



# Surveying on the Popular Singing Teaching Method at Shen Yang University of Music, The People's Republic of China

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## Abstract

This study aims to explore the teaching methods of popular singing instruction for first-year students at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music in China, focusing on aspects such as the learning environment, curriculum content, teaching approaches, activities, teaching equipment, student participation, and assessment. The study employed a qualitative research methodology, collecting data from February to July 2025 through classroom observations and in-depth interviews with three popular singing instructors who have over 10 years of teaching experience and hold master's degrees or higher. Data collection tools included observation forms, interview forms, and the Item Objective Consistency (IOC) tool for content validity testing. The study found that the learning environment for the pop singing program at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music includes professional recording studios and Yamaha pianos as hardware facilities. Course content covers foundational skills such as breath control and resonance training, as well as theoretical courses in music theory and the history of pop music. Teaching methods include one-on-one personalized guidance, demonstration performances, and scenario-based teaching, emphasizing technical visualization and interdisciplinary integration. The study noted that while the college has strengths in faculty resources and curriculum frameworks, there is room for improvement in adapting to industry trends, personalized teaching, and equipment updates. Recommendations include strengthening industry-academia-research collaboration, introducing digital technology-based teaching models, and adopting diversified assessment metrics.

**Keywords:** Shenyang Conservatory of Music; First-year students; Pop singing teaching methods

## 1. Introduction

As a well-known art university in China, Shenyang Conservatory of Music has seen rapid development in its popular music program in recent years, with popular singing courses becoming an important component of music education. The first year of university serves as the foundational stage for students, and the teaching methods employed directly impact the cultivation of their professional skills, enhancement of musical expression, and future career

directions.

Given the diverse styles and complex techniques of popular music, how to use scientific and reasonable teaching methods to help first-year students build a solid foundation has become a key issue in teaching research. Shenyang Conservatory of Music boasts a team of experienced professional faculty members who provide students with systematic vocal training and pop singing guidance. The conservatory is equipped with advanced recording facilities, rehearsal halls, and multimedia classrooms, creating an optimal learning and practical environment for students.

The program's curriculum covers various aspects including pop singing techniques, music theory, stage performance, and music production, fostering students' comprehensive development. The courses emphasize the cultivation of foundational skills while incorporating diverse pop music styles, enabling students to master multiple singing techniques. The college also regularly organizes various performances, competitions, and concerts to provide students with a platform to showcase their talents, enhancing their stage experience and expressiveness.

The pop music market is booming, with a strong demand for professional and high-quality pop singing talent. Studying pop singing not only improves singing skills but also lays the foundation for future careers in music production, performance, and education. The first-year pop singing course at Shenyang Conservatory of Music aims to build a solid foundation for students, cultivating their comprehensive musical literacy and singing abilities. Given the current diversity of teaching styles, this study focuses on the pop singing teaching methods at Shenyang Conservatory of Music, particularly for first-year vocal performance students, emphasizing the need to impart foundational knowledge, conduct practical training, and provide close follow-up assessments to ensure students build a solid foundation and can apply their skills effectively.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 History of Popular Singing

The literature review is extensive, incorporating both Chinese and Western sources. However, it occasionally includes excessive detail (e.g., unnecessary biographical information about singers) and repetition. The integration and critique of the literature could be improved.

The history of popular singing can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, primarily influenced by American and European popular music cultures. Its development exhibits distinct evolutionary phases.

In the early 20th century to the 1920s, popular singing styles were heavily influenced by opera and traditional theater. According to Murray (2014), singers employed grand vocal techniques and wide vocal ranges, with the musical style dominated by dance music and folk songs. The emergence of jazz during the 1930s and 1940s marked the golden age of jazz, as noted by Schuller (1989). During this era, popular singing became closely intertwined with jazz, retaining opera techniques while incorporating elements of improvisation.

The 1950s and 1960s saw the rise of rock and roll and folk music (Cohen, 2003), leading to a more free and personalized singing style. Singers began performing in a natural, direct manner, with emotional expression becoming central. From the 1970s to the 1990s, the globalization of pop music introduced innovations in singing techniques through electronic music and synthesizers, requiring singers to blend traditional skills with adaptability to new technologies.

Entering the 21st century, Hernandez (2015) points out that diverse styles such as EDM, hip-hop, and R&B have influenced pop singing. Digital technology has enabled flexible sound processing and personalized expression, resulting in varied characteristics.

Existing research systematically traces the evolutionary trajectory of pop singing from classical traditions to modern diversity. Murray focuses on the classical roots of early singing, Schuller reveals improvisational innovations during the jazz fusion era, Cohen emphasizes the shift toward personalization in the rock era, Frith and Goodwin explore how technological innovations have reshaped singing, and Hernandez examines the diverse developments in the digital age.

While these studies outline the interactive relationship between musical styles, technology, and singing techniques, they often overlook developments in non-Western regions. There is also insufficient exploration of the mechanisms of digital technology application (such as the influence of Auto-Tune) and the singing characteristics of emerging genres (such as K-pop), leaving certain research gaps.

## **2.2 Singing Teaching method**

The pop singing technique training system encompasses core modules such as breathing and vocalization, vocal resonance, vocal range expansion, emotional expression, style imitation, and modern teaching methods. Research in each field combines theory and practice to form a systematic training framework. In breathing and vocalization exercises (Li, 2015), emphasizes chest-abdominal combined breathing as the foundation, using methods such as deep breathing control, slow exhalation, consonant airflow regulation, and candle-blowing training to achieve vocal control and singing stability. Gao (2020), proposes that breathing training should be combined with emotional expression to adjust frequency, using everyday simulations like yawning and blowing up balloons to enhance training effectiveness and break away from the mechanical nature of traditional teaching.

Yu (2013), In terms of cavity resonance training highlights the critical role of head, oral, and chest cavity resonance in achieving fullness and penetration of tone, optimizing tonal layers through humming, vowel exercises, and chest cavity resonance training in the low register. Peng Y (2019) analyzes the vocal mechanisms of three types of resonance from a physical principles perspective: analyzing the vocal mechanisms of the three types of resonance: head resonance relies on the oral cavity as a foundation, transmitting sound waves through the elevation of the soft palate; oral resonance depends on the relaxation of facial muscles and the jaw; and chest resonance requires diaphragmatic breathing to maintain cavity elasticity, providing theoretical support for technical training.

Vocal range expansion and vocal training integrate traditional vocal exercises with pop singing characteristics. Wang (2014), advocates using breath to drive sound, expanding the vocal range through exercises such as fifth/octave scales and low chest voice imitating a train whistle, and recommends that beginners use narrow-range works like “Guess” and “Small Town Story” to build a solid foundation Xuan (2014) , systematically distinguishes between true voice, false voice, and mixed voice—true voice requires maintaining an open airway to avoid throat compression, false voice is used in the high register to compensate for physiological limitations (e.g., the true-false voice transition in Eason Chan's “Fuka”), and mixed voice blends true and false voice resonance in the vocal break to enhance tonal smoothness (e.g., Li Jiawei's 16th-octave range performance in “Torment”). Regarding vibrato training, Ding (2023), challenges the view of overseas blogger Keegan that “vibrato is an unconscious product,” proposing that vibrato can be acquired through diaphragmatic and laryngeal control, serving as a conscious means of emotional expression and vocal ornamentation.

Qiu (2019), In terms of emotional expression and song interpretation, emphasizes relaxing the throat through “speaking-style singing,” enhancing emotional impact through lyric analysis, dynamic timbre adjustments (such as variations in volume), and facial and bodily coordination, while avoiding common issues like neck extension in high registers or throat compression in

low registers. He advocates a mixed vocal technique prioritizing chest voice with falsetto as an auxiliary to ensure vocal stability. In terms of style imitation and personalized development proposes, based on the distinctive characteristics of genres like rock, blues, and country, using techniques such as rhythmic processing, timbre changes, and glissando pauses to imitate styles, thereby exploring personal vocal traits. The pitch shifts and improvisational freedom in blues require training in specific vocal habits (Li, 2020).

The modern SLS (Speaking Level Singing) teaching method was introduced by (Li, 2021), with the core principle of making singing as relaxed as speaking. Through training techniques such as lip trills, staccato, and falsetto glides, it balances timbre across all vocal ranges, avoids excessive tension in the muscles around the larynx, and addresses vocal break points for men (e and a notes) and women (high octave a and e) through head voice and mixed voice development to expand the vocal range, addressing the limitations and vocal damage caused by untrained singers relying solely on chest voice.

From a literature review perspective, existing research has established a comprehensive training system spanning from physiological vocal mechanisms to artistic expression: Li and Gao have refined the integration of scientific and practical approaches to breathing training, while Yu and Peng have deepened resonance theory from physical and anatomical perspectives. Xun systematically outlined the logic of vocal register transitions in pop singing, while Qiu and Li seamlessly integrated technical training with artistic interpretation. The SLS teaching method further drives the transformation of pop singing toward a “natural vocalization” aesthetic. However, research still has potential gaps: first, there is insufficient exploration of the impact of digital technology (such as Auto-Tune) on vocal training, failing to address the balance between virtual pitch correction and authentic vocal techniques; second, there is limited research on the specificity of cross-cultural style training (e.g., K-pop, African R&B), lacking comparative analysis of vocal methods within diverse musical systems; third, training strategies for emerging singing formats (e.g., short video songs, immersive stage performances) have not yet been systematized into theoretical frameworks, necessitating further expansion of research dimensions in conjunction with contemporary music dissemination contexts.

### **2.3 Singing Basic Skill and techniques**

Popular music, as an art form that conveys emotion, relies heavily on singers' mastery of fundamental skills. Through systematic training, singers must strengthen core abilities such as breathing, vocal technique, and articulation to achieve a harmonious blend of emotion and technical proficiency. In terms of breathing training, Qiu (2019) points out that singing breathing differs from physiological breathing. Singers must keep their chests open and breathe deeply into their abdomens, using the opposition between diaphragm expansion and abdominal contraction to achieve control over their singing. This abstract process requires teachers to use specific songs such as “Balloon” as demonstrations to correct students' bad habits, such as raising their shoulders, while also using targeted training exercises such as blowing paper games to improve breathing support. In vocal training, Gao (2020) emphasizes the use of lyric reading and syllable exercises like “i” and ‘ei’ to reveal the true voice and address issues with falsetto usage. Qiu (2019) categorizes pop vocal techniques into types like breathy voice and mixed voice, advocating the selection of vocal techniques based on song emotion. Through “Da Du Lu” exercises combined with scale training, breathing drives sound production to form correct muscle memory. In terms of pronunciation and articulation training, Cao (2015) based on Chinese pronunciation standards, cited Ma Xian's view from “Forty Years of Choral Training” that “clear pronunciation enhances sound quality,” emphasizing that accurate pronunciation of lyrics is the foundation of emotional expression; Gao (2020) proposed that while pop music has lower standardized requirements for pronunciation and articulation

compared to bel canto, it still avoids tense pronunciation, achieving natural articulation through language intonation analysis, to develop a unique singing style.

From a literature review perspective, existing research has established a foundational training framework spanning physiological mechanisms to artistic expression: Qiu 's research on breathing and vocalization transforms abstract techniques into practical teaching examples, Gao 's vocal and pronunciation training addresses practical issues with targeted solutions, and Cao reinforces the importance of pronunciation and articulation from a linguistic theoretical perspective. However, the research still has potential limitations: first, there is insufficient exploration of the impact of digital technology (such as Auto-Tune) on foundational training, failing to address the balance between virtual pitch correction and authentic vocal techniques; second, there is a lack of systematic research on special vocal techniques in diverse musical styles (such as rap and electronic pop), such as the differences between the use of breathy voice in Trap music and traditional training; third, there is no established theoretical framework for foundational skill adaptation training tailored to emerging performance scenarios (such as live streaming performances and immersive interactive performances), necessitating further research that integrates contemporary music dissemination models to expand the scope of inquiry.

#### **2.4 Effectiveness of Digital Platforms:**

A study evaluating digital platforms and mobile applications in vocal training revealed that while these tools offer flexibility and access to repertoire, fundamental elements like vocal resonance and breath control are better taught through in-person feedback the study suggests integrating AI and advanced sound technologies to enhance digital platforms While many applications and platforms exist for vocal training, there is a lack of empirical studies assessing their effectiveness compared to traditional methods. Research on how digital tools influence user engagement and motivation in vocal practice is sparse. Understanding user interaction with technology could improve training outcomes. There is a lack of longitudinal studies assessing the long-term effects of digital technology on vocal development and skill retention. Few studies explore how digital technology can be tailored to individual learning styles, especially in vocal training (Sakalar., & Gurel, 2024).

#### **2.5 Shenyang University of music**

Shenyang Conservatory of Music traces its origins back to the Lu Xun Academy of Arts, established in Yan'an in 1938 by Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and others. It was the first higher professional art institution founded by the Communist Party of China, with its motto, "Tension, Seriousness, Hard Work, and Progress," inscribed by Mao Zedong. After undergoing three developmental stages—the Yan'an Lu Xun Academy of Arts, the Northeast Lu Xun Academy of Arts, and the Northeast Conservatory of Music—it was officially renamed Shenyang Conservatory of Music in 1958. Over the past eight decades, the college has remained closely connected with the Party and the people, making significant contributions to the development of China's cultural and educational. It has nurtured renowned musicians such as Xian Xinghai, Ma Ke, and Zhang Qiany, and created musical works with profound social influence, including "The Yellow River Cantata" and "Nanmibu."

In terms of discipline development and talent cultivation, the college has three campuses—Sanzha, Changqing, and Taoyuan—and two secondary specialized schools, with 16 teaching units, forming an integrated undergraduate and graduate education system. The college has first-level discipline authorization in arts and professional degree programs in music and dance, and is one of the first institutions to grant Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degrees. It offers four national-level first-class undergraduate programs, including Composition Theory and Composition Techniques, as well as multiple provincial-level characteristic and advantageous programs. The faculty is highly accomplished, including over 40 high-level talents such as cultural celebrities recognized by the Central Propaganda Department and



experts receiving State Council allowances, forming an educational model that integrates teaching, research, creation, and artistic practice. In recent years, the college has achieved significant accomplishments in research and artistic practice, with 31 projects receiving national-level funding support. Works such as the opera “Spark” and the song “Flag” have won numerous national and provincial-level awards, and students have consistently achieved outstanding results in international and domestic professional competitions.

The college emphasizes the development of distinctive brands, creating unique initiatives such as “Citizen Political Classroom on Stage,” “Red Work Lectures,” and “Red Arts Cavalry.” It actively participates in major national and local events, leveraging its professional advantages to serve society. In terms of internationalization, the college has established collaborations with over 30 internationally renowned music institutions, including the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory, initiated the establishment of the Northeast Asia International Arts Education Alliance, and organized cross-border arts exchange activities to continuously enhance its internationalization level. In the future, the college will be guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, adhere to the philosophy of “rooted in the nation, integrated into the times, highlighting characteristics, and serving society,” deepen reforms, and strive to cultivate talented artists with both moral integrity and professional competence, create more outstanding artistic works, and assume new responsibilities in the construction of a cultural powerhouse.

Existing materials systematically summarize the historical development, educational achievements, and development plans of the Shenyang Conservatory of Music, highlighting its red gene and artistic education characteristics. Research has primarily focused on the college's historical contributions, disciplinary development achievements, and brand practices, showcasing its outstanding performance in artistic talent cultivation, artistic creation, and social services. However, related research has insufficiently explored innovative mechanisms in the college's contemporary art education reforms, particularly in terms of the transformation of teaching models and creative concepts in the digital age; analyses of the deep-seated interactions between cultural exchange and localization practices in international cooperation remain superficial, with a lack of systematic evaluations of cooperative outcomes; additionally, research on the specific pathways and social impacts of the college's contributions to national cultural strategies (such as rural revitalization and cultural heritage preservation) requires further expansion.

### **3. Research Methodology**

This study is a qualitative study, and the researchers used a combination of observation forms, interview forms, and the Index of Item Objective Congruence form.

#### **3.1 Sample Characteristics and Data Collection**

##### **1) Sample Characteristics**

This study selected first-year students majoring in pop singing at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music as the sample for observation. As the first stage of university education, first-year students exhibit strong adaptability, high receptivity to new knowledge and methods, and are in the foundational stage of professional training. Their singing habits and theoretical foundations have not yet solidified, enabling the initial effects of teaching methods to be clearly observed. Given their high adaptability, it is also easier to observe the short-term and long-term effects of teaching methods on vocal techniques, stage presence, and musical perception, facilitating observation, summary, and the development of research papers. Additionally, first-year courses have a strong systematic structure, allowing research to focus on the adaptability of core teaching methods while avoiding interference from observation



results caused by senior students' diverse course experiences and subjective factors. Furthermore, first-year students help validate the continuity and scientific rigor of the pop singing teaching system, providing empirical evidence to optimize the training model for pop singing talent cultivation.

## **2) Data Collection**

Starting from the literature review, by consulting relevant literature and summarizing and inducing, the teaching methods of first-year popular singing in Shenyang University of Music are studied. Design an interview questionnaire, interview three key interviewees, and summarize their opinions and experiences. The questions in the interview should include teaching objectives, teaching plans, course arrangements, student feedback, teaching methods, etc. Ensure that the questions are well designed, the content is clear, and the feedback is effective.

## **2. Analytical Method**

This study employs qualitative methods to investigate and analyze the teaching methods of popular singing at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music. Researchers collected data through classroom observations and teacher interviews, adhering to ethical principles. This approach enables the analysis of pop singing instruction at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music as a case study, focusing on seven key areas: teaching environment, pop singing curriculum content, teaching methods, instructional activities, teaching facilities, student engagement surveys, and instructional evaluation. Data collection tools included observation forms, interview questionnaires.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1 Learning Environment and Course Content**

Summary of the Teaching Environment at the Contemporary Music Department of Shenyang Conservatory of Music.

The Contemporary Music Department at Shenyang Conservatory of Music has built a comprehensive arts education ecosystem with outstanding hardware facilities, a strong teaching staff, a systematic curriculum, and a lively artistic atmosphere. In terms of facilities, the South Campus is equipped with 535 practice rooms, a digital recording studio, a musical theater rehearsal hall, and a professional concert hall, the latter featuring a nine-foot Steinway piano and professional lighting and sound systems to meet performance and practical training needs. Among the 790 practice rooms across the entire campus, some are exclusively allocated to the department, all equipped with Yamaha pianos and air conditioning. The library's collection includes diverse resources such as popular music and electronic music, providing strong support for learning.

The faculty team consists of 94 teachers, including 7 professors, 14 associate professors, and 14 master's degree advisors, combining professional theory with stage performance experience to form an outstanding undergraduate teaching team. The curriculum is practice-oriented, covering modules such as pop music performance, jazz ensemble, and electronic organ improvisation, emphasizing the cultivation of innovative abilities and interdisciplinary literacy. In terms of campus culture, the college regularly hosts concerts, masterclasses, and art exhibitions, inviting domestic and international artists for exchanges. Student art groups (such as the jazz big band) provide practical platforms, fostering a positive cycle of "learning-practice-creation." Overall, the department integrates traditional musical techniques with modern technology, using an immersive artistic environment to promote students' comprehensive development, and is committed to cultivating versatile musical talents with both

professional expertise and innovative thinking.



**Figure1:** Pop Singing Classroom  
Source: Wang JingJing

**Course Content:** The pop singing course at Shenyang Conservatory of Music centers on professional skill training, integrating scientific vocal techniques with specialized singing methods. Through practice with diverse stylistic works, students enhance their singing abilities. In the course, scientific vocal technique instruction follows the principle of “theory as the foundation, practice for deepening.” In terms of breath control, instructors first clarify the differences between diaphragmatic breathing and chest breathing, emphasizing the crucial role of abdominal strength. They demonstrate how the abdomen expands like a balloon during inhalation and how abdominal muscles contract to control airflow during exhalation. Exercises such as “blowing out a candle” and “counting” are used to enhance breath endurance. Slow ballads and fast-paced songs are used to train long breath support and short breath transitions, respectively. Vocal placement guidance distinguishes between chest resonance, head resonance, and mixed resonance. Through scale exercises singing vowels, students feel the changes in vibration location. Humming the “m” sound maintains nasal cavity vibration. Folk songs and high-pitched pop songs are used to reinforce the natural feel of chest resonance and the application of mixed resonance, respectively. Specialized vocal technique instruction emphasizes individuality and detail. In terms of timbre control, the course explains vocal techniques, resonance cavity adjustments, and the impact of breathing intensity on timbre. For example, a “sweet voice” requires gentle breathing and head voice, while a “hoarse voice” relies on slight vocal cord friction and reduced breathing volume. Students are encouraged to imitate the timbre characteristics of singers like Deng Ziqi and Adele and attempt timbre transitions within the same song. Vibrato instruction emphasizes “breath vibrato,” regulating breathing fluctuations through rhythmic contraction of the abdominal muscles, starting with slow-paced practice before integrating into songs. Head voice training uses “humming + high-pitched scales” to guide students in reducing vocal fold closure in the high register and utilizing head cavity resonance for vocalization. Teachers provide sentence-by-sentence guidance on breathing pauses, vocal placement transitions, and other issues, while incorporating stage performance elements to ensure that techniques serve emotional expression. The course emphasizes safe vocalization principles, reminding students to control the duration of exercises involving hoarse voices, and regularly perform vocal cord relaxation exercises such as bubble sounds. Students are encouraged to develop the habit of combining 10 minutes of daily breathing exercises with 15 minutes of scale exercises to form muscle memory and achieve natural application of techniques.

#### **4.2 Teaching Methods and Practical Activities**



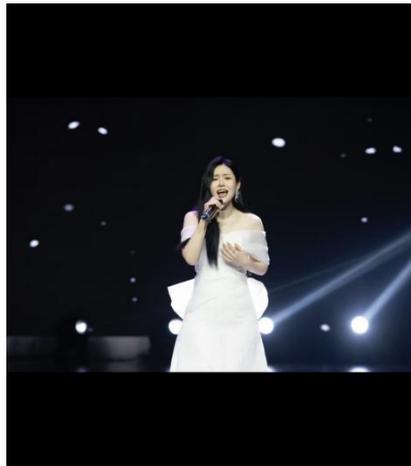
The one-on-one teaching method for pop singing at Shenyang Conservatory of Music centers on demonstration and imitation techniques, relying on a personalized teaching framework to impart skills and cultivate artistic talent. In the first lesson, teachers conduct a vocal range test, breathing stability assessment, and observation of vocal habits, and combine this with the student's preferences for styles such as R&B, folk, and rock to develop a phased training plan from basic vocal techniques to stage performance. In the teaching process, the focus is first on establishing a solid foundation in scientific vocal techniques such as breath control and resonance adjustment, then progressing to more complex techniques like vibrato and mixed vocal registers, and finally extending to the cultivation of emotional expression. If issues such as throat tension are identified during the process, the training intensity is adjusted in real-time.

Demonstration-based teaching is the core method, with instructors using concrete demonstrations to transform abstract techniques into sensory experiences. When teaching "head voice," the instructor demonstrates the clear tone of the high register and explains the oral cavity state and breathing support. When teaching new songs like "What I Miss," the instructor breaks down the subtle handling of breathy vocals in the verses and the emotional outburst in the chorus, using body language to reinforce understanding, when explaining diaphragmatic breathing, the instructor uses exaggerated abdominal expansion and contraction movements and slow-motion breathing demonstrations to help students intuitively grasp the muscle activation pathways.

Imitation-based instruction facilitates the practical application of theory, as students immediately replicate techniques after the teacher's demonstration, forming muscle memory through repeated practice. During vibrato exercises, the teacher provides real-time corrections on frequency and breathing control details; during style analysis, students are guided to dissect the characteristics of original performances, such as the handling of improvisational ornamentation and syncopated rhythms in jazz, first imitating and then innovating to gradually develop their personal style. This "demonstration-imitation-correction" closed-loop teaching method ensures the accuracy of technical transmission while also accommodating the personalized development of artistic expression.

**Practical Activities:** The Popular Music Performance program at Shenyang Conservatory of Music adheres to the educational philosophy of "integrating theory with practice and blending tradition with innovation," having established a scientifically sound and structurally sound curriculum system. The program's course offerings encompass core modules such as vocal techniques, stage performance, and music production, aimed at cultivating students' comprehensive and well-rounded abilities. In vocal technique courses, students, under the one-on-one guidance of instructors, transform theoretical knowledge (such as breath control and resonance adjustment) into practical singing skills. They practice long phrases through diaphragmatic breathing exercises, experiment with different head voice and breath voice techniques, and refine their mastery of subtle differences in vocal register transitions through challenging pieces like "Song of Solitude." Instructors hold music stands, lean in to listen closely, demonstrate techniques personally, and promptly correct issues such as improper vocal placement.

In stage performance training, the classroom transforms into a tense mini-theater. Students no longer limit themselves to mere singing but fully showcase the dramatic elements of songs like "Flammable and Explosive" through carefully designed movements, gestures, and expressions. They repeatedly adjust their body language in front of full-length mirrors, from eye contact to step rhythms, from interacting with virtual audiences to utilizing stage space, ensuring that every movement aligns perfectly with the emotional tone of the music under the teacher's guidance. They even experiment with incorporating traditional opera movements and rhythms into modern pop performances, exploring innovative forms of stage expression.



**Figure2:** Stage Practice  
Source: Wang JingJing

In the music production classroom, a tech-driven creative atmosphere fills the space. Students gather around professional audio workstations, applying theoretical knowledge of harmony and song structure to practical creation. They hum original melodies while inputting notes into software, using different instrument samples to build layered accompaniments; during the mixing phase, they adjust the balance between vocals and instruments and spatial effects based on acoustic principles.



**Figure3:** Stage Practice  
Source: Wang JingJing

### **4.3 Teaching Facilities, Student Participation, and Evaluation System**

**Teaching Facilities:** The college is equipped with advanced hardware facilities, including Yamaha audio systems and Shure microphones for teachers, as well as pianos and professional sound systems in classrooms. The curriculum uses the textbook “Practical Textbook for Popular Music Performance,” which is divided into Chinese and foreign sections, systematically supporting students' professional studies.



**Figure4:** Practical Textbook of Popular Music Singing (Chinese section)  
Source: Wang JingJing



**Figure5:** Practical Textbook of Popular Music Singing (popular music)  
Source: Wang JingJing



**Figure6:** Yamaha Speakers  
Source: Wang JingJing



**Figure7:** McShur 58  
Source: Wang JingJing

**Student Participation:** The pop singing courses at Shenyang Conservatory of Music emphasize scientific and reasonable time management. Each 45-minute class is systematically divided into sections such as song practice, technical training, song interpretation, and stage performance. Professional instructors tailor the curriculum to students' skill levels and needs, ensuring both intensity and specificity in learning. The 10-minute break between classes not only allows students to relax but also provides an opportunity to review the previous lesson's

content or engage in brief feedback with instructors. This balanced schedule ensures learning efficiency while prioritizing students' physical and mental well-being, enabling them to maintain focus throughout the class.

In terms of student engagement, both inside and outside the classroom, there is a high level of enthusiasm and initiative. During knowledge explanation sessions, students actively ask questions about topics such as popular singing techniques and stylistic differences. beginners delve into the vocal differences between popular singing and classical or ethnic singing, and actively participate in selecting songs and planning course content. During practical singing sessions, students take turns performing classic or original works on stage. Peers listen and take notes, discussing topics such as tone control and emotional expression, while teachers provide comprehensive guidance from breathing control to stage presence. Additionally, students analyze Chinese pop songs from different eras and styles in groups, deepening their understanding of singing techniques through research and simulated performances. Outside of class, they extend their learning to real-world stages through on-campus performances and interactions with external musicians, forming an integrated “learning-practice-performance” model that effectively enhances professional singing skills.



**Figure8:** Ms.Shang Yanxia instructs students to sing

Source: Wang Jingjing

Evaluation System: Exams are divided into mid-term and final assessments, including written tests and performance evaluations. Written tests assess music theory, while performance evaluations require students to sing songs, with scoring based on dimensions such as vocal techniques and emotional expression. Teachers provide feedback through classroom demonstrations, personalized guidance, and encouraging student interaction, using multi-dimensional evaluations to help students improve.



**Figure9:** Students taking exams

Source: Wang Jingjing

## 5. Conclusion

This study explores the teaching methods of popular singing at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music, analyzing the curriculum structure of the first-year program in the Popular Singing major. The study focuses on seven key areas: teaching environment, content of popular singing instruction, teaching methods, teaching activities, teaching equipment, student engagement in the Popular Singing major, and assessment of popular singing instruction. The findings reveal that the Popular Singing program at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music boasts a solid teaching foundation and a systematic curriculum framework, supported by a strong faculty. The program has a solid foundation in teaching infrastructure and talent cultivation, laying a strong foundation for students' professional studies. The curriculum covers multiple aspects such as pop singing techniques, music theory, and stage performance, emphasizing the cultivation of foundational skills while incorporating diverse pop music styles, enabling students to master various singing techniques. Additionally, through organizing various performances, competitions, and concerts, the program provides students with a platform to showcase and enhance their stage experience and expressive abilities.

## 6. Discussion

From the perspective of the teaching environment, the limited number of rehearsal halls and poor soundproofing have a negative impact on students' daily practice and group collaboration, thereby affecting teaching quality; in terms of course content, the disconnect between theory and practice, as well as insufficient coverage of the diverse forms of contemporary popular music, hinder students' comprehensive development; teaching methods rely on traditional models and lack innovation, making it difficult to fully stimulate students' enthusiasm and creativity; the scope of practical activities is limited, preventing students from accumulating rich industry experience; outdated teaching equipment hinders students' practical experience of modern music production processes; low student engagement affects learning outcomes; and an incomplete assessment system fails to comprehensively and scientifically evaluate students' learning progress. However, experts' suggestions regarding optimizing the layout of the teaching environment, accelerating equipment upgrades, and establishing a practical platform connected to the pop music industry are targeted and feasible. If implemented, these measures could effectively address current teaching issues. Additionally, further deepening industry-education integration, utilizing digital technology to build hybrid teaching models, and establishing student creation incubation mechanisms are of great significance for cultivating composite popular music talent with solid professional foundations and market adaptability.

## 7. Suggestions

In terms of optimizing the teaching environment, teaching spaces should be reasonably planned, the number of rehearsal halls increased, and proper soundproofing implemented to provide students with a good environment for practice and collaboration. In terms of updating course content, it is important to closely align with industry trends, strengthen the integration of theory and practice, and promptly introduce knowledge from emerging fields such as new media music and film scoring to broaden students' horizons. When innovating teaching methods, project-based learning and workshop-style teaching should be promoted to encourage students to actively participate in creation and practice, enhancing interactivity and innovation. In expanding practical platforms, long-term collaborations should be established with music companies and streaming platforms to introduce real-project-driven teaching. Additionally, digital technology should be utilized to create blended online and offline teaching models, enriching students' learning resources. In improving the assessment system, diversification



should be achieved by incorporating industry practice outcomes and group collaboration performance into comprehensive evaluation indicators to comprehensively and scientifically assess students. In terms of equipment updates and technological integration, we will accelerate the upgrading of recording studios and other equipment to enable students to access and utilize advanced music production technologies. In supporting students' personalized development, we will focus on individual differences, provide targeted guidance, encourage students to explore unique singing styles, and cultivate their innovative capabilities.

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