

Cello Teaching and Practice in China

Wu Shuangnan and Bubpachart Aupatumnarakorn

Bangkokthonburi University, Thailand

Corresponding Author, E-mail: nicha.musiced@gmail.com

Abstract

The cello in the field of China, both creation and performance are in a young stage of development. In order to improve the performance skills of the players, we must choose the teaching materials scientifically and effectively, learn from the western teaching methods and textbooks to lay a good foundation, learning to play scales, etudes, music with Chinese national characteristics is also indispensable. The best way to popularize cello teaching is the combination of Chinese and Western teaching materials. In the selection of cello teaching materials, China mainly adopts western European traditional teaching materials. Because European teaching materials have certain normative and scientific.

Keywords: Cello; Teaching; Practice; China

Introduction

The cello (a bowed string instrument, one of the instruments of the violin family (including the violin, viola, and cello), in addition to playing solo, it is also responsible for the bass strings in chamber music, string orchestras, and orchestras. Cellists in the Baroque period played seated with their feet between the sides of the instrument, later modified to add feet to support the body. However, there are still a few countries where the players are holding the piano in an almost horizontal posture. The most common way it is played is by rubbing the strings on the instrument with the bow (pulling the strings), but sometimes it is also played by picking or tapping the strings.

The interval between each string of the cello is a full five degrees. The four strings from high to low are called the 1 to 4 strings, and the pitches are A, D, G, and C. Cello music usually uses bass clef notation; The tenor clef or treble clef is used when playing in higher ranges.

The cello is sometimes used as a bass instrument in the Chinese orchestra to replace the Di Hu, and later some people invented bass instruments such as the lute, La Ruan, and Gehu, but the effect is not as good as the cello.

The cello is played sitting, with the instrument propped up on the floor. The fingertips of the left hand rest the strings on the fingerboard and determine the pitch of the notes played by the fingers. The right hand is used to pluck the string or bow to make a sound. Its weight is mainly supported by tail pins or nails placed on the floor. The cello is anchored to the lower side between the knees of the seated player and to the top above the chest. The cello neck is located above the player's left shoulder, and the C-string tuning stopper is located behind the left ear. The bow draws horizontally across the string.

Cello teaching

Cello teaching usually has three forms, one-to-one teaching, group lessons, group lessons. Jiujiang Vocational University adopts the form of group class. The number of students in the class is small, so the teacher can take care of every student, and students have the opportunity to speak in class, so that students can get a sense of achievement, which is conducive to students at all levels and exert their subjective consciousness. Students and teachers communicate with each other in many aspects, which is helpful for teachers to know students in time, so as to teach according to the actual situation of students and improve the teaching effect. At the same time, group classes can often carry out ensemble training, in this learning process, students can not only compare the advantages and disadvantages of other students, but also improve the team spirit.

In teaching, teachers should scientifically choose the repertoire that conforms to students' ability level. It is not advisable to blindly choose the repertoire of high difficulty and high showy skills while ignoring students' own ability. Excessive pursuit of high difficulty will make students unable to obtain a good learning experience and growth effect under long-term boring training, and will produce aversion and resistance to piano practice psychology, which will be extremely unfavorable to the development of cello teaching. Teachers should emphasize the importance of basic skills and make reasonable teaching plans according to the skills students have mastered.

In addition, the school often organizes various kinds of concerts to encourage students to actively participate, so that students have a stage to show, and stimulate the enthusiasm of students to practice.

Ordinary colleges and universities need to build a rich and diversified curriculum system, expand the choice of students' learning and practice methods, truly based on the people-oriented teaching concept, and truly realize the classification of teaching based on materials in cultivating high-level talents (Duan & Chen, 2022).

Cello practice

If you want to play the cello well, you must have a correct practice method, which requires the player to be relaxed and comfortable. Only by mastering the right method can we make a good sound.

Master the exact contact point of the bow and chord.

In the two bow and chord, the bow is the object of force, the string is the object of force. To carry a bow is to show the force of the bow, so the force on the string is another equal but opposite force. In the process of moving the bow from the middle to the tip of the bow, the player must compensate for the difference between the two forces while applying appropriate pressure. The main method is that we can use our body to push forward the backplane of the piano with the front chest, so that the friction of the force body increases, and then the two opposite forces reach roughly "equal". On the one hand, the relationship between active application and passive regulation of the body is more natural. On the other hand, in the upper half of the bow, when the bow tip moves the bow, the hand does not shake, the voice will not become weak, and the performance of the music can be just right, and the player will feel more handy.

Master the relatively fixed chord point.

The so-called relatively fixed means that when the empty string, a long tone or a tone within the position, the contact point of the bow on the string needs to be relatively fixed, if the bow can be well controlled at this time, and the corresponding sliding up and down in the process of pulling the bow, it can better make the timbre approach to perfection. In the case of not changing the bow speed and bow pressure, the higher the position, the closer the contact point should be to the piano code, on the contrary, the contact point should be appropriately moved up, only when the music needs to be soft and dim, the playing contact point should be run close to the fingerboard, with the eyes to focus on the contact point of the bow and chord, which can help us find a pure sound, and pay attention to the stability of the bow on the string to ensure that the sound is stable. The sound is pure and beautiful. Pronunciation exercises are especially important in training.

In addition, there must be a good and correct starting in the bow, because only good starting can make the strings have regular and full vibration, so as to produce a beautiful and pure sound, and the sound of the starting can not be generalized. A quiet, soft start is to move the bow very close to the weight with gentle force and less hair; Passionate and powerful starting can be added pressure in advance and matched with a fast bow speed, so that the bow bite the string, emit a strong and powerful sound. Cello pronunciation is a long-term experience and practice, need to continue to study and explore, as long as we grasp the key links of cello playing pronunciation, hard training will be able to play wonderful and beautiful music.

Research in Cello in China

For cello performance, the key is whether it can play its own unique beautiful, rich, close to the human voice, and all cellists are pursuing this goal at the same time, but also thinking about how to achieve this goal. So, how to make a wonderful sound? Many people believe that the key to determining the quality of the cello's timbre is the bow of the right hand, which is very reasonable, because the right hand is the basis of the cello's pronunciation. However, while we pay attention to the right hand, we can not ignore the importance of the left hand. Because the relationship between the right hand and the left hand is complementary to each other (Cheng, 2003).

In addition, when we practice, we often slow down the speed, which is a correct practice method. However, in slow practice, we often ignore the interconnections of the fingers, so that each finger is an isolated state on the string, resulting in the appearance of inaccurate sound, speed instability and other phenomena. Therefore, when we practice, we must pay attention to the relationship between the fingers of the left hand, so that the fingers can find their correct position on the string to ensure the accuracy of the sound. In short, in the teaching and performance of the cello, we should accurately grasp and seriously deal with the relationship between the left and right hands and pronunciation, and carry out reasonable organization, distribution, arrangement and design. Only in this way can our playing level be continuously improved, and then play the perfect music.

In recent years, with the increase of people's demand for diversified artistic life, various normal colleges and universities have also launched cello teaching subjects. The development of cello teaching subjects in normal universities gives more students in normal universities the opportunity to contact and learn the cello, among them there will be a large number of students to become grassroots music educators in our country, as these students in normal universities gradually enter the job, their knowledge and understanding of the cello will also bring far-reaching positive impact on the popularity of this instrument in our country (Wang, 2012).

However, when cello teaching is flourishing in colleges and universities, we should also see that behind this prosperity, there are still many problems. The teaching method of cello in normal universities is based on the teaching method of cello in professional music colleges. However, due to the difference in teaching objectives, this kind of "transplantation" appears a lot of "acculturating" phenomena. In order to overcome this "soil and water", the majority of cello teachers in normal schools have done a lot of intentional exploration and innovation. However, due to the lack of a set of mature and systematic theoretical support for cello teaching in normal universities, there are still some differences in the understanding of the goal and role of cello teaching in normal universities. This kind of exploration and innovation is a little messy, and even contradictory situations can not form a unified and systematic system.

The researchers believe that the primary key to the normalization of cello teaching lies in accurate target positioning. The goal of cello education in professional music colleges is to cultivate professional musical talents with creative ability and stage performance ability, which is obviously inconsistent with the original intention of cello education in normal colleges. Therefore, the first problem to be solved in the research of cello teaching in normal colleges is to reposition the goal of cello education in normal colleges. Only with a widely recognized teaching goal, all kinds of exploration and innovation can play a maximum role in the reform of cello teaching in normal universities, and integrate into a complete system.

Cello has the unique charm of musical expression, which has developed rapidly in college education, and the related teaching quality is also constantly improving. College students have more and more opportunities to contact western Musical Instruments. Cello students in colleges and universities can not only get technical guidance on the instrument, but also understand its cultural connotation more clearly (Xing, 2018).

(1) There is blindness in the cultivation of cello teaching students in universities. China's professional cello training colleges are basically saturated with teachers, the nine major music colleges have expanded enrollment year after year, and the students have been increasing, resulting in the lack of systematic and purposeful training of talents in colleges and universities. As far as ordinary colleges and universities are concerned, there is no goal for the education of technical talents in music performance, and there is no employability direction in teaching, which affects students' enthusiasm for learning. Nowadays, most colleges and universities do not pay enough attention to cello teaching and devote less enthusiasm to it, resulting in students being unable to understand related courses in more detail and being more confused about the direction of employment.

(2) Cello teaching in colleges and universities lacks individualized teaching. Nowadays, cello teaching methods in colleges and universities are relatively simple, following traditional education forms and using teaching methods and contents familiar to teachers, but ignoring the direction of students' understanding of courses in the new era, which reduces the quality of teaching. Compared with students in professional music colleges, college students in ordinary universities have not received professional and systematic training, and each student's own quality is different, resulting in different levels of cello performance. No targeted education, just the traditional form of education, will weaken students' interest in cello learning, can not improve the quality of teaching.

(3) College cello major enrollment goal is not clear. Most of the students admitted to the cello major in ordinary colleges and universities are usually from ordinary middle schools, without formal relevant training, and very few students have undergone art training. Therefore, students will encounter a variety of difficulties in learning the cello, such as the lack of congenital conditions, or the lack of technical understanding of the cello, will affect the entire learning progress. In the long run, college students will gradually weaken their interest in cello learning and lose confidence in their own learning. If the cello major enrollment is not clear enough, does not provide students with effective professional selection guidance, affect the choice of students' own employment direction, students and the school are somewhat irresponsible.

Anyone who studies string music knows that if there is only technique in the performance, but no musical sense, it will not impress people. The expression of music is based on its rich connotation and the performer's imagination to express happiness and sorrow. It uses people's hearing to enter people's inner world. Penetrating, sweet voice, that's what we're looking for (Shen, 2010).

Different instruments and different voices make different sounds. The cello is one of the most colorful instruments in the western bowstring instrument, its sound is very close to the strong male tone, it not only has the high violin, the graceful viola, the steady bass, and its range is wide, other bowstring instruments can not be compared. Whether it is playing cello music or appreciating cello music, people are often infected and convinced by the unique timbre charm of the cello.

It can be seen that timbre is of great significance and value in cello performance and performance. As a cello player, if you can only mechanically play the music, but can not turn the music into a beautiful musical language to infect the audience, then the superb skill can only be a skill, not real music; Therefore, for a cellist, articulation that is clear, strong, bright and strong is an important job.

Teaching students the correct way to play is the foundation of learning the cello and any other instrument. In the early stage of young people learning cello, the playing method is very important, which will affect the students' ability to play in the future. For the performance posture, right hand skills, left hand skills and other aspects of the content, students in the early learning teachers should fully teach students to master the content (Hu, 2020).

Conclusion

In the teaching and training of cello, teachers should pay attention to the thinking ability of students in this period, cultivate their enthusiasm for learning, and teach students in a correct way. Correct learning thinking and effective musical training should go hand in hand. Teachers should not only convey correct fingering to students, but also guide students in appropriate ways. As a western musical instrument, cello may not attract much attention compared with other Musical Instruments in the society. However, cello teachers should, on the basis of careful teaching, keep students' freshness and initiative in cello learning, use teaching resources to provide as many platforms for students to display, and improve students' professional ability and teamwork ability. It is also a way to learn different pieces in many musical forms. In addition, on the basis of students' professional mastery, teachers should enable students to have more access to other styles of music works, perceive the changes in music styles and techniques in the historical change of cello, and better understand the development of music history at that time.

References

- Cheng, Y. (2003). On the relationship between left and right hand of cello and pronunciation. *Yuefu New Voice (Journal of Shenyang Conservatory of Music)*, (01), 42-43.
- Duan, Y., & Chen, L. (2022). Thinking on the development of cello teaching in colleges and universities. *Music Life*, (12), 66-68.
- Hu, T. (2020). Thinking and training methods of basic cello teaching for teenagers. *Northern Music*, (05), 45-47.
- Shen, H. (2010). Analysis on timbre practice in cello teaching. *China Science and Education Innovation Guide*, (26), 215.
- Wang, X. (2012). *Higher normal music education the cello in teaching and research*, [Master's thesis]. Guangxi Normal University.
- Xing, G. (2018). The present situation and countermeasures of cello teaching in colleges and universities. *Times Agricultural Machinery*, (11), 126.