

# **The Writing of Practical Guidebook for the Rhythm of Viola for Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C Minor, Op.67 for First-Year Students at Sias University in Zhengzhou of Henan Province**

**Wang Shuai and Thanyawat Sondhiratna**  
Bangkokthonburi University, Bangkok, Thailand  
Corresponding Author, E-mail: 563671289@qq.com

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Abstract**

In China, the training value of viola in symphony is not paid enough attention, and the research on viola in symphony performance is relatively few. The objectives of this research were (1) To study the rhythm characteristics of viola of Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 from experts, and (2) To write the Practical Guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67 for first year students at Sias University.

The research methodology was qualitative. The study emphasized on interviewing three key informants who are the experts in viola teaching and performing, combined with studying other related literature by the researcher.

The results of this research were: (1) Through literature review and interviews with three experts, the teaching contents about the playing method of viola rhythm has been analyzed and summarized. (2) The suitable Practical Guidebook for first year undergraduate viola students has been compiled after the evaluation by the item-objective Consistency (IOC) which it was verified by three experts. The results of this research have been revised twice according to the recommendations from the experts. The Practical Guidebook contains each content thoroughly according to the purposes of study. The second-round item-objective congruence score was 0.967.

**Keywords:** The Writing of Practical Guidebook; The Rhythm of Viola; Beethoven's Symphony No.5; Sias University

## **Introduction**

In symphony teaching, students generally lack team spirit and sense of cooperation. Teachers should guide students on band fragments from the superficial to the profound. Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 is often used as a test piece for orchestra players, both in timbre treatment and technical treatment, demanding high details of performance. Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 is very suitable for first-year undergraduate students to learn symphonic music. Through the training of Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67, it can not only help students improve their understanding of rhythm, but also improve their ability to play symphony cooperation, which is of great significance to their future study and employment.

## Literature Reviews

### **Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67**

According to Choi (2003) mentioned that because Beethoven once said that the musical motive for composing the symphony was "fate's knock at the door." However, according to people's broad understanding, the theme of his music is not a simple sound reproduction and simulation of "knock at the door", but from a broader and deeper sense, the expression of a person struggling with "fate", facing the reality of the harsh and dark, facing the fate of the rough and smooth. Many difficulties, but not willing to yield, the spirit of struggle, so it has eternal artistic charm.

According to Tan (2022) thought that Beethoven's works have two styles, Viennese classicism and Romanticism. In the history of European music, he is praised as "the masterpiece of classicism and the pioneer of Romanticism", especially his famous symphonic works, such as Symphony No.3, Symphony No.5, Symphony No.6, Symphony No.9, etc. Beethoven was also known as the "King of the symphony" later. Even his teacher Haydn, the "father of the Western symphony", praised Beethoven as "The pupil surpasses the master". Symphony No.5 is Beethoven's first work with a very complex content. At the same time, it is also a classic work with a dramatic motive throughout the first movement, which also lays the dominant motive of the whole work. Such a series of organic development with a core motive and the final form of a large-scale work is a major innovation in symphonies. Many music scholars believe that Symphony No.5 is the most complete and basic prototype of symphonies. In Symphony No.5, Beethoven's pioneering performance of some historical themes and heroic figures broke the conventions in the history of western music creation. The symphony was originally written by Beethoven to Napoleon in recognition of his heroism, but after Napoleon was declared emperor, Beethoven revised it to celebrate the millions of heroes who had fought against their fate. Beethoven in the Fifth Symphony, through the motivational style of creation for the works to give a unique sound effect. In the whole symphony, Beethoven expanded the capacity of the ending part, so that the powerful magma torrent of "fate" finally turned into a triumphant song of the heroes' freedom after the brave struggle in front of the Arc de Triomphe, and the symphony came to a brilliant end. The author's distinctive creative personality is still full of love for music creation in the face of suffering. The charm of brave and life struggle personality has also been fully reflected. As Engels wrote to his sister, "It was wonderful music to hear the symphony last night. If you have not heard this magnificent work, you may say that you have never heard any good music in your life. "Symphony of Destiny" is worthy of the performance of the fight with the fate of the most beautiful hymn.

According to Xu (2021), Symphony No.5 is one of the most famous classical music works known around the world and one of the most frequently performed symphonies. It is widely regarded as one of the cornerstones of Western music. Hoffmann described the symphony as "one of the most important works of its time." This work can be regarded as a typical generation of symphonies of the transition period between classical and romantic. The Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 is often used as a piece of the exam for major orchestra players, and everyone will have to pay more attention to the details of the performance both in terms of timbre processing and technical processing.

Summary of the viola and Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 :

1) The viola is a stringed instrument halfway between the violin and the cello. It is larger than the violin, has thicker strings, slower pronunciation, requires more skill to play,

has a warm, full, almost human voice, and is expressive, Viola can fully play what violin plays.

2) The viola is a very special part of the symphony, often plays the inner voice in quartets and symphonies. but the viola is much better at connecting, supporting and combining other parts, Viola is an important stringed instrument in the family, and it is also a very special part in the symphony.

3) Ludwig van Beethoven was an outstanding German musician, one of the representatives of the Vienna School of classical music and one of the greatest composers in the history of world music. His works have a very profound influence on the development of world music, and he is honored as the "saint of music" and the "king of symphony".

4) Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 is one of the most famous classical music works in the world and one of the most frequently performed symphonies. It is one of the cornerstones of Western music and a typical example of symphonies of the transition period between classicism and Romanticism.

5) The Fifth Symphony is often used as a part of the examination of major orchestra players, and more details need to be paid attention to in performance.

## Research Objectives

1. To study the rhythm characteristics of viola of Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 from experts.

2. To write the Practical Guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67 for first year students at Sias University.

## Research Methodology

This paper is a qualitative study. Through the literature review and the interview from the experts. The research process is as follows:

### 1. Investigator review and data collection

1.1 Researchers review and practice the performance of the rhythm of the viola of Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67, which has many benefits for viola performance. These references are based on research at home and abroad.

In addition, the conceptual and pedagogical content of the study design was analyzed by a panel of experts. Help researchers to make recommendations on guidebook to the rhythm of the viola of Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 lesson plan, course duration, evaluation plan, etc. and conduct the item-objective congruence (IOC) evaluation to provide feasibility and effectiveness for the research.

1.2 The researchers interviewed Larry lang, vice dean and professor of the School of Music of Sias University, Satoshi Nakayama, professor of viola, and Zhang Yue, professor of the National First-Class conductor. They all have more than 20 years of experience in symphony orchestra playing and teaching, and were invited to form a panel of experts. After the results of the expert workshop came out, the researchers mainly asked the following two questions to think about:

- 1) The importance of symphony performance for viola learners.
  - 2) The difficulty and teaching focus of playing the viola in the symphony.
2. Write The Practical Guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67.

Based on expert meetings, the researchers created an instruction manual on the practical guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67, designed a lesson schedule, and invited a group of experts to evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson plan. The researchers found that many students lack the knowledge of symphony performance. According to the problems found, the researchers and the expert group discussed the main causes and technical difficulties of the current problems in the teaching of viola in symphony through a web conference call:

#### 2.1 Main reasons:

1) In China, there are very few schools with symphony orchestras in primary schools, middle schools and high schools, and even there are no symphony orchestras in many universities. Before entering university, viola students basically learn from university teachers or teachers in training institutions or private teachers, and the main content of learning is solo skills, so they have little exposure to symphony performance. Most viola students have no orchestral experience.

2) In China, there is a great lack of teaching materials about viola. Most of the works published on the market are about solo, but there is no practical guidebook for symphony performance.

3) The level of viola symphony performance is related to the students' solo skills and abilities.

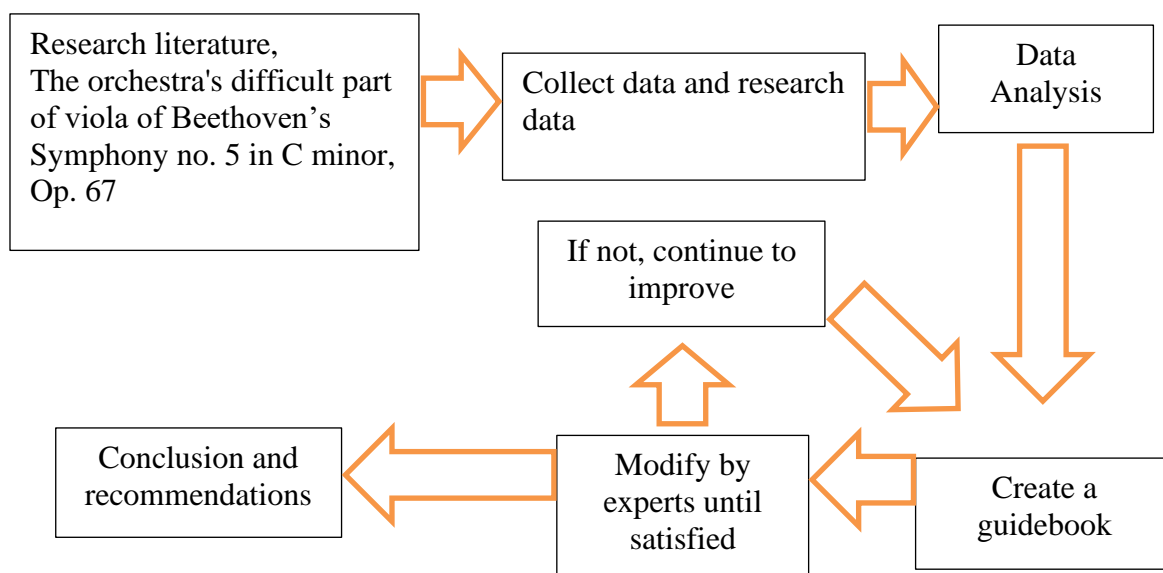
#### 2.2 Technical Difficulties:

Through literature review and expert interviews, the following five teaching difficulties of the practical guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67 were obtained:

- 1) The bowing of viola;
- 2) Viola cross-string technique;
- 3) The left hand position and fingering of viola;
- 4) Performance of crescendo, fermata, pizzicato and other musical terms;
- 5) Problems that should be paid attention to when playing the viola in a symphony orchestra.

After reviewing the relevant literature, the researchers produced a guide to the performance of the practical guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67 and the design of the course schedule. Experts are invited to put forward their opinions, including the theory and knowledge of the practical guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67, the practice and teaching guidance of the practical guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67, the arrangement and design of teaching courses, and the performance evaluation.

## Research Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1** Conceptual Framework

## Research Findings

1. This study adopts the method of qualitative research to study the literature of The Practical Guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67, the teaching content about the playing method of viola rhythm, the present situation and problems of Chinese symphony teaching, and the creation requirements of viola performance guide are studied, and interviewed experts.

2. Through literature review and expert interviews, the teaching content about the playing method of viola rhythm is summarized, and the playing guide suitable for first-year undergraduate viola students is compiled. Invite experts to evaluate the guidelines, interview 3 experts and ask them to evaluate the item-objective congruence (IOC). After the results of the first round of IOC evaluation are published, the guidelines are revised according to the recommendations of experts, and then the second round of IOC evaluation is carried out. The period is from October 2022 to July 2023.

3. The Practical Guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67, which consists of five chapters: 1) Left hand, 2) right hand, 3) The rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67, 4) Performance, 5) Assessment. After studying the guide book, Players began to practice all the Music sheet of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67 for the viola, The first-round item-objective congruence (IOC) evaluations score was 0.87, which was higher than the 0.8 expected by the study hypothesis. Due to the fact that there could be better development and construction and experts put forward 10 suggestions for modification, this guidebook was revised for the second time and evaluated for the second round, and the final score was 0.967.

When students have completed the performance or examination of Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67, it is necessary to conduct a systematic assessment, which can help us find shortcomings and improve, find some points and continue to work hard, do better and better, the evaluation will be from the performance skills, musical performance, cooperation ability, stage performance of these four aspects. The jury can invite experts and teachers to serve as judges and give scores.

The following are the scoring details and instructions. The scoring is mainly conducted from the following aspects: 1) Rhythm 2) Intonation 3) Integrality 4) Timbre 5) Collaborate.

The following is the assessment standard requirements, full score 100 points:

score	rhythm	Intonation	Integrality	Timbre	Collaborate
excellent 18-20	Smooth, accurate rhythm	Highly accurate	No mistakes	A layered, contrasting sound	Good playing
good 15-17	Good sense of rhythm	Basically accurate	Within two errors	There are contrasting sounds	The performance was smooth, with some shortcomings
Pass 12-14	Individual rhythms are not accurate	Individual inaccuracies	Error within three times	A single voice	Basically can cooperate with each other to complete the performance
flunk 1-11	No rhythm at all.	Very inaccurate	More than three errors	An unpolished voice	It affects the music
Miss 0	/	/	/	/	/

Final Score:

Excellent: 90 -100

Good: 80-89

Pass: 60-79

Fail: less than 60 points

## Discussion

The Western musical during the reign of Kangxi in the Qing Dynasty instruments were introduced into China. The earliest orchestral teaching in China began in 1885, but so far, in Chinese music colleges and universities, the learning of the difficult parts of special symphonies is basically in a vacuum. Students' understanding, attention and attitude towards symphony are not enough. Some universities are not active enough in symphony teaching. Students majoring in music also do not pay enough attention to the study of symphonic music, so they will not have a comprehensive analysis of the works and thus be affected in singing or performance (Mao, 2017). In symphony teaching, students generally lack team spirit and sense of cooperation due to the strong personality of students, grade differences, instrument price differences, students' personal understanding of music, students' efforts, students'

professional pursuit, and other reasons. It is also of great importance to study and train specific symphonic fragments for the band examination after graduation. Teachers should guide students on band fragments from the superficial to the profound.

In China, the training value of viola in symphony is not paid enough attention, and the research on viola in symphony performance is relatively few. Symphony teaching is an important supplement to viola teaching, which is of great significance to improve students' cooperation ability and performance level (Zhang, 2014). There is no systematic and professional teaching material about the guidebook of the viola in the symphony (Qin, 2006). To be good at reform and innovation, the teaching of the rhythm of the viola in the symphony should combine the traditional and modern teaching methods, and improve the teaching material and curriculum design. Teachers should analyze and sort out more symphonic works related to viola, and rationally plan courses and exercises according to the style and technical difficulty of the works. The practical guidebook for the rhythm of viola of Beethoven's Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op. 67 can help viola students gain valuable information on rhythm, enhance their understanding of playing a symphony, and thus improve their performance skills. Therefore, in view of the key points and difficulties of symphony teaching in the viola teaching of first-year undergraduate students (Lan, 2020), especially the ability of symphony performance and cooperation, this study selected the most representative famous composer Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 as a practice. In this study, some important rhythms of the viola were taken as examples for analysis. This study presents some guidelines on performance aspects for viola students to learn of Beethoven's Symphony no.5 in C minor, Op. 67 and explores the positive effects of learning symphony on students.

3. After learning symphonic performance, viola students can improve on the following aspects: Music understanding, aesthetic ability; Ability to read and analyze music works; The ability to control the pace; Enhance visual reading ability; Enhance the ability to play; Hearing ability; Cooperation awareness and ability; Big Picture; psychological quality, overcome tension. For now, The Chinese symphony viola has a late start of teaching and the viola has not been widely recognized, and its value and characteristics have not been deeply explored (Long, 2018). However, Symphony playing teaching is an important form of viola teaching in colleges and universities. In fact, Some music schools have already opened courses in the western orchestra, including violas, playing a major role in the viola education.

## **Recommendation**

### **1. Practical Recommendations**

This practical guide book is very practical, it fills the gaps in students' understanding of symphony performance, strengthens students' understanding of music, especially for students who are new to symphony, and is of great help to students in their next study and work.

Through the study of this guide, you will realize that to perform a symphony well requires the joint efforts and cooperation of each player, and each player needs long-term high requirements and high standards of training to do so. With this understanding, you will be more successful in performing various works in the future.

## 2. Recommendation for future research

Collecting more suggestions from expert professors, viola teachers, and viola students, and further improvements, gives this guide book a chance to become a textbook that can be sold. Because this guide book was designed for first year viola freshmen at Sias, it has certain limitations. Therefore, this study shows that the middle violin students have already had some playing foundation when they first come into contact with the symphony, and they can better understand and master the symphony performance by learning Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. In addition, this study only created a teaching guide and did not conduct relevant experiments. A range of teaching experiments can therefore be conducted to test the impact of this guide on students.

## References

- Lan, Y. (2020). An analysis of training students and band ensemble thinking in viola teaching. *Music of Northern China*. (13), 202-203. Doi: CNKI:SUN:BYYY.0.2020-13-099.
- Long, M. (2006). On Learning and training of symphonic fragments for viola major in Conservatory of Music. *Huang (China. Journal of wuhan music institute)* (S1), 200-202. Doi: 10.19706/j.cnki.cn42-1062/j.2006.s1.048.
- Mao, L. (2017). *Analysis of viola Band Fragment Performance -- Brahms' Variations on Haydn's Theme*. Master's thesis. Central Conservatory of Music. <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201801&filename=1017114658.nh>
- Qin, X. (2006). Significance and development of university students' symphony Orchestra. *Arts Education*. (11),4-5+10. Doi: CNKI: SUN: YSJY. 0.2006-11-000.
- Zhang, J. (2014). Analysis of symphonic music appreciation teaching in colleges and universities. *Young Writers*. (22),34. Doi: CNKI: SUN: QNZJ. 0.2014-22-022.