

Original Article

Problem of the Teaching Materials Study of the Music Department and Cultivating Sensitivity Through Music

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Kojien, an authoritative Japanese dictionary defines music as “art made by sound”, however, few people are associated with music and conscious of artistry at the same time in modern society, in which various cultures have permeated.

Music is considered to have diverse values, and compulsory education adopts music classes at almost every school as “moral culture cultivating aesthetic sentiments”. To be specific, in this essay, I would like many people to know more about the possibility of music that improves all the abilities of human beings, including sensitivity.

This section will discuss that people are consciously or unconsciously cultivating numerous sensitivities through music. The sensitivities obtained by music in the section are concretely the following four kinds:

Emotionality — People associate music, and emotions are created such as “sadness”, “suffering”, “joy” and “delight”.

Artistry — Acquiring curiosity and joy of pursuing art, an eternal theme for human beings, from the concept of music. People appreciate the joy of expressing their images with music.

Cultural — People can deepen the view of every culture from music of each country and its history.

Humanity — Unity through chorus and ensemble can be an element to build cooperativeness. Necessity of moral values.

Key Words: Music, Problem, Education, School

(1) *Emotionality — Enriching emotions with music*

People express many emotions from music irrespective of age and gender. For example, feeling uplifting unexpectedly when listening to rhythmical music is one, and on the contrary, feeling rise of tensions when listening to music with tense atmosphere.

The idea that music by chorus has an effect to stabilize human beings' sympathy and emotion is prevalent in all times and places. It can trace back to prehistoric period when you research the era. Ko T'ien Shih, the ancient Chinese emperor is known as an inventor of songs, and in Shiji, the ancient Chinese history record, includes the influence by his song, as “Chorus of a thousand people made peace for all, making mountain shook and river boiled”.

It is thought that the oldest musical instrument of human race was a bone whistle at about 36,000 years ago, discovered in a cave near Ulm in Germany, and was used for the purpose to chase away or to calm

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down the beasts. In addition, it is believed that human beings' sympathy towards music is rooted instinctively and genetically, from a story that even two-year old child without his/her memory shed tears after listening to mellow and melancholic music.

: The potential power of music

Today, a profession called music therapy has been established. Music therapists work on patients' mind and body to be recovered and revitalized through music, in response to their needs such as physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual, and social. The therapy has a premise that music contains something a big power, and made many achievements from 1940's, the dawn of the music therapy, to the present day.

1940s, the beginning of the therapy, was in the midst of war. It was said that the therapy was started for American soldiers injured by the World War II, and also said that music accelerated the healing of wounds.

In recent years, the therapy is utilized in cases for patients with dementia, Alzheimer's diseases for the elderly and mental disorders such as schizophrenia and neurosis. Patients feel nostalgic and look back on their life, especially for songs chorused at the entrance and graduation ceremonies of elementary and junior high school, and resulting patients to straighten up their memory. It is also said that tracing memory through music memorized in childhood was existed before music therapy was established, although there are no records. Not only the memory of a song, but feelings and thoughts when memorizing it recall through the song and synergistically recalling the life and events of the time.

: Academic progress by music

Children who are given music education such as piano and violin tend to show relatively high performance at school. This is based on the theory that the beautiful sound of piano and violin has a power to stimulate the brain, and listening to it every day has a good influence on studies. However, music teachers think this is not the only reason.

There is a hypothesis that listening to music or playing music makes people acquire the sense of rhythm, and unique pronunciation of English can be understood as "sound" rather than "word" and be memorized as a tone. In addition, the sense of rhythm is said medically that it not only stimulates the brain but also the blood circulation of body, and factors

such as getting in shape can also be seen. If these are verified accurately as numerical values, the concept of music will be recognized as a more advanced culture.

(2) *Artistry — Sharpen our thought through music*

Every piece of music includes humanity such as personality and character, and by communicating these unique characters, people can enhance expression from childhood.

First of all, the author will be conscious of the meaning of art in music through the essay.

As for art, it is likely to associate with classical music created by historical figures such as the Johann Sebastian Bach and Wolfgang Mozart, however, it continues further. "Art" refers to the representation of some expression, and purpose to arouse emotions through interaction with people who communicated this representation. In other words, every work can be regarded as art depending on a viewpoint, not only classical music but also pieces composed by contemporary musicians and children's hum.

This section will discuss the necessity for children's creativity.

In music classes at private elementary school, there are assignments on the theme of composition. Although it is said that there is a purpose to improve communication skills by children creating music together, but of course, the effect of creative activities is not limited to that. Not to mention the expansion of expressiveness through involvement in creative activities from childhood when rich in sensibility, there is also an aim for children to realize the enjoyment of creation by expressing what they felt or thought about things. Teachers believe this is very important.

Artists and business people including managers are interested in raising the creativity of children, as well as teachers. This is because the act of raising motivation for creation is taken very seriously since the brakes on declining birthrate and aging society is not applied in today's world. Rich creativity of children would be a source of growth in the future of country, as children will be responsible for the social growth of the next generation. Thus youngsters with flexibility in thoughts communicating various arts are crucial, and adults have to actively create such environment.

Moreover, there is no perfect score as long as artistry exists in music. Teachers should try to steadily accept the representation produced by children's self-expression, and not to deny it because it's plain or nagging. There is no right to deny the art expressed as it is, in the first place. Their willingness to creation should be evaluated, and making them enjoy creation should be most prioritized. The role of adults is to create an environment where children can enjoy creation with instruments and sound-producing tools according to their life experience and development so that children can demonstrate expressiveness at the maximum. It is also important to share their emotions, when being moved by their music.

(3) *Cultural—Learning culture of all ages and countries from music*

Music is not created by simple inspiration nor ideas. It is expressed by weaving creator's experiences, culture of the country or region, or feelings such as appreciation and separation with people. Therefore, it can be said that consciousness of people at the age are included in the music, for instance, suffer, wish, respect, culture and tradition of the country or region where raised up, joy, and sadness. Having exposed with music means having a glimpse of the life of its composer. People can be exposed to the unknown culture across the times and borders.

The fact above should also be taught actively to children by teachers. If children can deepen their view by knowing various cultures from childhood, their future will be much more advantageous. As mentioned in the section of artistry, deepening knowledge of art from the childhood when rich in sensitivity also leads to social effects. In addition, if children could have interest in concept of "art", "culture", and "history", they can find a good reason in those classes relatively, and may become involved in studying voluntarily.

: An example of musical culture "Sorani Bushi"

In this section, "Sorani Bushi" will be discussed as an example of culture learnt by music. "Sorani Bushi" is a Japanese traditional folk song, and is likely to be performed as in events such as sports day in elementary schools. There are many schools

making students perform Sorani Bushi, and well-known school dramas often have scenes performing it, which also makes it famous. However, even though many people have heard of its name and song, only a few knows the meaning of lyrics and its origin. There is an interesting fact of Sorani Bushi's origin, so telling students its history through "Why they have to dance", and "What does this dance means" will draw their attention and be worthwhile, not just aimlessly teaching choreography.

The birthplace of the Sorani Bushi is in the area from Cape Shakotan, Shiribeshi, to Yoichi-gun, and those areas are said to be prospered by herring fishery from the Edo Period to the early Showa era. Local people were taking it for granted, as well as fishermen called "Yan Shu" gathered the areas to earn money. The current "Sorani Bushi" is said to be one verse of "Okiage Ondo" which have been altered by time, and it originally comes from "Nishin-ba Sagyo Uta" sung during herring fishing. "Nishin-ba Sagyo Uta" consists from four parts: "Funakogi Ondo", "Ami-okoshi Ondo", "Okiage Ondo", and "Kodataki Ondo". "Okiage Ondo" lyrics include "Yaren Sorani Sorani Sorani Sorani Hai Hai (When a seagull was asked if herrings are here, the bird said that it will fly off so ask the waves)", and young men especially tough among fishermen shouted "Sorani Sorani" while stabbing the handle of Tamo net into the frame net.

This is just one example of many parts, Sorani Bushi has a lot more interesting histories. If people show an attitude to be aware of culture, there are many things that can be learnt from music.

(4) *Humanity—Communicating with people through music*

In this last section, humanity by music will be presented. At the beginning, the following was mentioned: Music classes teaches morals that nurtures aesthetic sentiments. This will be explained in detail in the section.

Kojien, an authoritative Japanese dictionary defines "aesthetic sentiments" as "Feelings caused by high level of psychological activity, intellectual and stable feeling rather than emotion, which is sustainable emotional attitude".

To put it plainly, aesthetic sentiments means feelings, emotions, and consciousness with social

value, and the purpose of music classes in compulsory education is exactly cultivating them, and to enrich creative and unique action of mind.

Chorus and ensemble are the typical examples for instance, and singing or playing instruments together with classmates leads to realize the feeling of communication, which is "community awareness".

"Moral value" such as fellowship emerging via music classes includes enough humanity, and although it is a very important concept that should be cultivated before maturity, there are not many opportunities to appreciate it in private life and ordinary classes.

Accepted March 31, 2017.