

Liberty University

School of Music

**Usage of the Chinese Notation System versus the Western Notation System among
Elementary Students**

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the School of Music
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Masters in Ethnomusicology

by

Yohei Oda Sparks

Lynchburg, VA

July/2023

Abstract

This research project uses the Chinese music notation system, *Jianpu*, in a modern elementary classroom setting in the United States to see if it is a usable asset. As Reilly Elementary School is already a bilingual school within a multicultural community with various talents, this idea could bring benefits to the students at this school. This paper examines what the Chinese notation system includes and how it could be used both as a classroom tool and as a suggestion for future researchers. The methodology used here was a lecture and an assessment of understanding followed by a survey to determine which notation system the participants found easier to use. The finding was that out of ten participants, six still preferred to use Western notation rather than *Jianpu*.

Keywords :*Jianpu*, Chinese Education System, Transcription

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the fourth grade students in the Mandarin program at Reilly Elementary School for their time and effort in allowing me to do this research project, even though it was at the end of the year. A special thank you to the principal of the school, Ms. Olano, for permitting me to conduct this project. Also, thanks to Dr. Meyer for being the second reader and Dr. Neto for giving me advice and suggestions for the research project and the paper.

Contents

List of Tables	vii
List of Figures.....	viii
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Statement of Problem	1
Statement of Purpose	1
Significance of the Study	1
Research Question and Sub Questions	2
Definition of Terms	3
Summary.....	4
Chapter Two: Literature Review	5
Introduction	5
A Brief Overview of Music Education	5
Western Music Education	5
Suzuki Methodology.....	8
Kodaly Method	10
Kodaly versus Suzuki Comparison	12
Benefits of Other Methods: Orff.....	17
Benefits of Other Methods: Dalcroze Eurhythmics	21

Chinese Music Education.....	22
Difference between Two Separate Systems.....	25
Notation.....	26
Songs.....	28
Summary.....	31
Chapter Three: Methodology	33
Introduction	33
Design	33
Question and Hypothesis.....	33
Participants.....	34
Setting.....	34
Procedures	34
Data Analysis	37
Chapter Four: Research Findings	38
Introduction	38
Findings.....	38
Discussion:	40
Discussion of Research Question #1: How Effective Is Chinese Notation in a Modern Classroom Setting?	42

Discussion of Research Question #2: What Lesson Plan for Teaching Chinese Music Notation Would Be Most Effective?	45
Summary.....	49
Chapter Five: Conclusions	51
Summary of Study	51
Summary of Findings	51
Limitations.....	52
Recommendations for Future Study	53
Implications for Practice	54
Summary.....	54
Appendix.....	56
Bibliography	57

List of Tables

- Table 1.1: Table of *Jianpu* notation and Western solfege 34
- Table 2.1: Student preferences between Western notation and *Jianpu* 45
- Table 2.2: Transcription score by students 46
- Table 2.3: Table of who has or has not seen *Jianpu* before 47

List of Figures

- Figure 1.1: Choir participation and academic performance 16
- Figure 1.2: Kodaly vs. Suzuki 21
- Figure 1.3: Kodaly songs and games: “Bee Bee” 22
- Figure 1.4: Kodaly songs and games: “Lemonade” 23
- Figure 1.5: Fun elementary music games 24
- Figure 1.6: Non-locomotor motions for steady beat 27
- Figure 1.7: *Jianpu* score of “Jasmine Flower” (“茉莉花”) 34
- Figure 1.8: Western notation and *Jianpu* score of “Happy New Year” (“新年好”) 37
- Figure 1.9: *Jianpu* score of “Little Swallow” (“小燕子”) 38
- Figure 2.1: Student transcription preference 46

Chapter One: Introduction

Statement of Problem

In Texas, increasing numbers of students have been enrolling in bilingual programs, especially in the Austin Independent School District. For instance, Reilly Elementary School offers two bilingual classes: English and Mandarin, and English in Spanish. Students in this school are mostly second language learners, with some also classified as “English as a second language” (ESL) students. This district’s curriculum does not include such students using their language skills outside of their homeroom class. In other words, the only time these students may sing in either English, Mandarin, or Spanish may be in their homerooms, and most of the time, they stop using songs in activities in either kindergarten or first grade. The current curriculum provided by the district does not mention teachers giving such instruction, thus limiting these students from learning various parts of their own culture, such as musical traditions.¹

Statement of Purpose

This research aims to collect as much data as possible regarding the effects of teaching this concept and the impact of the knowledge students gain from learning more about Chinese music notation. Additionally, this work will examine whether students can benefit from using *Jianpu* in an elementary school music setting.

Significance of the Study

This project has two parts. First, this project highlights Chinese notations and traditional songs that students may not always learn in American schools. Second, the study examines the

¹ AISD Multilingual Department, 2021

effects of a particular lesson plan that is implemented to do this research project. If executed correctly, this concept could better facilitate students' learning. If lessons are not engaging enough, students will lose interest in the topic of study. For researchers, this issue could produce inaccurate study results.

Combining music and the language the students are learning, this could benefit the Western primary education system.² An article published by Saga Brigg stated that a study conducted by Vanderbilt Kennedy Centre found that kids who have a strong sense of rhythm also had strong grammar skills.³ She continues by saying that a group of German researchers found that those who are learning English as a foreign language improved their grammar and vocabulary skills by singing.⁴ Additionally, combining music, language and could help students learn added information, and creating opportunities as well.

Research Question and Sub Questions

The first research question is: How effective is *Jianpu* as a notational system in a classroom setting in the US? The hypothesis here is that *Jianpu* can be a useful tool in a modern classroom setting. The second research question is: What is the most effective lesson plan for incorporating *Jianpu* into the US classroom? The hypothesis for the second question is that it is effective to use a slideshow with the definition of *Jianpu* and some examples using actual songs. Once finished, create a reference sheet showing both *Jianpu* and Western notation, where students will begin transcribing a piece of music that they already know from Western notation to *Jianpu*. After that,

² Briggs, Saga. "Learning a Language through Music: How to Train Your Brain." November 15, 2021.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

they would fill out a survey asking how they feel about *Jianpu* and which notation system is better suited for them in terms of comprehending how it works and how to write it. The second research question is notable because this research project would not be practical if the students were not learning anything or were confused. Thus far, Chinese teachers have focused more on accumulative thinking in traditional classroom settings, whereas American teachers prioritize creative thinking.⁵ Discovering the effectiveness of using the Chinese notation system in an American classroom and whether it is more effective than using the Western notation system is one of the aims of this research project, along with the usefulness of Chinese notation. Past studies have compared these two systems, including a 2020 article from Concordia University Shanghai that supports the previous statements about the comparison of two separate education system.⁶

Definition of Terms

Chinese Note Writing System: If nothing surrounds a musical note, it is a quarter note; if a line is under it, that line halves the note's value (eighth note). If the line is (or lines are) on the right of the number, it will show a half or a whole note, depending on the number of the lines.⁷

Dewey's Pragmatic System: This system is a Western concept that China follows, addressing people's daily political, practical, socioeconomic, and educational problems.⁸

Pinyin: This grammatical device Romanizes the Mandarin language and, eventually, the entire

⁵ Concordia Shanghai. "Similarities and Differences between Chinese and American Education." Similarities and Differences Between Chinese and American Education, September 9, 2020. <https://blog.concordiashanghai.org/chinese-and-american-education>.

⁶ Concordia Shanghai. "Similarities and Differences between Chinese and American Education." Similarities and Differences Between Chinese and American Education, September 9, 2020. <https://blog.concordiashanghai.org/chinese-and-american-education>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸Shawal, Malik. "Dewey's Philosophy of Pragmatism." Your Article Library, November 5, 2015. <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/philosophy/deweys-philosophy-of-pragmatism/69139>

Chinese language.⁹

Jianpu: Translated as “simple score,” this is one of the Chinese notation systems that is commonly used.¹⁰

Gongchepu: Traditional Chinese notation, which is said to be harder to read than the newer *Jianpu*.¹¹

Transcription: The act of listening to a piece of music and then rewriting it on a piece of paper or in a music program, where it can be used to analyze or play a different instrument or voice.¹²

Summary

The primary purpose of this research is to investigate whether the Chinese notation system will be effective in the American education system. This study hypothesizes that, if implemented correctly, *Jianpu* would help students learn. Overall, there are distinct differences between the United States and China in their musical notation systems; China uses numbers, and the United States uses syllables known as solfege.

⁹ Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. “pinyin”

¹⁰ Cheng, M. (2020, October 5). “Music Notations for a Chinese Orchestra.” Medium. Retrieved January 22, 2023, from https://medium.com/@mingcheng_5918/music-notations-for-chinese-orchestra-a18537355848

¹¹ Unknown. “Gong-Che Notation.” Key Concepts in Chinese Thought and Culture. Accessed July 26, 2023. https://www.chinesethought.cn/EN/shuyu_show.aspx?shuyu_id=4623.

¹² Vaughan, Jack. “Transcribing Music.” Lean Musician, November 25, 2020. <https://www.leanmusician.com/post/transcribing-music>.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

As this project mainly discusses the advantages of introducing a new notation system to a typical Western music educator, it is important to look at the differences that exist between two separate but relatable ideas: music education systems and notation systems. The music education system, specifically pedagogy, can differ from educator to educator in the West. There will be a comparison of four different music pedagogies, including three Western-origin pedagogies and one from the East. This is achieved through a comparison of the music education systems and a study of how to implement a non-Western music notation, such as *Jianpu*, in a Western music classroom. In addition, another aspect that can be discussed is the presence of two similar yet different notation systems in Chinese music, both still in use to this day. This section will discuss the importance of music education in America, its effect on students and their lives, and some possible items that can be used in the classroom setting. This section also includes a short introduction and discussion of the two Chinese notation systems. This will hopefully correlate with the reasoning behind a possible implementation of *Jianpu* in their classroom.

A Brief Overview of Music Education

Western Music Education

Multiple studies have highlighted the importance of music education in elementary school. An article published by the University of South California studied the brains of children learning music, which revealed that music improved their reading, linguistics, and listening

skills.¹³ Having music as part of a school curriculum has not only shown faster development in certain areas but also that music can affect the student's performance in other subject areas.¹⁴

A study titled *The Chorus Impact Study* conducted by the organization Chorus America with multiple people, such as Peter Grunwald, Tom de Boor, and Drew Richardson, discussed the benefits of singing in a choir for people of all ages. The group had four major findings. The first was that choral groups are the most popular way to participate in the performing arts.¹⁵ The second was that, supposedly, adults who participate in choral music tend to be good citizens. The third finding, and the important one for this project, was that students in choir programs tend to have better life skills and academic performance than those who are not.¹⁶ The final finding was that there is a concern that there are fewer students enrolling in choral programs.¹⁷ Regarding the third finding, there is a graph showing how choir program students perform academically versus those that do not take part in choir programs. The graph can be seen below:

¹³ Raffio, Nina. "USC Researchers Find Music Education Benefits Youth Wellbeing." USC Today, September 19, 2023. <https://today.usc.edu/music-education-research/>

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Armstrong, Anton, Paul Caldwell, and Todd Eastbrook. "How Children, Adults, and Communities Benefit from Choruses: The Chorus Impact Study." Chorus America, 2009. https://chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ImpactStudy09_Report.pdf.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

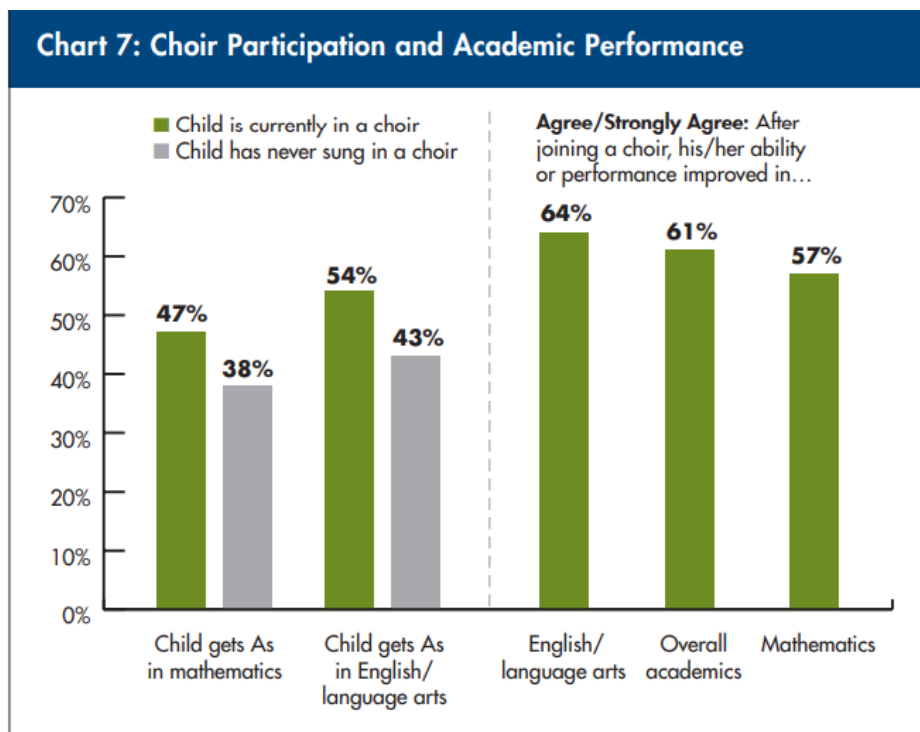


Figure 1.1. Eastbrook, Todd. Chart 7: Choir participation and academic performance. How Children, Adults, and Communities Benefit from Choruses: The Chorus Impact Study. Chorus America, 2009. https://www.kaufmanmusiccenter.org/images/uploads/content/ImpactStudy09_Report.pdf

This chart shows the difference in academic scores in two subjects, math and English Language Arts (ELA), between students who do and do not take choir as a course. It clearly shows that there is a difference in the percentages, albeit not too much, between students who get As in those two subjects who are in choir and those who are not.

The effect and the benefit of music education in elementary schools is not limited to vocal music; it is also applicable to instrumental music. In this vein, when a student learns to play an instrument, they benefit in numerous ways. Joining an extracurricular group, like a

school band, helps students build friendships and leadership skills through sharing experiences with others, such as performing in a concert, solo, ensemble, or competition.¹⁸

In the United States, 92% of public schools offer music classes,¹⁹ from basic elementary music classes to band and choir in middle and high school.²⁰ The core value of American music education is that being in a music class helps develop various skills students can use in multiple subjects and elsewhere in their daily lives.²¹ Certain music educators use different musical pedagogies, including Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze, and Suzuki. The next sections will highlight some of the main characteristics and benefits of each of these methods.

Suzuki Methodology

Among the music education methodologies that are considered non-Western is the Suzuki method. As the name suggests, the creator of this method was a Japanese violinist named Dr. Shinichi Suzuki. His principle of music education can be broken into four components. First is that every child has potential in music with limitless possibilities.²² In Japanese, the word is *saino* (才能); while there is no direct translation, it means “talented” or “gifted.” Suzuki believes that talent is not something that is inherited from the child’s parents, but rather a child is born with a talent of some kind.²³ The second concept is parental involvement. It is obvious that

¹⁸ Arts, Music &. “10 Lessons Your Child Will Learn in Marching Band.” The Vault at Music & Arts, July 14, 2022. <https://thevault.musicarts.com/10-lessons-your-child-will-learn-in-marching-band/>

¹⁹ Staff, Yamaha. “Status of Music Education in Public Schools.” Yamaha Music, November 29, 2022. <https://hub.yamaha.com/music-educators/prog-health/advocacy/status-of-music-education-in-public-schools/>

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Sarrazin, Natalie. “Chapter 4: Approaches to Music Education.” Music and the Child, June 15, 2016. <https://milnepublishing.geneseo.edu/music-and-the-child/chapter/chapter-4/>

²² McKenry, T. (2023, February 28). “Does the Suzuki Method Work for Kids Learning an Instrument? Parental Involvement Is Good, But Other Aspects Less So.” The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/does-the-suzuki-method-work-for-kids-learning-an-instrument-parental-involvement-is-good-but-other-aspects-less-so-111995>

²³ Ibid.

parents should be invested in their child's education, but his case is that parents should also be music teachers at home to support their child's development and practice of their respective instruments.²⁴ The third component is the ability to play first before learning the music language. This means that, rather than focusing on knowing how to read the notes, he puts focus on the child's ability to listen and repeat what they have heard on their instruments. The fourth component is "character first, ability second"²⁵ This, according to Suzuki, will lead students to progress into becoming musicians themselves as they get older.²⁶

The most notable concept is the mother tongue theory. According to Suzuki, he noticed that kids learn their native language (mother tongue) by imitating their parents and eventually acquire speaking and comprehension skills.²⁷ This means that if a child can learn their first language in that manner, then they should be able to do the same with instruments as well. The mother tongue approach in the Suzuki method is when students are learning an instrument; according to Music Education Queensland, the following are used when a child is learning their native language: listening, memory, motivation, vocabulary, repetition, parental involvement, step-by-step mastery, and love.²⁸ The first, listening, is very important both musically and when learning a new language, as it is used for listening to and imitating what others are saying. The same thing can be said for learning music literature, as students can learn by listening to the music literature and imitating what they have heard.²⁹ The second factor is memory; the more they practice, the more they are able to play from memory. As for the Suzuki method, the

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Unknown. "The Mother-Tongue Approach." Mother Tongue Approach. Accessed August 29, 2023. https://www.suzukimusicqld.com.au/html/mother_tongue_approach.html#:~:text=Dr%20Suzuki%20has%20called%20his,skills%2C%20that%20of%20intelligible%20speech.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

reading and comprehension of music notations are not taught until the students are more comfortable with their instruments.³⁰ The third factor is motivation, which is in conjunction with parental involvement. Because Suzuki believes that parents are a key influence on how a child learns their native language, he also believes that parents should be active in their child's musical development. He thinks that parents should attend the child's lesson, record the lesson, and be the child's teacher at home as well as encouraging them in their efforts.³¹ Normally, the role of a music educator in other methodologies is to be the student's mentor, but for those who are in a Suzuki-method class, the educator is a mentor to both students and parents.³² The fourth important factor is repetition. There is a saying, "practice makes perfect"; Suzuki's principle regarding repetition is no different from that. The reputation of the Suzuki method is that the student should practice every day, the same pieces, which will eventually lead to mastering what they already know.³³ The fifth factor is step-by-step mastery. For this, the Suzuki method focuses on standardized repertoires that every student will practice and master. Each piece practices a particular technique, such as fine motor skills with a fast piece or expressiveness with a slower one.³⁴

Kodaly Method

Another alternative methodology is the Kodaly method, one of the more prominent methodologies among American music educators. Zoltan Kodaly, a Hungarian composer and an educator, believed that music education should be taught in a sequential manner and that body

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

and vocal exercise is important to develop the child's musical skills.³⁵ According to the Kodaly Music Institute, the core principles of this method come from singing, regardless of the student's age. The institute also believes that singing removes the obstacle of instrumental difficulties, as it is a naturally acquired instrument and a tool that anyone can use to express themselves musically.³⁶ To teach a student in the Kodaly method, the educator would lead them to sing in tune along with a body movement to match the rhythm of the song; doing it this way activates their auditory, kinesthetic, and visual senses of their body.³⁷ The institute also mentions on its philosophy page: "Music is learned first through immersion and then literacy is learned using the tools of relative solfa, rhythm names and hand signs."³⁸

As mentioned earlier, the singing voice is a naturally acquired instrument of most human beings. Therefore, Kodaly educators usually emphasize vocal singing first before going on to instrumental teaching. The main aspect of this method is that it promotes music education to students at a young age. It appears that this was one of the first methods to be incorporated into music classrooms in Kodaly's home country of Hungary, as resources then were very scarce. Exposing students to music, rhythms, expressions, pitch, and patterns helps with their development both musically and mentally.³⁹ This benefit leads to better musical instinct by allowing students to sharpen their instinct and become better musicians. The social benefit of the Kodaly method is that it allows students to collaborate with one another to achieve a common

³⁵ Rich, Joshua. "Teaching Methods: The Kodaly Method." My CMS, July 9, 2014. <https://musicstaff.com/teaching-methods-kodaly-method/>

³⁶ Epstein, Mary, and Jonathan Rappaport. "Our Mission & the Kodály Concept." Welcome to Kodály Music Institute, 2020. <https://kodalmusicinstitute.org/about-kodaly-music-institute#:~:text=Kod%C3%A1ly's%20concepts%20are%20based%20on,in%20a%20logical%20sequential%20manner.>

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

goal: making music. As stated in the article “What Is the Kodaly Method? How Can I Use It?”: “There is a uniquely social aspect to every class because students are always learning together. The social, inherently human side of music is at the core of Kodaly. A typical class, for example, might incorporate singing in rounds, duet performances or the entire small group of pupils singing together, like a choir.”⁴⁰

Kodaly versus Suzuki Comparison

The Kodaly method may be an effective alternative in some contexts. As the whole project revolves around Western notations and Chinese notation, this would be an opportunity to compare two different methodologies, Kodaly and Suzuki, Western and Eastern, respectively. The fact that Kodaly is the most used pedagogy, at least in the United States, makes it natural to use it for comparison. Other methodologies can be used to compare as well, for example Orff versus Suzuki. There are significant differences between the Kodaly and the Suzuki teaching methods. The first is that the Kodaly method focuses on developing musician skills through vocal training rather than on instruments, keeping the content within the student’s appropriate grade levels.⁴¹ The other difference between the two methods is that Suzuki prefers small-group instruction over whole-class instruction. There are other differences and similarities that are depicted in the Venn diagram below:

⁴⁰ Rob, Mr. “What Is the Kodaly Method? How Can I Use It?” Prodigies Music, July 13, 2023. <https://prodigies.com/what-is-the-kodaly-method-how-can-i-use-it/#:~:text=Perhaps%20the%20primary%20advantage%20of,the%20pitch%20and%20sing%20along>

⁴¹ VanderGraaff, Zach. “Kodaly vs. Suzuki Method: Detailed Comparison.” Dynamic Music Room, May 3, 2021. <https://dynamicmusicroom.com/kodaly-vs-suzuki/>

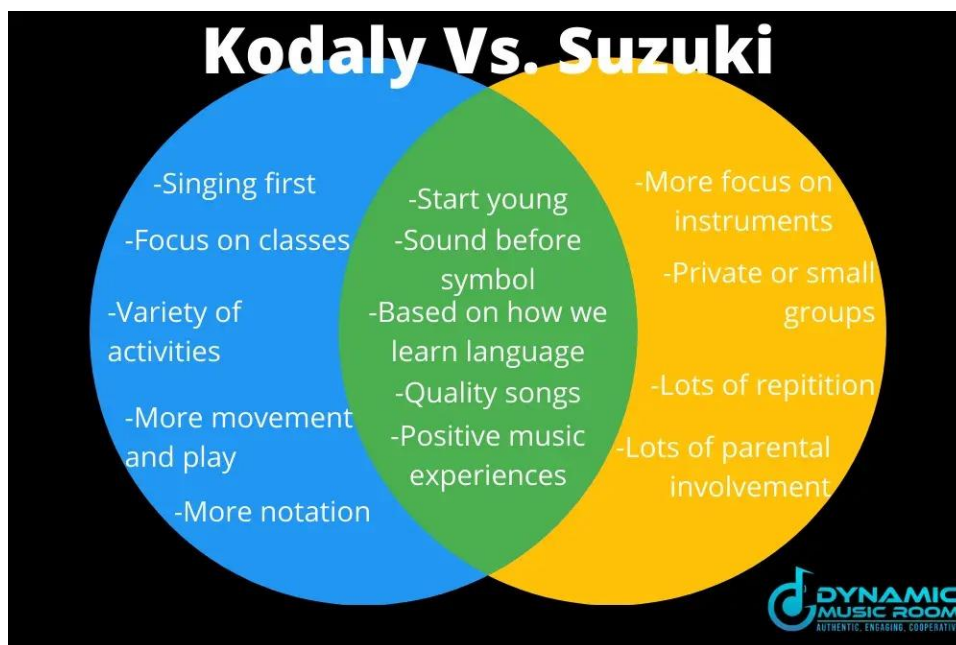


Figure 1.2. VanderGraff, Zach. Kodaly vs Suzuki. Photograph. Dynamic Music Room. Dynamic Music Room , May 3, 2021.

The picture above represents the similarities and differences between Kodaly and Suzuki, the left being the Kodaly and the right being the Suzuki method. Based on this diagram, the methods both have pros and cons along with similarities. The most important similarity is that both methods aim to teach children the same way as when they learn their mother tongue. Kodaly believes that by starting students with their own folk songs or at least ones from their country, this will eventually pave the way for them to be able to respect and enjoy other music from other countries.⁴² For Suzuki, the approach is more complicated than that. As stated earlier, the Suzuki method relies on the following items: mother tongue approach, praise, repetition, listening, and interaction with other students.⁴³ These components are important because they

⁴² VanderGraff, Zach. “Kodaly vs. Suzuki Method: Detailed Comparison.” Dynamic Music Room, May 3, 2021. <https://dynamicmusicroom.com/kodaly-vs-suzuki/>

⁴³ Association of the Americas, Suzuki. “About the Suzuki Method.” Suzuki Association of the Americas, 2023. <https://suzukiassociation.org/about/suzuki-method/>

establish a starting point for students in their music education endeavors that will continue for their whole lives.⁴⁴

Another interesting comparison between the two methods is how they practice their songs. As mentioned before, Suzuki relies on students listening to a recording or their instructor, and then they must repeat what they have heard. For Kodaly, students usually learn through a rhythmic game and are also given a syllable or a word to be used in that activity.⁴⁵ These are the most common approaches used in music education in the US. In the next section, we will examine the Chinese music education system.

An example of a rhythmic game is called Bee Bee, where students sit on the floor and pass the ball to each other after calling out their names. The lyrics are as follows, and this can be repeated with either all the students or a handful of students at a time:

Bee Bee



Figure 1.3. Boyd, Cheryl, and Paul Boyd. “Kodaly Songs and Games - Beacon Media.” Action Songs and Games Level 1, 2013.

⁴⁴ Kodaly Society, International. “Educational Activities.”

⁴⁵ Kodaly Society, International. “Educational Activities.”

<https://beaconmedia.com.au/bm/images/docs/Action%20songs%20and%20games%20Level%201.pdf>

Another example of a Kodaly game is Lemonade. The instructions and the song are shown below:

La Ta Ti ti Fun Game

Lemonade

Group 1 Group 2 Group 1 Group 2 Group 1 Group 2

Here we come. Where from? New York. What's your trade? Lem-on-ade. Give us some!

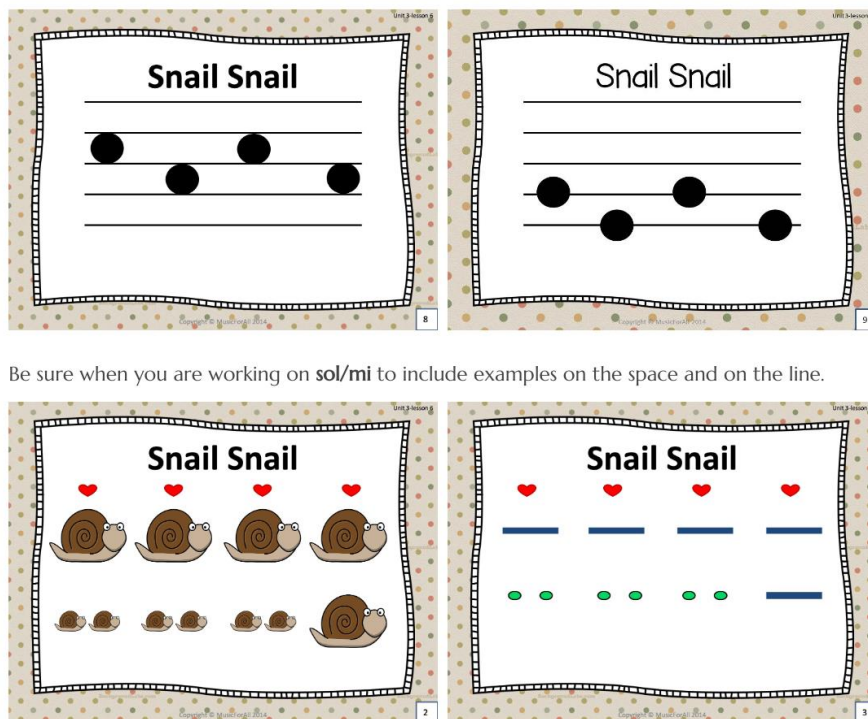
7 Group 1 Group 2

Have none. Get to work and make us some, If you're not a - fraid

Game: Divide students into two lines with each line facing the other. Pick one student to be the "tradesman". Students sing the song, as group 1 and group 2. At the end of the song, the student chosen acts out a job, without making any sounds like charades. (firefighter, teacher, doctor, etc.) The other team gets to guess the trade. They have 3 guesses to get the right answer, and if they do, they earn a point for their team. Optional hints may be provided if the students are having a hard time. Note: a discussion about types of trades, or jobs, is necessary before the game starts. Switch students and continue.

Copyright © MusicForAll 2013

Figure 1.4. Doyle, Kristen. Photograph. 5 Fun Elementary Music Games K-1. Kodaly Guys, October 19, 2022. <https://kodalyguy.com/elementary-music-games/>



Be sure when you are working on sol/mi to include examples on the space and on the line.

Figure 1.5. Doyle, Kristen. Photograph. 5 Fun Elementary Music Games K-1. Kodaly Guys, October 19, 2022. <https://kodalyguy.com/elementary-music-games/>

On the other hand, a typical Suzuki lesson, at least when it is violin, can go as follows:

1. Practice a song using only the first note of the song.
2. Do not let the student play a hard tone with stiff hands. Regardless of when a student begins, or what discipline a student is studying, the very beginning is most important. The student should play only this single pattern with a natural and good tone. If the student plays a hard tone, the teacher should say that a soft tone is all right: "Let's play with a soft tone." The teacher should then demonstrate a good tone, and then the student can correct it.
3. No matter how quickly a given student can learn, getting to this point will take two or three weeks.
4. What is important is not to confuse the child. Let the child learn to work methodically.
5. At each lesson, all the same things are repeated, from the bow onward, and the next things are added one at a time.
6. We must tell the parent to repeat these same steps to accomplish good practice at home every day. Five to ten minutes of daily home practice is enough in the beginning.
7. Be careful to let the child always do concentrated and good work in an orderly fashion, even if it is only for a short time. When we give unstructured lessons or let the child

practice at home slowly and absentmindedly for long periods of time, he or she will gradually come to dislike work.

8. What is important is not quantity, but by repetition, to accumulate good quality practice. Another important thing is this: The teacher must remind the parent, at every lesson without fail, to create a good home environment by listening to the recordings. The recording need not be played at a high volume. Children, who have good ears, can hear a very soft tone much better than adults can.
9. The beginning is crucial. Legato playing of repeated notes is a very difficult, but a very important, technique in piano playing. If the child learns it correctly at the beginning, he will be able to play repeated-note legato easily for the rest of his life.⁴⁶

As the two methodologies differ in how a lesson goes, there is also a difference in what they focus on in a lesson. First and foremost, most Suzuki lessons are conducted with an instrument, like a violin, while Kodaly lessons are usually conducted by through vocal means. The other difference is that the Suzuki lesson plan includes, as mentioned in the philosophy of Suzuki, a segment where the student's parent(s) will take part in their learning process by reinforcing the lesson at home through practicing.

Benefits of Other Methods: Orff

The Orff method, sometimes known as the Orff-Schulwerk, is a music pedagogy established by German music educator Karl Orff. It is the other pedagogy common among music educators in the United States. The methodology was established in the 1920s, and the key concept of this pedagogy is that it allows students to be creative and use their imagination to create music rather than always following the teacher and singing.

⁴⁶ Kataoka, Haruko. "How to Teach Beginners." Edited by Kenneth Wilburn. Translated by Mitsuo Furumachi. *How to Teach Beginners*, September 24, 2021.
<https://core.ecu.edu/wilburnk/SuzukiPianoBasics/KataokaSensei/HTB.htm#HTB-3.htm>

The philosophy of Orff is that any activity done in class should be “elemental.”⁴⁷

According to Orff, the definition of elemental is:

What is elemental? The Latin term “elementarius” means “belonging to the elements, to the origins, the beginnings, appropriate to first principles.” Further, what is elemental music? [It] is never music alone; it is bound together with movement, dance and speech; it is music that one must make himself, into which one is drawn in not as listener, but as participant. It is unsophisticated, knows no large forms or grand structures; instead, it consists of small series forms, ostinatos, and small rondo forms. Elemental music is near the earth, natural, physical, to be learned and experienced by everyone, suitable for the child.⁴⁸

The element of philosophy based on Orff’s quote above is that music should not only be taught by performing a song but rather with both locomotive and non-locomotive movements, and speech should be incorporated as well to create how Orff sees music. In other words, when a student is learning music, they should be dancing and including musical elements such as ostinatos and practicing their ABA or Rondo form when doing any activity. Also, this means that an Orff educator would be embracing music and dance and, while doing so, also developing their social development through working in groups.

Locomotive movement means that while doing a dance or a song, the students will be moving around their classroom doing any of these activities: walking, fast-walking, hopping, skipping, galloping, sliding, or climbing.

Students are not only limited to doing these things going forward; they can also do them backwards and sideways.⁴⁹ The opposite of locomotive movement is non-locomotive movement.

⁴⁷ Shamrock, Mary. “The Orff-Schulwerk Approach.” allianceamm. Accessed October 31, 2023. <https://www.allianceamm.org/resources/orff-schulwerk/>

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Bellerose, Samantha. “Locomotor Movement Skills for Toddlers & Kids – Lessons, Examples & Tips.” Move Dance Learn, October 24, 2022. <https://www.movedancelearn.com/locomotor-movement-skills-for-toddlers-kids-lessons-examples-tips/>

This means that rather than doing movements that would make students move from one point to another, they would be moving without traveling to another place. Possible activities are represented below:

NON-LOCOMOTOR MOTIONS FOR STEADY BEAT

- ARMS SWING LIKE RUNNING
- FLIP HANDS PALM UP/PALM DOWN
- SWAY ARMS ABOVE HEAD OR BELOW WAIST
- TAP FISTS TOGETHER
- TAP ON HAND ON TOP OF THE OTHER HAND
- KARATE CHOP
- BEND JOINTS
- TAP TOES TOGETHER WITH FEET STRAIGHT OUT, SITTING ON FLOOR

STANDING

- SWAY BACK AND FORTH
- ROCK HIPS
- TWIST AT WAIST WITH HANDS ON HIP
- TAP TOE
- BEND KNEES

OTHER

- TAP BODY PARTS
- ALTERNATE TAPPING TWO BODY PARTS

BODY PARTS

TOES
ANKLES
KNEES
HIPS
STOMACH
BACK
SHOULDER
NOSE
EARS
HEAD
CHEEK
NOSE

Created by
www.musicbyandrea.com

Figure 1.6. Mendoza, Andrea. NON-LOCOMOTOR MOTIONS FOR STEADY BEAT October 4, 2020. Photograph. Music By Andrea. https://musicbyandrea.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/nonlocomotor_steadybeat.pdf

To build an Orff activity or a lesson plan, the following things must be present: body percussion, unpitched instruments, and Orff-instruments. In this case, Orff-instruments can be the following: xylophones (bass, alto, soprano), metallophones (bass, alto), and/or

glockenspiel.⁵⁰ It is at the teacher's discretion to decide what chords to create or to remove certain keys to allow students to create their own melodies with what is present on their instrument. The unpitched instruments usually refer to any kind of drums, such as hand drums or conga drums, and other instruments, such as maracas or triangles. The most important part of Orff is the body percussion; this can be something as simple as clapping hands, patting knees, or anything that students create on their own that others can follow.⁵¹ These tools can give some freedom to students in regard to how to perform a song that they are doing in class with a teacher.

A benefit that differentiates this method from others is that it allows students to improvise, whereas other pedagogies may not allow that part of a student's musicality to grow.⁵² A blog post by Robert Adams talked about how improvisation is mostly absent from elementary music. He believes this is because most music educators are classically trained, which means that there really was not as much room for them to improvise as for those who are jazz-trained musicians.⁵³ He does find that troubling; as he puts it: "This is troubling, because improvisation, to my way of thinking, is essential to developing music literacy and fluency. Improvisation is the musical equivalent to conversation. Imagine how dreadful our communication would be if we could only talk to each other from what we read."⁵⁴ The second benefit that this method brings is the use of instruments, specifically barred instruments such as xylophones and metallophones.

⁵⁰ Estrella, Espie. "How the Orff Approach Is Used to Teach Children Music." LiveAbout, January 24, 2019. <https://www.liveabout.com/the-orff-approach-2456422>

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Shamrock, Mary. "The Orff-Schulwerk Approach." allianceamm. Accessed October 31, 2023. <https://www.allianceamm.org/resources/orff-schulwerk/>

⁵³ Adams, Robert. "Strengths and Weaknesses of Orff Schulwerk." Mister a Music Place, March 7, 2016. <https://mramusicplace.net/2016/03/07/strengths-and-weaknesses-of-orff-schulwerk/#:~:text=It's%20emphasis%20on%20improvisation%20and,to%20rhythm%20literacy%20are%20weaknesses>

⁵⁴ Ibid.

The benefit of this is that the educator has the liberty to remove the notes that are not needed in that song. An example would be if a song is sung in a key of C, then the teacher could remove notes such as D, F, and A to ensure that the music stays coherent and sounding good.⁵⁵ Also, by using this method, teachers can ensure that students feel their success from the start rather than later.⁵⁶

Benefits of Other Methods: Dalcroze Eurhythmics

Emile Jacques-Dalcroze was a Swiss musician and pedagogist who believed that through dance and kinesthetic movements, students will learn music.⁵⁷ There are four components to this method: early music education, improvisation, immersive approach to rhythm, and emphasis on human voice.⁵⁸ For the first one, early music education, like with other methods, Dalcroze thought that students should be educated in music as early as possible.⁵⁹ The second, improvisation, is different from Orff as improvisation in this case comes from dance and movement, rather than being on instruments.⁶⁰ The third component, the immersive approach to rhythm, means that rhythm is taught by dance and kinesthetic activities and games. The fourth is an emphasis on voice, meaning that for subdivision and the learning of complex meters and rhythms to become second nature to them, Dalcroze believes that students should sing rhythmic articulations until they become comfortable with them.⁶¹ Dalcroze has its advantages; it is not just limited to young students—according to the Dalcroze Society of America, it can also benefit

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Society of America, Dalcroze. "What Is Dalcroze?" Dalcroze Society of America, May 5, 2023. <https://dalcrozeusa.org/about-dalcroze/what-is-dalcroze/>

⁵⁸ Perlman, Itzhak. "Dalcroze Method Guide: 4 Principles of Eurhythmics - 2023." MasterClass, June 7, 2021. <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/dalcroze-method-guide>

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

people such as the elderly, dancers, actors/actresses, and people with needs and disabilities.⁶² In the case of young students, it allows them to be more expressive in their performances. And using dance as a learning tool also helps students with their rhythmic comprehension and develops their sense of harmony as well.⁶³ For seniors, it helps with their basic motor skills and strengthens their memory skills.⁶⁴ Although this method seems very effective in the classroom, there are not many educators who are certified in Dalcroze, as the training is only offered in seven training centers in the US. It can take up to seven years to be fully certified in Dalcroze eurhythmics.⁶⁵

As this is a research paper on Chinese notation, among the four methods discussed, the method *Jianpu* can possibly incorporate is either Orff or Kodaly. This is because they both use a solfege system, and their main form of performance is both instrument and vocal. As discussed in the Orff section about what sort of items are required in a lesson plan, it would be logical to add *Jianpu* into an Orff or even Kodaly style of teaching. Suzuki could work as well, especially when reading a piece of music that could have originated from China. For Dalcroze, it may not work as it is a body movement-oriented pedagogy. To make an effective lesson, proper pedagogy must be implemented, which is why the suggestions listed above are crucial to its success.

Chinese Music Education

In a YouTube video originally aired on the BBC called *Are Our Participants Tough Enough?*, a Chinese school follows five Chinese instructors teaching several classes in the United Kingdom to examine the students' experience of a different teaching style. Over time, most

⁶² Society of America, Dalcroze. "What Is Dalcroze?" Dalcroze Society of America, May 5, 2023. <https://dalcrozeusa.org/about-dalcroze/what-is-dalcroze/>

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

students improved their test scores, attitudes toward education, and respect for adults. This Chinese teaching class scored higher than those using the Western method.⁶⁶ While the school had a reasonable testing score before this, it showed that the Chinese schooling system can make a difference. The main difference between the UK schooling system and the Chinese system is the speed; Chinese schools typically cover the material much faster than their UK counterparts. The other major difference is that kids have a much longer school day—twelve hours, to be exact.⁶⁷ It also seemed like there were problems between students and teachers, but the results supported the theory that the school administrators had about implementation of the Chinese teaching style.

An interview with Dr. Catherine Ming Tu, the current professor of Elementary Music at Texas A&M Kingsville, revealed certain information. First, one significant difference between China and the United States is that China focuses more on faculty-led teaching and learning, and Chinese students take copious notes and figure everything out from their notes and the lecture by the teacher.⁶⁸ Thus, these classes have no room for creativity, and students have no voice in their learning. Furthermore, compared to the United States, these students must always take rigorous tests throughout their school lives. On the other hand, American schools focus more on cultivating a student-centered environment, where students are free to be creative and to ask questions without feeling ashamed. Additionally, Dr. Tu noted that even elementary Chinese music classes focus heavily on singing from a book rather than doing creative or fun activities like schools in the United States.⁶⁹

According to Jin Shenghong and Jau-wei Dan, the Chinese philosophy combines

⁶⁶ America, CGTN. “Chinese Teaching Methods Shock British ... - YouTube.” YouTube. Google, August 26, 2015.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ming Tu, Zoom chat on December 7, 2021

⁶⁹ Ibid.

traditional philosophy and Western philosophy with Marxism. The result is that educators and philosophers are striving to create an environment where things like a liberal democratic society and redefining citizenship are becoming more important than before.⁷⁰ However, this philosophy is incomplete because it requires a variable factor that must be established to create a more redefined concept of education in Chinese society.⁷¹ Thus, although China may appear to be against the West, the country still follows a Western non-Marxist philosophy in its education philosophy system.

Music is a core subject in China that all kids must partake in. According to Elizabeth Sinclair, Chinese students in grades one and two focus on musical games, while grades three and up focus more on music structure and using instruments.⁷² The structure is similar to that of the United States, where usually in the first three years, from kindergarten to second grade, students focus on basic body movements through music and performing songs and dances, while instruments become more prominent from third grade onwards.⁷³ Chinese music education values not just the development of the students' skills across different areas but also, according to Sinclair, brings a sense of nationalistic pride to the students.⁷⁴ She notes that since Chinese students learn songs that originate from different ethnic groups across China, this brings a sense of understanding of other ethnic groups and promotes citizenship among the student populous.⁷⁵ This shows that the Chinese education system has a value that the Chinese government wishes all citizens to follow to

⁷⁰ Jin Shenghong, and Jau-wei Dan. "The Contemporary Development of Philosophy of Education in Mainland China and Taiwan." *Comparative Education* 40, no. 4 (2004): 571–81. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4134628>

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Sinclair, Elizabeth. Thesis. *Comparative Music Education A COMPARISON BETWEEN CHINESE AND AMERICAN MAINSTREAM MUSIC EDUCATION*. Thesis, The Monterey Institute of International Studies, 2014. <https://sites.miis.edu/esinclair/files/2014/05/Comparative-Music-Education.pdf>

⁷³ Sarrazin, Natalie. "Chapter 4: Approaches to Music Education." *Music and the Child*, June 15, 2016. <https://milnepublishing.geneseo.edu/music-and-the-child/chapter/chapter-4/>

⁷⁴ Sinclair, 8 2014

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

promote a structured society where everyone has the same skillset and knowledge.

Difference between Two Separate Systems

Chinese schools (and, from this author's experience, Japanese schools) tend to follow the concept of "following and listening to the teacher and taking tests or doing homework," which is the standard method of the system implemented by at least these two nations. In the article by Yuan, he describes Chinese education as a passing of knowledge passively.⁷⁶

On the other hand, Western classrooms are more student-led and discussion-oriented than Chinese classrooms. In this vein, homework is only sometimes passed out. Instead, according to Yuan, they are given something to prepare for the next class to continue their discussion of the subject matter.⁷⁷

However, there are negatives to both Chinese and Western education. In China, students tend to lack open-mindedness, struggling to think beyond the information given them. On this subject, Yuan explains the disadvantage of Chinese education by saying, "Students are accustomed to relying too much on teachers and textbooks in their study. The ability of independent learning is poor."⁴² Although these students may understand a basic concept, they can only sometimes apply that concept to a real-world context.

Western education has a different kind of problem. For example, the American education system is less rigorous than the Chinese system and requires far less of students, meaning some fail to learn basic, required knowledge.⁴³ Therefore, both education systems have advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, the Chinese system teaches all students information in a similar

⁷⁶ Ibid, 64.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 64.

way. On the other hand, the Western system provides students with scattered knowledge, meaning only some learn the same way.

Notation

Technically, there are multiple types of notation systems. The oldest system is the *Gongchepu* (工尺谱), which lost all its uses after the introduction of *Jianpu*. The example below shows the *Gongchepu*, modern numerical notation, and Japanese writing.

The second one, which will be used in this project, is *Jianpu* (简谱). The latter is used the most frequently among the familiar Chinese notation systems if they are in an orchestra or were taught this in school.⁷⁸

 **茉莉花** 中国民歌

$1 = \flat E \quad \frac{4}{4}$

3 3 5 6 1 1 6 | 5 5 6 5 — | 3 3 5 6 1 1 6 |
好 一 朵 美 丽 的 茉 莉 花 ， 好 一 朵 美 丽 的

5 5 6 5 — | 5 5 5 3 5 | 6 6 5 — |
茉 莉 花 ， 芬 芳 美 丽 满 枝 丫 ，

3 2 3 5 3 2 | 1 1 2 1 — | 3 2 1 3 2 3 |
又 香 又 白 人 人 夸 。 让 我 来 将

5 6 1 5 — | 2 3 5 2 3 1 6 | 5 — 6 1 |
你 摘 下 ， 送 给 别 人 家 ， 茉 莉

2 3 1 2 1 6 | 5 — — 0 ||
花 茉 莉 花 。

⁷⁸ Cheng, 2020

Figure 1.7. Song, Zuying. Photograph. 《茉莉花》简谱. Jianpu.net, April 9, 2006. <http://www.jianpu.net/jianpu/1192.html>

Above is the *Jianpu* notation for a Chinese folk song, “Jasmine Flower” (“茉莉花”). The way Victoria Boler, a music educator, was taught by her friend was that she first had to look at the numbers. Those are the Western equivalents of the solfege system, meaning that 1 is *Do*.⁷⁹ When placed on a table, it would look like this; the left side is the *Jianpu*, and the right is the Western solfege.

1	Do
2	Re
3	Mi
4	Fa
5	Sol
6	La
7	Ti

Table 1.1

Returning to the music, it shows that 1 equals E-flat, meaning 1 (Do) is E-flat as it is written in the top left corner. Afterward, all that needs to be done is to figure out what number equals what note in the Western format. To figure out the difference between quarter, eighth, dotted notes, and so forth, Boler notes the following: If there is a dot next to the number, for example, in measure six, this indicates a dotted quarter note. If the dot is at the bottom of the note, that solfege must be sung in a lower octave, whereas a dot above the note would indicate singing in a higher octave.⁸⁰ If the line under the note is connected to the succeeding note, it indicates that those are eighth notes.

An opinion shared by Boler is that this notation system could come in handy, as she

⁷⁹ Boler, Victoria. “How to Read Chinese Music.” Victoria Boler, October 29, 2021. <https://victoriaboler.com/blog/2015/11/12/owhthm5nhqe0eaplz9iha07y49g3d0>

⁸⁰ Ibid.

thinks it is a singable scale and focuses a lot on aural skills.⁸¹ She also states, “In my opinion, where the Chinese music notation system excels in developing aural skills, it may take some getting used to for beginning readers because of the visual elements. When we look at the lines and spaces on the staff, we use high areas and low areas to show high and low pitch. We can literally see the melodic contour in front of our eyes.”⁸² Also, *Jianpu* is written in Arabic numerals, whereas *Gongchepu* is written in Mandarin.⁸³ This means that a non-Chinese person who also has little to no knowledge of Chinese letters would have to learn Chinese numbers before being able to read the *Gongchepu*. But if using *Jianpu*, the same person would not have to learn the characters, only the system.

Songs

The history of Chinese music dates back to Neolithic times, 7,000–8,000 years ago, according to Erik Meyer’s post on the history of music in China.⁸⁴ Due to this long history, it would be no surprise to find something that could be taught to any grade from 1–4 in a Mandarin immersion class. Therefore, this section discusses examples of traditional Chinese songs and the effects of Chinese education in a Western setting.

A prime example of an easily learned song is “*Xiān qǐ le nǐ dē gài tóu lǎi*,” which means “Lift up your veil to let me see your eyes.” It is short, and, in addition, the lyrics are simple and provided in Pinyin, which is crucial to Westerners learning any Chinese language.⁸⁵ Additionally, this song originated in Xinjiang province, home to many Uyghur people. These people have been

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Cheng, 2020

⁸⁴ Meyer, Eric M. “Chinese Music: History, Instruments, Types, Modern Music.” China Educational Tours. China Educational Tours, September 1, 2021.

⁸⁵ Education, Confucius. “*Xiān Qǐ Le Nǐ Dē Gài Tóu Lǎi* (Xinjiang Province).” Chinese Folk Songs for Music Teachers. Confucius Institute in Edmonton., n.d.

persecuted by the Chinese government for being Muslim, which the government, like many people in the world, equates with terrorists.⁸⁶ Consequently, this could be an opportunity to discuss this situation, stressing the importance of equality and withholding judgment when meeting differences.

Another example of a quickly learned song is “Kang Ding Qing Ge,” which means “Kang Ding Love Song.” This song has a slow tempo, so students can quickly learn the music in terms of lesson and approach to learning.⁸⁷

For this project, as the participants were all minors, it was best to use kids’ songs as the vocabulary was easier. The first example is “新年好” or “Happy New Year.” As the title suggests, it is a new year’s song and is short. The author of the article *7 Chinese Songs for Kids That Your Inner Child Will Love to Learn* states that most of the words in this song are learned in Chinese 101.⁸⁸ Should other educators or researchers decide to do a similar project, they should keep in mind factors such as age, gender, level of singing (advanced or beginner level), and the reason for picking the song. The song is presented below, written in the aforementioned *Jianpu*.

⁸⁶ BBC, “Who are the Uyghurs and why is China being accused of genocide?” 2022.

⁸⁷ Zhu, Jennifer. “Folk Music – 康定情歌 (Kāngdìng Qínggē) Kangding Love Song.”

⁸⁸ Tang, Katrina. “7 Chinese Songs for Kids That Your Inner Child Will Love to Learn.” *FluentU Mandarin Chinese*, June 14, 2023. https://www.fluentu.com/blog/chinese/chinese-songs-for-kids/#toc_7

新年好
HAPPY NEW YEAR
(大众乐谱网站制谱)

1=F 1 1 1 5̣ 3 3 3 1 1 3 5 5

Hap - py New year, Hap - py New year, Hap - py New year
新 年 来 到, 新 年 来 到, 祝 贺 大 家

4 3 2 — 2 3 4 4 3 2 3 1

to you all. We are sing - ing, We are danc - ing,
新 年 好。 快 乐 歌 唱, 纵 情 舞 蹈,

1 3 2 5̣ 7̣ 2 1 —

Hap - py New year to you all.
祝 贺 大 家 新 年 好。

Figure 1.8. sin80. 新年好乐谱. Photograph. 《新年好》乐谱. sin80.com, December 23, 2009. <https://www.sin80.com/score/38e66ab7>

Another song that can be used is a children’s song called “Little Swallow” or, in Mandarin, “小燕子.” This is also an easy-to-learn song as it is relatively short and meant for kids. The *Jianpu* notation version of the song is written below. The song has a underlying message; supposedly, according to Jasmine Li, “Stanley interpreted this song as one form of propaganda that praised a new China with the emphasis of a beautiful spring and an eager swallow, as it was published six years after the Cultural Revolution. The spring underscored new beginnings after a colder and darker time period, as represented by a new spring.”⁸⁹ This would not be surprising given when

⁸⁹ Li, Jasmine, and Jasmine Li. “小燕子 - The Little Swallow.” Dartmouth Folklore Archive, June 3, 2020. <https://journeys.dartmouth.edu/folklorearchive/2020/06/03/%E5%B0%8F%E7%87%95%E5%AD%90-the-little-swallow/>

the song was written. Nevertheless, it is still a popular children's song today.

小燕子

1=bB 4/4 王路、王云阶 词 王云阶 曲

$\underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{5}} - | \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{5}} - | \underline{\underline{1}}. \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{1}} | \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{5}} - | \underline{\underline{3}}. \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} | \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} - |$
 小燕子，穿花衣，年年春天来这里，我问燕子你为啥来。

$\underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{2}} - | \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{5}} | \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{5}} - | \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{5}} - | \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{5}} - | \underline{\underline{1}}. \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{1}} |$
 燕子说，这里的春天最美丽。小燕子，告诉你，今年这里

$\underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{5}} - | \underline{\underline{3}}. \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} | \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} - | \underline{\underline{3}}. \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{5}} | \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{2}} - | \underline{\underline{2}}. \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{5}} - \overset{6}{\underline{\underline{J}}}$
 更美丽。我们盖起了大工厂，装上了新机器。欢迎你

$\underline{\underline{1}}. \underline{\underline{3}} \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{1}} | \underline{\underline{2}} \underline{\underline{1}} \underline{\underline{5}} \underline{\underline{6}} \underline{\underline{1}} - ||$
 长期住在这里

Figure 1.9. Freisen-Wiens, Kim. Xiǎo Yàn Zi. Photograph. Chinese Folk Songs for Music Teachers. Chinese Folk Songs for Music Teachers, n.d.

<http://www.chinesefolksongs.com/xi462onbspyagravennbspzi-little-swallow.html>

Summary

Many educators agree that music education is an important part of a student's school career, with some choosing to follow the musical path as part of their lives. Even though the education systems of China and the Western world are different, both sides share a similar road map in terms of what the kids should learn at which grade level. One factor that both sides share is that most instrument playing starts at the third-grade level and focuses more on the form and the message behind the songs around that time. Where it differs is that in China, music is a mandatory class all the way into high school, whereas Western nations tend to make it optional once students hit secondary school. The other difference is that in the United States, some art

programs, including music, are being cut due to the direction the country is heading in in terms of its educational core values and curriculum along with more focus on standardized testing.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

As this project was designed to be used as a lesson in a public-school setting, it was vital that the setting and content were age appropriate. As the participants were fourth graders, using materials that were above their learning level might have imposed some roadblocks. Another important factor while completing this project was the methodology used both to obtain results and to answer the research question and hypotheses.

Design

The instruction within the project was through a lecture that included certain traditional Chinese folk songs that students would already know, such as “小燕子,” or “Little Swallow.”

The aim of this process was to ascertain the effectiveness of the Chinese education system and its impact on students' comprehension of Chinese music notation and lyrics. Because the participants involved in this research were musically knowledgeable, giving them an assignment that doubled as an assessment tool to check for their understanding of *Jianpu* made it very clear whether they understood each concept from their song transcriptions. In this case, it was a transcription assignment/assessment.

Question and Hypotheses

This study should determine whether the Chinese notation system can be effective in the classroom setting here in the United States. The first research question is: How effective is *Jianpu* as a notational system in a classroom setting in the US? The hypothesis here is that *Jianpu* can be a useful tool in a modern classroom setting. The second research question is: What is the most effective lesson plan for incorporating *Jianpu* into the US classroom? The hypothesis for the

second question is that it is effective to use a slideshow with the definition of *Jianpu* and some examples using actual songs. Once finished, create a reference sheet showing both *Jianpu* and Western notation, where students will begin transcribing a piece of music that they already know from Western notation to *Jianpu*. After that, they would fill out a survey asking how they feel about *Jianpu* and which notation system is better suited for them in terms of comprehending how it works and how to write it.

Participants

The project involved fourth-grade students in Mandarin immersion classes. Notably, among the fourth graders, over half were non-Asian and did not have a Mandarin-speaking parent.

Setting

This project was conducted at Reilly Elementary School during music class so as not to affect the students' learning by implementing the project outside of their music class time. The classroom was equipped with a TV screen to project the presentation via a computer. Participants were given a pencil and a piece of paper to complete their transcription activity. They were free to sit wherever they wished; however, the presenter reserved the right to relocate them if necessary.

Procedures

This part of the study involved two assessments: students' comprehension of Chinese notation and their ability to transcribe a simple song they should already know from Western notation to *Jianpu*. By the end of this assessment, the research question and the hypothesis would be answered as well.

The project began with creating a presentation using a program called Canva, which contains materials and resources for creating an engaging slideshow. The presentation itself had an explanation of what students would do and a definition of *Jianpu* and how it works. The slideshow included a side-by-side comparison of the song “小燕子,” or “Little Swallow,” which is a Chinese song that the participants have at least seen or heard before and showed them how the notation system differs and how it is written, using the Canva slideshow for visual references. A few examples were shown in the presentation to help students better understand what they needed to do.

At this point, learning the Chinese notation system and songs began, and this part was both simple and complex. Simple because students were at least able to comprehend the language part of the song, which would eliminate some questions that could have arisen if they did not comprehend Mandarin. Complex, because they were learning a new notation system that was mostly foreign to them, and they had also never done transcription. In terms of exposure to *Jianpu* beforehand, only one participant had seen *Jianpu* before because of their active participation in Dragon and Lion Dance, which have some songs that use *Jianpu*.

Students also created a cheat sheet showing the *Jianpu* notation and the Western solfege in a side-by-side comparison. Afterward, they were assigned in pairs to transcribe a section of “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.” As they already knew the song, they were able to go straight into the assessment, using the cheat sheet they had created earlier. The point of the assessment was to see if they could transcribe from Western notation to *Jianpu*. To start the assessment, they transcribed the first four measures with a partner to get them comfortable with transcription and to help them understand better through having some assistance before needing to do it by themselves. Once that task was completed, they were to transcribe the rest of the song by themselves. Once

they were done with their work and their assessment had been corrected by the teacher (researcher), they were told how they had done based on a 1–10 scale, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. Once the assessment was complete, they had to fill out a three-question survey, which they had to answer in complete sentences and complete thoughts, which was necessary for obtaining accurate data and results. The questions were as follows:

- What is the difference between Chinese notation and Western notation?
- Which one seems to be easier to understand, and why?
- If you were able to pick, which notation style would you choose to use, and why?

The reason for the emphasis on the complete thoughts is that if a teacher does not give enough specifics on what is expected, then there is a chance that the participants could provide incomplete information or incomplete thoughts regarding the reasoning they wrote in the survey.

This procedure was qualitative, the best choice for obtaining optimal results. As described in an article by Steve Tenny, Grae Brannan, and Janelle Brannan, “Qualitative research is a type of research that explores and provides deeper insights into real-world problems.⁹⁰ Instead of collecting numerical data points or intervene or introduce treatments just like in quantitative research, qualitative research helps generate hypotheses as well as further investigate and understand quantitative data.”⁹¹ To obtain qualitative data collection and analysis requires multiple assessments; this qualitative process is more suitable and logical than a quantitative process would be.

⁹⁰ Tenny, Steven, Janelle M Brannan, and Grace D Brannan. “Qualitative Study.” National Center for Biotechnology Information, September 18, 2022. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470395/>

⁹¹ Tenny et al., 2022

Using the data collected to this point, the researchers decided whether Chinese notation is more effective in classroom usage versus the Western notation system. This also gave the researchers an idea of whether the lesson plan used for this project was effective or not.

Data Analysis

To collect data regarding a student's comprehension of Chinese songs and musical notation, the researchers used an assessment and a survey. The assessment involved transcribing the song "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" from Western notation to *Jianpu*. And the survey asked about which notation, Western or *Jianpu*, was easier for them to understand. They also had to explain their reasoning in complete sentences to ensure accuracy in the data collection and analysis, as mentioned before. The data was analyzed based on the survey questions and also, to an extent, how they did in the transcription activity.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

Introduction

The main aspects investigated that were considered in the study and analysis of the results were the amount the students understood and their opinions on what they learned. Attention span proved to be a relevant factor and may have affected the results. As Chinese notation was a new concept for all but one student, it was understood that it would be difficult to learn during the initial phase, but the hope was that the students could gain at least a basic understanding after a few lessons.

Findings

The results are shown in Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1. The uses of “x” in the table indicates each student’s preference after completing the transcription activity. The three categories were Western Notation, Chinese Notation, and Either, with Either meaning the student(s) would be comfortable using either Chinese or Western Notation.

Student	Western Notation	Chinese Notation	Either
#1	x		
#2	x		
#3			x
#4	x		
#5		x	
#6		x	
#7		x	
#8	x		
#9	x		
#10	x		

Table 2.1. Table version of student notation system preference.

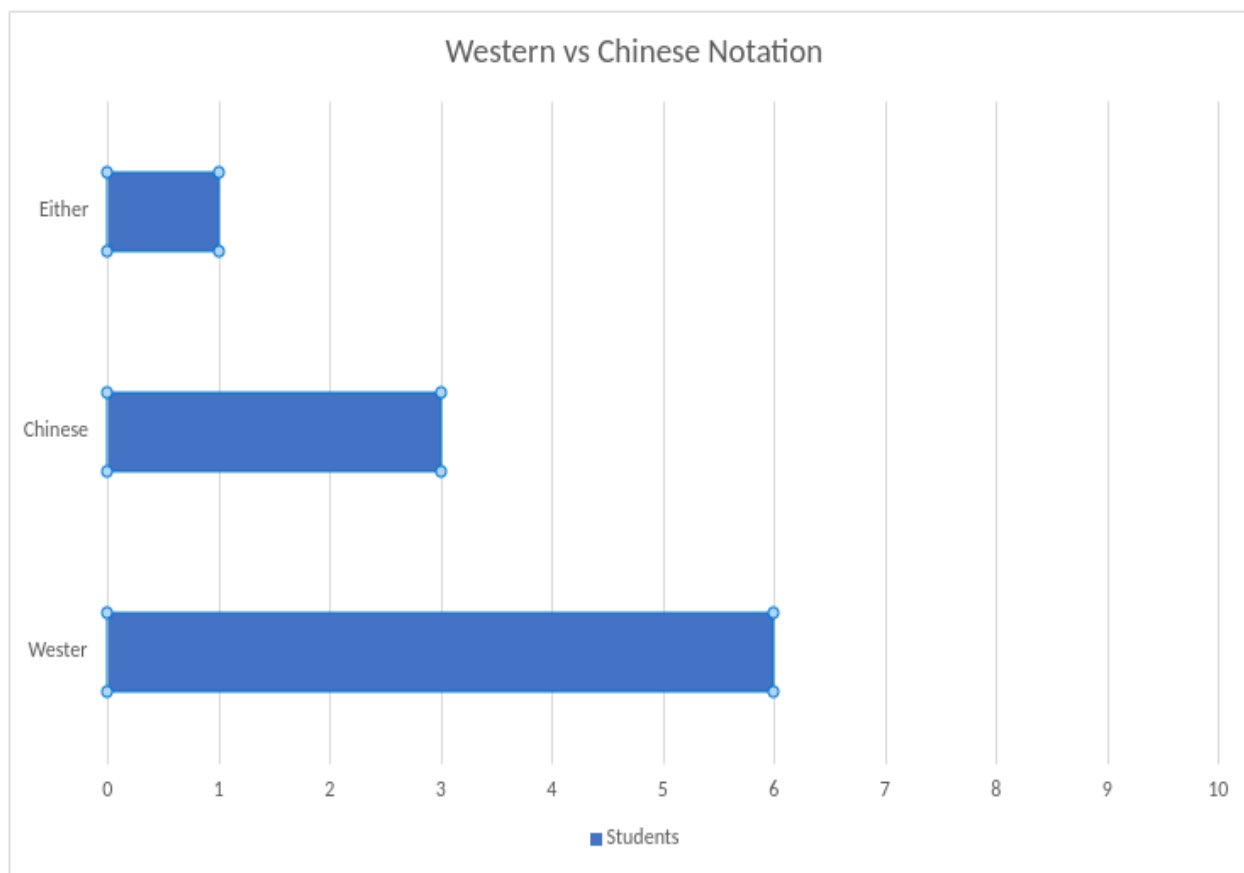


Figure 2.1. Bar graph of student transcription preference.

After the transcription activity, the work the participants had done was graded on accuracy.

The grades are listed in Table 2.2. The score system used a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being the lowest and 10 being the highest. The order of the participants is the same as in Table 2.1.

#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	AVG
10	6	9	7	6	9	7	8	10	10	8.2

Table 2.2. The score of the transcription from Western to *Jianpu*.

Table 2.3 indicates which participants had previously seen or not seen Chinese notation (indicated as Y/N).

#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10
N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N

Table 2.3. The number of participants who had or had not seen *Jianpu* before this research project.

Table 2.3 shows that regardless of whether the students preferred *Jianpu* or not, they were able to accurately transcribe Western notation to *Jianpu*. Also, regarding those who got a low score, it may have been because they were confused by the concept and could not comprehend it well enough to get a higher score or, as mentioned in the limitations section of Chapter One, because it was at the end of the year so they were not as engaged as they should have been.

Discussion

The participants showed that they were able to complete the activity without help from the instructors. Out of ten participants, seven were very attentive when given prompts and instructions. The result was that those who were attentive were able to complete the assessment and the survey promptly (within the allotted class time) and without too much confusion about *Jianpu* and how to do the transcription. As displayed in Table 2.2, those who were attentive got a higher score than those who were not.

Three students were initially not engaged in the lessons and failed to follow the instructions on the first day. The reason for this lack of interest is unknown; two claimed that they did not know what to do in terms of transcription, and the third one was confused about the *Jianpu* concept and the assessment. The following class time was spent reteaching the whole idea, while those who completed the task were rewarded with free time. The second activity was implemented with more examples of songs written in *Jianpu*, gave more models to follow, and modified the instruction to make it a little easier to understand. Those changes might have helped

the students better understand the concept, which they mostly did, at least to an acceptable level. The impact of this was a much more accurate results both in terms of their thoughts on the concept as well as their assessment being more accurate as they had a better understanding of *Jianpu* and transcription.

Figure 2.1 shows that some students either favored Chinese notation or were comfortable doing either of the notation styles. Overall, six students preferred using Western notation, three preferred Chinese notation, and one had no preference. As for the grade that all of them received, it ranged from six to ten on a one to ten scale.

The students who preferred Western notation did so for one of two reasons: First, they were used to seeing Western notation, and second, out of the six who preferred Western notation, three had experience of music lessons outside of school (mainly drums, harp, or piano), and for this reason, they were already accustomed to Western notation. There were mixed results regarding transcription grades, with three students, participants 1, 9, and 10, obtaining a perfect score, while the other three achieved scores of 6,7, and 8, respectively. This also shows that even the students who did not favor using *Jianpu* nonetheless took it seriously (except for one student), understood the concept, and were able to apply it to the task that was given to them—in this case, the transcription of a song from Western notation to *Jianpu* that was shown on the slideshow screen.

On the other hand, three participants preferred *Jianpu*, and they obtained a wide range of grades for their transcription activities. The main reason given by the students who selected *Jianpu* as their preferred notation system was that they found it easier to familiarize themselves with it and to remember how to read the scales, and they were more familiar with numbers than with the alphabet and syllables used in solfège.

Meanwhile, the reason provided by the participant who selected “Either” was that she felt both notation systems seemed straightforward enough to understand and put into use if given the choice to do so. Another possibility is that, as the student was knowledgeable about music and mathematics, she may have connected the two, as I told her that music sometimes has similarities to math. Regarding the other students that chose *Jianpu* as their option, I knew from my interactions with them that they were more math-oriented and worked more easily with numbers than with traditional notes.

Discussion of Research Question #1: How Effective is Chinese notation in a Modern Classroom Setting?

As Chinese and Western notation require different skills, it may take some time for some students to understand them fully, especially those who do not completely understand the Western notation system. Based on my observations while doing this activity, most of the students were confused with regard to the concept of *Jianpu*, as it was foreign to them. Because it was the end of the year, some students did not pay attention due to a lack of interest. The result was that half of the students understood *Jianpu* and were able to complete the assignment without significant issues, while the other half had some difficulty understanding *Jianpu* and the transcription process.

One reason for introducing students to *Jianpu* has been noted by Victoria Boler, a music educator and content creator, who argues that the concept of *Jianpu* can be beneficial. She writes, “I love that Chinese notation focuses so much on aural skills. The entire system is built around using a singable scale which contributes a lot to building listening skills alongside

reading skills. The note name and the note sound are the same.”⁹² Aural skills are indeed important for students, especially given all the benefits that they can bring to their developing brains. As such, activities such as learning Chinese notation could be useful for helping develop students’ aural skills.

The present study, which was designed to answer the first research question, found mixed views, as three of the participants stated that Chinese notation was easier than Western notation. Meanwhile, the six participants who leaned more toward Western notation said that they found it to be more accessible— “because it is not numbers,”⁹³ as one participant put it. One stated that both *Jianpu* and Western notation were easy to learn and understand. The students who preferred *Jianpu* did so mainly because the Chinese notation system uses only numbers and dashes and, in the case of some students, because they were oriented toward STEM subjects (subjects within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Other reasons included, “the Chinese notation is easier because the Western one is confusing when you change your instrument and you get new writing.”⁹⁴

On the other hand, those who stated that they were not in favor of Chinese notation said that they were more trained in Western notation, or they were not STEM-oriented. The unfamiliarity of Chinese notation also led to confusion throughout the lessons and during their transcription activity before the assessment. The other reason was that some participants had previously used Western notation while taking musical instrument lessons, most notably harp, piano, and guitar. Another reason was that Western notation is much easier to remember than Chinese notation. The student who gave this reason also noted that because of her learning

⁹² Boler, Victoria. “How to Read Chinese Music.” Victoria Boler, October 29, 2021

⁹³ Student A, interview by author, Austin, May 16, 2023

⁹⁴ Student B, interview by author, Austin, May 16, 2023

method (memorization), she found simply remembering the notes using Western notation much more straightforward than using Chinese notation. This view was supported by another participant, who gave a very similar statement, adding, “I do not have to remember all the dots and lines.”⁹⁵

The dilemma that can arise when a teacher or researcher is deciding whether to implement *Jianpu* or continue with Western notation is that schoolchildren, like adults, think differently from each other, and therefore a single learning method is not suitable for every student. For this reason, a teacher should be familiar with their students’ learning styles and use this information to decide whether to teach *Jianpu*. For example, continuing to teach *Jianpu* with the group of students that was used in this study is possible if and only if:

- A. They are fully familiar with all the materials.
- B. They pay close attention to everything that they are being taught. A lack of attentiveness results in missing vital details, as some participants did during this research project.
- C. The concept is taught clearly to them—the teacher avoids veering from the topic and makes it as clear as possible.
- D. The students have a satisfactory level of independent work habits and/or good cooperation with their fellow students.

In summary, Chinese notation seemed to be easier to learn than Western notation for some participants, while others favored Western notation. The participants who responded in favor of *Jianpu* were those who needed to learn more about music notation because they had

⁹⁵ Ibid.

never been taught it while they were younger. On the other hand, participants with some musical knowledge tended to favor Western notation because they were Western trained, despite being in the Mandarin class. However, one thing to note is that all participants were born and raised in the United States except for two from Central America, and none were born in China or Taiwan. Back to the research question, “How effective is Chinese notation in a modern classroom setting?” Yes, it is effective to an extent; as the result was mixed, it is difficult to give a definitive “yes” or “no” answer to research question 1, but the results gave a picture of who said what, and why.

Discussion of Research Question #2: What Lesson Plan for Teaching Chinese Music Notation Would Be Most Effective?

To address this question, the easiest way to create a lesson plan for teaching Chinese music notation is to create a slideshow that students can view and see what is being talked about and how it is written with a real-life example. The students should write down the basics of the Chinese notation side by side with its Western counterpart so that both musically trained and non-musically trained students can distinguish them from each other. They should have a cheat sheet with the necessary information, such as which number in Chinese notation translates to which feature of Western notation, and how to write each note in *Jianpu*. They can use it to transcribe a song that they already know, which, in the case of this study, was “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.” I instructed the students to work with partners just for the first four measures to become familiar with what they needed to do.

Because they have that cheat sheet, which includes features such as a side-by-side comparison of *Jianpu* and Western notation, the students should finish the rest on their own using the resources provided to them. Thus, it is up to the students to decide whether to write

everything down and ask questions if needed. To ensure that they would not cheat, even if they only saw it for 30 seconds, I did not show them the Chinese notation version of this song. If the students finished early (some grasped the idea of the notation system quickly), they were asked to help other students who needed assistance, and they could explain the concept much more easily than the way the teacher said it. This also gave some students the chance to lead by helping and instructing other students, rather than always leaving this role to the teacher.

The result was as expected, with half of the students asking a high number of relevant questions and being able to complete the task on their own without much difficulty. Some of the questions were: “How do you write *insert a type of note*?”; “Am I doing this right?”; “How do I make it look like this one?” (referring to the Western notation version of “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”). By contrast, the other half of the class was more confused, with some students not paying attention to the presentation or lecture, not being able to finish the activity, and, ultimately, getting into trouble with the lecturer for not paying attention.

The following questions should be considered in any lesson plan:

- What is the topic of the lesson?
- What do I want the students to learn?
- What do I want them to understand and be able to do at the end of the class?
- What do I want them to take away from this lesson?⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Donaghy, Kieran. “Bringing Lesson Outcomes to Life.” Macmillan Education: ELT Courses, Digital Solutions and Educational Materials, June 1, 2022. <https://www.macmillanenglish.com/us/blog-resources/article/bringing-lesson-outcomes-to-life>

As mentioned above, because some of the students chose not to pay attention and missed vital details, I had to reteach the lesson the following week to those students. Nevertheless, after I retaught the lesson by repeating it several times, they eventually understood what needed to be done. Those who had to be retaught then had to complete their work like everyone else and adjust what they had already done if needed. The impact of this was that although they understood the concept better than during the initial lesson and were able to do the transcription, they still preferred the Western notation versus *Jianpu*.

The remaining question is, “Was the lesson plan well implemented?” The lesson plan worked well for a second-year educator, but it was by no means perfect. Some aspects were a success, while others were not. However, to answer the question of whether this research question contributed to the overall goal and hypothesis of this project, the answer is yes. This study, rather than simply following the “I talk, you listen” approach, was only successful to an extent, as some students are more capable of understanding through “hands-on activities”—in this case, through transcription. This also means that the Chinese teaching style would not ultimately work with American students. However, a well-implemented lesson plan can make a difference in how much the student understands the concept being taught, and this was mostly done well in this study.

The results presented at the end of this project were as expected, and enough information was retrieved to answer the two essential research questions. The first question was as follows: “How effective or ineffective would the use of Chinese musical notation be in a modern classroom setting?” The answer is that it may be effective, depending on the learning style of the students and the extent to which they are musically trained. However, even then, there are other

aspects to consider, such as whether they are more oriented toward STEM subjects or the arts, and how much attention the students pay to all the lectures and activities.

The second research question was as follows: “What lesson plan would be the most effective at producing the best, clearest, and most concise results?” One finding in this study was that visuals are beneficial to students, as they can see what they need to do and ask questions if needed. The second factor is the balance between working with a partner and working by oneself. The study found that some students were able to gain a stronger understanding of Chinese music notation with the help of their classmates. Finally, giving the students a point of reference (a cheat sheet) was also helpful in avoiding being asked unnecessary questions, such as “How do you write _____ again?” as all they would have to do is look at the reference sheet.

A lesson plan is a crucial tool for all educators. For this research project, the main factors that needed to be considered were as follows:

- A. Keep the lesson short and simple.
- B. Make the lesson comprehensible and not too complicated.
- C. Create an activity that the students can participate in as a class.
- D. Make the lesson engaging by getting the students to transcribe so they can have the hands-on experience of learning a different notation system.

- **Lesson Plan Suggestions**

An example of a lesson plan idea is presented below:

- **Title: Learning and Writing Chinese Notation**

- **Objective: I can accurately write Chinese notation.**
- **Standards: This will depend on the teacher's school district.**
- #1: Deliver a short warm-up or classroom opening procedure (dependent on the teacher's teaching style and grade).
- #2: Present the content to the class. An effective way to do this is to create an interactive PowerPoint or at least make the content visibly pleasing and engaging for the students.
- #3: Ideally, show an example of a transcribed piece of music so that the students can relate Chinese notation to the Western notation they are already familiar with. You may also give them a group assignment, provided that they have comfortably understood the previous step.
- #4: Find a song they already know and have them transcribe it as described in the previous step on paper or on a poster. This activity can be done as a class, as a group, individually, or in a combination of all three options.
- #5: Implement corrections to the students' work as needed or instruct students who have full comprehension of the subject to correct their classmates' work.

An alternative idea for steps 2 and 3 is to teach the concept over the course of one or two classes to ensure that participants understand the notation, and then offer the activities on a subsequent occasion.

Summary

The results of this study show that teaching students new notation systems, such as Chinese notation, can be helpful if both the educator and the students are musically trained and

understand the concept well. Using non-Western notation systems can be beneficial, as Boler states in her above-mentioned article about the Chinese notation system, which discusses students' aural skills. The overall finding of this study was that six out of the ten participants preferred to continue using Western notation, three preferred *Jianpu*, and one was comfortable using both. Regarding the results in the transcription section, most students achieved a high score on a scale ranging from 1 to 10. The average among the 10 students was 8.2, with three achieving a perfect score and the lowest score being 6. Additionally, it was found that even where students preferred Western notation, this did not always prevent them from putting effort into their work, although some did not put in as much effort as others. In the methodology applied to this study, the students were first taught the concept of *Jianpu*, mainly by visual means; they then worked partially with a partner, and they completed the final part of the transcription by themselves. The lesson plan was carefully formulated to fit the group's needs and to ensure a successful lesson so that, at minimum, they could understand the basics and apply them to their assignment, which doubled as an assessment to address the research questions.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

Summary of Study

The study conducted was to find out whether the use of the Chinese notation system could be a tool that music educators here in the United States could use. The study included the use of visual presentation tools, which were used to reinforce and support the students to ensure that they understood everything they needed to learn and use for their activity, which doubled as an analysis tool for the researcher. The second research question was: What lesson plan for teaching Chinese music notation would be most effective? When discussing this RQ in Chapter 4, it was stated that, to ensure a smooth lesson, as much information as possible should be given. To make this happen, a proper lesson plan must be provided, keeping things in mind such as what the topic is and its outcome, meaning what students have learned and how they applied it to their activities. The result was that most of the students were able to at least understand the concept and apply it to their activity or assessment. With that in mind, there was also a suggestion for a lesson plan that other researchers and/or educators could use in their class should they so wish. As for the methodology, it was conducted in the Chinese style of “I talk, you listen,” which means that during the lecture they could not ask questions. They were only allowed to ask questions after the lecture.

Summary of Findings

The project revealed intriguing findings. First, out of ten students, six preferred to use the Western notation system, either because they found it easier to use or because they were already used to using that system. They were not necessarily comfortable using the Chinese notation system, as it was new to them. On the other hand, the other four students were in favor of using *Jianpu*, as it was easier for them to remember and comprehend how it works and looks. To

restate the findings, it was noted that while most were able to pay attention and successfully do the activities, some had some difficulty paying attention and, as a result, did not do as well as the others. However, as mentioned before, they still enjoyed the activity and were intrigued by *Jianpu* as it was foreign to them. This is relevant as it shows that *Jianpu* can be a tool that educators can use to discuss different cultures from their own. In addition, the opinions regarding who preferred which notation system were as expected. For example, for those who preferred the Western notation system, some of the reasons were because they already take music lessons, they are more accustomed to it, or it is easier for them to use. Meanwhile, on the other end of the spectrum, those who preferred to use *Jianpu* said that they liked it because it was not as complicated as the Western notation system, and they thought that, regardless of what instruments they played, they could just use one type of notation.

Limitations

Like anything else in this world, the method of study and content can only be successful to a point. In this case, the possible limitation is that only some students can use or understand this notation system, as we live in a time where everyone has a unique way of learning and using whatever resources are given to them. However, if the teacher does not know the context or thinks that it would not benefit them, then this study would not be helpful to that group of teachers or students. A roadblock that was encountered during this research was that during the literature review, it was difficult to compare already-conducted research on this topic, as it seems no one has conducted this type of research before. As such, a few of the literature items had to be changed to discuss music pedagogy and compare the music education systems in Western nations and China. Also, discussing the pros and cons of some pedagogies was used to overcome the previous roadblocks. Another problem occurred during the project phase, when some

participants were not as motivated as others due to factors such as it being the end of the school year and being confused about how *Jianpu* works and how transposition works. A mistake that was made during the project phase was not implementing a transcription activity where participants transposed from *Jianpu* to Western notation, as they were only required to do transposition from Western notation to *Jianpu*.

Recommendations for Future Study

As this study was conducted at an elementary school level, a good recommendation for future researchers, whether it is this notation system or not, would be to do this at a secondary school level, as those students would have a better understanding of at least the Western notation system, assuming they have knowledge of it through private lessons, band, or orchestra. Another suggestion would be to conduct this same study using a different way of teaching, such as the “flipping the classroom” concept or another way that the teacher might deem helpful in his or her classroom, which was done by the researcher’s ninth-grade teacher.

When another researcher conducts this kind of research project, they should know a little about the participants before doing the activity part. This way, the presentation part would be easier as it is oriented towards the participants and thus easier for them to understand the concept. The slideshow used for this research project was created to meet the participants’ needs, so there were many images and hands-on activities, and the definition and rules were kept short and easy to understand. A recommendation is to find a different teaching style, as the Chinese teaching method was deemed successful to make a difference in the attitude of students in that grade school in the United Kingdom and their test scores⁹⁷ This method may not work better for

⁹⁷ Unknown, 2015

those in the States as the education system and core values differ from those of the United Kingdom or China.⁹⁸ However, it is worth a try, provided that the researcher has ample time to implement it for a more extended period.

Implications for Practice

As mentioned in the significance of the study in Chapter One, since the world is changing and people are becoming more connected with diverse cultures, this could open another door for the participants who participated in this study or give some ideas to educators and researchers alike. People know that everyone has their own way of doing specific tasks, such as how they learn a concept or how to work on a particular problem. To instruct the participants about Chinese notation, several things must be kept in mind, the first being that they are participants, which means they cannot always comprehend as adults can. Nevertheless, a suitable method of presentation and proper implementation of the content can make it easier for participants to learn and determine whether or not they like it. However, they may prefer how they were taught before.

Summary

The study involved the usage of Chinese notation, *Jianpu*, in a classroom setting. The hypothesis was that *Jianpu* could be a classroom tool. This claim was supported by the study conducted on fourth-grade participants in an English-Mandarin bilingual program. The result of the study was that out of ten participants, only three preferred to use *Jianpu*, while six preferred the Western notation system, and one student was willing to use either notation system. The setting for this was a music classroom, and the participants had paper and a pencil to transcribe a

⁹⁸ International Student. 2008. "U.K. vs. USA Education System | Study Abroad Guide." International Student. 2008. <https://www.internationalstudent.com/study-abroad/guide/uk-usa-education-system/>

well-known children's song into *Jianpu*, first working with a partner, then finishing the piece on their own. Also, something to note is that if the presentation is not engaging enough or going at a pace that the participant cannot keep up with, they could lose interest in the lecture, resulting in inaccurate results. If another researcher were to do something similar, they must ensure that the presentation is given in a manner that catches the participants' attention and makes it interactive.

Appendix

Bibliography

- Adams, Robert. "Strengths and Weaknesses of Orff Schulwerk." Mister a Music Place, March 7, 2016. <https://mramusicplace.net/2016/03/07/strengths-and-weaknesses-of-orff-schulwerk/#:~:text=It's%20emphasis%20on%20improvisation%20and,to%20rhythm%20literacy%20are%20weaknesses>
- America, CGTN. "Chinese Teaching Methods Shock British ... - YouTube." YouTube. Google, August 26, 2015.
- Arts, Music &. "10 Lessons Your Child Will Learn in Marching Band." The Vault at Music & Arts, July 14, 2022. <https://thevault.musicarts.com/10-lessons-your-child-will-learn-in-marching-band/>
- Boler, Victoria. "How to Read Chinese Music." Victoria Boler, October 29, 2021. <https://victoriaboler.com/blog/2015/11/12/owhthm5nhqe0eaplz9iha07y49g3d0>
- Briggs, Saga. "Learning a Language through Music: How to Train Your Brain." Berlitz, November 15, 2021. <https://www.berlitz.com/blog/learning-language-through-music-songs>
- Cheng, M. (2020, October 5). "Music notations for a Chinese orchestra." Medium. Retrieved January 22, 2023, from https://medium.com/@mingcheng_5918/music-notations-for-chinese-orchestra-a18537355848
- "Chinese Musical Notation (Numbered System)." Stanford Chinese Music Ensemble. Stanford Chinese Music Ensemble. Accessed December 18, 2021. <https://web.stanford.edu/group/scme/cgi-bin/wordpress1/chinese-music-%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E9%9F%B3%E4%B9%90/chinese-musical-notation-numbered-system>
- Concordia Shanghai. "Similarities and Differences between Chinese and American Education." Similarities and Differences Between Chinese and American Education, September 9, 2020. <https://blog.concordiashanghai.org/chinese-and-american-education>
- Damkohler, Katherine. "Music Education and the Multiplier Effect." HuffPost, December 7, 2017. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/music-education-and-the-m_b_7603098
- Donaghy, Kieran. "Bringing Lesson Outcomes to Life." Macmillan Education: ELT courses, digital solutions and educational materials, June 1, 2022. <https://www.macmillanenglish.com/us/blog-resources/article/bringing-lesson-outcomes-to-life>
- Education, Confucius "Dǎ Huā Pāi." Chinese Folk Songs for Music Teachers. Confucius Institute in Edmonton., n.d. <http://www.chinesefolksongs.com/xi257n-q464-le-n464-d275-gagravei-toacutau-l462i-xinjiang-province.html>

- Education, Confucius. “Xiān Qǐ Le Nǐ Dē Gài Tóu Lǎi (Xinjiang Province).” Chinese Folk Songs for Music Teachers. Confucius Institute in Edmonton., n.d.
- Epstein, Mary, and Jonathan Rappaport. “Our Mission & the Kodály Concept.” Welcome to Kodály Music Institute, 2020. <https://kodalymusicinstitute.org/about-kodaly-music-institute#:~:text=Kod%C3%A1ly's%20concepts%20are%20based%20on,in%20a%20logical%2C%20sequential%20manner>
- Estrella, Espie. “How the Orff Approach Is Used to Teach Children Music.” LiveAbout, January 24, 2019. <https://www.liveabout.com/the-orff-approach-2456422>
- Freisen-Wiens, Kim. Xiǎo Yàn Zi. Photograph. Chinese Folk Songs for Music Teachers. Chinese Folk Songs for Music Teachers, n.d. <http://www.chinesefolksongs.com/xi462onbspyagravennbspzi-little-swallow.html>
- Freisen-Wiens, Kim. “Yǒng É: Chinese Folk Songs Project.” Chinese Folk Songs for Music Teachers. Accessed August 10, 2023. <http://www.chinesefolksongs.com/xi462onbspyagravennbspzi-little-swallow.html>
- International Student. 2008. “U.K. vs. USA Education System | Study Abroad Guide.” International Student. 2008. <https://www.internationalstudent.com/study-abroad/guide/uk-usa-education-system/>
- Jin, Shenghong, and Jau-wei Dan. “The Contemporary Development of Philosophy of Education in Mainland China and Taiwan.” *Comparative Education* 40, no. 4 (2004): 571–81. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4134628>
- Li, Jasmine, and Jasmine Li. “小燕子- The Little Swallow.” Dartmouth Folklore Archive, June 3, 2020. <https://journeys.dartmouth.edu/folklorearchive/2020/06/03/%E5%B0%8F%E7%87%95%E5%AD%90-the-little-swallow/>
- Liu, H. (2014, May 8). Office of International Affairs. University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus. Retrieved November 21, 2022, from <https://www.ucdenver.edu/offices/international-affairs/newsroom/articles/detail/differences-between-chinese-american-education>
- Mathewson, Tara García. “NYC’s Only K-12 School with Music as Core Subject Sees High Outcomes.” Deep Dive, January 17, 2017. <https://www.k12dive.com/news/nycs-only-k-12-school-with-music-as-core-subject-sees-high-outcomes/433960/>
- Meyer, Eric M. “Chinese Music: History, Instruments, Types, Modern Music.” China Educational Tours. China Educational Tours, September 1, 2021.
- Ming Tu, Zoom chat on December 7, 2021

- Perlman, Itzhak. "Dalcroze Method Guide: 4 Principles of Eurhythmics - 2023." MasterClass, June 7, 2021. <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/dalcroze-method-guide>
- "Reilly Elementary School." Austin ISD, August 2022. <https://www.austinisd.org/schools/reilly>
- Rob, Mr. "What Is the Kodaly Method? How Can I Use It?" Prodigies Music, July 13, 2023. <https://prodigies.com/what-is-the-kodaly-method-how-can-i-use-it/#:~:text=Perhaps%20the%20primary%20advantage%20of,the%20pitch%20and%20sing%20along>
- Row, David. "Why Teach Folk Songs? - Resources, How-to, and More." Make Moments Matter, December 2, 2017. <https://makemomentsmatter.org/content/my-favorite-folk-songs-folk-song-resources/>
- Sarrazin, Natalie. "Chapter 4: Approaches to Music Education." Music and the Child, June 15, 2016. <https://milnepublishing.geneseo.edu/music-and-the-child/chapter/chapter-4/>
- Shamrock, Mary. "The Orff-Schulwerk Approach." allianceamm. Accessed October 31, 2023. <https://www.allianceamm.org/resources/orff-schulwerk/>
- sin80. 新年好乐谱. Photograph. 《新年好》乐谱. sin80.com, December 23, 2009. <https://www.sin80.com/score/38e66ab7>
- Sinclair, Elizabeth. "Comparative Music Education: A COMPARISON BETWEEN CHINESE AND AMERICAN MAINSTREAM MUSIC EDUCATION." Thesis, The Monterey Institute of International Studies, 2014. <https://sites.miiis.edu/esinclair/files/2014/05/Comparative-Music-Education.pdf>
- Shawal, Malik. "Dewey's Philosophy of Pragmatism." Your Article Library, November 5, 2015. <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/philosophy/deweys-philosophy-of-pragmatism/69139>
- Society of America, Dalcroze. "What Is Dalcroze?" Dalcroze Society of America, May 5, 2023. <https://dalcrozeusa.org/about-dalcroze/what-is-dalcroze/>
- Sparks, Yohei. Chinese Notation Assignment. Personal, May 16, 2023.
- Sparks, Yohei. Chinese Notation Assignment. Personal, May 23, 2023.
- Staff, Yamaha. "Status of Music Education in Public Schools." Yamaha Music, November 29, 2022. <https://hub.yamaha.com/music-educators/prog-health/advocacy/status-of-music-education-in-public-schools/#:~:text=Findings%20about%20music%20education%20in,education%20during%20the%20school%20day>
- Student A, interview by author, Reilly Elementary School, Austin, TX, May 16, 2023.
- Student B, interview by author, Reilly Elementary School, Austin, TX, May 16, 2023.

- Tang, Katrina. “7 Chinese Songs for Kids That Your Inner Child Will Love to Learn.” FluentU Mandarin Chinese, June 14, 2023. https://www.fluentu.com/blog/chinese/chinese-songs-for-kids/#toc_7
- Tenny, Steven, Janelle M Brannan, and Grace D Brannan. “Qualitative Study.” National Center for Biotechnology Information, September 18, 2022. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470395/>
- “The Chorus Impact Study - Kaufman Music Center.” The Chorus Impact Study, 2009. https://www.kaufmanmusiccenter.org/images/uploads/content/ImpactStudy09_Report.pdf
- Unknown. “Are Our Participants Tough Enough Chinese School?” YouTube. YouTube/Google, August 23, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYGxAwRUpaI>
- Unknown. “Gong-Che Notation.” Key concepts in Chinese thought and culture. Accessed July 26, 2023. https://www.chinesethought.cn/EN/shuyu_show.aspx?shuyu_id=4623
- Unknown. “What Is Dalcroze?” Dalcroze Society of America, May 5, 2023. <https://dalcrozeusa.org/about-dalcroze/what-is-dalcroze/>
- VanderGraaff, Zach. “Kodaly vs. Suzuki Method: Detailed Comparison.” Dynamic Music Room, May 3, 2021. <https://dynamicmusicroom.com/kodaly-vs-suzuki/>
- Vaughan, Jack. “Transcribing Music.” Lean Musician, November 25, 2020. <https://www.leanmusician.com/post/transcribing-music>
- X, Science. “Music Training Strengthens Children’s Brains, Decision-Making Network.” Medical Xpress - medical research advances and health news, November 14, 2017. <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-11-music-children-brains-decision-making-network.html>
- “Yi Jian Mei (Xue Hua Piao Piao Bei Feng Xiao Xiao).” YouTube. YouTube, August 25, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8x4m-qpmJ8>
- Zhu, Jennifer. “Folk Music – 康定情歌 (Kāngdìng Qínggē) Kangding Love Song.” eChineseLearning Blog Folk music Kngdng qngg Kangding Love Song Comments, May 26, 2017. <https://www.echineselearning.com/blog/folk-music-kangding-love-song>