music students were not proactive in utilising these opportunities for additional practice.

> I once invited students to join the music gatherings on campus. Yet, when they realised attendance wasn't mandatory, not all of them were willing to come. Actually, the actors are willing to learn more, unlike our music students, especially those who are skilled and already working outside, they were not very willing to come. So, we have very good resources provided by the school, but we only lack the east wind [laughter]. (Mr. X)

Some teachers also added that addressing students' weaknesses is challenging, particularly in training their aural skills:

> Students nowadays are too reliant on listening to the recordings. They basically just follow the recordings to sing and play but not to memorise those common formats and structures in Cantonese opera… Many music students' aural skills are not strong enough to play by ear. So, they rely on the teacher's written melodies for them to play. If the actors sang differently, then, we had to ask the music students to change the score again. Even those students trained at other Cantonese opera schools were used

to playing with the score instead of playing by ear. (Mr. X)

Some teachers highlighted the difficulties in addressing students' different learning abilities,

especially those without prior Cantonese opera knowledge.

> It is challenging to teach students with different capabilities. Nearly half of our students are completely new to Cantonese opera, while another half can play. The students who know how to play will find it boring in our lessons, but I cannot neglect those weaker students. (Mr. X)

> It is pretty challenging to teach when many students lack a basic understanding of Cantonese opera upon admission. Some of them who are unfamiliar with Cantonese, since it's not their first language, must adapt to the nine tones of Cantonese…Many students were trained under the Chinese music concepts and perceive *jia-hua* differently than the less complex notions in Cantonese operatic music. (Mr. Z)

5.1.4.4 Teachers' and Students' Suggestions

The teachers and students proposed several suggestions for enhancing the teaching and

learning experience under the institutional setting.

Firstly, offering other practical opportunities to students was recommended. Some teachers

suggested providing regular on-campus music gatherings outside the programme schedule:

> Actually, I don't mind having music gatherings after school, even if it is not compulsory as part of the programme requirements. We teachers can stay here and guide the students through these gatherings. If there are not many music students coming, I can serve as the percussion player, and other teachers can play the melodic instruments. The most important thing is for students to be eager to come and learn. (Mr. X)

> We should keep that regular weekly music gathering so that music and performance students will have more chances to practice. When it comes to *pai-he*, experience is very important. Practicing practically is the only way for them to accumulate experiences but not solely learn from lessons. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

> Previously, we organised music gatherings once a week and invited an experienced Cantonese opera singer and our music students to join us. Our teachers were also there to assist the students. However, that singer is very well-known, and our students were so nervous that they feared making mistakes. In my opinion, we should keep this kind of weekly music gathering but have those Cantonese opera veterans come once a month instead, and the rest of the gatherings involve student singers only. This way,

students will not be under this kind of pressure and can learn more through these practical experiences. (Mr. Z)

Apart from the on-campus music gatherings, some students also expressed their interest in following their teachers to observe or participate in their rehearsals and performances to accumulate *pai-he* experiences:

> Our teachers are right. We learn the most in music gatherings. To be honest, I don't think the accompaniment practicum course is enough to train us to become a professional player. On the other hand, these music-gathering opportunities help me learn a lot. (Unstructured interview, student A)

> As I know, the professional troupes outside generally perform or practice at least one repertoire each month. It would help us learn more from practicing repertoire instead of performing repertoire for the biannual performance only. I understand the programme structure restricts that. So, I suggest that our teachers organise more music gatherings for us and keep bringing us to their rehearsals. (Unstructured interview, student F)

> I agree with our teachers that learning *pai-he* has no shortcut. In my experience, I learned much faster by following our teachers to their rehearsals and music gatherings. If there are more opportunities for us, let's say we can resume the weekly music gatherings and benefit a lot from them. (Unstructured interview, student G)

Mr. X and Mr. Z mentioned the benefits of bringing students and following them to music gatherings:

> For example, when you [students] are working as a player outside, you (they) will not have as much time to rehearse as we do in the institution, which is very challenging for them. Unless they are willing to follow others to learn in the music gatherings or performances without getting paid, they should seise the chance whenever the practitioners notice that you [students] can play well. Since we are getting paid to play, people expect us to be professionals who cannot make mistakes. We cannot bring those mediocre students there while getting paid. (Mr. X)

> Playing with different *tou-jia* will teach you more about different *pai-he* styles, which cannot be learned in the lessons. What we taught in lessons was just the basic ideas of *pai-he*. (Mr. Z)

Secondly, some teachers suggested a few strategies for addressing students' diverse learning abilities by encouraging students to help each other in learning and practicing:

> So, I will ask those students familiar with Cantonese operatic music to help those weaker students, such as to further explain certain topics to them. This way, the stronger students will not feel bored during the lesson, and the weaker students can receive extra learning support from their peers. (Mr. X)

> I always encourage students to revise the learned content and exam syllabus together. Let's say you [students] will take an exam related to *er-huang*; then, the music students can play for the performance students so that both groups of students can familiarise themselves with the structure and formats of *er-huang* passages. They can come and ask us if any of them are uncertain about anything. Even if we haven't taught that particular aria type yet, you [students] should have the ability to do lesson previews. (Mr. Z)

In addition, Ms. Y narrated her teaching strategy specifically for training students' aural skills, as it was one of her students' common weaknesses.

> Their common weakness is their aural skills. That's why you see many *gongche* markings on their score. However, I won't write the *gongche* for them directly. Instead, I would ask them to listen to my *chang-qiang* and try to play first. I would then point out which pitches were wrong and have them listen again, and lastly, write the *gongche* for their reference. The main point is that I would keep altering my *chang-qiang* with slight differences so that they are trained to listen to the singers' melody instead of completely relying on the score. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

5.2 Pedagogies

The pedagogies under the institutional setting can be categorised into transfer and transformative pedagogies, the former being assessment-oriented and less flexible than the latter, which is learning-oriented (Carey et al., 2013).

5.2.1 Transformative Pedagogies

As mentioned, transformative pedagogies are learning-centred and more flexible, emphasising the students' understanding and focusing on both their performance and learning outcomes (Carey et al., 2013). In this case study, various teaching practices aligned with the

nature of transformative pedagogies, including authentic learning and open exploration of ideas.

5.2.1.1 Authentic Learning

As observed, the teachers emphasised conveying the knowledge to students through authentic learning approaches in both 'accompaniment training' and 'accompaniment practicum' courses. Despite the content differences among the courses, authentic learning activities were this case study's most typical and core approach in the lessons. The primary objective of these authentic learning activities is to strengthen students' aural competency and flexibility in managing different scenarios, given that the teachers were concerned of the students' future development when entering the Cantonese opera field. They narrated the following:

> We aim to strengthen their [our students'] ability to adapt and respond to any type of *chang-qiang* during *pai-he*. When you [students] start working [in the field] in the future, many unpredictable situations will arise in the performances. As more experienced musicians, we usually have rich experience in *pai-he*; so, we know how to handle them. For example, we can respond to actors' mistakes on stage, singers' sudden change of *chang-qiang* or the delay of the actors' movements. However, most of them [our students] are inexperienced in *pai-he* and must learn to adapt when becoming a professional musician. Meanwhile, it is difficult to tell them about our experiences verbally. Instead, teaching them through varied singing melodies is the most direct way for them to learn. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

> Of course, a *ping-hou* singer shouldn't alternate between *ping-hou* and *zi-hou chang-qiang* [laughter]. However, today's music gatherings feature singers of varying abilities, some of whom might sing this way. Our students, who may encounter different errors in performances, should be equipped to handle these situations and assist the actors/ singers in completing the piece. We cannot guide them in every performance, but we can share our experiences and demonstrate past mistakes as examples of their learning. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

In the 'accompaniment training' courses, authentic learning activities are aimed to build up and consolidate the *pai-he* techniques and knowledge with the students. Some teachers would sing a particular melody or passage a few times with subtle changes every time they sang, and the students played *pai-he*.

Ms. Y practiced the *fan-xian-zhong-ban* passage with students a few times. Then, she intentionally sang different *chang-qiang*, requiring students to follow and play accordingly. Some students were able to follow, whereas some could not. Ms. Y reminded students to always pay close attention to the singers and actors instead of sticking to the score to play. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 24)

After practicing the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage a few times, Mr. Z sang differently and required students to think about how they could play. Mr. Z was supposed to start singing on the *ban* right after the prelude, but instead, he purposely delayed singing. Students had no idea what to do and stopped playing… Mr. Z demonstrated and explained how to prolong the melodies of the prelude to allow the singer to sing without being awkward. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

Mr. Z informed students that he would sing the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage differently, sometimes with *zi-hou* or *ping-hou chang-qiang*. He reminded students to pay attention to his melodic contour to distinguish between two types of *chang-qiang* and play according to his sung melodies. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 3)

Apart from the constant changes in singing, teachers would sometimes serve as the *tou-jia* to play differently and require students to follow and play:

Mr. Z revised the learned interludes of *shi-gong-man-ban* with the students. Then, he acted as the *tou-jia* to play the violin with different advanced notes and required students to play the appropriate interludes based on the advanced notes. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

Some teachers required students to play and design *pai-he* melodies for different *chang-qiang* and write them down before actually playing:

Mr. Z required students to think of the melodies of the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage for the *zi-hou* singer before playing. After each student wrote their own melodies, Mr. Z required them to play each of their designed melodies individually and comment on their work… Mr. Z played the violin with the students and explained why some melodies were good and some were mediocre. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 24)

In the previous lesson, Mr. Z asked the students to design and write the *ping-hou* melodies for the same *shi-gong-man-ban* passage as the assignment. He checked students' work and required students to play and reflect on whether they were appropriate. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

In the 'accompaniment practicum' course, the students from the *pai-he* programme would rehearse the performing repertoire with the student actors. Instead of systematically training

students' *pai-he* skills, the authentic learning approaches in this course aim to enable students to experience being a *pai-he* player, perform for the actors and prepare for the annual performance. In general, the teachers would identify students' problems when they recognised any:

> Mr. X pointed out the mistakes of the *zhang-ban* student and reminded him to give a clearer *ying-tou* [影頭, referring to a traditional practice providing a musical signal implying the melody contour]… The *tou-jia* student could not follow and play *zhui-qiang* for the actor's melodies. Ms. Y sang the melodies to remind him. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 30)

> The *tou-jia* student could not play at a steady tempo. Ms Y tapped his shoulder to count the beat for him… Mr. X read the percussion mnemonics for the percussion students when they missed a stroke… Ms. Y sang the melodies for the *ruan* player when he was lost. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 7)

5.2.1.2 Open exploration of ideas

The teachers actively explored performance and musical ideas through discussions with students, especially in the 'accompaniment training' course. Sometimes, they would discuss various musical interpretations with students:

> Mr. Z reviewed the students' assignment regarding their designed melodies of the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage. He played them on the violin and discussed with the students to investigate whether they were designed appropriately. Some students thought the melodies were smooth; some found it hard to breathe while singing. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 24)

> Mr. X discussed with the students how to design the percussion patterns that could bring out the actors' movement with the right timing. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 24)

> Ms. Y invited the student actor to the accompaniment training lesson. She asked the *pai-he* students to discuss and consider what melodies were suitable for the actor based on his vocal range. Some students considered his vocal range's limitation and suggested he sing *ping-hou* [平喉] instead of *ba-qiang* [霸腔]. By contrast, others realised that singing *ping-hou* cannot show the mighty personality of the character. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 29)

> Mr. Z discussed with the students how to adjust the percussion patterns according to

> the expression of the music… Whilst some students thought their designed percussion pattern was too simple, a student noticed that evoking a sense of nostalgia is sometimes difficult when the percussion patterns became too complex. Mr. Z further discussed how to strike a balance with the students. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 10)

Such discussions often evoked students' curiosity and eagerness to learn:

> During the break, a student asked, 'What are the differences between *zi-hou* and *ping-hou* in *shi-gong-man-ban* in terms of the melodic contour, apart from the ending notes of the phrase?' Mr. Z explained by demonstrating various common *chang-qiang* of *zi-hou* and *ping-hou* on the violin and discussing them with the students. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 24)

> A student asked, 'I have seen some *nan-yin* passages followed by *chang-ju-er-huang*. How about followed by *er-huang-man-ban*?' Mr. Z discussed the possible changes in musical contour with the students, demonstrated those melodies and asked students' opinions on such changes. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 8)

Although the exploration of ideas was not often observed in the 'accompaniment practicum' course, one notable example has surfaced:

> Mr. X discussed revising the percussion patterns according to the actors' movements with the percussion students. The *zhang-ban* student suggested playing the percussion passage at a faster tempo, but Mr. X was concerned about the feasibility of doing so… They had come up with a better plan and tried it with the actors. (Observational field notes, 2024, April 30)

Overall, the teachers' pedagogical styles were flexible, and they usually encouraged students to explore and develop their musical interpretations through authentic learning practices, especially in the 'accompaniment training' course. Students were observed to be more eager to learn and reflect on themselves under transformative pedagogies.

5.2.2 Transfer Pedagogies

The transfer pedagogical approaches were more frequently observed in addressing students' learning difficulties and assisting weaker students. The teachers' teaching styles in the

'accompaniment practicum' course were also observed to be more didactic, similar to the nature of transfer pedagogies. The learning objectives of the course are rather narrow, as Mr. Z mentioned; the course primarily focused on training the student actors and aimed to rehearse for the annual performance. Students could gain a different experience in learning *pai-he* by collaborating with the actors; meanwhile, the objective of this course was to rehearse for the performances instead of delivering concrete knowledge through lessons. Thus, the teachers' teaching strategies were performance-outcome oriented and less flexible than the 'accompaniment training' course.

5.2.2.1 Teachers' Support in Learning

As observed, teachers' support in learning primarily covers note-taking for students, addressing students' learning difficulties, advising students and providing feedback. The main learning difficulty for melodic instrument students was playing aurally by closely listening to the actors' melodies. By contrast, syncing with the actors' movements was challenging for the percussion instrument students. The teachers also reflected similar problems among the students:

> Their biggest problem is that they can only rely on the score to play. They cannot play if they receive a score with text only. (Unstructured interview, Mr. X)

> The common weakness of the students is their aural skills. They cannot identify the pitches by listening but always rely on the score to play. So, I keep training their aural skills by constantly asking them to identify the pitches of each word and sentence and to train them to respond to the pitches of the lyrics. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

Ms. Y specified the reasons behind assisting weaker students by writing the notations for them, as they have to manage students' biannual performance with limited time:

> Although relying on the score to play is not a good practice, we have to ensure they [students] can perform on stage by the end of the semester in such a short period of time. That's why sometimes I have to write the melodies for some of them. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

Whereas some students would proactively jot notes when they recognised anything important, others, particularly some students with weaker aural skills, did not know how to take notes:

> Ms. Y reminded students to take notes after revising the actors' melodies. Some students marked their scores, and some did not know the pitches. Ms. Y helped them write the *gongche* notations. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 30)

> Mr. Z demonstrated the percussion patterns and required students to observe closely and jot notes. Some students found it difficult to memorise and recorded his demonstration, transcribing them for reference. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 7)

> Ms. Y noticed a student unknowingly played the passage in *zheng-xian* instead of *fan-xian*. She highlighted the students' scores to remind them. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 7)

When the teachers recognised that students were confused or lost, they would adopt different non-verbal strategies to remind them without interrupting the actors' performance:

> Some students' pulse was not steady; so, Ms. Y tapped her foot near them to remind them… The *zhang-ban* student forgot to start playing the percussion for the prelude, and Mr. X reminded him by tapping his shoulder… The *tou-jia* student forgot to play the 'horse bray', and Ms. Y picked up a *zhong-hu* to play with and reminded him… Some students were uncertain about the sung melodies and couldn't *zhui-qiang*; so, Ms. Y sang the pitches in *gongche* to remind them… The percussion students' tempo was too fast; so, Mr. X tapped his foot to remind them. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 30)

> The *tou-jia* student was uncertain which prelude to play; so, Ms. Y sang the melodies to remind him… The *tou-jia* student forgot to play the prelude, and Ms. Y played the *zhong-hu* to guide him… Ms. Y sang the solfege of the *zhui-qiang* melodies to remind the *tou-jia* student about the pitches. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 7)

During short breaks and after lessons, the teachers would provide concrete feedback to students and review their performance:

Ms. Y commented on students' *zhui-qiang* that some couldn't follow the actors' pitches… Mr. X told the *zhang-ban* student that his percussion patterns were too long and were not in sync with the actors' movements… Ms. Y explained to the *ruan* student that his melodies were unsuitable for the *ruan* player and that he should play in a lower range… Mr. X and Ms. Y remarked that the students' melodies did not align with the actors' speeches. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 30)

Mr. X and Ms. Y commented on the *tou-jia* student, saying his pulse was not in sync with the percussion rhythm, and reminded him to pay close attention to the percussion patterns… Mr. X commented on the *zhang-ban* student that his percussion pattern was too simple and couldn't capture the atmosphere of the opera's storyline. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 7)

5.2.2.2 Imitation of teacher's style

Imitating the teacher's style was another shared transfer pedagogical practice observed in this case study. Whilst the teachers hoped that students could develop their personal artistic development, they acknowledged that achieving this goal without a solid foundation and understanding of Cantonese operatic music knowledge is challenging. With the constraints of the programmes' duration, they primarily focus on teaching students on the rudimentary knowledge of Cantonese operatic music, and they could not spend much time cultivating students' artistic styles. Thus, teachers' demonstrations and students' imitation are the most direct approach to learning. Some teachers described the following:

There is no shortcut in learning *pai-he*. They [students] must 'immerse' in learning for a long period, which involves a lot of practice, and we, as their teachers, have to demonstrate repeatedly for them, just like how we learned from our masters. (Unstructured interview, Mr. X)

I always encourage them [students] to develop their styles, but the problem is that they still don't have enough experience and confidence to do so. So, I always demonstrate my musical interpretations for them as reference. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

The teachers always encouraged students to improvise; however, some students found it difficult and thus avoided improvising. Thus, the teachers would demonstrate and allow

students to follow them as reference:

> Mr. Z encouraged students to *jia-hua* instead of playing according to the score. Some students said it was difficult for *jia-hua* since they were still unfamiliar with the passage. Mr. Z demonstrated his *jia-hua* on the violin and asked the students to try to follow. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 3)

> The *yangqin* student kept forgetting to play the rolls as part of the *jia-hua* and play the melodies by relying on the score. Mr. Z demonstrated his improvisation version of the *yangqin* and asked the student to record and learn to improvise for her reference. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 8)

Some students attempted improvising their unique style, but it did not align with the characteristics of Cantonese operatic music. The teachers would also point out their problems and demonstrate their interpretations:

> In the previous lesson, Mr. Z required students to write their improvised melodies for the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage as part of the assignment. Mr. Z commented on the students' assignments one by one, as he noticed some melodies didn't match the Cantonese operatic music style. He demonstrated the students' melodies and his improvisation version to let students do a comparison. Some students realised their problem was that their improvised melodies could not significantly pronounce the diction of the lyrics. Mr. Z suggested that students learn from his demonstration. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

> The percussion students improvised and played different percussion patterns based on their interpretation. Mr. Z commented that the percussion patterns were too complex and would distract and cover the singer's melodies… Mr. Z demonstrated his improvisation and asked the students to record and transcribe for their reference. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 10)

In this case study, teachers were found to have a tendency to employ transformative pedagogies in their overall teaching, whilst transfer pedagogies were often adopted to support students with learning difficulties. Although Carey et al. (2013) indicated that the notions of the two pedagogies contrast with each other, this case study shows that the features of both practices can be applied on different occasions based on students' learning progress and abilities.

As observed, the learning outcomes of transfer pedagogies are rather focused and narrow compared with transformative pedagogies, focusing on short-term achievements. Meanwhile, the didactic characteristic of transfer pedagogies enables teachers to guide students with clear verbal instruction, which is particularly beneficial for weaker students. Furthermore, the mimicry of the teacher is another characteristic of transfer pedagogies. By imitating the teacher's demonstrations, students can progressively enhance other complex skills, such as improvisation.

As students gain experience and become more advanced, transformative pedagogy can encourage students to explore ideas more flexibly, instead of solely relying on imitating the teachers' demonstration and strictly following their instructions throughout the learning process. Instead, transformative pedagogy fosters a contextualised learning environment for students to explore and acquire more expansive learning outcomes. For instance, the teachers in this case had planned various authentic learning activities. This process enables students to learn *pai-he* through hands-on experience and simulate the scenario of performing on stage.

5.3 Comparison between Traditional Pedagogies and Institutional Practices

In the first phase of this study, traditional *pai-he* pedagogies were observed, and the interviewees offered an in-depth understanding of their teaching and learning experiences (see Chapter 4). The teaching practices at the institution were then explored in the second phase of this study. By comparing traditional pedagogies and institutional teaching practices, this study aims to combine the advantages of both practices and propose a more well-rounded pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he*. Table 5.2 summarises the commonalities and

differences between traditional pedagogies and institutional practice. The following section

indicates examples of the two practices.

Table 5.2

Comparison between Traditional Pedagogies and Institutional Practices

Pedagogical component	Traditional pedagogies	Institutional practices
Teaching Setting	Informal	Formal
Curriculum	Unstandardised and unsystematic	Standard curriculum
Teaching Strategies	Teaching through repertoire Teaching of playing by ear Employing authentic learning approaches	
Assessments	Authentic assessments	Authentic assessments Summative assessments Formative assessments

5.3.1 Commonalities

Certain teaching practices were found to resonate with the characteristics of the traditional teaching approaches explored in Phase I, namely (1) teaching through repertoire, (2) teaching of playing by ear, (3) employing authentic learning approaches and (4) employing authentic and formative assessments.

5.3.1.1 Teaching through Repertoire

Teaching through repertoire is one of the common practices adopted in the traditional and institutional teaching approaches. Instead of explicitly teaching the fundamental *pai-he* techniques and skills through etudes, the theories and knowledge were imparted through teaching the repertoire. The teachers employed slightly different teaching methods, depending on students' learning progress and abilities. Some teachers would select the appropriate repertoire and derive particular passages for systematically teaching specific topics, especially for students who were at their early stage of learning *pai-he*:

> Mr. Z guided the students in playing the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage of the piece by playing the violin… He reminded students about the format of *shi-gong-man-ban* and introduced various common interludes that were applied. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

> Mr. Z started teaching the format and structure of *nan-yin*… He selected another piece and picked the *nan-yin* passage to teach students. He introduced and demonstrated various preludes that are commonly used in *nan-yin*. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 8)

Mr. Z further elaborated on the rationale behind these teaching plans, which is to consolidate students' fundamental understanding of each musical form in Cantonese opera:

> For example, this week's topic is teaching *man-ban*. So, I picked a few pieces with the *man-ban* passages to teach them [students]. After the completion of this *man-ban* topic, we will teach them other aria types one by one, and again, to look for another repertoire that consists of that particular aria types. This way, they will be clearer

about the format and structure of each aria type. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

Meanwhile, the teachers teaching more advanced students would teach the techniques

through the entire repertoire instead of deriving specific passages from the pieces to teach

students:

> Ms. Y and Mr. X went through the whole piece with the students and paused when they noticed the students' problems… Mr. X commented that the *zhang-ban* student did not give a clear cue for his *xia-shou* and demonstrated once… Ms. Y pointed out the *tou-jia*'s *zhui-qiang* skill was inaccurate and sang the melodies for him. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 29)

> Ms. Y and Mr. X started going through another piece with the students… The *tou-jia* student was confused about what advance notes to add, and Ms. Y demonstrated on her *yehu* without telling him what pitches were and required him to play on the *gaohu*… Mr. X commented that the percussion pattern that the *zhang-ban* student played was too complex and would distract others. He demonstrated a simpler version for her. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 8)

Regardless of the slight differences in terms of teaching approaches, the teachers agreed on

the necessity of teaching through repertoire, as it provides a practical context for

understanding and applying *pai-he* techniques:

> I need to teach them how to design the *chang-qiang* for *shi-gong-man-ban*; as you saw in our lesson, the *chang-qiang* of *zi-hou* and *ping-hou* are not completely the same. Through learning those pieces, they will be more familiarised with the formats and structures of those aria types. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

> It is difficult to teach *pai-he* without any examples. We can't simply teach them each technique one by one without using any pieces as examples. They [students] need to learn from playing the pieces, analyse what techniques to use under our guidance and apply them to play the next pieces. This way, they can accumulate their experiences and understand which techniques to apply. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

5.3.1.2 Teaching of Playing by Ear

Playing by ear is another teaching strategy that has been frequently applied in the institution,

which shares similar components as the traditional pedagogies, namely (1) teacher's

demonstration and students' imitation, (2) training aural skills and (3) teaching with/without

the score.

The teachers' demonstrations were commonly observed at the institution, especially the content that was unfamiliar   to the students. The students would generally attempt to imitate their demonstrations:

> The *yangqin* student was uncertain about which *nan-yin* interlude to play for certain phrases and got lost. Mr. Z paused and demonstrated them on the violin, and the student was trying to follow him and play on the *yangqin*. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 6)

> Ms. Y demonstrated how to *zhui-qiang* on *yehu* without writing the *gongche* notations for the *tou-jia* student. She asked the student to listen closely and try to play on *gaohu*… Mr. X noted that the *xia-shou* student could not project the sound of the instrument properly and demonstrated for her. The student tried again after observing. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 8)

Sometimes, when the students were not able to master certain skills or techniques, the teachers would ask the students to record their demonstration and further practice after the lessons.

> Mr. Z introduced various common percussion patterns for the *nan-yin* passages, and the students tried to imitate them. Mr. Z pointed out that the sound of the *pai-ban* was not good enough, and the pulse was unsteady. He required the students to film his demonstration and practice with his video. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 10)

> The *zhang-ban* student couldn't play the percussion pattern for the prelude accurately. Mr. Z demonstrated and required the student to record his demonstration and asked him to practice according to the video after the lesson. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 7)

Training students' aural skills was another frequently used teaching practice. The teachers particularly highlighted the importance of aural skills training:

> Playing aurally is a common weakness of many students. However, a professional *pai-he* musician must have high aural skills to play the *zhui-qiang*. Not to mention the musicians also have to be able to respond to any kind of scenarios on stage. That's why we focus on training their aural skills a lot. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

> Although the new pieces nowadays are clearly written in detailed *gongche* notations, we always train our students' aural skills in different ways to push them to play by ear instead of relying on the score. The traditional feature of *pai-he* is not playing from the score, and we always emphasise this point to students. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

The pedagogies applied at the institution placed extra emphasis on training students' aural skills than the traditional pedagogies, which focused on strengthening students' listening competence, musical sense and adaptability. The listening competence refers to students' ability to identify the pitches of the melodies sung and to play on their instruments. To enhance this ability, the teachers would constantly alter their *chang-qiang* and require students to listen to their melodies instead of playing according to the score.

> Ms. Y sang the *gun-hua* passage again with a different *chang-qiang*. The *tou-jia* student couldn't follow. Ms. Y sang the *gun-hua* again, asked the student what pitches she had just sung and guided him in playing the *gaohu*. (Observation field notes, 2024 April 24)

> Mr. Z informed students that he would sing the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage differently, sometimes with *zi-hou* or *ping-hou chang-qiang*. He reminded students to pay attention to his melodic contour to distinguish between two types of *chang-qiang* and play according to his sung melodies. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 3)

Ms. Y explained the reasons behind this exercise as follows:

> They are always relying on the score to play. As a professional *pai-he* player, we must play by ear but not the score. Sometimes the actors might sing different *chang-qiang* instead of the ones that they sang during the rehearsals. So, we cannot just stick to the score and play. You see, that student actor is trying really hard to sing in *ba-qiang*. He can sometimes make those high pitches but sometimes cannot. We cannot predict what *chang-qiang* he is going to adopt during the performance. The only way is to closely listen to his melodies. So, I often switch my *chang-qiang* to train students during the lessons. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

The musical sense refers to students' ability to improvise appropriately without any musical notations written. The teachers employed various strategies to strengthen students' musical sense. Some of them would often serve as the *tou-jia* and guide the students to improvise the melodies:

> Mr. Z played the violin and played the advanced notes as a *tou-jia*. He asked the students to consider what corresponding melodies were suitable to play. Each student played their melodies one by one, and Mr. Z commented some musical contours didn't sound like Cantonese operatic music, and some were too simple… He later encouraged them to further improvise the melodies… Mr. Z commented that sometimes the *yang-qin* students' improvisation is too much and somehow covers the singer's *chang-qiang*. He explained how to *jian-hua* to fit the singer properly. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

> Ms. Y commented that the *tou-jia* student's melodies were too plain and asked him to apply more *jia-hua* for improvisation. Ms. Y demonstrated her *jia-hua* version on the *yehu*. (Observation field notes, 2024 April 29)

Some teachers also adopted another strategy to strengthen students' ability to create melodies

based on the texts:

> Mr. Z read a sentence and asked the students to consider the pitches of that sentence. Some students hummed the melody, and some students tried them on their instruments. Mr. Z commented on whether their melodies were suitable. (Observation field notes, 2024 May 3)

> Ms. Y paused and read the text. She asked the students what pitches should be. Some students sing the solfege and see if it matches the pitches. She pointed out that some pitches were not completely wrong, but there was a better version that fit the text. (Observation field notes, 2024 April 29)

The competency to address different situations during performances is regarded as students'

adaptability. The teachers noted that it is the most challenging part of being a professional

pai-he player and teaching students:

> It is hard to teach them how to handle different scenarios on stage, and we cannot follow them to work in the future. We can only share our experiences, and in the lesson, we can simulate some situations, like singing at the wrong beat, to teach them how to handle these issues when they are on stage. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

> After all, they [students] have to gain more experience on their own. We cannot predict any situations on stage. This is how we used to learn when becoming a player as well. We literally cannot teach them these things, but we can always share our experiences with them or demonstrate some issues in the lessons to let them think of how to cope with them. (Unstructured interview, Mr. X)

As observed, some teachers intentionally make changes to their singing to enhance the

students' adaptability:

> After practicing the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage a few times, Mr. Z sang the pitches differently and required students to think about how they could play. Mr. Z was supposed to start singing on the *ban* right after the prelude, but instead, he purposely delayed singing. Students had no idea what to do and stopped playing… Mr. Z demonstrated and explained how to prolong the melodies of the prelude to allow the singer to sing without being awkward. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

> Ms. Y was singing in *ping-hou chang-qiang* and then switched to *ba-qiang.* Some students could not follow her melodies. She reminded students to pay attention to the singer instead of reading the score, as the student actor sometimes could sing in *ba-qiang* but sometimes could not… Ms. Y sang the *ba-qiang* and *ping-hou* melodies in *gongche* to tell students what the pitches were. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 3)

> Mr. Z told students that he was going to sing differently and reminded them to pay attention instead of relying on the score. He sang at different pitches and at a different tempo, and most students could not follow him… Mr. Z commented that some students could follow his *chang-qiang*, but the interludes that were played were not suitable for the tempo. He demonstrated various interludes for different tempos. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 29)

Sometimes, the teachers would raise some challenging questions to the students:

> Mr. X asked students what to do when they forgot to bring one of the percussion instruments to the performance. The students shared their thoughts and discussed with Mr. X… He shared his personal experience with the students. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

5.3.1.3 Authentic Learning Approaches

The teachers at the institution emphasised having students acquire knowledge and strengthen *pai-he* skills through authentic learning experiences, which is similar to the traditional pedagogies to have the learners learn by doing. The 'teaching through repertoire' and 'playing by ear' teaching approaches mentioned above primarily offered opportunities for students to experience authentic learning activities. Ms. Y underscored the advantages of learning by doing to deepen students' understanding of the knowledge:

> Learning by doing is the most effective approach, in my opinion. Just introducing the

theories to students is not enough, because they would just forget what we said after a certain period of time… As they apply these theories when doing (*pai-he*), they will have a deeper understanding and gain more experience. Of course, it is important for us to closely monitor the performance of our students and point out their problems promptly. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)

Mr. X also added that authentic learning activities enable students to practically accumulate experiences and subsequently understand and enhance their *pai-he* skills:

When it comes to learning Cantonese opera, we need a certain period of time to 'learn via immersive experiences'. It just takes time to master those techniques and process the musical knowledge. That's why we need to learn by doing and building up our experiences. So, sometimes I will bring those who are eager to learn, to those music gatherings, to enable them to expand their learning experiences. (Unstructured interview, Mr. X)

5.3.1.4 Authentic and Formative Assessment

Apart from summative assessments, the teachers at the institution also assess students' understanding of the learned content through authentic and formative assessments during the lessons. Notably, the traditional teaching practice also involves similar assessments.

Authentic assessments were frequently observed in the institutional tradition, which emphasised the application of knowledge and skills in realistic settings. The teachers would simulate unpredictable scenarios of actual performance, such as making minor changes in their *chang-qiang*, to assess students' application of *pai-he* knowledge and theories learned, especially *zhui-qiang*.

Ms. Y practiced the *fan-xian-zhong-ban* passage with students a few times. Then, she intentionally sang different *chang-qiang*, requiring students to follow and play accordingly. Some students were able to follow, whereas some could not. Ms. Y reminded students to always pay close attention to the singers and actors instead of sticking to the score to play. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 24)

After practicing the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage a few times, Mr. Z sang differently

and required students to think about how they could play. Mr. Z was supposed to start singing on the *ban* right after the prelude; instead, he purposely delayed singing. Students had no idea what to do and stopped playing… Mr. Z demonstrated and explained how to prolong the melodies of the prelude to allow the singer to sing without being awkward. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)

5.3.2 Differences

Meanwhile, the institutional pedagogies substantially differ from traditional pedagogies in terms of the teaching setting, curriculum and assessments.

5.3.2.1 Teaching setting

The teaching setting of the institution is formal and fixed, whereas the traditional pedagogies adopted an informal and flexible teaching setting. Similar to school education, the teaching usually takes place in the classrooms at the institution, where teachers follow the teaching schedule and deliver the lessons. Some teachers narrated the advantages of the fixed teaching setting:

> Undoubtedly, the learning environment is much better than the way we learned in the past with our masters. The institution here is very systematic, in teaching students topic by topic. Unlike in the past, our masters required us to 'immerse' in this knowledge without teaching us concretely. Students nowadays are so lucky. (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)

By contrast, the teaching could happen in flexible scenarios under traditional pedagogies, such as the music gatherings and the troupe, as the interviewees from the Phase I study mentioned.

5.3.2.2 Curriculum

The institution offered a standardised and systematic curriculum for students, whereas the

traditional pedagogies were unstandardised and unsystematic. To nurture Cantonese opera artists and musicians, the institution provides various programmes with the corresponding curriculum for students to study. The teachers compared the differences among the three programmes:

> In the diploma programme, we teach *bang-zi* in the first year and *er-huang* in the second year. We will teach them the format and structure of each aria type. (Mr. X)
>
> The professional diploma is designed for students who already have some experience in Cantonese opera; for example, some of them have been working in the field for a certain period of time, and some have been playing in music gatherings before admitting to the institution. The foundation diploma serves as a stepping stone for students to continue their studies further. (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y)
>
> We teach them [students] from the easier to more complex topics: starting with *gun-hua*, *man-ban*, *zhong-ban* and then *er-huang*. (Mr. Z)

Meanwhile, under traditional pedagogies, no standardised or concrete curriculum was in place for teaching *pai-he*, and the teaching plans varied among the masters/ tutors.

5.3.2.3 Assessments

As mentioned previously, the institution included summative and formative assessments to assess students' performance; the former was part of the mandatory requirements, apart from the authentic and formative assessments adopted during lessons. The written and practical tests were examples of summative assessments:

> The mid-term practical test involves the content learned in the first seven weeks... For the final exam, we also include a written test, in addition to the practical exam. (Mr. Z)

Formative assessments were also observed in the institutional teaching practice, in which the teachers monitored their lessons based on students' learning progress. The teachers would assess students' understanding of theories and techniques and explain certain concepts

unfamiliar to them:

> Mr. Z required students to play the *shi-gong-man-ban* for the *zi-hou chang-qiang* on their own without himself leading with the violin. The *yangqin* student was lost, and Mr. Z explained which interlude to apply to the musical contour of the *zi-hou* again. (Observation field notes, 2024, April 24)

> Ms. Y asked the students to play on their own based on her *chang-qiang*. The *tou-jia* student was unable to *zhui-qiang* for the altered melodies. Ms. Y demonstrated and explained again how to *zhui-qiang* and remind him to pay close attention to the singer's melodies. (Observation field notes, 2024, May 8)

They would also adjust their teaching schedule when the students were unfamiliar with certain topics, as Mr. X mentioned:

> Although we have a teaching schedule, we also have to adjust our teaching plans according to students' learning progress. Sometimes we won't strictly stick to the teaching schedule. For example, when I have been teaching *man-ban* for four lessons and they are still not familiar with the topic, then, I will spend more time teaching them about this topic. (Mr. X)

Conversely, the traditional pedagogies excluded compulsory assessments for learners. Instead, authentic assessments were solely employed to assess the learners' learning progress through realistic situations and giving feedback. For instance, as mentioned in the Phase I findings, the masters would immediately point out the learners' problems when they perceive any during the actual music gatherings and rehearsals of performances and further discuss the issues through informal settings, such as late-night meals. Regardless of the different settings, the *pai-he* tutors also employed similar approaches by immediately pointing out the students' mistakes when they perceived any.

5.4 Summary

This case study indicates the application of both transformative and transfer pedagogies in the institution. Teachers in this case tended to employ transformative teaching practices in their

teaching, whilst transfer pedagogies were often employed to support students with learning difficulties. The teachers' choices of pedagogical approaches were influenced by the objectives of different courses. As observed, the 'accompaniment training' course, which focuses on imparting knowledge and consolidating students' understanding, predominantly adopted transformative pedagogies. Meanwhile, the 'accompaniment practicum' course, which focuses on rehearsing for the annual performance, was less flexible and applied transfer pedagogies more often.

The application of authentic learning activities was a piece of evidence of transformative pedagogies, which were frequently observed in this case study, emphasising students' learning by doing, especially by training their aural competency and flexibility in handling different scenarios. Playing by ear and teaching through repertoire were the common teaching strategies that were often involved as part of authentic learning activities similar to the traditional pedagogies of teaching *pai-he*, as resonated with the findings of Phase I. In addition, these transformative teaching strategies employed in the institution were typically associated with authentic and formative assessments instead of solely relying on summative assessments to assess students' learning progress and understanding.

In addition, the findings illustrated the advantages of institutional tradition, including (1) the systematic teaching and curriculum, (2) teachers' qualifications and (3) rich resources, which were the major differences compared with the traditional pedagogies for teaching *pai-he*. Meanwhile, the findings also revealed the challenges and limitations of the institutional tradition, involving the programme limitations, collaboration among teachers and coping with students' learning attitudes and weaknesses. Although the limitations of the institutional

tradition cannot be avoided, noting its advantages is crucial, apart from the benefits of the traditional pedagogies, to propose a more well-rounded pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he*.

Chapter 6: Discussion

This chapter discusses the findings from Chapters 4 and 5 with reference to multiple pieces of literature, covering the development and transmission of Cantonese opera and the evolution of teaching *pai-he* across the decades. Overall, the development of Cantonese opera and its transmission approaches have been influenced by Westernization and institutionalization. On the basis of the discussion of the research findings and related literature, a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* is proposed to provide insights and recommendations for *pai-he* tutors and institutions to formulate and consider their teaching plans.

In this chapter, clarifying the terminology used to describe the roles of teachers and learners across different educational contexts is crucial. For the context of apprenticeship, the terms "master" and "apprentice" are employed. In community courses, as designed primarily for amateurs, the terms "tutor" and "student" are adopted because of the informal community-oriented setting. The conventional terms "teacher" and "student" are used in the institutional setting because it is a formal educational context.

6.1 Development and Transmission of Cantonese Opera

Chapter 4 has reported the pedagogical approaches adopted by masters and tutors but also

sheds light on the concerns raised by Cantonese opera practitioners regarding the evolution of

the repertoires and the transmission approaches of this traditional genre.

6.1.1 Evolution of Cantonese Opera Repertoire

    6.1.1.1 Influence of Westernization

While it is inevitable for traditional art genres to evolve over the decades, the balance of

preserving traditional values and incorporating Western elements in the development of the

contemporary Cantonese opera repertoire has been a challenging and controversial issue for

the stakeholders in the field. In Chapter 4, findings indicate that some Cantonese opera

practitioners criticised the involvement of innovative ideas that neglect the traditional

features of the flexible and interactive nature of Cantonese opera, such as integrating Western

musical components by using chords and harmonies, writing detailed scores, and restricting

performers' improvisation. Apart from Cantonese opera, Westernization significantly affects

the authenticity and preservation of traditional music genres around the globe, which is a

prevalent challenge in their transmission, as Leung (2018) highlighted. For instance, Akuno

(2018) revealed that traditional Kenyan music is influenced by Westernised components, such

as the harmonies that often distort traditional musical features, while the new genres of

African classical music were eventually formed by Western-styled music.

By contrast, certain practitioners emphasised the significance of sustainable development and

transmission of Cantonese opera. Hill (2009) summarised previous literature written by Nettl

(1986) and Stock (1996), regarding the changes observed in the non-Western music genres

under the influence of Westernization. Among these changes, the trend of increased interest in preserving and reconstructing traditional genres alongside the day-to-day creation of new repertoire is similar to the development of Cantonese opera repertoire in recent years. In the current study, some practitioners support the reconstruction of Cantonese opera repertoire by incorporating Western elements in the pieces to align with the current trend of a more diverse musical taste. They primarily considered the audience's acceptance and appreciation, implying that contemporary Cantonese opera pieces can attract and engage new audiences and, at the same time, ensure satisfaction among the old audiences. A Cantonese opera practitioner expressed a similar perspective by using audience acceptance towards Gustav Mahler's compositions as an example, that is, his music was initially neglected but then became an instant hit after decades, to show the potential for innovative ideas in contemporary Cantonese opera repertoire to enrich its diversity and sustainability for long-term development. Meanwhile, part of the research findings of Phase I contrasted with this viewpoint, illustrating that these practitioners cannot solely represent all learners' perspectives. Some *pai-he* learners, despite being novices or amateurs, expressed their eagerness to learn and master the traditional *pai-he* skills and aimed to enhance their aural and improvisation skills rather than learning the contemporary pieces with fixed melodies that restrict the flexibility of improvisation and interaction with the vocal part. They revealed their preference for the traditional repertoire rather than the contemporary pieces because the former mainly consists of various aria types whose melodies they were familiar with, and they value the traditional traits of Cantonese opera. Conversely, the contemporary repertoire is challenging for them to memorise due to their novelty and lack of traditional Cantonese opera features.

The sustainability of a traditional art form depends not only on the artists but also on the

support of the audiences. Research findings have shown that despite varying perspectives among practitioners on the development of the Cantonese opera repertoire, their primary goal is to ensure the enduring presence of Cantonese opera. Audience opinions and perspectives play a critical role in determining the sustainability of traditional art forms because they ultimately influence whether the art form continues to thrive. Bohlman (1988) pointed out that traditional music transmission reflects a conservative process of change, which may be considered unacceptable in certain cultures. Conversely, in some cultures, individual creativity is highly valued and musicians are judged on the basis of their ability to perform and present each version of the piece as unique. In such societies, preservation for its own sake may not be a common practice. Audiences may evaluate the performances based on the perceived novelty rather than the accuracy of the rendition of the pieces. Bohlman (1988) further explained that cultural attitudes toward stability and change vary significantly. In most cultures, stability and change coexist, with one being more prevalent but not excluding the other, in which the audiences' attitudes also differ. Therefore, practitioners of Cantonese opera should remain open to accepting diverse feedback from their audiences.

Westernization of traditional genres is a typical issue that is faced by different places around the globe, and Cantonese opera is one of the notable examples. Meanwhile, the incorporation of Western elements, as previously discussed, is not the only potential dimension of being innovative. Hence, stakeholders in the Cantonese opera field must reflect on how the traditional genre can be developed sustainably, without losing its stylistic characteristics, because the evolution of the Cantonese opera genre is inevitable. The following questions must be considered as we incorporate new musical ideas while preserving their traditional essence: What are the traditional fundamental values of Cantonese opera? What defines and determines what constitutes a high-quality repertoire? How do we involve innovative

concepts in Cantonese opera without losing its traditional characteristics? Is Westernization the only way to attract new audiences? Will we lose the old audiences with the involvement of Western and other pioneering concepts in Cantonese opera? Answering these questions requires deep and long-term reflections, discussions, and collaborations among the practitioners, artists, and educators involved in the Cantonese opera field. This research study does not imply that the Cantonese opera repertoire or any type of traditional genre should remain unchanged to keep their traditions, but rather, to provide insights for different stakeholders to consider and contribute to the development and transmission of Cantonese opera.

6.1.1.2 Quality of Cantonese Opera Repertoires

Apart from the Westernization of the contemporary Cantonese opera repertoires, some practitioners were aware of the mediocre quality of pieces in recent years. Ip (2005) delved into the issue concerning the decline in scriptwriting expertise, in which some Cantonese opera veterans expressed their concerns regarding the diminishing number of professional and qualified scriptwriters, which hinders the development of Cantonese opera.

The features of mediocre quality repertoire are summarised below on the basis of the research findings:

(1) The melody does not align with the intonation of the text. In the Cantonese opera field, there is a terminology known as *luzi* (露字, literally "exposing words," referring to the clear diction of the words). Given that Cantonese is a tonal language, the pitch must match the corresponding syllables of each word. Yung (1983a) highlighted the

distinctive correlation between linguistic tones in Cantonese and musical tones in terms of pitch levels, the pitch movement contour, and the duration of the pitch. Lee (2021) also stressed the importance of maintaining consistency between the tone of the text and melody to avoid misinterpreting the meaning. In other words, if the melody does not match the linguistic tone of the text, it can result in unclear intonation, making it difficult for the audience to hear the lyrics clearly or even leading to misunderstandings.

(2) The melodic contour of the fixed tunes appears to lack coherence and is inconsistent with the traditional styles of Cantonese operatic music. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the traditional Cantonese opera repertoire typically consists of aria type, fixed tunes, and narrative music. In contemporary Cantonese opera pieces, some scriptwriters have attempted to include or compose new fixed tunes in the piece. While there are no right or wrong melodic contours nor are there specific rules documented for composing these fixed tunes, some Cantonese opera practitioners have reported that some new fixed tunes deviate from the traditional Cantonese style and do not adhere to the conventions of Cantonese operatic music, accounting for the reason some learners find them hard to memorise.

(3) The use of aria type deviates from the traditional characteristic of Cantonese opera and constrains improvisation among artists. As aforementioned, Cantonese opera is a flexible traditional genre that allows the singers/actors and *pai-he* players to improvise and interact among themselves freely, particularly in the aria type, where only the texts are provided, and the artists interpret the melodies by themselves, instead of having the melody notated in the score (Yung, 1983b). Meanwhile, the contemporary repertoires often contain well-written *gongche* notation, even for aria

types. From the current research findings, some practitioners criticised that the aria type with *gongche* notation limits the performers' interpretations and improvisations, thus blurring the traditional flexible nature of *pai-he* and restricting the personal styles of the performers.

(4) The involvement of Western elements and the adoption of symphonic orchestration into Cantonese opera repertoire are excessive. As mentioned, Westernization is a typical issue that occurs and influences different traditional genres worldwide, including Cantonese opera. According to the current research findings, while some practitioners advocate for the incorporation of Western elements to attract new audiences, some criticise that it violates the conventional styles of Cantonese opera. Meanwhile, most practitioners who participated in this study do not completely oppose including Western elements, as long as the involvement of Western elements is "not too excessive." While no standardised definition of "excessive use of Western elements" exists, their opinions vary. Some believe that solely adopting a symphonic orchestration instead of the traditional *pai-he* setting is unacceptable; some are open to incorporating a few chord progressions to enhance the melodies; and some are open to the innovative ideas of the fixed tunes, given that the aria type is not revised and does not restrict the flexibilities of performers to improvise.

6.1.2 Quality of Cantonese Operatic Tutors in the Community

While the population of *pai-he* tutors in the community remains relatively small, some practitioners have noted an increase in the number of Cantonese operatic singing tutors. Meanwhile, in contrast to teachers' qualifications in formal institutions, those of the tutors in

the community varies. The findings from Phase I of the research indicated that a notable proportion of community tutors lack substantial teaching experience and possess limited knowledge of Cantonese opera, as revealed by some practitioners. The inaccurate knowledge and theories of Cantonese opera might be transmitted instead. Under the formal educational system, teaching qualifications are essential and are often the prerequisite for becoming a professional teacher. In addition, professional development training courses are offered for professional teachers to enhance their teaching skills further. However, community tutors who provide lessons to amateurs have no concrete qualification requirements. The selection of tutors and classes is based on learners' personal preferences even if they might not be capable of identifying and verifying the quality of the tutors. Consequently, the quality of community tutors is another significant issue that hinders and influences the development of Cantonese opera in the long run.

6.2 Evolution in Teaching *Pai-he*

Teaching context and approaches have been evolving throughout the decades. In the early 20th century, apprenticeship was one of the typical approaches for cultivating professional Cantonese opera artists in Hong Kong (Leung, 2015b). Apart from apprenticeship, Cantonese operatic singing courses and music gatherings are offered by various music clubs in the community, particularly for amateurs. These courses, offered for amateurs, have been continuously provided to the present day. While apprenticeship is fading out, institutional training has become the primary approach for nurturing professional Cantonese opera artists.

To formulate a comprehensive pedagogical model in teaching *pai-he*, the advantages and

drawbacks associated with the aforementioned teaching contexts must be understood. With the theoretical framework of this study, incorporating Bowman and Powell's (2007) embodied knowledge transmission method, Matsunobu's (2011) pedagogy of *kata*, Schippers's (2010) Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework, and Suzuki's mother tongue method, the findings have provided a comprehensive understanding of the pedagogies of *pai-he* by illustrating the teaching and learning contexts and approaches and the general teaching styles.

6.2.1 Traditional Practices

6.2.1.1 Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship incorporates informal teaching and learning approaches, as the research findings resonate with the literature (Leung, 2015b; San, 1993). Instead of following a fixed teaching schedule, teaching and learning could occur in various scenarios, such as music gatherings, Cantonese opera troupe performances and rehearsals, or even late-night meals. It largely depends on the personality and teaching style of the master (San, 1993). While apprenticeship does not employ systematic pedagogies, the masters' teaching strategies can be classified into teaching through repertoires and playing by ear, as discussed in Chapter 4. As the apprentices follow their masters to learn, they are encouraged to engage in different musical activities. For instance, performing various repertoires during music gatherings was common, and the master provided feedback and advice on how to improve their skills. Meanwhile, the repertoire selection is determined by the singers from the music gathering, instead of by the masters for teaching purposes. This feature is similar to the characteristic of learning by doing approach and resonates with the nature of Indigenous pedagogy, as stated

in Kamanski's (2008) literature, because the skills and knowledge are not being taught by topic or etudes but rather through the realistic context of performances and music gatherings. Moreover, the apprentices can build up their connections with other Cantonese opera veterans and artists by following their master to engage in different musical activities, which is beneficial for their future career development.

Another typical example of teaching and learning under apprenticeship is observation and imitation of the master, which involves playing by ear as the primary teaching strategy. For instance, some masters would bring their apprentices to observe their performances as part of their teaching and require their apprentices to imitate their performance as much as possible. This process enhances apprentices' aural skills through playing by ear to listen and imitate their master, instead of relying on the score to play. Moreover, instead of receiving structured teaching materials or handouts from the master, the apprentices have to gather learning materials on their own, such as by following the master on different occasions, looking for instructional books and recordings, attending Cantonese opera performances, and analysing the knowledge learned by themselves. They would take the initiative to raise questions and seek their master's guidance when they encounter difficulties in their learning. This process aligns with Leung's (2023) literature, that learning Cantonese opera requires frequent self-reflection and self-analysis, constant listening, and imitation.

While apprenticeship offers a comprehensive learning experience, the teaching styles of different masters may vary, which may not suit every apprentice. Apprenticeship does not incorporate formal teaching or the principles of pedagogy. Although the masters are highly experienced and professional musicians, teaching is not their primary vocation, and most of

them have not received any formal teaching training before. Instead, their teaching is shaped by their personality and depends on the apprentice's talent (San, 1993). In other words, the master's teaching approach is also influenced by their personality, which may not align with every apprentice. In addition to the master's teaching style and personality, the apprentice's attitude is another key factor that influences the effectiveness of the teaching. As the research findings reflected, Cantonese opera practitioners possessed a studious learning attitude and were eager to take the initiative in learning when they were apprentices.

6.2.1.2 Community Courses

The *pai-he* courses offered by music clubs in the community are partly similar to apprenticeship, which involves informal teaching and learning approaches. Apart from apprenticeship, the community courses were another prevalent method of transmitting Cantonese opera traditions in the early 20th century in Hong Kong. While apprenticeship is fading out, these community courses continue to be offered to the present day. Similar to apprenticeship, teaching through repertoire and playing by ear are the primary teaching strategies observed in the community courses, as indicated in the findings in Chapter 4. However, these two teaching approaches were employed differently compared with apprenticeship. Despite the tutors employing the strategy of teaching through repertoire in the community courses, the tutors decide and plan the repertoire used as part of the teaching materials. In Chapter 4, findings illustrate that the *pai-he* tutors would select the teaching pieces based on students' capabilities and interests. Moreover, this teaching approach is often associated with other strategies, such as repeating practice of the specific areas of the repertoire and practice referring to the tutor, which means the tutor would guide the students

to practice together and require them to follow closely while playing. Playing by ear is another teaching strategy the *pai-he* tutors adopt; it involves tutors' demonstration and students' imitation. Nevertheless, the training of aural skills was not as much as the masters in apprenticeship do. Instead, the tutors tend to rely on teaching with the score and seldom require students to play aurally.

In addition to the teaching approaches, apprenticeship and community courses have two major distinctions. First, the nature of apprenticeship and community courses differs. As highlighted by the research findings in Phase I, anyone can enroll in community courses by paying tuition fee, and the courses are mostly designed for amateurs; whereas in apprenticeship, the master has the choice to accept an apprentice, and they aim to nurture professional musicians. In other words, tutors providing community courses offer their services to students after receiving the tuition fees, while apprenticeship involves a master teaching the apprentice unconditionally.

Second, although apprenticeship and community courses do not incorporate formal teaching approaches, the tutors usually follow a fixed teaching schedule to deliver the courses, including fixed lesson durations and a fixed place for lessons, which is similar to a classroom setting. However, teaching *pai-he* courses among the tutors has no standardised curriculum.

Some Cantonese opera practitioners have raised their concerns regarding the quality of the community *pai-he* courses, as reflected by the findings in Chapter 4. While each tutor's teaching materials and strategies may vary, some tutors within the community are incapable of teaching because they may lack pedagogical knowledge and experience in *pai-he*. The inexperienced tutors may adopt some mediocre Cantonese opera pieces as their teaching

material, leading to another issue of transmitting inaccurate knowledge of *pai-he,* which influences the development of Cantonese opera. Hence, tutors must identify poor-quality pieces and ensure the quality of teaching materials that preserve the traditional characteristics of Cantonese opera.

As discussed previously, in apprenticeship and *pai-he* courses, masters and tutors mainly adopted teaching through repertoire and playing by ear as the primary teaching strategies, with different teaching activities. These strategies resonate with Suzuki's mother tongue method, which practically teaches the techniques and theories through repertoire and playing aurally. Findings show that these teaching approaches enable learners to practice repeatedly by following and imitating the master/tutor and consistently reflecting on their learning journey, achieving the embodied learning process, as described by Bowman and Powell (2007) and Matsunobu's (2011) *kata* pedagogy.

The teaching strategies documented in this research also reflected different teaching styles of the masters and tutors, based on Schippers's (2010) framework, in terms of dimensions of interaction and mode of transmission, referring to the theoretical framework mentioned in Chapter 2.

The dimensions of interaction between the master/tutor and the learner consist of four spectra to indicate the interactions, as adopted from Schippers's (2010) Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework: (1) from large to small power distance, which refers to the power distance between the master/tutor and learners; (2) from individual to collective central, which means whether achievements and development of music practice are individual or as a

group; (3) from avoiding uncertainty to tolerating uncertainty, which indicates the tolerance of uncertainties regarding the musical ideas; and (4) long-term orientation to short-term orientation, which illustrates whether the progress or goals are in the long run or short term. The power distance between the current tutors and the learners is smaller than they did with their masters in the past because the tutors did not insist on being addressed as "masters," and they usually sat at the same level as the students instead of maintaining a certain physical distance between them. A close relationship among the tutors and students were observed. Moreover, the interactions among the masters/tutors and learners mostly tend to be collectively central because the teaching and learning process in various settings was mostly conducted in groups instead of individually, such as music gatherings, troupe performances and rehearsals, and *pai-he* classes. In addition, the tutors' teaching styles tend to tolerate uncertainty, while the masters' teaching styles tend to avoid it. The tutors, in general, did not expect strict obedience to follow themselves, while some masters did not allow a diverse musical style that differed from their own styles. Furthermore, the tutors tend to set short-term goals for students, whereas the masters focused on the apprentices' long-term development. The tutors often focused on students' short-term performances rather than evaluating their achievements in the long run, such as organizing semiannual performances and weekly four-hour music gatherings for students. Meanwhile, in apprenticeship, the masters' expectations toward the apprentices focused on their professions' long-term development, such as becoming a professional musician in the future.

According to Schippers (2010), the mode of transmission comprises the continuum (1) from atomistic/analytical to holistic, which means the strategies are from didactic and progressive to a less systematic but comprehensive; (2) from written to aural, which refers to the notated

scores to relying on aural approaches; and (3) from tangible to intangible, which describe the teaching from theoretical and focus on technical skills to spiritual values and expressions of the music.

The masters' and tutors' teaching approaches tend to employ holistic modes of transmission, with the masters being more prominent. The findings show that masters' and tutors' teachings seldom involve progressive or formal teaching curricula, lesson structures, or examinations. Instead, they focus on demonstration and practicing by referring to themselves rather than verbal explanations. Masters, however, tend to allow learners to construct their musical knowledge more than tutors because they often take the initiative to look for recordings for practice and develop their understanding instead of being taught step by step. In addition, tutors apply notation-based teaching considerably, while masters tend to teach aurally, as illustrated by the findings. Although tutors sometimes adopt different strategies to enhance students' aural skills, they mainly rely on teaching with the score because they find it helpful. Conversely, masters seldom note their improvisations but demonstrate them to learners, enhancing learners' aural skills. Furthermore, the tutors slightly lean toward tangible modes of transmission, while masters' teaching tends to be intangible. Tutors would spend little time explaining the Cantonese operatic music theories and enhancing students' technical skills. However, in contrast to masters, tutors rarely encourage improvisation or explain the expressions of the pieces.

Figure 6.1

Masters' and Tutors' Pai-he Teaching Styles

Dimensions of interaction

Modes of transmission
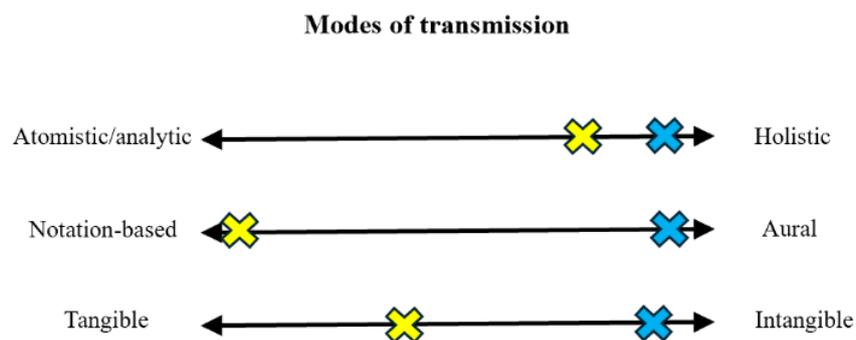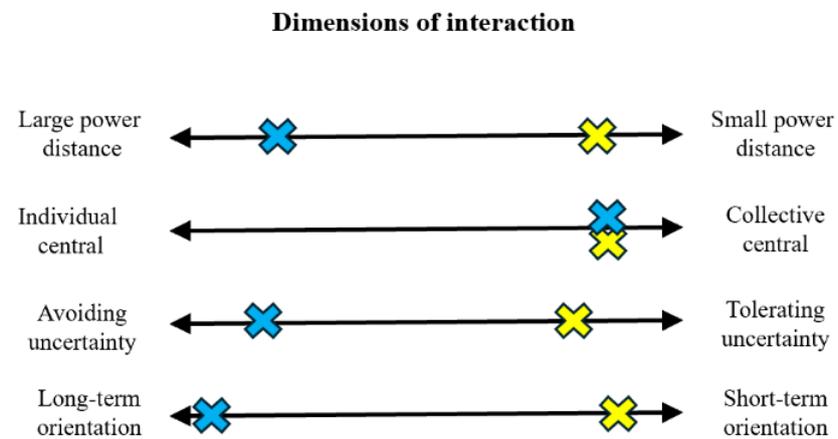
X : Masters' teaching styles under apprenticeship

X : Tutors' teaching styles in the *pai-he* courses

Note. This figure demonstrates the masters' and tutors' teaching styles based on Schippers's (2010) Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework. The blue cross represents the masters' teaching styles, and the yellow cross illustrates the tutors' teaching styles. It is important to note that this figure is not intended to present parametric findings; instead, it highlights the extent to which the teaching styles of masters and tutors differ from one another. These differences are based on perceptual and conceptual insights rather than parametric data.

6.2.2 Conservatoire Tradition

6.2.2.1 Formalised Context

The institutions incorporate a formal context for nurturing Cantonese opera artists, as mentioned in the previous chapters. The institution incorporates various diploma and bachelor's programs for training Cantonese opera actors and musicians. Regardless of the differences in terms of the program titles, they offer a standardised and systematic teaching curriculum, with clear teaching and learning objectives, and assessments. In addition to the formal educational setting, rich resources, such as ample facilities and musical instruments, rehearsal and practicing venues and classrooms, and exchange tours, are provided to enhance the students' learning experiences, as indicated by the findings in Chapter 5. Compared with apprenticeship, the institution provides a more comprehensive context for students, not only in Cantonese opera training but also exposure to other genres of arts and culture. As revealed in the research findings, students in the institution are required to delve into subjects beyond Cantonese opera, such as cultural studies and language studies.

6.2.2.2 Teaching Strategies

As reported in Chapter 5, the most frequently applied teaching strategies are authentic learning activities and imitation of the teacher's style, along with the application of authentic and formative assessments to assess students' learning progress, in addition to summative assessment, which is the mandatory assessment system of the institution. Teachers primarily utilise various authentic learning activities and authentic assessments to simulate the unpredictable scenarios of actual performance and assess students' application of *pai-he* knowledge and theories learned. As the participants highlighted, this type of teaching strategy can deepen students' understanding of the acquired knowledge through learning by doing and practically accumulating experiences and subsequently understanding and enhancing their

pai-he skills. This strategy resonates with the nature of transformative pedagogy, as illustrated in Carey et al. (2013), which emphasises the learning process of contextualizing the content and assessments as part of their teaching strategies. The findings in Phase II of this study also indicate that students tend to be more independent in learning and often show curiosity in exploring new concepts throughout the authentic learning activities. Other studies have also reported similar findings that the real-world learning context offered by the transformative pedagogy enhances students' problem solving and critical thinking skills (Adefila et al., 2023; Alaniz & Cerling, 2023). Moreover, the findings from Chapter 5 document the use of formative assessment, which enables teachers to adjust their teaching schedule and reflect on their teaching practice, based on students' understanding and to consolidate further their unfamiliar topics.

By contrast, imitation of teacher's style is a typical example of transferred pedagogy, resonating with its didactic and mimicry nature, as stated in Carey et al. (2013) research. The Phase II findings show that teachers tend to adopt transfer pedagogy when teaching more challenging concepts with clear instructions and assisting weaker students. Teachers would demonstrate the challenging skills for students to follow and imitate them as reference. Carey et al. (2013) also revealed partly similar findings that the transferred pedagogical approaches are more often seen in teaching first-year students because their skills are not so advanced and need further instruction. In addition to demonstrating for students to imitate, teachers showed more didactic and explicit instructions to explain the challenging concepts or take notes for the students. For instance, some students struggled with aural skills and could not play by ear accurately. The teacher would first ask the students to try on their own and point out their mistakes. If the students cannot succeed after a few attempts, the teacher would

notate the melody on the score for their reference. Meanwhile, the overuse of transfer pedagogies might lead to reliance on the teacher's instruction and a lack of personal style among the students. Thus, the benefits of transformative and transfer pedagogies must be utilised on the basis of the students' learning styles and capabilities and assess their learning progress with suitable assessments.

6.2.2.3 Influences of Westernization and Institutionalization

While the Cantonese opera music degree programs in the institution offered multiple advantages, various scholars are concerned about the impacts brought by Westernization and institutionalization while including the traditional genres in such formal educational settings (Bohlman, 1988; Hill, 2009; Keegan-Phipps, 2007; Leung, 2018; Nettl, 1986; Rubinoff, 2017).

First, Bohlman (1988) and Keegan-Phipps (2007) were concerned about the impacts brought by Westernization and institutionalization, such as the reformulation or reconstruction of the traditional genres, through establishing the direction or even creating orchestras for traditional music, which ultimately distorts the traditional essence and performing styles of these genres. Bohlman (1988) used German–American music as an example, illustrating how, within numerous German–American communities in the Midwest, church choirs often performed in social contexts beyond the church settings, blending their religious repertoire with secular folk songs. Institutionalization, at the same time, supports such kind of reformulated repertoires of the German–American music tradition. Nonetheless, the findings of the current study did not report similar issues as Bohlman (1988) and Keegan-Phipps

(2007) stated. The institution, in the case of this study, maintains the conventional instrumentation of *pai-he,* and the teachers have selected the traditional repertoire as the basis for teaching. Meanwhile, the trend of reformulation or reconstruction of the Cantonese operatic repertoires, performing style, and instrumentation was evident, as Yu (2001) indicated. In recent decades, numerous albums and recordings from mainland China have utilised orchestral accompaniment as *pai-he*, instead of the traditional instrumentation of melodic and percussion sections only (Yu, 2001). As documented in Yu's (2001) literature, some Cantonese opera practitioners appreciate the rich musical texture performed by the orchestral accompaniment, while some criticise such accompaniment approach as "kind of weird and is different from Cantonese opera" (pp. 283–284).

Second, Bohlman (1988) underscored the issue of specialization in the traditional genres as part of the effects of institutionalization. Specialization happens when an individual develops and applies specific skills that contribute to the overall structure (Bohlman, 1988). In other words, specialization, within the institutional context, refers to the process of dividing the discipline into specific areas, which enables students to focus on achieving expertise in that particular area of study. Bohlman (1988) explained that institutionalization also promotes the acquisition of specialised skills but tends to organise them in a hierarchical manner within organizations. The findings of the present study did not provide significant evidence of the type of specialization, as Bohlman (1988) described. However, the education system of the institution does lean slightly toward specialization. The findings revealed that students at the institution are free to choose their major and minor instruments as part of their study, with specific training provided. Nonetheless, this type of specialization and corresponding training are necessary for students to ensure that their technical skills are qualified and sufficient to

become a professional *pai-he* musician.

Third, Hill (2009) outlined the influence of Westernization and institutionalization on traditional genre programs, including the music transmission method, aesthetic values, repertoire selection, and performing styles. Rubinoff (2017) stated a similar point of view and further added that Westernization also brings and imposes Western orchestral disciplines, principles, and aesthetic values on the traditional genres. Meanwhile, the current research findings revealed that the institution teachers recognise the limitations of the formal educational setting within the institution, and they attempt to maintain the traditional practice of teaching *pai-he*. Chapter 5 compares the traditional pedagogies with conservatoire tradition in terms of the teaching setting, curriculum, teaching strategies and assessments, in which the overall teaching strategies are similar, regardless of the slight differences in actual teaching. Both practices emphasise employing teaching through repertoire, playing by ear, and using authentic learning approaches as part of their teaching methods and also incorporating authentic assessment throughout the teaching process. Thus, the institution teachers are not influenced by the Western orchestral disciplines, principles, or artistic values, as Rubinoff (2017) is concerned.

Instead, the transmission method of Cantonese opera suffers from a huge impact under Westernization and institutionalization in terms of the standardised and Westernised concept of the structure of the institution, as Keegan-Phipps (2007) and Hill (2009) described. As aforementioned, the transmission method of Cantonese opera relied on apprenticeship, which is similar to the oral transmission approach in other traditional music genres. Including Cantonese opera in the formalised context of the institution and offering a standardised curriculum contrast with the traditional oral transmission approach, which is less flexible and

restricted by the curriculum and program structure. The institution teachers reflected the insufficient time in training students into professional musicians within the four-year or two-year duration of the respective program because they can only cover all the basic theories and knowledge of Cantonese opera and *pai-he* within each program duration. As the Cantonese opera practitioners mentioned, practical training is not enough for students to master the *pai-he* skills and eventually become professional players by the time they graduate, even though such program duration might be sufficient for other music genres to train a professional musician. Despite the evaluations of the curriculum being conducted yearly, the program structure and curriculum are expected to follow and fulfil the requirements of the Qualifications Framework. With the standardised curriculum and program, restructuring the program durations and content is impractical for the teachers, and they must adhere to the suggested teaching guidelines for each academic year throughout the duration of the study period of each program and plan their lesson schedules accordingly.

Fourth, the teaching strategies adopted are influenced by other program requirements, as brought by Westernization and institutionalization. From the research findings, the institution teachers reflected that the biannual performance, as part of the program requirements, inadvertently altered their teaching strategies. The institution teachers recognised the limitations of the formalised educational setting and incorporated some notions of traditional pedagogies into their daily teaching, such as training students' aural skills through authentic learning activities. Meanwhile, this kind of teaching approach takes time for students to master the challenging skills, making it infeasible to rely solely on teaching aurally, especially considering that students are required to perform on stage biannually as part of the program requirements. Consequently, the teachers increase the use of notations, instead of

completely relying on teaching aurally, to meet the requirements of the program. This situation resonates with Hill's (2009) perspective that the institutionalised non-Western music genres would inevitably be influenced in terms of the greater use of notation instead of playing aurally.

Fifth, another notable influence brought by Westernization and institutionalization is evident in the recognition of qualification of the traditional genre programs offered (Keegan-Phipps, 2007). As the findings revealed, the bachelor's and diploma qualification are factors that attract students to pursue their studies in Cantonese opera in the institution, even though it is not their first choice. Meanwhile, without prior engagement in Cantonese opera, completing the program requirements is especially challenging. Some institution teachers highlighted the difficulties in addressing students' different learning abilities, especially those without prior Cantonese opera knowledge. They also pointed out the dilemma of the institution's admission policy: on the one hand, the institution aims to establish a high standard of admission requirement for the Cantonese opera programs to select and attract students with high quality; on the other hand, they have to maintain certain admission rate of the programs to ensure the sustainability of the programs and provide recognised qualifications for Cantonese opera artists. Apart from the Cantonese opera related content offered by the programs, other cultural and language studies related courses are part of the requirements of the Qualification Framework, as aforementioned. Despite the recognition of the qualification offered by the institution, the research findings revealed that the students are unfamiliar with the meaning of bachelor's degree because they are reluctant to study nonmusic-related courses and consider them as irrelevant to their specialization, which is supposed to be Cantonese opera. The impact of Westernization and institutionalization of including traditional genres in the

institution not only influenced its transmission method but also blurred students' perceptions of music degree programs.

6.3 Proposed *Pai-he* Pedagogical Model

On the basis of the findings from Phases I and II, a *pai-he* pedagogical model is proposed (Figure 6.2). The triangle in this model represents the training of the six essential skills for *pai-he* musicians, from basic to more advanced and challenging skills: (1) instrumental skills, (2) sight-reading skills, (3) ensemble playing skills, (4) aural skills, (5) improvisation skills, and (6) adaptability skills. Given that the *tou-jia* and *zhang-ban* are responsible for leading the *xia-jia* and *xia-shou* players, their competency in these six skills is more demanding than that of other players. This pedagogical model also involves four primary stages throughout the teaching, namely, (1) preparation of teaching content, (2) application of teaching strategies, (3) assessments of learners' performance, and (4) evaluations of teaching. As shown in Figure 6.2, the four green arrows represent a pedagogical cycle with the aforementioned four stages, which revolve around training six essential skills for *pai-he* musicians. This pedagogical model aims to provide a framework for teaching *pai-he*, in which the actual teaching content and approaches may vary depending on the teaching and learning objectives.

Figure 6.2

Pai-he Pedagogical Model
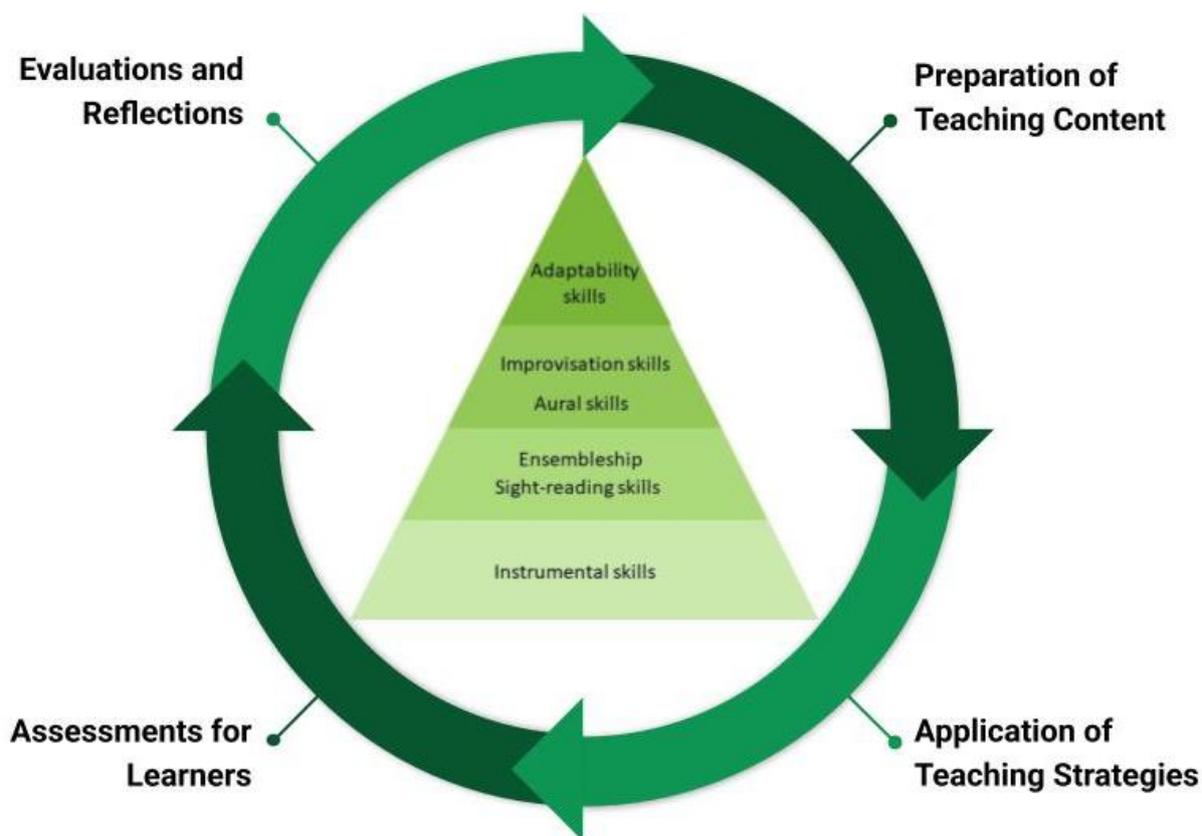
Note. This figure demonstrates the proposed pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he*.

6.3.1 Six Skills

6.3.1.1 Instrumental Skills

The instrumental technical skill refers to the ability to play musical instruments, which primarily involves the accuracy of pitch, tone, and rhythms. In Chapter 4, the Cantonese opera practitioners underscored that instrumental skills are the fundamental prerequisite for *pai-he* musicians. In the melodic section, the *tou-jia* player is expected to master various bowed-string instruments, such as the violin, *gao-hu*, *er-xian*, *er-hu*, and *ye-hu*. By contrast, other *xia-jia* players should proficiently play their respective instruments. For instance, the *zhonghu* player should maintain accurate intonations; the *yang-qin* player should be able to

play the tremolo evenly; and the *dizi* player should also be able to play *xiao*.

6.3.1.2 Sight-reading Skill

The sight-reading skill refers to the ability to read and play the music from the score without prior preparation, especially when it comes to *gongche* notations. As mentioned in Chapter 2, *gongche* notations are the primary notation system in Cantonese operatic repertoire, especially for fixed tunes. Although the traditional *pai-he* approach does not emphasise playing from the score, findings from Chapter 4 revealed that some contemporary Cantonese opera pieces often notate the *gongche* in detail, even for the aria type passages, which require basic sight-reading skills. In addition, some Cantonese opera practitioners noted that professional troupes usually offer limited rehearsals for the actors and musicians to rehearse before the performance. Thus, sight-reading is an indispensable skill for *pai-he* players.

6.3.1.3 Ensemble Playing Skills

Ensemble playing skills refer to the ability of players to collaborate and perform in groups. The *tou-jia* and *zhang-ban* players are expected to lead the *xia-jia* and *xia-shou* players, respectively, who in turn are expected to follow them. Specifically, *pai-he* musicians must understand the correlation among the instruments. From the findings in Chapter 4, some Cantonese opera practitioners indicated the importance of considering the roles of each instrument and playing accordingly. In the melodic section, the sound range of each instrument varies. Thus, the role of each instrument depends on its sound range. In addition, when certain instruments perform a more complex melody, other instruments have to

maintain simple melodies.

6.3.1.4 Aural Skills

Aural skills refer to the ability to play by ear. In Chapters 4 and 5, Phases I and II findings revealed the importance of aural skills because the traditional *pai-he* practice relies on playing by ear instead of playing from the score. With the flexible nature of Cantonese opera, the singers' or actors' interpretation of the same repertoire varies; thus, the *pai-he* musicians have to pay close attention to their melodies and imitate accordingly, especially in the aria type passages. In addition, the ability to derive the pitches from the text is included as part of the aural skills so that the musicians can briefly predict the pitches of the melody and be prepared for accompanying the vocal part. Although aural skills are not the most challenging compared with other skills, they are prerequisites for mastering improvisation skills and adaptability skills.

6.3.1.5 Improvisation Skills

Improvisation skills refer to the ability to improvise with ornaments. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the findings illustrate the interactive nature of *pai-he* and its significance in interacting with the vocal part. Thus, professional *pai-he* musicians are expected to understand when and how to improvise, on the basis of the tone of the texts, the skeleton melodies, and the role of each instrument. The premise is to enrich the music and, at the same time, not interfere with the vocal part and other instruments' melodies.

6.3.1.6 Adaptability Skills

Adaptability skills refer to the competence to adapt to and instantly respond to different situations that happen during the performances. During the performances, performers commonly encounter or make unexpected mistakes. Professional *pai-he* musicians, especially the *tou-jia* and *zhang-ban*, are responsible for covering up these mistakes. The other players, as aforementioned, are expected to follow the *tou-jia* and *zhang-ban*, to assist the singers or actors, by covering up their mistakes. As indicated in the findings from Chapter 5, adaptability skills are the most important yet challenging skill for *pai-he* players to master.

6.3.2 Four Stages

Although different tutors' teaching schedules and content vary, this four-stage cycle is proposed for tutors to formulate their teaching plans and strategies systematically based on the learners' abilities.

6.3.2.1 Preparation of Teaching Content

Prior to the lessons, the tutors must plan the schedule based on the teaching objectives and prepare necessary teaching materials. The teaching content can be specifically designed to enhance learners' proficiency in the aforementioned six targeted skills, such as deriving the fixed tunes and aria type excerpts from various Cantonese opera repertoires as the primary source of teaching content, apart from teaching the whole piece.

Fixed tunes are recommended to be used to train learners' instrumental and sight-reading

skills. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the fixed tunes include pre-existing melodies and are typically marked with the *gongche* notations (Wong, 2009; Yung, 1983b). Playing the fixed tunes from the score can enhance learners' sight-reading skills and strengthen their instrumental skills through repeating practice. To reinforce learners' aural skills, *pai-he* tutors may derive the aria type excerpts from the Cantonese opera repertoire for teaching. As aforementioned, the aria types are flexible, and different performers' interpretation varies and requires *pai-he* players' aural listening competence. Thus, the aria type passages are useful in training aural skills.

Meanwhile, some contemporary Cantonese opera repertoires are of poor quality, as discussed previously. Appropriate repertoires for teaching should be selected by considering the following guidelines:

(1) Ensure the accuracy of the *gongche* notations and the consistency with the intonation of the text: As mentioned above, some contemporary repertoires are notated with detailed melodies, even in the aria type. Although it does not align with the traditional flexible feature of Cantonese opera and is not recommended for being long-term teaching materials, they can be used to introduce beginners to aria types. Meanwhile, the tutors are responsible for validating the accuracy of the notations before using them for teaching.

(2) Validate the melodic contour of the pieces: While ensuring the pitches are consistent with the intonation of the text, avoiding the use of the repertoire with a distorted melodic contour that does not align with the traditional styles and modes of Cantonese operatic music is vital.

(3) Evaluate the influence of Western components applied in the repertoire: As mentioned, Westernization has long been an influence on traditional genres, including Cantonese opera. While there is no concrete or standardised answer to how much Western elements used are inappropriate, the tutors are responsible for assessing these pieces and whether they align with their teaching objectives or not.

6.3.2.2 Application of Teaching Strategies

In Chapter 4, the findings illustrate that playing by ear and teaching through repertoires are the primary traditional *pai-he* pedagogies, while the findings in Chapter 5 reveal the extent that transformative and transferred pedagogies are applied in the institution, which mainly included authentic learning activities and imitation of teachers' style. Each of the pedagogical approaches is beneficial for teaching and training specific *pai-he* skills.

Playing by ear can strengthen learners' aural skills. As mentioned previously, playing by ear requires learners to pay close attention to the melody and perform on their instruments, and it is an indispensable skill for *pai-he* musicians. Thus, employing it as part of the teaching process can strengthen learners' aural skills. For beginners or weak learners, an alternative approach might be considered for building up learners' aural competence by imitating or playing by referring to the teacher's demonstration to achieve the embodied learning process as Bowman and Powell (2007) and Matsunobu's (2011) *kata* pedagogy described, although it takes time for the learners to master it. By contrast, teaching through repertoires can deliver Cantonese opera knowledge and theories to learners through different levels of repeating practice. The teachers may consider adopting multiple repertoires and classifying the

passages into various aria types. For instance, *shi-gong-man-ban* is a typical aria type in many Cantonese opera repertoires. The teachers may gather the *shi-gong-man-ban* passages from multiple pieces for teaching and analysing their characteristics, formats, and structure for learners to understand them effectively and systematically.

These two teaching approaches can be used as part of authentic learning activities and further enhance learners' ensembleship and adaptability skills. Incorporating authentic learning activities is one of the typical teaching strategies of transformative pedagogies, as reflected in Chapter 5. The findings resonate with the features of transformative pedagogies, which emphasise a learning-oriented approach that facilitates learning through hands-on experiences and fosters a deeper understanding of the practical performance setting (Carey et al., 2013). Incorporating various singing styles while teaching *pai-he* is essential for simulating the performance context, allowing learners to interact with the vocal parts and strengthening their ensembleship. Professional *pai-he* musicians may participate in diverse performances by singers or actors with different personal styles. Thus, teaching *pai-he* with diverse singing styles and variations not only fosters learners' aural skills, such as playing by ear instead of relying on the score but also strengthens their adaptability skills, as they encounter a different melody. Furthermore, learners are recommended to take the singing roles while learning *pai-he*. The research findings reflected that the vocal part and *pai-he* are interactive and closely related. Thus, understanding the singing practice enables learners to enhance their learning progress.

In addition, the imitation of teachers' styles is one of the common teaching strategies of transfer pedagogies, as discussed previously. Although transfer pedagogy is less flexible than transformative pedagogy, it emphasises guiding learners with didactic instructions and

mimicry of the teachers (Carey et al., 2013). The findings from Chapter 5 revealed that the characteristics of transfer pedagogy enable teachers to provide support to learners when they encounter challenges in learning. For instance, as revealed in the research findings of Phase II, the improvisation techniques are challenging for learners. The mimicry of tutors' demonstration of improvisation allows learners to start by referencing the teachers and consolidating their understanding toward improvisation and subsequently further developing their improvisation skills. Meanwhile, excessive reliance on transferred pedagogies may lead to learners' dependence on tutors and may influence their learning outcomes. Preserving the traditional features of Cantonese opera and *pai-he,* with emphasis on its flexible and interactive nature, is crucial. If learners rely solely on tutors' didactic instruction and mimicry, developing their personal style in *pai-he* may be challenging. Thus, *pai-he* tutors must strike a balance between transformative and transferred pedagogies and adopt suitable teaching strategies according to learners' capabilities and learning progress.

6.3.2.3 Assessments for Learners

Apart from preparing teaching materials and applying suitable teaching strategies, assessing learners' understanding is \ vital to this pedagogical model. The research findings indicate that the traditional *pai-he* pedagogies primarily employ authentic assessment in assessing learners' understanding and giving feedback on their performance, while the teachers in the institutions incorporate authentic and formative assessments in their lessons, apart from the mandatory summative assessment required by the institution.

Given that assessing learners' performance in the aforementioned six skills in grades or score

is impractical, authentic assessment is recommended for evaluating learners' understanding and progress. Under authentic learning activities, tutors can assess learners' understanding and proficiencies in the aforementioned six skills. Authentic assessments also allow tutors to provide concrete feedback based on the simulated realistic situations of performances, so that the learners can avoid making the same mistake during actual performances. Furthermore, formative assessments can be employed to identify learners' learning difficulties. The findings from Phase II showed that the teachers in the institution applied formative assessments to monitor students' learning progress and address their unfamiliar concepts. Similarly, through formative assessment, *pai-he* tutors can perceive learners' misconceptions or unfamiliarity toward certain Cantonese opera theories or notions and consider adjusting their teaching accordingly.

6.3.2.4 Evaluations of Teaching and Reflections

Evaluations of teaching and reflections serve as the final stage in the pedagogical cycle, and concurrently, they are the initial step in formulating and organizing the new teaching content. Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching based on learners' performances is crucial for tutors to consider how they should refine their future teaching approaches. Despite the benefits of the aforementioned teaching approaches, learners' capabilities and competencies vary. Thus, *pai-he* tutors have to reflect on the learners' progress and performances to adjust their teaching strategies for the coming lessons and address the weaknesses of the learners.

Apart from evaluations on the effectiveness of teaching, reflections on learners' learning motives are crucial for considering future teaching content. From the research findings, the

learners possessed different backgrounds and motives for learning *pai-he*. In the community, some were amateurs, and some aimed to become professional *pai-he* musicians. By contrast, some students pursued becoming professional players in the institution, while some did not consider studying *pai-he* as their first priority. For amateur learners, having tutors train them with strict professional standards is unrealistic, and thus, tutors should guide them in exploring the traditional practice of *pai-he*. Conversely, learners who are pursuing to become professional musicians must be taught with high standards. In addition, tutors must reflect on how to increase overall learners' learning motivation in the long run to transmit *pai-he* knowledge to future generations.

The following are the suggested points for evaluations and reflections to prepare for future teaching:

(1) To what extent did the lesson achieve the teaching objectives? What can be done to improve the teaching effectiveness?

(2) What were the learners' weaknesses, and which aspects did they find challenging?

(3) Did the learners show improvement in their learning compared with the previous lessons?

(4) To what extent did the learners show interest in learning the current topic?

6.4 Summary

This chapter has discussed the research findings from Phases I and II, illustrating the traditional practice for teaching and learning *pai-he* and the pedagogies applied in the

institutions in modern society. On the basis of these findings, a pedagogical model was developed and formulated, covering six essential skills for professional *pai-he* musicians and four primary stages in structuring the teaching, from preparation of teaching materials, application of teaching strategies, assessing students' learning progress and understanding, to reflections of teaching effectiveness. This pedagogical model serves as a suggested framework for educators, including the teachers in the institutions and community tutors, to structure the teaching plans and strategies of *pai-he* lessons. In addition to the pedagogical model, the issues and challenges encountered throughout the development and transmission of Cantonese opera are discussed in this chapter.

The evolution of the Cantonese opera repertoire and the quality of tutors in the community are two of the issues that might hinder the development of Cantonese opera. First, contemporary Cantonese opera pieces incorporate various innovative elements or borrow from Western musical concepts but omit or violate the traditional aesthetic values and essence of the genre. Some practitioners support these types of evolution and believe that it can attract new audiences and contribute to the sustainable development of the transmission of Cantonese opera, whereas some practitioners criticise this phenomenon because it blurs the traditional characteristics and nature of the genre. As previously examined and discussed, Westernization of traditional art forms is a typical issue encountered by various places worldwide, and Cantonese opera is one of the examples. Exploring how to evolve Cantonese opera sustainably without losing its traditional aesthetic values is essential. This study emphasises the need for consideration and collaboration in the Cantonese opera field to guide its development and transmission.

Meanwhile, Westernization is not the only factor that influences the evolution of Cantonese opera repertoire. The discussion on the evolution of Cantonese opera repertoire reveals another concerning issue where the mediocre quality of the contemporary pieces might hinder the development of the genre because this may influence and disturb the learners' and amateurs' conception of Cantonese operatic music. The scriptwriter also serves an important role in the development of Cantonese opera because the quality of the repertoire influences the performers' interpretations of the music. The mediocre quality of the pieces may also limit their performance flexibility and lose the traditional essence of Cantonese opera.

Similarly, the quality and teaching proficiencies of the tutors in the community play a significant role in the transmission of Cantonese opera. The community tutors, as another type of educator apart from the institutions, are responsible for ensuring their teaching qualities. If the tutors lack experience in Cantonese opera or pedagogical expertise, they may inadvertently impart inaccurate theories and knowledge to their students. They may also adopt the mediocre quality of repertoire as their teaching materials and eventually influence the development of Cantonese opera in the long run.

Apart from the development of Cantonese opera repertoire, the aforementioned issue of Westernization influences not only the musical values of the traditional genres but also its transmission methods. The transformation from oral tradition to institutional tradition is one evidence of Westernization and institutionalization, which impose Western conceptions and the structure of institution into the transmission of Cantonese opera when offered with the music degree programs. In contrast to the flexibility of teaching and learning in oral traditions, the education provided by the institutions is restricted by their formalised structures, such as the program admission requirements, graduation requirements, and

standardised curricula. Despite the impacts brought by Westernization and institutionalization, the rich resources and quality of the education provided by the institutions are beneficial. Given that apprenticeships are fading out, the institution programs play an imperative role in nurturing professional Cantonese opera artists and contributing to the transmission of Cantonese opera.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Implications

This chapter summarises the research findings and discussions from the previous chapters to generate a conclusion and thus answer the research questions. The end of this chapter presents the study's implications and recommendations for further research.

7.1 Conclusion

This study aims to investigate and document the traditional pedagogy of *pai-he* in Cantonese opera and how it is transmitted in modern institutional settings. Consequently, this thesis has proposed a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* in modern society by compiling the advantages of pedagogies used in the traditional approach and institutional pedagogies. Phase I investigates the nature of *pai-he* and illustrates its traditional pedagogies through a multiple case study comprising seven semi-structured interviews with *pai-he* tutors and three structured observations of their lessons. The following questions guide this research:

1) How do learners learn *pai-he* in the traditional approach?

2) What are the traditional practices and strategies for teaching *pai-he*?

For research question 1, the study has revealed the informal learning contexts and approaches for learning *pai-he*. Learning *pai-he* can take place in various informal settings, such as music gatherings, performance rehearsals or even late-night meals. The learners generally possess a studious attitude in learning and practicing, incorporating different levels of self-learning, self-analysing and repeating practices by observing and imitating their masters'/tutors' performances. For research question 2, this study documents the traditional teaching

practices, which primarily involve teaching through repertoire and playing by ear. The teaching content primarily focuses on practical and cognitive content. The former refers to technical instrumental skills, and the latter refers to Cantonese opera theories and knowledge. Meanwhile, their teaching methods do not incorporate formal pedagogical concepts. Instead, the teaching styles of the masters and tutors vary, depending on their personalities.

Phase II further explores the pedagogies of the institutional practice through a single case study involving an institution, including two semi-structured interviews with the teachers and structured observations of their lessons. It focuses on the following research questions:

3) To what extent does the case employ transformative and/or transferred pedagogies?

4) What are the commonalities and differences between traditional practices and institutional pedagogies for teaching *pai-he*?

Phase II has addressed research question 3 and demonstrates different levels of application of transformative and transferred pedagogies. Transformative pedagogy typically involves the use of authentic learning activities, allowing students to learn through hands-on experiences in simulated practical contexts similar to real-life scenarios. Meanwhile, transferred pedagogy often entails imitating teachers' styles and is commonly used to support weak students alongside didactic instructions. For research question 4, this study highlights the differences between traditional practices and institutional pedagogies. The traditional pedagogies incorporate informal teaching and learning contexts, whilst the institutional practices involve formal teaching and learning contexts with standardised curriculums and assessments. This study illustrates that the traditional practices and institutional pedagogies share similar approaches to teaching in terms of the application of teaching through repertoire, playing by

ear, employing authentic learning approaches and using authentic assessments. Whilst the institution provides a formal context for teaching and learning, teachers often integrate traditional teaching strategies and authentic learning approaches, drawing from their own experiences as learners. Despite most, but not all the masters and tutors do not possess rich pedagogical concepts in teaching, their traditional teaching practices align with the authentic learning approaches and authentic assessments adopted in the institutions, which require learners to learn under the actual practical contexts, such as troupe performances and rehearsals and music gatherings. Moreover, similar to the concept of authentic assessments, these traditional teaching practices involve evaluating students' performance in real-world situations and scenarios and providing feedback for improvement.

The researcher has developed a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* in modern society based on the extensive literature review and the research findings. Despite the limited literature on the pedagogies of *pai-he*, this study has effectively addressed the previously identified gap in the research literature.

Whilst this study initially endeavoured to develop a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he*, the findings revealed critical issues and challenges in the development of Cantonese opera, as discussed in Chapter 6. Firstly, one of the major concerns is the impact of Westernisation on the development of Cantonese opera. As highlighted in the previous literature, Westernisation is a typical issue that other traditional music genres have faced, and Cantonese opera is one of the examples illustrated by the current study. Western music concepts and values have been imposed into contemporary Cantonese opera pieces in recent years. Some practitioners view this incorporation of Western music elements as a way to sustain the development of Cantonese opera, given their belief that innovative ideas can attract new audiences.

Conversely, some practitioners criticise encompassing these Western notions as blurring the traditional essence of Cantonese opera, which hinders its original flexibility and interactive nature. Regardless of the different points of view, they endeavour to ensure the sustainability and transmission of Cantonese opera to future generations. Despite the absence of a definitive answer as to whether integrating Western elements into Cantonese opera or other traditional music genres is right or wrong, reflecting and exploring how to evolve Cantonese opera sustainably whilst preserving its traditional aesthetic values are crucial for practitioners and educators. This study underscores the importance of thoughtful consideration and collaboration in the Cantonese opera field to guide its development and transmission.

Secondly, the variety of Cantonese opera repertoire and the proficiency of the community tutors differ and may hinder the development of Cantonese opera. The influence of Westernisation is not the sole factor affecting the development of Cantonese opera repertoire. As discussed in the previous chapters, the research findings highlight the concerns regarding the mediocre quality of the contemporary pieces, which may impact and disturb the learners' and amateurs' conception of Cantonese operatic music. The mediocre quality pieces generally involve inconsistent intonation of the text and melodies, melodic contours violating the traditional Cantonese opera style, constraining performers' improvisation in aria type and the excessive involvement of Western elements. Thus, the scriptwriter serves an imperative role in the development of Cantonese opera, as the quality of the repertoire shapes the performers' interpretations of the music. Similarly, the proficiency of teaching among the tutors in the community is crucial in the transmission of Cantonese opera. The community tutors, as another type of educator alongside the institutions, are responsible for upholding high teaching standards. If the tutors lack experience in Cantonese opera or pedagogical expertise,

they may inadvertently convey inaccurate theories and knowledge to their students. They may also employ a mediocre quality of repertoire as their teaching materials and eventually influence the development of Cantonese opera in the long run.

The influence of Westernisation on the development of Cantonese opera not only impacts its repertoire but also its transmission approaches. In modern society, the traditional apprenticeship is diminishing, and institutions are playing a crucial role in nurturing Cantonese opera artists. This trend does not only happen to the transmission of Cantonese opera; similar changes are also occurring in other traditional genres worldwide, and institutions are now offering traditional music degree programmes. This phenomenon highlights the issue of institutionalisation, and the concepts of music degree programmes offered by the institutions are evidence of the Western principles imposed.

The limitations associated with the research methodologies are thoroughly discussed in the methodology chapter. One of the notable constraints is the limited number of participants involved in Phase I, which is an inevitable issue given the small population of *pai-he* tutors in Hong Kong. Furthermore, the single case study adopted in Phase II cannot compare with other cases and hence cannot avoid criticism for its uniqueness. Worth noting is that only one institution offers the *pai-he* programme in Hong Kong. Although similar programmes are offered by the institutions in China, their evolving *pai-he* approaches differ from the conventional Cantonese opera characteristics, such as replacing *gongche* notations with numbered notation system and writing the melodies on the score instead of allowing musicians to improvise, as mentioned in previous literature and research studies. Thus, this study only focused on the case in Hong Kong to explore the *pai-he* pedagogies that preserve its traditional features. However, the findings of this study do not represent the views of the

entire population of all *pai-he* tutors and Cantonese opera practitioners.

7.2 Implications and Recommendations

In light of the previous discussions, the following recommendations are presented for consideration to the tutors and conservatoire to contribute to the development of Cantonese opera. This section also illustrates the implications of this study.

7.2.1 Implications for Teaching

With the above research findings, *pai-he* tutors may consider adopting the aforementioned pedagogical model in their teaching. This model serves as a framework to guide the tutors in systematically formulating their overall teaching, whereas the actual teaching approaches may vary depending on the learners' abilities and learning styles. Meanwhile, given the lack of a standardised curriculum for teaching *pai-he* and teaching through repertoire as part of the core strategies for teaching, noting the selection of the teaching materials is the most important point owing to the aforementioned varieties of pieces written by vast scriptwriters involving different types of innovative elements, such as incorporating Western music notions that influence the traditional aesthetic values of Cantonese opera. Tutors should be capable of selecting a suitable teaching repertoire and critically evaluating each piece. The choices of teaching repertoire influence the learning outcomes and the learner's understanding of Cantonese operatic music. The *pai-he* tutors, as educators who transmit the knowledge to future generations, play an indispensable role in imparting both the knowledge and traditional features of *pai-he*. They should enable the learners to understand and experience the flexibility of improvisation and interactive relationship with the vocal parts, which are

stylistic features in *pai-he*.

Apart from choosing suitable teaching materials, teaching plans are also vital in the pedagogies of *pai-he*. Continuously reflecting and adjusting their teaching approaches according to the learners' aptitudes are essential for the tutors owing to the varying learning progress and musical backgrounds of every learner. The tutors should be able to perceive students' difficulties throughout the learning process and identify suitable strategies for assisting and teaching students specifically. As reflected by the findings of this study, one of the most challenging parts of teaching *pai-he* is to train the learners' aural skills and develop their musical sense. This study suggests that the *pai-he* tutors may consider employing the playing-by-ear teaching strategies at the early stage of the learning process instead of solely relying on teaching with written musical notations. The *pai-he* practitioners and tutors may also collaborate and develop a teaching curriculum to ensure the quality of teaching materials that preserve the traditional aesthetic values of Cantonese opera and concurrently keep pace with the current development of Cantonese operatic music.

7.2.2 Implications for Institutional Practices

Whereas apprenticeship is diminishing in modern society, the training and music degree programmes offered by institutions are prominent in nurturing Cantonese opera artists. Although solely adopting the informal context for teaching and learning Cantonese opera is impractical for the institutions as apprenticeship did, combining the advantages of formal and informal teaching strategies is recommended to refine the current teaching settings. As discussed above, the authentic learning environment can maximise teaching effectiveness and

enable students to learn through hands-on experiences. Thus, the institution can organise weekly music gatherings for students as part of their extra-curricular activities. Considering that the research findings also indicate limitations regarding the allocation of Cantonese opera related lessons for the programmes, the music gatherings, which are excluded in the compulsory courses of the curriculum, can enrich students' learning experiences and collaboration among themselves. Meanwhile, recognising students' learning motivation in the institutions is also crucial. As discussed, the admission policy of the institution is currently facing a notable dilemma. On the one hand, a need arises to raise the admission requirements and standards to improve the quality of students. On the other hand, the sustainability of the programmes must be ensured by maintaining certain admission rates. Implementing strategies aimed at increasing the learning motivation among students would be advantageous for the institution, even if it does not represent their initial preference.

In addition, as a key stakeholder in transmitting Cantonese opera, the institution is encouraged to provide professional development and training courses for the public, particularly for Cantonese opera tutors in the community. As the previous discussions and research findings have highlighted, most, if not all, community tutors do not possess professional qualifications, and no standardised guidelines or obligations are set up to assess their teaching proficiency. Nonetheless, these tutors are vital educators in the community, who are responsible for passing on Cantonese opera knowledge. With the institution's rich resources and qualified teachers, introducing professional training programmes for community tutors is recommended to enhance their teaching capabilities and pedagogical knowledge, enabling them to effectively impart accurate concepts and knowledge of Cantonese opera to their students.

Moreover, with the rise of the variety of contemporary Cantonese opera repertoire in recent years, offering scriptwriting and fixed tunes composition courses for Cantonese opera tutors and enthusiasts is crucial for institutions. These proposed classes can help promote the traditional characteristics of Cantonese opera whilst addressing the issue of the rising poor-quality repertoire in the community. They can also effectively transmit the precise concepts of traditional Cantonese opera and enable learners to evaluate the quality of the pieces and hence contribute to the creation of more high-quality repertoires, to foster the development of Cantonese opera.

7.2.3 Implications of the Pedagogical Model

The previous chapters have discussed the significance of aural skills, adaptability skills, improvisation skills, sight-reading skills, instrumental skills and ensemble playing skills for professional *pai-he* musicians. Thus, including specific training and teaching of these skills is crucial, as stated in this pedagogical model. In addition, the pedagogical cycles play a vital role in teaching *pai-he* by encompassing the preparation of teaching content, application of teaching strategies, assessments for learners and evaluations and reflections. These cycles enable teachers to systematically formulate effective teaching strategies and plans based on the capabilities of their learners. This teaching model can be applied or adapted for use by *pai-he* tutors in the community, teachers in the institutions as well as other educators teaching different genres of traditional music and accompaniment.

7.2.3.1 Teaching Other Traditional Music Genres

Whilst this pedagogical model is formulated for teaching *pai-he*, it can be further modified and adapted for teaching other traditional music genres, folk music or non-Western music, based on their corresponding characteristics and nature. The aforementioned pedagogical cycle can be applied to teaching any traditional music genres, as it outlines a comprehensive framework for teaching and planning, from the initial stage of preparing and organising the teaching plans and content, the practical implementation of teaching strategies, the assessment of students, to the reflection and evaluation of the teaching effectiveness. These stages enable the teachers to formulate and structure their teaching plans systematically. This pedagogical model focuses on teaching and training the six skills crucial for *pai-he* musicians, namely instrumental skills, ensemble playing skills, sight-reading skills, aural skills, improvisation skills and adaptability skills. These core skills are changeable according to the features and conventions of the respective traditional genres.

Despite the unique characteristics of various traditional music genres, they share some commonalities and necessary skills. For instance, instrumental skills are the prerequisite for developing more advanced techniques and skills, regardless of the specific music style or instruments. The teachers may adopt different pedagogical approaches to cultivate learners' instrumental skills, such as applying transformative or transfer pedagogical concepts. The ensemble playing skills are also crucial for some traditional music genres, especially those that require performers to play within an ensemble rather than as soloists. Furthermore, proficiency in aural skills and improvisation skills are crucial for playing traditional music, as these genres generally rely on playing by ear and are flexible for performers to improvise rather than strictly adhere to notations. Apart from the aforementioned skills, each traditional

music genre may have its own specific requirements that can further modify this pedagogical model for application.

7.2.3.2 Teaching Instrumental Accompaniment

As discussed in the previous chapters, *pai-he* is a necessary component in Cantonese opera, as it serves as the accompaniment of the vocal parts and interacts among themselves. Apart from its role in Cantonese opera, different traditional and Western music genres also incorporate various types of instrumental accompaniment. The current pedagogical model can be adapted to teach these accompaniments. Similar to other musical genres, proficiency in instrumental skills is a fundamental requirement, and ensemble playing skills are prerequisites for instrumental accompaniment. Regardless of the differences among each type of instrumental accompaniment among different genres, adaptability skills are crucial for accompanists, as they often encounter unpredictable scenarios during live performances. The professional accompanists are responsible for adapting to the vocal parts, covering up their mistakes and interacting with them. However, the research findings show that adaptability skills are important but are the most challenging skill to master, and teaching these skills can be difficult due to the infinite variations of performance scenarios. Thus, applying the pedagogical model is recommended with transformative teaching strategies, such as designing authentic learning activities to enable learners to learn through simulated scenarios of real-life contexts, to cultivate their adaptability skills. The notions of transformative pedagogies and the use of authentic learning activities can help learners accumulate their accompanying experiences and develop their adaptability skills through hands-on experiences.

7.2.4 Future Research

The current study has developed a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* and endeavours to provide insights for the community tutors and the teachers in the institutions. This model is not only applicable in teaching *pai-he* but can also be adapted or modified further for teaching other traditional musical genres or instrumental accompaniments, as discussed previously. In addition, further research is recommended on the application of this pedagogical model not only in Hong Kong but also in other contexts where Cantonese opera is prevalent, as well as the pedagogies for teaching Cantonese operatic singing and acting.

7.2.4.1 Further Research on the Application of the Pedagogical Model

As highlighted previously, limited literature and research have been conducted concerning the pedagogies of *pai-he*. The current research has developed a pedagogical model for teaching *pai-he* by combining the advantages of both traditional and institutional practices, contributing to the academic field of Cantonese opera and enriching research studies on teaching *pai-he*. Further investigation can be conducted on the application of this pedagogical model to examine its effectiveness in teaching by receiving the educators' and learners' feedback and opinions. The data collected can further refine this pedagogical model and foster the transmission of *pai-he* and Cantonese opera. Moreover, given that the present research was conducted within the context of Hong Kong, the studies can be carried out in other contexts, such as mainland China, where Cantonese opera is prevalent, such as investigating how they perceive the involvement of Western elements in Cantonese opera and how it influences their teaching pedagogies.

7.2.4.2 Further Research on Teaching Cantonese Operatic Singing and Acting

Given that this research study primarily focuses on the pedagogies in teaching *pai-he*, further exploration is recommended on the pedagogies adopted in teaching Cantonese operatic singing and acting. As mentioned in the previous chapters, Cantonese operatic singing and Cantonese opera are slightly different; the former only involves singing, whilst the latter encompasses both singing and acting. Unlike *pai-he*, which primarily serves as an instrumental accompaniment, Cantonese operatic singing and acting encompass broader artistic aspects, apart from the musical instruments. Thus, the pedagogies applied in teaching Cantonese operatic singing and acting differ from teaching *pai-he*. As an indispensable part of fostering the sustainability of Cantonese opera, education serves an important role in transmitting knowledge to future generations. The research studies conducted related to the pedagogical approaches for teaching Cantonese operatic singing and acting are beneficial not only to the academic field but also to provide valuable insights for educators and practitioners in the Cantonese opera industry.

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Appendix A: Phase I Codebook

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
1. Background		Interviewees' musical background.	"I started to be a *tou-jia* player more than 30 years ago… around 1985 or 1986 I became a *tou-jia* player… should be 1985, because Tienleh Music Club was established in 1982 ... no…should be 1983, I was already a *tou-jia* player." (Mr. P, interview) "Under the influence of my father, I started playing Cantonese music and Cantonese opera when I was a kid. However, I was not trained in professional conservatoire. I was 16 or 17 when I joined the "Down to the Countryside movement". Then, I joined the troupes in Panyu and Guangzhou, one after another. Then, I started my music club." (Mr. Q, interview)
2. Learning pai-he			
	Attitudes	Taking the initiative to learn.	"I usually proactively learn and practice whenever I was free." (Mr. L, interview) "The whole [learning] process is all about spontaneous learning, but no one would teach you systematically at that time." (Mr. W, interview)
	Strategies	Learning strategies include informal learning, listening,	**Informal learning, listening** "Also, every time after the

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
		observation, imitation, repeating practice, self-analysis, self-learning, and transcribing melodies.	troupe performances, we would have a meal together. Those experienced older musicians would share their pai-he experiences, Cantonese opera theories, singing and percussions with us. I would listen closely to their sharing and memorised them." (Mr. L, interview) "After the music gatherings, we usually have a late-night meal, then play Mahjong. I followed them to learn, and I would ask them whenever I didn't understand. (I) asked them how to play here and there, then (they would teach me) play like this and that, they would tell me." (Mr. P, interview) **Observation and imitation** "I followed him, he was the *tou-jia* and taught me how to play. He required me to listen to how he was playing." (Mr. P, interview) "Nobody taught me how to play. But they asked me to observe their performances and to imitate and follow them." (Mr. S, interview) **Listening, imitation, and self-analysing**

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			"I also listened to and followed the albums to play. I also recorded my father's audio recordings for my own reference. I followed and imitated his performances, imitating his bowing and dynamics…I had listened to the recordings again and again, and to imitate him. While imitating, I had comprehended and did some musical analysis on my own." (Mr. Q, interview) **Repeating practice** "Again, practicing and playing more to make it into a habit. Every time we hear certain pitches and then we'll be able to recall and play the related melody." (Mr. P, interview) **Transcribing melodies** "Mr. Wong would first sing and play the violin simultaneously for demonstration. Then, Mr. T would use the Walkman to record his demonstration for reference. Mr. T would also transcribe his demonstrations in numbered notations. At that time, Wong appreciated his effort and thought it was helpful for his teaching. Through transcribing the recordings, Mr. T analysed Mr. Wong's

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples

			techniques to learn from him… Mr. T usually practiced referring to Mr. Wong's recordings, tried to imitate his performances, and referred to his transcriptions." (Mr. T, interview field notes)
			
			Self-learning
			
			    "While learning pai-he, I found some Cantonese operatic singing books on my own for self-learning." (Mr. Q, interview)
			
			    "As I was learning, I realised that I did not have enough understanding. So, I started reading books and looking up information. And finally, I understood more." (Mr. W)

	Learning setting	The venues and events while learning *pai-he*.	**Music gatherings**
			    "At first, I was playing in the unions, for example, motorbike night club and something like sorority, clan association; I was in the association, learning percussion from the amateurs…In the past, we used to spend five or six nights to join those music gatherings, each lasting for three to four hours." (Mr. P, interview)
			    "I had many opportunities to practice in those music clubs." (Mr. W, interview)

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			Troupes' performances and rehearsals "We usually gave performances at night. Sometimes, we didn't need to perform in the mornings, and we would spend the time to practice the practical skills and techniques…Whenever we had time, we would practice together. For example, if we were going to perform a specific piece tonight, then we would practice it on that day." (Mr. L, interview) "Learning in the Sha Tin Cantonese Opera Troupe; playing *zhonghu* for around 4-5 years; 8-10 years to serve as *tou-jia.*" (Mr. T, interview field notes)
	Relationship with other apprentices or learners	Maintaining good relationships with other apprentices or learners.	"He had many apprentices around the world. We still keep in touch and help each other." (Mr. Q, interview) "I know them (other apprentices) and we keep in touch." (Mr. W, interview)
	Relationship with masters/ tutors	Maintaining good relationships with the master/ tutors.	"(I regarded them) as tutors as well as friends. After the music gatherings, we usually have a late-night meal, then play Mahjong…Now, we sometimes have music gatherings together, so that my master would not abandon (the techniques)." (Mr.

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			P, interview)
	Masters'/ tutors' teaching	Teaching content includes ancient content, cognitive content, practical content, percussion knowledge, and singing knowledge.	**Ancient content** "He taught me how to play *er-xian*… how to play *pai-he* for the "ancient things". All of these were taught by my godfather…For example, when you sing "Classical vocal style" (古腔), you must use *er-xian*. Those are regarded as "ancient things". When it comes to "Classical vocal style" in Cantonese operatic singing, we will most likely use *er-xian*. There are two types of *er-xian*, including *he che* (合尺) and *shi gong* (士工). In the past, when we were doing the same opera, for example, it started with *he che,* which is also known as *er-huang*, then the rest of the opera is *he che*. If it started with *shi gong*, then the whole opera is *shi gong*. Once it started with *shi gong shou ban* (士工首板), then it will be followed by *shi gong man ban* (士工慢板), *shi gong hua* (士工花), everything is *shi gong*." (Mr. P, interview) **Cognitive content** "He taught me many things, such as how to accompany the music…also told us that in bang-huang, we need to derive the melody through the

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			tone of the texts, which requires our level of aural and listening skills…In the past, some Cantonese operatic singing teachers also taught us about the structure and format of each type of bang-huang." (Mr. L, interview) "Mr. Wong taught the theories in Cantonese opera (e.g., the formats of different genres of Cantonese opera)… Mr. Wong also taught the techniques used for p*ai-he*, (e.g., *jia-hua* and *zhui-qiang*)." (Mr. T, interview field notes) "He taught the others how to *pai-he*. For example, he taught a *xiao* player, which places were not appropriate to play the melodies and how to play for other passages of the music…He just told us (how to play *pai-he*). For example, we asked him how to play that interlude, then he would tell us." (Mr. P, interview) **Practical content** "My master taught me how to hold the yangqin hammers. Apart from that, I also visited other teachers to learn the practical technical skills of each instrument, including practicing scales and the accuracy of the pitches, dynamics, and posture of playing the instrument. For

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			erhu, we also need to practice the bowing techniques." (Mr. L, interview) "When it comes to pai-he, we must first play that instrument well." (Mr. Q, interview) **Percussion knowledge** "I was legitimately learning percussion section instruments." (Mr. P, interview) "Before I started playing *erhu*, I was learning percussion instruments." (Mr. W, interview) **Singing knowledge** "My master also taught me about Cantonese operatic singing knowledge… We must understand how to sing before learning *pai-he*." (Mr. L, interview)
3. Teaching *pai-he*			
	Teaching content	Including cognitive and practical content.	**Cognitive content** "It is a must to learn everything about the cognitive content as well, and you need to first understand them. At least you need to understand *bang-zi, er-huang* concepts, and how to play. This point is very important. And when you sing

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			bang-huang, the melodies are not the same…you need to learn to look for patterns. For example, you need to play an interlude here, but how? It depends on the rhythm here, whether it is one full beat or half beat of interlude. These examples need to be taught. How should we play in one beat and how should we play in half beat, how to imitate the previous melody? There are many things. So we need to listen to the *tou-jia* and we need to know where the beats are. And we also need to pay attention to the last syllable of the phrases. So we cannot rely on the score to play, especially in *bang-huang*, there are many variations." (Mr. P, interview) "I will teach the students about the musical forms of Cantonese operatic music…However, when it comes to accompanying Cantonese operatic music, all those ornaments and other technical skills and the melodies are not written on the score. When I teach, I won't write them down as well, however, I will tell you how. I won't force my students to strictly follow my interpretation. The best pai-he player should be able to blend into one with the singing parts, for example, when the singer is "crying" and the pai-he music should be "crying" as well.)"

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			(Mr. W, interview) **Practical content** "The practical content is all about practicing; you need to know how to play your instrument and understand those techniques…teach the students to play fixed tunes in *zheng-xian*, then *fan-xian, che-wu-xian,* and *shi-gong-xian*." (Mr. P, interview) "Firstly, I have to teach the student how to read the score, if the student has no idea. But I won't teach students who don't know how to play that instrument, since teaching pai-he is not the same as teaching an instrument." (Mr. W, interview)
	Personal beliefs and teaching beliefs	The interviewees' beliefs in *pai-he* and teaching.	"So we must perform and practice many times, then we will start to remember. Also, experiences are important. When we have been practicing for a long time, we will start to remember them and be able to *pai-he…*You know, there is no graduation. Even today, we are still learning and haven't graduated yet…Nowadays, we sing and play Cantonese operatic music; what do we rely on? I rely on experiences. You cannot play as well as me because you don't have as much experience as me. But from the perspective of techniques, my techniques are

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			not as good as those of Chinese instrumental musicians." (Mr. P, interview)
	Teaching strategies	Teaching strategies includes teaching through repertoire, playing by ear, teaching with/ without score, and masters'/tutors' demonstration and students' imitation. Some interviewees also mentioned the rationale behind their teaching strategies.	**Teaching through repertoire** "While the students are practicing, Mr. L plays the violin simultaneously to lead the students. He always asks the students to listen to and follow his performance while playing." (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson) "Mr. S plays the *gaohu* and leads the students while practicing. He reminds the students to keep a steady tempo by following his playing." (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson) **Playing by ear** "Before introducing the new *yi-fan-nan-yin* passage, Mr. S asked if students remembered how to play the prelude. The students could not recall the melody. Instead of demonstrating, Mr. S sang the melody of the prelude and asked the students to guess what the pitches were in *gongche* notations. Some students could answer and tried to play it on the *gaohu*." (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lesson, 17

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			February, 2024)
			Teaching with/ without score
			"Mr. L's teaching relies on the score in every lesson. He introduces the format and structure of each aria type among the pieces; however, he requires students to pay attention to the score. When he realises the melodies are inaccurate or wrongly written on the scores, he will revise them in advance and upload them to the WhatsApp group for students' reference." (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lessons)
			"Mr. R's lesson primarily adopted his teaching based on the score." (Observation field notes, Mr. R's lesson)
			"Overall, Mr. S usually teaches students by using the score. Although he would seldom teach students to play without the score, such as listening to the prelude he had just played, he required the students to listen and then sing the *gongche* and play on the instrument without providing the score." (Observation field notes, Mr. S's lessons)
			Masters'/tutors' demonstration and students' imitation

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			"Some students cannot catch up with the fast tempo. Mr. R demonstrates the bowing techniques for them… Mr. R said that the tempo played was insecure and then demonstrated the appropriate tempo." (Observational field notes, Mr. R's lesson, 19 March, 2024) "Mr. L is demonstrating the *yi-fan-zhong-ban* passage on the violin and singing. He introduced the characteristics of *yi-fan-xian* and the pitch of *yi*. Some students hum the melodies, and some sing the lyrics." (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 8 January, 2024) "Mr. L is demonstrating the first page of the new piece by singing the lyrics and playing the violin simultaneously. He also emphasises the importance of the percussion patterns while playing the interludes to connect the two passages. When he is demonstrating the percussion patterns and playing the interlude simultaneously, some students imitate Mr. L by humming the interlude melody, and some students read the percussion mnemonics and count the *ding-ban* simultaneously." (Observation field notes, Mr. L's lesson, 22 January, 2024) **Rationale behind transforming**

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			their teaching
			"I have changed my teaching strategies. In the past, I used to spend more time teaching and practicing basic technical skills with students, but many of them were impatient and would like to learn the pieces directly. In fact, the better basic technical skills you have, the easier for you to be a good pai-he player." (Mr. L, interview)
			"In my teaching, I will tell you why my interpretation is like this, why we need to do this and that, etc. It's very important to tell the students why…My teaching materials are all marked with the score, which is for their reference only. It is used to consolidate their fundamental knowledge about Cantonese operatic music. Once they are familiar with it, I will show them other possible variations in *pai-he*. So, you can see my teaching schedule is from easy to hard. After introducing all the basic knowledge, I will teach them other variations and choices in each type of *bang-huang*…Since we need to put those theories into practice, I will pick one of the passages from several pieces, for example picking the *zhong-ban* passage from several pieces to teach them the structure, format and other

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			characteristics of *zhong-ban*. But we need to link up each passage in the piece. So, after learning that particular bang-huang passage, we will practice the whole piece, to let them know how to connect that passage to the other parts. Although there are many variations, I will first teach them the basic knowledge, and then teach them the other variations and options." (Mr. R, interview) "I have modified my teaching strategies. In the past, I focused more on basic technical skills in my lessons. However, people nowadays cannot bear the hardship. They regarded basic technical skills as boring stuff and would like to learn pieces directly. So, I spend less time in playing basic technical skills nowadays. If their basic technical skills are well practiced, it is much easier to play any songs… I teach and strengthen my students' aural skills, by listening to my singing and ask them to play the melodies that I sung. They would be able to do that gradually after practicing for a long time…But if you look at it from another perspective, in terms of teaching beginners, it is easier for them to learn with the well written scores in those new pieces. When they have been learning for a period of time, then they have to learn some

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			pieces that do not provide the *gongche* notation and to practice their aural skills. But that basic knowledge could be learned through the new pieces, for example, the preludes and interludes of bang-huang. That's why I also ask students to memorise them in my lesson." (Mr. S, interview)
	Evaluations	How the interviewees review and evaluate their students' performance.	"Since the students are not young anymore, it would be satisfactory if they are able to play neatly and in a steady tempo." (Mr. L, interview)
			"Like how I teach Cantonese operatic singing, I will focus on the student's weaknesses. For example, if he's not good at the rhythms, I will teach him about the rhythms until he understands. Or, for example, if he is not able to identify the pitches." (Mr. P, interview)
			"Actually, it is hard to evaluate or define satisfaction towards students' performance. Some of them thought they were already capable of being a pai-he musician, so they stopped coming to class. Some of them had been working in the community music clubs for a while and realised they were not capable enough and returned to my class as well." (Mr. R, interview)

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
5. Challenges of teaching *pai-he* class			"Because we don't have a venue and don't have time. We need a bigger place. And I don't want the setting to be just a class. I can't do teaching only, but I also want to find someone to sing with... when it comes to teaching, there are many problems… for example, we cannot guarantee the quality of the students when we are open for enrollment. Some of them only learned or knew a few things, and they would show off, then they would say they follow me to learn those things! Then I will be in big trouble." (Mr. P, interview)
7. Problems faced in the field	Views on contemporary pieces	The interviewees' views on the contemporary pieces.	"We all want to be innovative. However, everyone's direction is different, lacking the "build-up" of that particular idea. In the past, veteran Cantonese opera actors had their own personal styles because they had spent a long time building up their innovative ideas, which people nowadays cannot do. Some people are unfamiliar with the basics of classical traditional Cantonese opera and claim to be innovative and try to create something new, which is meaningless. You see, many tunes composed by Wong Yuet Sang were based on the Western musical format, yet his melodies are 'very Cantonese music,' which keeps the styles and interactions of Cantonese

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			music like people are communicating with each other. Cantonese operatic music should be like this." (Mr. R, interview) "Playing those contemporary pieces with the wrong musical formats will negatively influence the *pai-he* musicians' musical sense in Cantonese operatic music. Then, they will also tend to play by relying on the score, and they will be unable to play the traditional techniques, such as improvisation… Some scriptwriters are unfamiliar with the formats of *bang-huang*, and when the recordings of that piece came out, some singers followed and sang, and many people thought it was right. I think we should correct them." (Mr. W, interview)
	Views on the young artists and musicians	The interviewees' views on the young artists and musicians.	"Just following others how to sing, that's the way many people nowadays learn how to sing. If you're able to sing by just looking at the text, then that means you really know how to sing." (Mr. P, interview) "But nowadays, our musicians are not able to respond as quickly as those musicians in the past…I don't think it is possible to train them. Because most of them just care about their work and to earn a living, so they don't have the time to investigate and to further

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
			improve themselves. Why did people in the past earn a living and at the same time develop their work?" (Mr. Q, interview) "Also, many people just want to earn a living, somehow too impatient to earn money. So, they wrote some weird scripts, claiming that those were innovative elements, and applied for the funding. So it is like a chain reaction, different stakeholders and factors affecting each other. So, there are actually more chances to develop Cantonese opera, but to me, it is unsatisfactory, especially in their attitudes. And many people are teaching just to earn a living. But how can we teach and improve their quality? That's the issue." (Mr. R, interview)
8. Nature of Cantonese operatic music	Flexible	Flexibility of improvisation in Cantonese operatic music.	"Because there is no legitimate *pai-he* approach. You see, every *tou-jia* player has different *pai-he* approaches." (Mr. P, interview) "The spirit of pai-he is that the music is very flexible but not very neat. We are always "chasing" the singing part. While 'chasing,' is not a must to completely follow the singer's melodies, we fully follow the singer's emotions to create the improvisational heterophonic texture." (Mr. Q, interview)
	Interactive	The interactive	"Cantonese operatic music

Themes	Subthemes	Descriptions	Examples
		relationship between *pai-he* and vocal parts.	should be interactive, especially in bang-huang, to play the melodies according to the linguistic tone of the text. This is the main characteristic of Cantonese operatic music. When you write down all the notations on the score, you will not pay much attention to the singers' melodies, so everything will be performed very neatly, losing the spark of that traditional pai-he styles and features." (Mr. R, interview) "The best pai-he player should be able to blend into one with the singing parts, for example, when the singer is 'crying,' and the pai-he music should be 'crying' as well." (Mr. W, interview)

Appendix B: Phase II Codebook

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
1. Programme structure		Programme structure of the pai-he courses.	
	Admission	Programme admission criteria.	"The main difference between the Diploma and Bachelor's programme is that the students who apply for the Diploma programme already have a basic understanding and working experience in the Cantonese opera field. While the Bachelor's program admission requirement is DSE 3322, with music fundamentals, however, many of them are completely new to Cantone opera." (Mr. X, interview)
	Assessments	The practical tests are more about practical skills, and the written tests are more about theories.	**Practical test** "For the bachelor's programme, we have a mid-term test and a final exam. The mid-term test involves the content learned in the first seven weeks, like; for example, I have taught the *shi-gong-man-ban* of *zi-hou,* then I will pick an excerpt of the piece and require them to *pai-he*, while another teacher sings for the *chang-qiang* part." (Mr. Z, interview) **Written test** "For the final exam, we also include a written test, in addition to the practical exam. The written test is more about the theories, for example, to test students' understanding of the formats and structures of each aria type, and also the percussion patterns. We also require students to dictate the preludes of the aria

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
			type; and some questions related to different scenarios that might happen in actual performance, and they are expected to write how the prelude could be altered for that situation, etc." (Mr. Z, interview)
	Teaching content	The teaching content in the institution.	"In the Diploma programme, we teach bang-zi in the first year and er-huang in the second year. We will teach them each aria type's format and structure." (Mr. X, interview) "The reason why we choose to teach gunhua in the first year is because gun-hua is san-ban, and they (students) first have to learn and understand the nine tones of Cantonese through playing gunhua, without the constraint of the rhythms and beats. After consolidating their fundamentals, we can move on to teach other aria types, to teach them how to zhui-qiang, how to decide which advanced notes to play, etc." (Mr. Y, interview)
	Evaluations	How the teachers evaluate their teaching plans.	"Although we have a teaching schedule, we also have to adjust our teaching plans according to students' learning progress. Sometimes we won't strictly stick to the teaching schedule. For example, when I have been teaching man-ban for four lessons, and they are still not familiar with the topic, then I will spend more time teaching them about this topic." (Mr. X, interview) "Our dean of the School of Opera used to have an annual dinner with our students to offer a platform for students to express their thoughts and feedback on our program and course arrangement. Then our teachers will discuss and follow

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
			up with these issues." (Mr. Z, interview)
	Exchange activities	The exchange activities for students.	"We have benefited a lot from the Hangzhou exchange programme. Our performance students have learned some Kun-ju repertoire, and our music students have learned more about the Yue opera." (Mr. X, interview) "In terms of the bachelor's degree students, you (they) must have at least one opportunity for exchange, within the four-year study period. Apart from Hangzhou, we had visited America and other places in the past, but the pandemic has influenced our planning. We are planning to have exchange activities in Shanghai, Beijing, etc, in the future. We aim to provide opportunities for students to learn more different things related to opera, and also to promote our Cantonese opera to others." (Mr. Z, interview) "I'm glad that we were able to learn other genres of traditional opera from the Hangzhou trip. I have learned and engaged in playing a Kunju repertoire as a percussion player." (Unstructured interview, student F)
	Graduation requirement	The graduation requirements for bachelor's students.	"Our graduation requirement includes passing all the courses and holding a graduation recital, for the bachelor's students. For the graduation recital, there should be at least 50% of the recital duration is related to Cantonese opera." (Mr. Z, interview)
	Transformation of programme	The old and new syllabus after the	**Old Syllabus** "In the old syllabus, the bachelor

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
	syllabus	establishment of the School of Chinese Opera.	year one and two students were required to take a percussion course, in which they only had to learn the percussion patterns without performing. When they take the exam, they only have to write the percussion patterns." (Mr. X, interview) **New Syllabus** "In contrast, we have rearranged and spent more time on providing practical practices for students, for example, the accompaniment training course, which enables students to practice the performance repertoire and to consolidate their understanding of the theories learned in other courses by practical practices. So our courses are all interrelated and consistent." (Mr. Z, interview)
2. Advantages		Advantages of conservatoire tradition.	
	Resources	Conservatoire provides rich resources.	"One of the advantages is that we basically have all the instruments we need, so students can learn from each other…We also have rich resources for rehearsals or music gatherings. It is not easy to look for a place to rehearse outside the campus." (Mr. X, interview) "There are all kinds of percussion instruments here. I can practice with my classmates whenever the rooms are empty." (Unstructured interview, student F)
	Systematic	To teach	"We teach systematically with analysis of the Cantonese opera theories

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
	teaching	systematically.	and teaching step by step from easy to complex concepts. Unlike our masters in the past, many of them would just tell you how to do it verbally instead of writing the score or notes for you." (Mr. Z, interview)
	Teachers' qualification	The qualifications of the institution teachers.	"I think our teacher qualifications are one of the advantages of the conservatoire. Our teachers are all very experienced Cantonese opera artists and also in teaching." (Mr. Z, interview)
3. Difficulties		Difficulties faced when teaching in the institution.	
	Limitations of programme	Limitations of programme structure.	**Inconsistent teaching** "They have a class to learn accompaniment, basically taking our performance repertoire to teach them first. The difficulty is that during the class, it's our accompaniment teacher who sings, but the actor may not sing like that during the performance. The actor's teacher may not teach him to sing as our teacher did, because Cantonese opera is very flexible, and everyone's singing can be different. Then, during our rehearsal time, the accompaniment internship class, there were no actors coming in to rehearse with us." (Mr. X, interview) "Another difficulty is that we also have part-time teachers to teach. However, sometimes we have different teaching beliefs, in which sometimes it is challenging to maintain the consistency among teachers' teaching." (Mr. Z, interview)

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
			Limited time in teaching "The four-year programme is not enough for students to learn, and it is restricted by the Qualification Framework of the academy. They (students) also have to study for other language studies." (Mr. X, interview) "There is an accompaniment practicum course designed for the students to perform various repertoires every year. However, the repertoire must be chosen based on the personal characteristics of the actors, but not for the purpose of training music students as the main focus, although it also aims to offer practical *pai-he* practice for the music students." (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y) "I think we are restricted by the Qualification Framework, that non-music studies reduce our music lessons' time. So, we are missing a course to consolidate students' understanding through practical practice, not only solely limited to the music students or performance students but providing a platform for all music and performance students to practice practically together, without any constraints. However, the course duration is limited." (Mr. Z, interview) "I think we have too many cultural study courses unrelated to my major (*pai-he* studies). There are too many assignments, and I want to spend more time studying and practicing *pai-he* instead. I don't understand why we need to study them." (Unstructured interview,

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
			student C)
	Students' attitude	Institution students' learning attitude.	"However, many students prefer to learn from the Chinese music teachers who come from the School of Music, which is not very helpful in learning Cantonese opera knowledge. But as I know, this is completely up to students' preferences. Of course, if your (students') skills are not good enough, those teachers can help you; but if you want them to teach you to play aria type music, to play *zhui-qiang*, it is not the most effective approach." (Mr. X, interview) "Although the class of students you observed was pretty good, some students are here (admitted to this programme) because of the recognition of this academy. All they want is that piece of paper (the certificate). We all know that, but there's not much we can do about it." (Unstructured interview, Ms. Y) "I think their learning atmosphere today differs from ours, possibly because they are not staying in the dormitory together. In the past, we all lived in the dormitory, and we used to play music together a lot whenever we had time. However, students nowadays just leave the school after lessons, but don't have these kinds of interactions and practice with each other." (Mr. Z, interview)
	Students' weaknesses	Weak at aural skills.	"Meanwhile, many music students' aural skills are not strong enough to play by ear. So, they rely on the teacher's written melodies for them to play. If the

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
			actors sang differently, then we had to ask the music students to change the score again. Even those students who were trained at other Cantonese opera schools were used to playing with the score instead of playing by ear." (Mr. X, interview) "It is quite challenging to teach when many students do not have a basic understanding of Cantonese opera before admitting to our programme. Some of the students are not even familiar with Cantonese since it is not their first language. Thus, they have to adapt to the nine tones of Cantonese." (Mr. Z, interview)
4. Teaching strategies		The teachers' teaching approaches.	
	Address students' difficulties	Teachers adjust their teaching plans based on students' capabilities and difficulties.	"Although we have a teaching schedule, we also have to adjust our teaching plans according to students' learning progress. Sometimes we won't strictly stick to the teaching schedule. For example, when I have been teaching man-ban for four lessons, and they are still not familiar with the topic, then I will spend more time teaching them about this topic." (Mr. X, interview) "When we teach, we also have to pay attention to students' capabilities and their learning progress. We would teach the same topic repeatedly if they were still unfamiliar with a certain topic. For instance, we would teach the same aria type again, by telling them the variations of that particular aria type. So, the teaching schedule can be adjusted

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
			slightly." (Mr. Z, interview)
			"The common weakness of the students is their aural skills. They cannot identify the pitches by listening but always rely on the score to play. So, I keep training their aural skills by constantly asking them to identify the pitches of each word and sentence and to train them to respond to the pitches of the lyrics." (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z)
			"Ms. Y reminded students to take notes after revising the actors' melodies. Some students marked their scores, and some did not know the pitches. Ms. Y helped them write the *gongche* notations." (Observation field notes, 2024, April 30)
	Authentic learning activities	Learning activities that simulating the reality of actual performances.	"Ms. Y practiced the *fan-xian-zhong-ban* passage with students a few times. Then, she intentionally sang different *chang-qiang*, requiring students to follow and play accordingly. Some students were able to follow, whereas some could not. Ms. Y reminded students to always pay close attention to the singers and actors instead of sticking to the score to play." (Observation field notes, 2024, April 24)
			"After practicing the *shi-gong-man-ban* passage a few times, Mr. Z sang differently and required students to think about how they could play. Mr. Z was supposed to start singing on the *ban* right after the prelude, but instead, he purposely delayed singing. Students had no idea what to do and stopped playing… Mr. Z demonstrated and explained how to prolong the melodies of the prelude to allow the singer to sing without being

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
			awkward." (Observation field notes, 2024, April 26)
	Flexible	Not didactically teaching, allow exploration of ideas.	"In terms of cultivating students' personal style, although we don't interpret their interpretation, it is normal for them to unconsciously follow how we play. For example, some tou-jia players, like the cellist playing pizzicato in nan-yin passages, and some tou-jia players don't. So about the personal style, it is hard to define, and is very subjective. So, it is also not easy to cultivate their own style, since the more they follow you to play, the more they imitate your playing." (Mr. X, interview) "Mr. Z discussed with the students how to adjust the percussion patterns according to the expression of the music… Whilst some students thought their designed percussion pattern was too simple, a student noticed that evoking a sense of nostalgia is sometimes difficult when the percussion patterns became too complex. Mr. Z further discussed how to strike a balance with the students." (Observation field notes, 2024, May 10)
	Music analysis	The teachers require students to analyse the music	"Basically, I will prepare the teaching materials and notes and look for recordings on YouTube for students to listen to and make reference with. For example, when I teach shi-gong-man-ban, I will provide the different text of shi-gong-man-ban, and ask them to analyse its structure, and write the melodies accordingly." (Mr. X, interview)
	Note-taking	Reminding or assisting students to	"I always remind students to jot notes during the lesson. When they are doing revision, they should also write

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
		take notes.	down the key points of each aria type after learning them in lessons." (Mr. Z, interview) "Ms. Y reminded students to take notes after revising the actors' melodies. Some students marked their scores, and some did not know the pitches. Ms. Y helped them write the *gongche* notations." (Observation field notes, 2024, April 30)
	Imitation of teachers' style	Students trying to imitate the teachers' performances.	"I always encourage them [students] to develop their styles, but the problem is that they still don't have enough experience and confidence to do so. So, I always demonstrate my musical interpretations for them as reference." (Unstructured interview, Mr. Z) "The *yangqin* student kept forgetting to play the rolls as part of the *jia-hua* and play the melodies by relying on the score. Mr. Z demonstrated his improvisation version of the *yangqin* and asked the student to record and learn to improvise for her reference." (Observation field notes, 2024, May 8)
	Training aural skills		"I will take students who are eager to learn, to the music gatherings I participate in, and have them sit and listen or play together if feasible. Because to learn Cantonese opera, one needs to "immerse" oneself in it through frequent practice, rather than learning it by studying." (Mr. X, interview)
5. Career planning		Preparing for students' career	"I will take students who are eager to learn, to the music gatherings I participate in, and have them sit and listen or play

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
		pathway	together if feasible." (Mr. X, interview) "Bringing students to music gatherings, performances, and rehearsals is also part of the preparation for their career pathway. In order to enter the field, it is crucial to meet Cantonese opera practitioners. In our field, we emphasise these kinds of connections and friendships. For example, during the music gatherings, other players find you talkative and easy going, then they will invite you to join next time. After a certain period of time, you will build up your network and connection." (Mr. Z, interview)
6. Suggestions			"So, I will ask those students who are familiar with Cantonese operatic music to help those weaker students, such as to further explain for them to understand certain topics." (Mr. X, interview) "I always encourage music students to interact with the performance students; for example, they can study for the exam together. Let's say you (students) are going to take an exam related to er-huang; then the music students can play for the performance students so that both groups of students can familiarise themselves with the structure and formats of er-huang passages. If any of them are uncertain about anything, they can come and ask us. Even if we haven't taught that particular aria type yet, you (students) should have the ability to preview that content." (Mr. Z, interview) "I agree with our teachers that learning *pai-he* has no shortcut. In my experience, I learned much faster by

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Examples
			following our teachers to their rehearsals and music gatherings. If there are more opportunities for us, let's say we can resume the weekly music gatherings and benefit a lot from them." (Unstructured interview, student G)

Glossary

ba-qiang 霸腔	rough and powerful voice.
ban 板	the first beat of the rhythmic unit.
ban-yan 板眼	a type of narrative music.
bang-huang 梆黃	refers to *bang-zi* (梆子) and *er-huang* (二黃).
Bang-zi 梆子	the name of an aria type.
chen-zi 襯字	literally "lining words", which means additional syllables.
da-diao 大調	refers to the music derived from long traditional repertoires.
da-peng-xian 大棚線	the tuning is 20 vibrations per second above the equivalent notes on a modern piano with Western equal-tempered tuning.
ding 叮	refers to the other beats of a rhythmic unit.
di-zi 笛子	bamboo flute.
er-hu 二胡	a fiddle with two strings.
er-huang 二黃	the name of an aria type.
er-huang-man-ban 二黃慢板	the name of an aria type.
er-huang-shou-ban 二黃首板	the name of an aria type.
fan-xian 反線	the two strings of the fiddle, which are named *sang* and *liu* respectively.
fan-xian-er-huang 反線二黃	the name of an aria type.
fan-xian-zhong-ban 反線中板	the name of an aria type.
gao-hu 高胡	high two-string fiddle.
gongche notations 工尺譜	a musical notation system of traditional Chinese music. See the table below:

Gongche	伬	仕	亿	仜	伬	仜	仮	合	士	乙	上	尺	工	反	六	五	亿	生	伬	仜	仮	伬	伍
Term	*he*	*shi*	*yi*	*sang*	*che*	*gong*	*fan*	*he*	*shi*	*yi*	*sang*	*che*	*gong*	*fan*	*liu*	*wu*	*yi*	*sang*	*che*	*gong*	*fan*	*liu*	*wu*
Solfege	sol	la	ti	do	re	mi	fa	sol	la	ti	do	re	mi	fa	sol	la	ti	do	re	mi	fa	sol	la

*he and *liu* are considered to be the same note but an octave apart

gun-hua 滾花	the name of an aria type.
hou-guan 喉管	an instrument with a double-reed straight pipe.
hui-long-qiang 迴龍腔	an example of *zhuan-qiang*.
ji-ta-qiang 祭塔腔	an example of *zhuan-qiang*.
jia-hua 加花	to add ornaments.
jiao-zi-qiang 教子腔	an example of *zhuan-qiang*.

ku-hou 苦喉	sorrowful voice.
kuk 曲	there are three meanings: (1) referring to the text that is used in Cantonese opera performances; (2) referring to the text for Cantonese operatic singing performances; (3) referring to the piece of music.
liu 六	one of the *gongche* notations.
liu-shui-ban 流水板	a pulse pattern that has continuous beats played on the large woodblock.
long-zhou 龍舟	a type of narrative music.
luzi 露字	referring to the clear diction of the words
mu-yu 木魚	a type of narrative music. It can also refers to a wooden percussion instrument.
nan-yin: 南音	a type of narrative music
one *ban* and one *ding* 一板一叮	a pulse pattern consisting of two beats played on the large and small woodblocks, respectively.
one *ban* and three *dings* 一板三叮	a pulse pattern consisting of four beats: the first beat is played on the large woodblock, and the others are played on the small woodblock.
pai-he 拍和	*:* referring to the instrumental accompaniment of Cantonese opera or Cantonese operatic singing.
pai-zi 牌子	referring to the fixed tunes from *Kun-ju* opera and Peking opera.
ping-hou 平喉	referring to male voice
ruan-gong 軟弓	the name of a type of instrumental combination.
shi-gong-man-ban 士工慢板	the name of an aria type.
shi-gong-xian 士工線	the name of a mode, which is also known as *bang-zi*.
suo-na 嗩吶	an instrument with double-reed conical pipe.
tou-jia 頭架	the leader of the melodic section.
xia-jia 下架	other players in the melodic section.
xia-shou 下手	other players in the percussion section.
xian 線	referring to the systems of tuning and pitch-naming, or referring to the mode.
xiao-qu 小曲	pre-composed or pre-existent tunes, which is a type of fixed tune.
yang-qin 揚琴	a Chinese musical instrument that is played with a pair of thin bamboo sticks.
ye-hu 椰胡	a coconut-shell fiddle.
yi-fan-nan-yin 乙反南音	one of the *nan-yin* types.
yi-fan-xian 乙反線	a heptatonic scale that emphasises *ti* and *fa* but deemphasises *la* and *mi* to express a sorrowful emotion.
yi-fan-zhong-ban 乙反中板	the name of a aria type.
ying-gong 硬弓	the name of a type of instrumental combination.

zhang-ban 掌板	referring to the leader of the percussion section.
zheng-xian 正線	referring to the two strings of the fiddle, which are named *he* and *che*, respectively.
zhong-hu 中胡	a medium two-string fiddle.
zhuan-qiang 專腔	literally "specialised cavity," referring to the specific melody.
zhui-qiang 追腔	the practice of playing an imitative melodic interlude.
zi-hou 子喉	referring to the young female role, which is a falsetto voice production.