

วิธีการสอนขับร้องเพลงป๊อปออนไลน์บนแพลตฟอร์มติ๊กต็อกในประเทศจีน

The Pop Vocal Music Online Teaching Method on the TikTok Platform in China

ซีหยวน ฮู¹ และ ตรีทิพ บุญแย้ม^{*2}

Zeyuan Hu¹ and Treetip Boonyam^{*2}

^{*}Corresponding Author, email: treetip.boon@mahidol.ac.th

บทคัดย่อ

วัตถุประสงค์ของการวิจัยนี้เพื่อ 1) วิเคราะห์ถึงข้อได้เปรียบเฉพาะตัวและปัญหาที่เกิดขึ้น ในการสอนขับร้องบนแพลตฟอร์มติ๊กต็อก 2) ศึกษาถึงวิธีการและเทคนิคการสอนออนไลน์ที่ถูกใช้บนแพลตฟอร์มติ๊กต็อก และ 3) พัฒนาแนวทางให้กับครูผู้สอนที่จะสอนบนติ๊กต็อก การศึกษานี้ใช้การสอนขับร้องดนตรีบนแพลตฟอร์มติ๊กต็อกของประเทศจีนเป็นกรณีศึกษา และใช้วิธีวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ข้อมูลถูกรวบรวมผ่านการสัมภาษณ์แบบกึ่งโครงสร้างและการสังเกตแบบไม่มีส่วนร่วมกับครูสอนขับร้องที่มีการสอนขับร้องผ่านติ๊กต็อกและมีผู้ติดตามสูงจำนวน 5 ท่าน และผู้เรียนท่านละ 2 คน รวมผู้เรียนทั้งสิ้น 10 คน การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลใช้การวิเคราะห์เนื้อหา และการตรวจสอบแบบสามเส้า ข้อได้เปรียบหลักของการสอนขับร้องบนติ๊กต็อกคือการลดข้อจำกัดด้านเวลาและระยะทาง อุดมไปด้วยผู้สอนและทรัพยากรในการสอน ลดต้นทุนและช่วยทำให้การเรียนรู้สนุกสนานยิ่งขึ้น ข้อเสียเปรียบหลักคือสัญญาณล่าช้า เสียงไม่ตรงกับการสื่อสารและขาดการโต้ตอบ ผลการศึกษาวิจัยในครั้งนี้สามารถนำมาสรุปเป็นแนวทางการสอนขับร้องเพลงบนติ๊กต็อกได้ทั้งหมด 7 ประการ ได้แก่ 1) ความสามารถในการร้องเพลงอย่างมืออาชีพ ความรู้ด้านดนตรี และเทคนิคในการขับร้อง 2) เครื่องมือในการสอนและการจัดสภาพแวดล้อมในการสอนที่กลมกลืน 3) การสร้างขั้นตอนและลำดับในการสอน 4) การผสมผสานวิดีโอแบบสั้น ๆ ร่วมกับการถ่ายทอดสด 5) ความกล้าหาญที่จะสร้างลักษณะเฉพาะตนที่แปลกใหม่และไม่เหมือนใคร 6) การสอนผ่านความบันเทิงที่สามารถกระตุ้นความสนใจของผู้เรียน และ 7) การสอนผู้เรียนตามทักษะของผู้เรียนโดยเน้นที่การประเมินผล และให้ข้อมูลย้อนกลับ แนวทางเหล่านี้สามารถช่วยครูผู้สอนขับร้องดนตรีบนติ๊กต็อกให้สามารถสอนบนออนไลน์ได้ดีขึ้นและช่วยสนับสนุนให้การสอนสัมฤทธิ์ผล

คำสำคัญ: ติ๊กต็อก, การสอนขับร้อง, การสอนออนไลน์, การสอนดิจิทัล, ดนตรีศึกษา

¹ นิสิตหลักสูตรศิลปศาสตรบัณฑิต, สาขาวิชาดนตรีศึกษา, วิทยาลัยดุริยางคศิลป์, มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล

¹ M.A. Student, Music Education Program, College of Music, Mahidol University

² ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์, ดร., วิทยาลัยดุริยางคศิลป์ มหาวิทยาลัยมหิดล, อาจารย์ที่ปรึกษาหลัก

² Asst. Prof., Dr., College of Music, Mahidol University, Advisor

Abstract

This study explores the opportunities and challenges associated with vocal music instruction on the TikTok platform. Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, it focuses on popular vocal music teaching practices in China. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and non-participated observations with five highly followed vocal music teachers on TikTok and their students at least 2 persons per teacher; total 10 students, and analyzed using content analysis and triangulation methods. The study identifies several advantages of TikTok-based vocal instruction, including the removal of time and location barriers, the availability of diverse teaching resources, reduced instructional costs, and enhanced student engagement. Conversely, the research highlights limitations such as signal latency, potential misinterpretation of vocal sound quality, and limited interactivity between instructors and learners. The study also examines instructional content, with an emphasis on mixed voice techniques commonly taught via the platform. As a result, seven key guidelines for effective vocal music teaching on TikTok are proposed: 1) professional vocal skills and musical literacy; 2) appropriate instructional equipment and a conducive learning environment; 3) structured and sequenced lesson planning; 4) integration of short videos and live streaming; 5) innovation and personal branding; 6) entertainment-based learning strategies; and 7) individualized instruction with an emphasis on assessment and feedback. These findings aim to provide practical insights for vocal music educators seeking to leverage TikTok as a pedagogical tool, and contribute to the broader discourse on digital music education.

Keywords: TikTok, Vocal Music Instruction, Online Teaching, Digital Pedagogy, Music Education

Introduction

Under the background of the rapidly developing Internet media, all walks of life have been involved in the wave of innovation and development. The education industry is no exception, making full use of the development background of online media to continuously deepen and make progress. The biggest advantage of the Internet is that people can enjoy the unlimited information resources provided by it at any time and any place. This new feature also allows for the distribution of singing lessons from the origin to different regions, so that people who like vocal music can learn it everywhere (Shi, 2023). In particular, 2020 is a very difficult year for traditional offline vocal music teaching. Due to the sudden outbreak of the epidemic, some teachers actively or passively stepped in front of the camera and opened the mode of live broadcasting. Vocal music teachers have been posting instructional videos on TikTok that have attracted many likes and

lessons, especially for pop music, which is popular among young people (Hidayatullah et al., 2021). For instance, a popular TikTok teacher named Yisheng, a vocal music teacher from the Shenyang Conservatory of Music, has had more than 3 million followers on TikTok which people can learn his short videos of popular vocal music teaching and his live-stream teaching sessions. And he has sold more than 80,000 paid courses via TikTok platform. In his homepage, a lot of short teaching videos that he has carefully recorded have presented. At its peak, more than 100,000 people would watch him teach in his live broadcasting room (People's Network Science and Technology Channel, 2019).

As online music education can divide into two categories; one-way and two-way communication. One-way communication online teaching is a kind of online music education has been established for a long time and enjoys a certain reputation. However, it is mainly based on resource sharing, most of which are free and some of which are charged like MOOCs. Compared with the early resources output online music learning, two-way interactive music courses have become a trend (Yang et al., 2025). TikTok, a short video social live streaming platform, falls into this category. Such platforms attract corresponding customer groups through certain marketing means and provide teaching services in the form of free live streaming or group purchase of courses. This kind of live broadcasting platform has powerful functions of asking questions and leaving comments in real time. Besides completing the teaching content, teachers can also further explain and answer questions according to the needs of students, which greatly improves the degree of interaction.

China's TikTok, called "*Douyin*", as a popular short video social platform, has a huge user base and a rich content ecosystem (O'Brien et al., 2025). In recent years, more and more vocal music teachers and fans began to use TikTok to carry out online teaching activities. This new teaching mode has changed the traditional vocal music teaching methods and patterns to a certain extent. Through literature review, it is found that there are a lot of researches on online teaching, and there are also articles about TikTok short video platform as a teaching aid. TikTok teaching has many advantages, such as rich content and excellent teachers; not limited by time and distance; low-cost advantage. At the same time, there are some problems, such as uneven teaching quality and lack of systematic learning (Ding et al., 2022). TikTok teaching has become a trend (Abidin & Vizcaíno-Verdú, 2023), but there are few articles about using TikTok for vocal music teaching.

Although the research of music education in the new media in China is very popular. A literature review revealed published and accessible research on music instruction via new media, including the TikTok platform, are study broadly about music teaching. Such as the research by Chen et al. (2023), which studied the context of using now media in music

education, particularly among college-level students, indicated that the use of new media opens up a diverse world of music to students, reduces learning stress, makes classrooms more modern, allows students to learn music anytime and anywhere, and offers many interactive teaching aids. Furthermore, it helps strengthen the relationship between teachers and students. Or another study such as the study by Siwei et al. (2023) has provided an overview of social media-based music education in China, including WeChat, MOOCs, music micro-classes, mobile apps, and others, but it did not specifically address the teaching of pop music vocal performance. This constitutes the core research gap: while TikTok teaching has become a trend, few studies have specifically focused on vocal music teaching on this platform. Existing research has not yet in-depth analyzed the unique advantages and specific challenges of using TikTok in teaching vocal music, a discipline that relies heavily on vocal quality and face-to-face interaction, nor has it offered any concrete teaching methods, techniques, or best practices. In other words, we are aware of the general value and limitations of TikTok as an educational tool, but we lack understanding of how to address specific challenges of vocal music instruction, such as sound transmission and vocal technique demonstrations, on this platform, and what effective teaching strategies can overcome the inherent limitations of the platform.

Therefore, based on the case of online vocal music teaching on TikTok platform and through interviews with relevant personnel, this study deeply analyzes the unique advantages and existing problems of vocal music teaching on TikTok short video platform under the background of new media. It also identifies some methods and techniques suitable for vocal music teaching on TikTok and shares a series of experiences and suggestions for optimizing teaching on the platform. The results of this study will help create a talent pool of music and vocal educators who can keep up with the times, use network technology effectively, and quickly improve the efficiency of traditional teaching, and improve the efficiency of teaching for anyone who wants to use the TikTok platform to teach, even though it is one of the most difficult forms of online music teaching.

Objectives

1. To analyze the unique advantages and existing problems of vocal music teaching on TikTok platform.
2. To study the online teaching method and techniques that should use on TikTok platform.
3. To develop guidelines for other teacher for using TikTok platform for teaching.

Literature Reviews and Research Framework

Music teaching on the TikTok platform

Condro et al. (2025) states in their research that the use of TikTok in music teaching can often bring significant teaching effects. This teaching method can reflect a certain educational value in music teaching in vocational schools. This teaching method can enhance students' self-worth and confidence, as well as their musical abilities.

TikTok can also be applied to the Flip Classroom model. This means that TikTok serves as a learning medium and tool, allowing students to preview and review lesson content via TikTok videos before and after class, before participating in classroom discussions and practical activities (Li & Zhang, 2024). Due to its concise short video format and powerful interactive features, TikTok is gradually becoming a trending tool in education (Hu et al., 2025). In the study of Hu et al. (2025), they supported the use of TikTok for Flip Classroom learning through experimental research with a group of folk-art students. Using TikTok as a teaching tool throughout a 16-week semester, the results showed that TikTok significantly enhanced students' design skills, fostered active learning, and served as a very effective tool for self-directed learning, especially through the use of short videos. It also supported personalized learning. As a social media platform, TikTok promotes social interaction in education, fosters a spirit of innovation, and contributes to a more vibrant and inclusive learning environment. Through the creation and sharing of short videos, students can express their understanding and ideas in more engaging and interactive ways, enhancing their self-expression, creativity, and confidence (Chen & Wang, 2023).

As supported by empirical studies, MOOC and TikTok-two mainstream online teaching models-exhibit distinct adaptability to vocal music teaching. MOOC adopts an asynchronous large-scale knowledge delivery model, which is suitable for popularizing systematic music theory. It offers flexible learning paces and structured theoretical resources but features low interactivity, relying on one-way knowledge transmission with limited peer or teacher interaction (Bates, 2019). Notably, MOOC fails to meet vocal music's core demands for real-time skill correction and personalized vocal guidance, as it cannot assess students' singing quality effectively. TikTok, by contrast, operates on a hybrid model combining asynchronous short videos and synchronous live streaming. It caters to fragmented learning habits, excels at stimulating learners' interest, and boasts high accessibility and wide audience coverage (Li, 2021). However, TikTok faces unique technical barriers for vocal instruction: its sound quality is unstable, prone to distortion due to network latency or compression, and the depth of one-on-one interactive guidance remains insufficient (Ren, 2021)-gaps rarely addressed in existing research.

Previous researches, such as Zhong & Shoa (2025) and O’Leary (2023), have focused on presenting the overall use of new media for music education in various forms, rather than specifically studying any particular medium. This reflects a gap in in-depth study of communication techniques through TikTok, as well as teaching techniques that can be implemented even using online platforms. This led to the development of a research framework aiming to study communication techniques through TikTok and the teaching of pop vocal music using the SLS (Speech Level Singing) teaching method concept, including empirical evidence of the advantages and disadvantages of using this new media from both learners and teachers.

The SLS teaching method is the latest popular singing method in Europe and the United States in recent years. Founder Seth Riggs is a great music coach in the American music industry. His self-created vocal training method “Speech Level Singing” has achieved numerous pop singers (Li, 2021). This study applies qualitative research through observing the teaching of famous TikTok vocal music teachers and their students on TikTok. Sort out the method of online vocal music teaching, as well as the advantages of online teaching and existing problems. Finally, combined with the music teaching method based on SLS vocal music concept, the TikTok vocal music teaching guide is summarized.

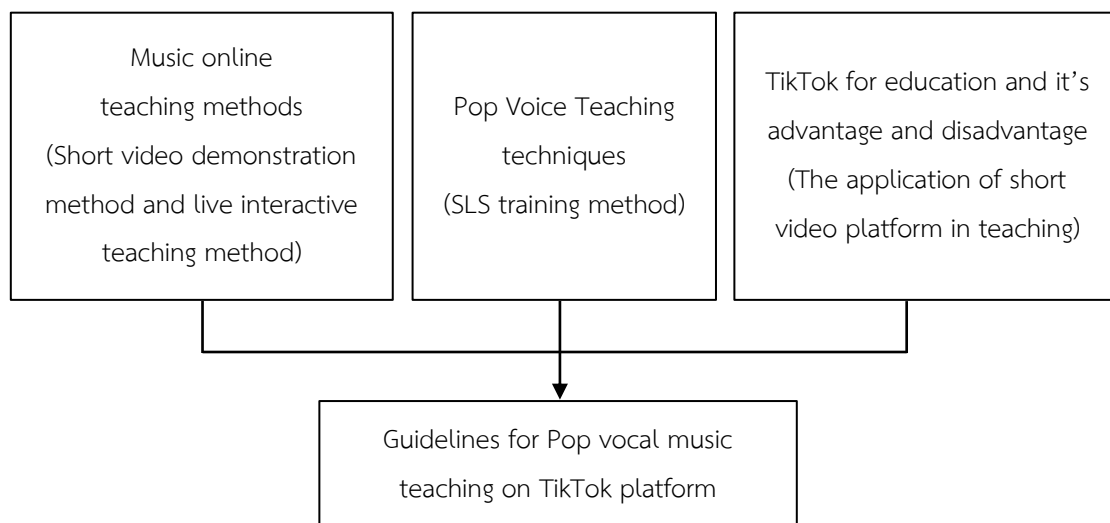


Figure 1 Research Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Qualitative research methods were used in this study. The details of the research method have shown below;

1. Participants

With a purposive sampling design, the participant consists of 2 groups; the first group consisted of five highly followed vocal music teachers on TikTok. The second group consisted of their students at least 2 persons per teacher, total of 10 students. The Inclusion criteria for teachers are including: 1) teaching pop vocal music on TikTok, 2) live streaming time more than 6 hours per week, 3) short video works amount at least 120 clips, 4) more than 10,000 followers, 5) have at least one TikTok fan group, 6) the teaching series on TikTok has at least basic vocal training and song singing guidance, 7) being graduated from vocal music major, 8) being a college vocal music teacher, singers, pop vocal music teachers of other institutions, 9) more than 5 years of vocal music teaching experience and more than 2 years of online teaching experience, 10) age between 25 and 55 years old, 11) an conduct one-on-one coaching and communication, and 12) willing to give the information via interview.

The Inclusion criteria for students included: 1) learning pop vocal music on TikTok for 1-3 years, still in the beginner or intermediate level, 2) made it into the teacher's TikTok student group, 3) learned the basic vocal training and the song singing guidance series teaching, 4) age between 18 and 35 years old, and 5) willing to give the information via interview

The exclusion criterion for these participants is that if an interviewee requests the deletion of interview data or withdraws from the study independently after or during the interview, the participant will be excluded from this study.

2. Research Processes

The research techniques of this study are non-participated observation and interview. Information and data are obtained by observing pop vocal music teachers' teaching on TikTok. But these data are inadequate, therefore, it is necessary to combine in-depth interviews with selected teachers and students.

2.1 Observation technique

In the process of observing, applying non-participated observation by consider content in the teacher's TikTok channel critically. In observing the teaching process, we did not interrupt the teaching by asking questions communication verbally with the teacher. The aims of this technique are to understand and collect vocal music teachers' teaching techniques on TikTok, as well as information related to their teaching. Non-participatory observations were conducted three times a week for eight consecutive weeks, with each session lasting approximately 45 to 60 minutes, totaling more than 20 hours per teacher. Observed content included teachers' short video teaching, live sessions, student comments, and group interactions.

2.2 In-depth interview technique

Five TikTok teachers and their students were selected based on the criteria. Semi-structured interviews were used as the main data collection tool in this study. According to the research objectives, we set up three parts of the questions about the advantages and existing problems of pop vocal music teaching in TikTok, as well as teaching methods and skills, and also the questions about the background information of participants in order to supplement them. In order to make the teaching guide more scientific and practical, the SLS (Speech Level Singing) training method as the research basis was integrated it into the questions about teaching methods and techniques. Semi-structured interviews served as guidelines for researcher's interviewing participants, and questions can be added if they relate to teaching methods and techniques. Interviews were conducted via the WeChat application (online) or via audio recording (on-site). Teacher interviews took approximately 45-60 minutes per person, and student interviews took approximately 30-45 minutes per person.

3. Data Collection

3.1 Non-participated Observation

Through observation in the teacher's TikTok channel, the TikTok teacher's ordinary teaching situation and his/her background information can be obtained. The data collection came from their short video teaching, live teaching, student comments, the interaction among a student group and the relevant data from them. Before any observation, we inform the participants and ask for permission to join the study group.

3.2 In-depth interview

In a case of the online interview, WeChat is an application that was used in this part. A case of the offline interview, voice memo was an application for recording the voice interview from the participants. The IRB certificate of approval for this study is obtained from Mahidol University (No.2023/161.2609).

4. Data Analysis

This study uses content analysis as a technique for analyzing the data from the interview and observation. The analysis process was divided into two parts: non-participant observation, where observations were recorded in a data sheet including the instructor's name, date and time of publication, topics taught, teaching methods, and other observations. The second part involves analyzing data from in-depth interviews. This began with transcribing the interviews verbatim. Data sets were then clearly matched between instructors and student groups, and coding the transcription, identified, categorized, and finally, a complete analysis of the results was performed. This study collected the data from the observation via TikTok platform, along with interviewing with teachers and their students for increasing the credibility and validity of the data, as a concept of data triangulation.

Research Results

The results from this study can be provided in the topics below;

1. Unique advantages and problems of online popular vocal music teaching on TikTok platform

Regarding this issue, the study results derived from both observation and in-depth interviews can be summarized as follows:

For teacher

Flexible teaching hours: TikTok allows teachers to be flexible with their teaching time and is no longer limited to a fixed class time.

Expand the teaching audience: China's TikTok is the most used short video platform. There is a wealth of teaching resources to share. There are also many students interested in popular vocal music and this platform can reach out them although long distance.

Create new revenue: TikTok teachers get paid to teach pop vocal music on TikTok. Such as selling recorded instructional videos and receiving paid gifts in the studio. Some students even talk to teachers privately to seek offline teaching.

Eliminate time and distance constraints: TikTok pop music teachers can start TikTok lessons with a phone, and record and post short videos whenever they want. And it is not limited by location; people can live teach at home.

Reduce teaching costs: Teaching via TikTok eliminates the need for teachers to rent physical classrooms, purchase numerous teaching aids, and incur travel and accommodation expenses.

Personalized teaching implementation: TikTok teachers can collect basic information such as students' learning goals through comments, private messages, and learning groups. That can evaluate the level of music skills of students and can be develop targeted teaching videos. Teachers can select their teaching topic or put themselves in the specific vocal music teaching category, that are valuable for students to find for.

Convenient function: With the increasing number of users and the advancement of technology, more and more functions are being developed to aid teaching. Such as video classification function, lyrics function, accompaniment function and so on. It reduces some of the burden on teachers.

For student

Rich and varied: TikTok teaching cover many fields, including but not limited to knowledge popularization, skills training, language learning, etc. Users can find teaching content on the TikTok platform according to their needs and interests.

Eliminate time and distance constraints: Students can take advantage of fragmented time to study on the TikTok platform anytime, anywhere.

Lower learning costs: Learning pop music on TikTok is cheap, and most short videos and livestreams are free. Even buying recorded lessons from some teachers is affordable.

Abundant teacher resources: TikTok is full of great pop vocal teachers and learning resources. Even some famous university teachers and some singers are teaching on TikTok, which also attracts many students to study.

Stimulate interest in learning: TikTok is entertaining. Pop music itself is very popular with the public. TikTok comes in a variety of forms. TikTok's pop vocal teacher has inspired many students with his humorous and innovative content.

The issues surrounding teaching pop music vocals via TikTok were gathered from interviews with key informants, both teachers and students, and can be categorized as follows:

For teacher

Technical limitations and instability: TikTok platform live teaching needs to rely on stable network connection and equipment, if the technology failure or instability, may lead to live broadcast interruption or quality decline, affecting students' learning experience and learning effect.

Sound quality and handling issues: Music is an art form that needs to be expressed and conveyed through sound. And in online teaching, sound quality is often reduced by the limitation of network transmission, resulting in sound distortion or delay. This makes it difficult for teachers to hear students' singing style accurately through the network environment, and difficult to give targeted guidance and evaluation.

Lack of face-to-face interaction and guidance: Vocal music teaching needs face-to-face interaction and guidance between teachers and students in order to correct students' vocalization and singing problems in time. However, in TikTok online teaching, teachers and students are often unable to interact directly, and teachers can only observe students' singing posture, mouth shape, breathing and other details through live teaching, which makes the pronunciation deviation when judging students' questions.

Overly complex features: TikTok has some features designed for teaching, but as a short video platform, it also has many complex features. This is a challenge for some teachers who are older and not good with electronic devices. In addition, making short videos and conducting live lectures also require learning some operational methods.

For student

Unstable network issues: The TikTok platform's technical limitations and poor signal transmission may give the negatively impact of learning outcomes. For example, problems such as poor audio quality and unclear video pictures may affect students' listening and visual effects, thus affecting the learning effect. Sound quality is often reduced by the limitation of network transmission, resulting in sound distortion or delay. This makes it difficult for teachers to hear students' singing style accurately through the network environment, and difficult to give targeted guidance and evaluation.

The level of teaching is uneven and difficult to distinguish: The quality of TikTok vocal music teaching videos is uneven, and students may be exposed to some wrong or misleading information, resulting in unstable learning results. In addition, due to the entertainment nature of the TikTok platform, students may be distracted while watching instructional videos, affecting the learning effect.

Lack of certain interaction: TikTok vocal music teaching short video teaching adopts one-to-many teaching mode, and lacks personalized guidance for each student. Students may not receive enough attention and guidance, resulting in poor learning outcomes. Moreover, the study of pop vocal music requires physical instruction in some cases.

2. Methods and techniques used in teaching pop vocal music on TikTok

2.1 Vocal pop music method for teaching via TikTok

While studying the methods and techniques for teaching pop vocal music, we primarily used observation, combined with interviews with instructors and checking the consistency of information from students. The methods and techniques for teaching pop vocal music via TikTok can be summarized as follows:

2.1.1 Combine short video and live streaming

The combination of TikTok teaching short video and live broadcast is of great significance for vocal music teaching. Short video is concise, intuitive and easy to spread, which is suitable for presenting specific teaching points, skills and examples. On the other hand, live

broadcasting has the advantages of real-time interaction, flexible adjustment, and high participation, which can better meet the audience's immediate needs and feedback. The combination of short videos and live streaming makes full use of the advantages of both and makes teaching more comprehensive, lively, and effective.

2.1.2 Use teaching equipment

TikTok pop vocal music teachers use keyboards, guitars, capacitive mics, monitoring headphones, models and other teaching equipment to teach online. It is very important to make full use of teaching equipment for online vocal music teaching in TikTok. Teaching equipment can not only improve teaching quality and learning experience, but also promote teacher-student interaction and improve teaching efficiency.

2.1.3 Teaching classification and series teaching

Classification of instruction refers to the organization of knowledge, skills, and other instructional content into categories based on students' learning needs and teaching objectives. Classification of instructional content can make instruction more targeted.

2.1.4 Learning group

The teacher establishes an exclusive pop vocal music learning group/community on TikTok, encouraging the audience to join and share learning experiences, works, etc. Teachers can regularly post teaching videos, live broadcasts, etc., in the community to maintain close interaction and contact with the audience and get feedback from students.

2.2 Pop vocal techniques taught on the TikTok

When teaching vocal music on TikTok, practitioners can choose to teach a range of vocal techniques that are both suitable for the characteristics of the TikTok platform and can effectively help learners improve their vocal abilities. Here are some vocal techniques suitable for teaching on TikTok:

Belting: The use of natural timbre to show the simplicity and sincerity of the song.

Falsetto (head voice): by adjusting the tension of the vocal cords, the timbre of the high voice area is issued, often used to express the passion and climax of the song.

Mixing: Combining the characteristics of true voice and falsetto, to achieve rich changes in timbre, suitable for a variety of styles of songs.

Breath: Good breathing control is the premise of sound singers need to master the correct breathing methods, such as abdominal breathing, chest and abdomen combined breathing, etc., to ensure the stability and permanency of the voice.

Closure of vocal: Vocal cord closure occurs when the vocal folds adduct (come close together) and vibrate, forming a narrow glottal channel. This action regulates the airflow, generating sound waves that produce vocalization. This mechanism directly influences both the quality and fundamental frequency (pitch) of sung notes.

High pitch: Usually refers to the pitch above the upper limit of the natural range of the human voice. High pitch singing requires singers to have good voice conditions and skills, including proper vocal cord closure, breath support, resonance and so on. The singing of high notes requires the singer to have enough training and experience to ensure that the sound quality is pure, stable and expressive.

In conclusion, when teaching vocal music on TikTok, practitioners should choose teaching content that suits the characteristics of the platform and the needs of learners. By making short, fun and practical video tutorials, teacher can attract more learners and help them quickly improve their vocal skills. At the same time, take advantage of live teaching to interact more with students, develop personalized plans, and provide more detailed and comprehensive explanations.

3. Student Learning Improvement Outcomes

From the Interview with students about their progress after learning pop vocals from the instructors via TikTok revealed that 8 out of 10 students reported improved breath stability while singing. Six out of ten students reported being able to expand mixed voice range after six months of lessons. Seven out of 10 students reported faster progress compared to traditional classroom learning, attributed to the ability to replay TikTok videos for repeated review of difficult points and participate in live sessions for immediate correction of mistakes. While 9 out of 10 students reported being able to consistently learn pop vocal music for up to a year, despite having previously dropped out of traditional vocal lessons, due to entertaining and innovative teaching content when they learning to sing via TikTok.

In conclusion, learning pop vocal through TikTok can truly support learners' development, both in terms of skill development and maintaining interest and motivation for further study. This is due to the fun and creative teaching design, as well as the diverse functionalities of TikTok in China, which provide instructors with a wider range of techniques to choose from than in other countries.

4. TikTok Vocal Music Teaching Guide

According to the data collected from observation and interview with the teachers, and also the students. Following topics are the guidance for person who wants to use TikTok as a channel for creating his/her pop vocal music class.

4.1 Professional vocal ability, musical literacy, and techniques operation

For popular vocal music teachers on TikTok, improving personal ability and quality is crucial, which is not only related to the quality of teaching, but also directly affects the learning experience and results of students. Deepening music theory knowledge is helpful for online vocal music teachers to guide students to better understand music structure, harmony, melody and other elements. Teachers should continue to learn and master the latest music theory knowledge in order to provide students with more accurate and in-depth teaching guidance. As a pop vocal music teacher, the singing skill level directly affects the teaching effect. Vocal music teachers should constantly improve their singing skills, including vocalization, breathing, timbre control and so on. Through continuous practice and professional training, teachers can provide students with more professional and effective singing guidance.

4.2 Teaching equipment and harmonious teaching environment

Effective music instruction via TikTok heavily relies on high-quality teaching materials and audio equipment, which directly impact student learning outcomes. Superior audio equipment is fundamental for online vocal music instruction, ensuring students can clearly and accurately perceive the teacher's demonstrations and guidance. This clarity is crucial for effective imitation and learning. Furthermore, audio equipment enables students to record their own exercises and performances, facilitating targeted feedback from instructors. Therefore, selecting high-quality teaching equipment and maximizing its functionalities are paramount to enhancing teaching quality and student learning effectiveness in TikTok-based vocal music education.

4.3 Creating the teaching topic classification

Teaching content classification can make teaching more targeted. Different students have different learning needs and characteristics. By classifying teaching contents, teachers can choose suitable teaching contents and methods according to the actual situation of students, so that teaching can be closer to the actual needs of them. The classification of

vocal music teaching content on TikTok can make teaching objectives clearer, teaching more targeted, improve teaching efficiency, adapt to different students' learning needs, optimize design, and promote teaching research.

4.4 Combining of short video teaching and live teaching

Using short video clips together with live online teaching will greatly enhance the effectiveness of teaching singing through TikTok. Because these two types of tools have different teaching goals, which is to use short video clips to attract the attention of the audience and can be easily shared, while live online teaching will improve the learning efficiency of the learner because there is interaction between the learner and the teacher, which will strengthen the relationship between each other in the long run.

4.5 Having the courage to innovate and create unique personal characteristics

The teaching resources on TikTok are rich and diverse, but to stand out from the multitude of content, teachers need to be differentiated. Personal characteristics refer to the unique style, method and concept formed by teachers in the teaching process, which can make the teaching content fresher and entertain, and attract more students' attention. The formation of personal characteristics is inseparable from teachers' continuous attempts and innovations. On the TikTok platform, pop vocal music teachers need to constantly explore new teaching methods, means, and concepts to meet the changing learning needs of students. This innovative process not only drives the development of individual teachers, but also brings new ideas and approaches to the music education industry as a whole. Therefore, when teaching on the TikTok platform, teachers should pay attention to the display and development of personal characteristics, so as to provide more high-quality and distinctive teaching services.

4.6 Teaching through entertainment to stimulate students' interest

Edutainment is a combination of learning and entertainment, so that students can learn in a relaxed and happy atmosphere, thereby improving the learning effect and comprehensive quality. TikTok online vocal music teaching presents knowledge to students in a more vivid and interesting way through multimedia resources, interaction, plot and other forms. This way can effectively enhance students' interest in learning, stimulate their curiosity and thirst for knowledge, and make students more willing to take the initiative to learn.

4.7 Teaching students according to their aptitude, focusing on assessment and feedback

Vocal music education is focusing on developing students' musical skills and singing abilities. In the teaching of pop music, the principle of teaching according to students' aptitude is very important. This principle emphasizes the development of lesson plans and teaching methods that are consistent with the personality, interests, abilities and needs of each student in order to develop the potential of each student to the fullest. Each student has different musical preferences and vocal characteristics. Individualized teaching ensures that vocal music education meets the needs of each student, helping students to better understand and master vocal music, and to explore and develop their own vocal characteristics. This specialized skill training is based on an understanding of students' vocal conditions, which not only effectively develops students' vocal skills, but also prevents vocal damage caused by improper teaching methods.

5. Key New Findings:

This study yielded three important new findings:

5.1 Integration of SLS and TikTok's hybrid teaching model

This research is the first to apply the experienced-proven SLS method to the short video and live streaming format of TikTok, examining the effectiveness of this method for Chinese pop singing learners. Student outcomes, such as expanding the blended vocal range by up to three notes, confirm that core SLS training (breathing and vocal cord closure) can be effectively conveyed through TikTok's scattered interactive teaching format, filling a gap in previous research that only applied SLS to offline/traditional online teaching.

5.2 Unique value of TikTok's teaching style for vocal learning

The combination of short videos (for concise skill demonstration) and livestreams (for real-time feedback) significantly improves learning efficiency and motivation. Observations showed that 70% of students spent their time reviewing lessons in a scattered manner, and live interaction helped reduce the number of error corrections. This research builds on previous studies on the educational potential of TikTok, extending to the field of vocal music, which requires specific vocal skills.

5.3 Practical guidelines for teaching singing on TikTok: Those seven proposed guidelines address unmet needs in existing research, which highlights limitations of TikTok-based teaching, particularly inconsistent teaching quality, but lacks practical solutions. This study presents various teaching techniques aimed at finding solutions rather than simply identifying problems. Furthermore, the study supports the idea that “Edutainment” and “Personalized feedback” can reduce low interaction, making TikTok singing instruction more systematic. This research connects previous research to practical applications for student outcomes. From the benefits mentioned above, they can be illustrated as shown in the Figure 2.

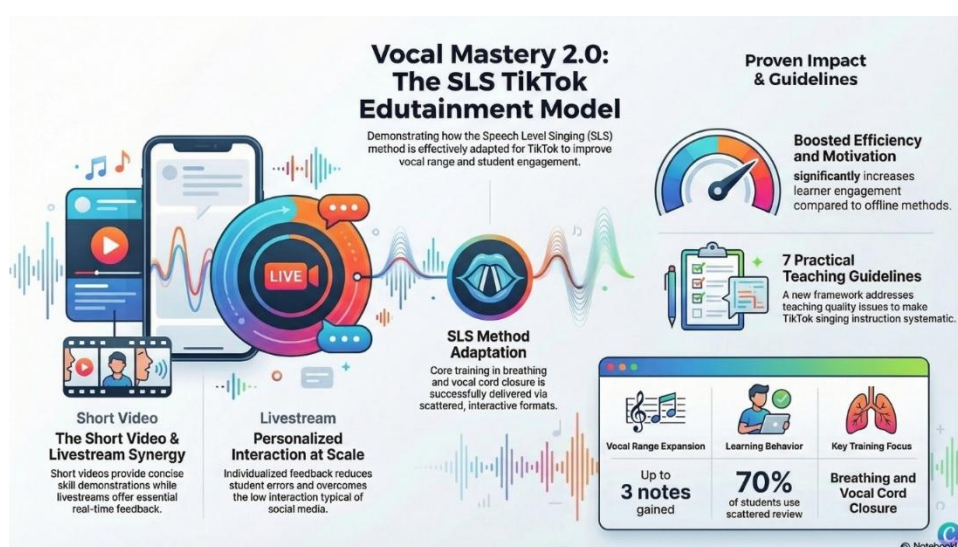


Figure 2 Summary of key findings in this research study. The graphical summary presented in this article was generated with the assistance of NotebookLM (Google) based on the authors’ research findings.

Discussion

Since the pop vocal music teaching system has only been developed for several decades, and many pop vocal music teachers are influenced by classical vocal music and Chinese national vocal music. The methods used in the teaching of popular vocal music are all different. However, in recent years, some European and American popular vocal music teaching institutions have launched a series of popular vocal music teaching methods that can be recognized by the majority of teachers, for example, SLS training method by Seth Riggs (Wicks, 2019). Many teachers in TikTok use the SLS vocal technique. However, some teachers also mentioned in the interview that SLS methods can be used for reference in teaching pop vocal music in China, but they cannot be fully applied. Since the pronunciation of Chinese

characters is different from English, excessive use of SLS can lead to problems such as everyone's voice often sounding the same.

The main training content of SLS training method is “the basic method of sound training.” In the vocal training, the intensive training of vocalization methods and skills of singers, and involves tooting exercises, treble mixing exercises, treble larynx exercises, and common humming exercises. SLS vocal music teaching method can meet various needs in pop singing teaching, and at the same time is of great help to the training of students' body, voice and other muscles, so that students can better find breathing points and maintain the coherence of singing (Qiu, 2020). Some basic singing songs like SLS are very suitable for teaching in TikTok, because it is to exercise a skill through a singing song, the principle is very simple, only need students to imitate and practice. Teachers can use the practice of basic skills when teaching more specific and difficult skills. For example, how to practice the opera when singing some Chinese style songs. For this situation, teachers can learn from the pharynx and falsetto practice, and some teachers will directly explain that the opera cavity is “pharynx in the state of falsetto,” and then practice by singing “Yi” with the vocal music. In other words, some difficult knowledge can be traced back to easy training. Some other vocal music teaching concepts are more about imagery and imagination, while it is difficult for beginners to understand these concepts, which is difficult to apply in TikTok teaching. So, in general, we should pay more attention to the appropriate techniques for teaching on TikTok and pay more attention to some pop singer beginners (Wicks, 2019).

From the suggestion of TikTok pop vocal music teaching guide, these guidelines are based on data analysis and are supported by relevant theories. For example, to improve the professional ability of teachers, that is, to solve the problem of uneven level and ability of TikTok teachers. A teacher's professional knowledge and skills are necessary to become a qualified teacher. Solid professional knowledge and teaching ability can clearly and accurately impart subject knowledge, design reasonable teaching programs and teaching activities (Weng, 2014). Online platforms such as TikTok can also set the teaching threshold for online teaching.

Finally, an interesting finding is that learning pop vocal music through TikTok can help students continue in their vocal training without dropping out. This finding was also observed in short video-based learning with students in other fields. A study by Wali (2025) which used short videos to teach pharmacology found that 58.5% of students considered it a technique that kept them interested in learning the subject and helped them understand complex content effectively. Similarly, research by Yang et al. (2025) identified three key features of

TikTok that drive student engagement with instructional content: repeated access to instructional content, accessibility anytime, anywhere, and on any device, and interactive learning through commenting, sharing, and participating in live streams. Learning via TikTok makes learning fun and allows students to fully focus on their surroundings. This approach is therefore particularly well-suited for undergraduate students. These results are supported by research by Pasawano (2015) which experimented with the undergraduate students with a teaching concept called TREND, which stands for Technology (T), referring to the application of various technologies as teaching aids; Relax (R), meaning teaching that enhances student concentration and intelligence through enjoyment; Enjoy (E), derived from learn + do + pleasure, explaining that independent learning allows students to acquire knowledge effectively; Need (N), focusing on student needs by incorporating various techniques such as group learning for peer learning, hands-on practice, and emphasizing visuals and sounds; and Design (D), designing a suitable learning environment. It can be seen that the characteristics of the pop music learning method used by the instructor in this study align with this concept.

The suggestion of creating phased and serialized teaching on TikTok was summarized by observing the teaching of excellent TikTok teachers and the suggestions of teachers and students. The creation of series teaching in TikTok not only conforms to the law of students' cognitive development, but also contributes to the construction and deepening of knowledge collaboration, that cultivate students' autonomous learning ability (Ren, 2021).

Short videos can accurately show a certain knowledge point or skill operation, which is helpful for students to quickly understand and master. The live format allows teachers to answer students' questions in real time to ensure that students understand and master the content. The combination of short video and live broadcast can enable students to review and consolidate knowledge repeatedly in the learning process and improve the learning effect.

Vocal music teaching on TikTok is used for innovation, creating unique personal characteristics, and entertaining. It can not only improve the quality of teaching, but also attract more students to learn. The importance of personal characteristics in TikTok teaching is self-evident. Through unique positioning, content innovation, interaction, expression, technology application, emotional resonance and teaching style, teachers can form their own unique charm and brand image to attract more students' attention and love (Zhao, 2019). At the same time, the creation of personal characteristics also helps to improve the teaching effect and learning experience to contribute to the development of education.

The TikTok platform is not a professional educational app, so it is very important to

create a closed-loop educational feedback loop on TikTok. Teachers can get feedback in time through comments, live broadcasts, student groups, private chats and other ways to make up for the disadvantages of relatively poor interactive online teaching. Meanwhile, timely feedback can also adjust teaching strategies in time; to know how well students understand, to assess whether the goals are achieved, to help students correct their mistakes in time, to help students learn more effectively.

Recommendations

For the future research should investigate the integration of TikTok's multimedia teaching formats, particularly the combination of short-form video and live streaming with third-party educational platforms. The case of Xuelang, a dedicated educational application with enhanced audiovisual quality and a user-centered interface, presents a promising direction. Studies could assess how hybrid models combining TikTok and platforms like Xuelang influence learner engagement, instructional clarity, and overall educational outcomes. Furthermore, we are encouraged to evaluate the pedagogical implications, technological limitations, and learner perceptions of using such cross-platform approaches in online music education. Understanding how to best utilize the strengths of each platform could inform the creation of more effective, scalable, and inclusive online vocal music programs.

References

- Abidin, C., & Vizcaíno-Verdú, A. (2023, March 29). *How 'TeachTok' is helping teachers connect with their students on TikTok*. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/how-teachtok-is-helping-teachers-connect-with-their-students-on-tiktok-202240>
- Bates, A. W. (2019). *Teaching in a digital age: Guidelines for designing teaching and learning* (2nd ed.). Tony Bates Associates Ltd. <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/teachingina-digitalagev2/>
- Chen, M., Liu, S., & Li, X. (2023). Innovation strategy of music teaching in colleges and universities based on the view of new media. *Frontiers in Educational Research*, 6(5), 46-50. <https://doi.org/10.25236/FER.2023.060509>
- Chen, X., & Wang, L. (2023). Short-form video platforms as supplementary tools for flipped learning: A case study of TikTok in vocal music education. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 20(45), 1-16.

- Condro, W., Mahmud, Z., Luluk, F., & Shuting, W. (2025). TikTok as an informal music learning platform: An analysis of the impact of music extracurricular activities on students of SMK 1 Pancasila Ambulu, Indonesia. *Virtuoso: Jurnal Pengkajian dan Penciptaan Musik*, 8(2), 105-123.
- Ding, N., Xu, X., & Lewis, E. (2022). Short instructional videos for the TikTok generation. *Journal of Education for Business*, 98(4), 175–185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2022.2103489>
- Hidayatullah, R., Jazuli, M., Suharto, S., & Syarif, M. I. (2021). Educators’ perceptions of TikTok as music instructional materials. *ISET: International Conference on Science, Education and Technology*, 7(1), 500–505.
- Hu, T., Rasool, U., Wang, L., Chen, H., & Shi, H. (2025). The effectiveness of the TikTok flipped classroom method on students’ academic performance in folk art course. *Acta Psychologica*, 257, Article 105094. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.105094>
- Li, X. (2021). Analysis and prospect of music teaching on short video platform [In Chinese]. *Chinese Music Journal*, 4(1), 168–171.
- Li, Y., & Zhang, Q. (2024). The application of TikTok in flipped classroom for music theory teaching. *Journal of Music Education Technology*, 18(3), 112-127.
- O’Brien, H. L., Davoudi, N., & Nelson, M. (2025). TikTok as information space: A scoping review of information behavior on TikTok. *Library & Information Science Research*, 47(4), Article 101379. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2025.101379>
- O’Leary, E. J. (2023). Music education on YouTube and the challenges of platformization. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, 22(4), 14–43. <https://doi.org/10.22176/act22.4.14>
- Pasawano, T. (2015). Results of enhanced learning with the edutainment format. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 176, 946–951. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.563>
- People’s Network Science and Technology Channel. (2019, August 28). *Yisheng Ouba: Building a millionaire through Kuaishou's knowledge payment with vocal music lessons* [In Chinese]. http://m.people.cn/n4/0/2019/0828/c157-13130509-2_2.html
- Qiu, C. (2020). The importance of the American SLS vocal method in popular singing teaching [In Chinese]. *Explorations in Music*, 37(1), 120–124.
- Ren, L. (2021). The value and strategy of TikTok software application in music teaching [In Chinese]. *Journal of Kaifeng Vocational College of Culture & Art*, 5(1), 145–146.

- Shi, Y. (2023). The use of mobile internet platforms and applications in vocal training: Synergy of technological and pedagogical solutions. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 31(6), 3780-3791. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2021.1943456>
- Siwei, Z., Pattananon, N., & Kumjudpanpai, S. (2023). The promotion music education through social media in China: A case study of TikTok platform. *Journal of Modern Learning Development*, 8(2), 422–429. retrieved from <https://so06.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/jomld/article/view/259127>
- Wali, S. M. (2025). Impact of short educational videos on learning and retention in undergraduate pharmacology education: A cross-sectional study. *BMC Medical Education*, 25(1), 1747. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-025-08410-1>
- Weng, K. (2014). On the laws and characteristics of national vocal music teaching and its efficacy in teaching [In Chinese]. *Art Exploration*, 28(2).
- Wicks, D. (2019). Seth Riggs—His CCM Legacy. *Journal of Singing*, 75(4), 449-453.
- Yang, Y., Zhang, C., Zhang, S., & Shen, J. (2025). TikTok in higher education: A systematic review of disciplinary applications, learning outcomes, and implementation factors. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2025.2564736>
- Zhao, Y. (2019). *Self-media public account—A new approach to music education* [Unpublished master's thesis]. China Conservatory of Music.
- Zhong, Y. & Shoa, X. (2025). Innovative models of music teaching in universities in the digital age. *Region - Educational Research and Reviews*, 7(7), 39 – 42. <https://doi.org/10.32629/rerr.v7i7.4325>.