

The Integration Strategy of Traditional and Modern Elements in the Creation of Preschool Dance

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Received: 28 June 2025; **Accepted:** 27 July 2025; **Published:** 12 August 2025

Abstract:

With the deepening of aesthetic education in early childhood, dance composition, as an important carrier of artistic enlightenment, is facing practical challenges of the dual demands of traditional cultural inheritance and children's aesthetic development. This article systematically reveals the core problems of insufficient transformation of traditional symbols of childlike interest, lack of dynamic innovation in creative techniques, and weak collaboration in audio-visual arts by analyzing the current phenomenon of formulaic transplantation of traditional elements and superficial collage of modern techniques in young children's dance creation. Based on the cognitive laws of children and the characteristics of dance aesthetic education, this study constructs an implementation path for the organic integration of traditional and modern elements from four dimensions: cultural symbol extraction, music rhythm reconstruction, body language innovation, and situational arrangement. By exploring creative strategies that are in line with the physical and mental characteristics of young children, we can not only strengthen the cultural roots of dance works, but also stimulate children's artistic expression, providing a reference plan that combines cultural heritage value and aesthetic practice significance for the innovative development of young children's dance education in the new era.

Keywords:

Traditional Elements, Modern Elements, Creation of Dance for Young Children, Integration Strategy, Cultural Heritage

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of deepening aesthetic education reform in the preschool education system, the creation of dance for young children shoulders the dual mission of cultural enlightenment and artistic immersion. In current practice, issues such as element fragmentation and rigid forms caused by deviations in creative concepts not only weaken the aesthetic function of dance, but also affect the early construction of cultural identity. In recent years, with the interweaving of traditional cultural revival and modern educational concepts, how to preserve cultural genes and fit children's

cognitive characteristics in dance choreography has become a focus of both theoretical and practical attention. This article is based on the scene of early childhood dance education. By analyzing the crux of the integration of tradition and modernity, it explores a creative method that combines cultural thickness and child centeredness, aiming to provide theoretical support and practical reference for the organic unity of cultural inheritance and aesthetic innovation in early childhood dance.

2. The Significance of Integrating Traditional and Modern Elements in the Creation of Children's Dance

The organic integration of traditional and modern elements has opened up a practical path for young children's dance creation that combines cultural inheritance and innovative expression. From a cultural perspective, traditional elements carry the aesthetic genes and spiritual core of national art. By extracting symbols such as opera figures and folk dance rhythms, they can sow the seeds of cultural identity in early childhood education. In terms of aesthetic value, modern creative techniques for innovative expression of rhythm, space, and form are more in line with children's pursuit of fun and dynamic aesthetic psychology, which helps to stimulate their artistic perception and expression desire. This integration not only solves the "intergenerational gap" of traditional culture in children's acceptance, but also breaks through the creative limitations of simply imitating tradition or chasing trends. By transforming traditional movement vocabulary into simplified combinations that conform to the physical characteristics of young children, while incorporating modern popular music, multimedia interaction, and other elements, dance works can not only demonstrate cultural depth, but also create a visual and auditory experience that children enjoy, injecting sustainable development vitality into the aesthetic education of young children in the new era.

3. The Existing Problems of Traditional and Modern Integration in Children's Dance Creation

3.1. Traditional elements are applied rigidly and lack techniques for transforming childlike innocence

There is a widespread phenomenon of mechanical transplantation of traditional elements in the current creation of dance for young children, which fails to fully consider the laws of children's physical and mental development and aesthetic acceptance ability. Some creators directly apply cultural symbols such as formulaic movements in traditional Chinese opera and typical postures in folk dance to children's dance, ignoring the compatibility between the original form of traditional art and children's physical expression. For example, the complexity of movements such as "cloud hand" and "round field" in traditional Chinese opera exceeds the coordination ability of young children, resulting in stiff movements and chaotic rhythms during performances; However, if the traditional visual symbols such as Paper Cuttings and New Year pictures are directly used as dance props or dress elements without deconstruction and reorganization, it is easy for children to have cognitive barriers due to the abstract cultural meaning. This superficial and stereotyped application method not only weakens the infiltration function of traditional culture in early childhood education, but also hinders children's participation enthusiasm due to the lack of interesting design. At its root, creators often excessively pursue the "authenticity" of cultural symbols, without delving into

how to achieve the childlike transformation of traditional elements through simplification, reconstruction, personification, or gamification. This creative tendency creates a contradiction between dance movements and children's natural liberation needs, which not only limits the possibility of children understanding cultural connotations through body language, but also leads to traditional cultural inheritance being reduced to formal performances, failing to truly activate children's aesthetic experience and cultural resonance [1].

3.2. Imbalance in the proportion of modern elements and insufficient exploration of cultural connotations

In the practice of creating dance for young children, the use of modern elements often falls into the misconception of "technology first" due to the pursuit of novel forms, resulting in an imbalance of cultural weight between tradition and modernity. Some creators, in order to cater to children's interests and preferences for new things, excessively stack modern symbols such as electronic music, popular dance steps, and multimedia effects, without delving into the logical connection between these elements and the core of traditional culture. For example, when simply combining street dance rhythms with opera movements, due to the lack of research on the common meaning of rhythm and emotional expression, only visual symbol collages are formed, which actually severs the integrity of dance language. This instrumental use of modern elements neither achieves contemporary expression of traditional spirit, nor excessively reinforces the impact of form, leading the work to fall into the trap of "entertainment". At the same time, creators often overlook the deep decoding of traditional elements and fail to extract cultural genes that can be transformed by modern contexts from philosophical implications, folk narratives, and other aspects, resulting in dance creation remaining at the surface level of "traditional appearance+modern packaging" fusion. This creative tendency not only fragments children's understanding of traditional culture, but also weakens the value guidance function of dance as a carrier of aesthetic education due to the insufficient cultural carrying capacity of modern elements [2].

3.3. Single and rigid editing techniques, lack of dynamic combination innovation

There is a common phenomenon in the current creation of young children's dance that relies on programmatic arrangement templates. The creation techniques are limited by traditional dance structures or popular dance paradigms, and fail to construct flexible and diverse creative frameworks based on the cognitive laws and developmental characteristics of young children's movements. Some creators tend to adopt a fixed pattern of "theme action repetition+linear formation change", such as mechanically repeating basic movements such as "cross step" and "waving hand" in traditional dance, or completing spatial narrative through simple formation scheduling such as circles and rows, resulting in a lack of hierarchical progression and emotional tension in action language. This fixed thinking limits the extraction of traditional elements to the level of motion imitation, while the integration of modern elements is often reflected in the combination of electronic sound effects, lighting switching, and other technologies, failing to achieve contemporary expression of cultural meaning through dynamic design such as motion texture, rhythm segmentation, or power contrast. At the same time, the development of children's physical potential by creators is insufficient, often neglecting their natural needs for improvisation, collaboration, and interaction. The combination of movements is mainly one-way

transmission through teacher demonstration and children's imitation, lacking designs that stimulate creative limb expression through gamification exploration, multi sensory linkage, and other techniques. This creative inertia not only limits the organic integration of traditional and modern elements in action vocabulary, but also weakens the effectiveness of dance in cultivating children's aesthetic perception and creativity due to the monotony of dynamic language, leading to the dilemma of "form similarity and connotation emptiness" in the works, making it difficult to establish a true artistic connection between cultural inheritance and child centeredness.

3.4. The design of music and clothing is fragmented, resulting in poor audio-visual integration

In current preschool dance creation, the design of music and clothing is often separated into independent modules, failing to form an organic audio-visual linkage based on dance themes. Some creators mechanically combine traditional instruments with modern electronic sound effects in their music choices, such as rigidly combining the melody of the guzheng with electronic drum beats, without achieving a natural transition in auditory levels through the coordination of rhythm and emotional tone; Clothing design mostly stays at the level of symbolic application, such as simply combining Hanfu cross collars, embroidery patterns, and fluorescent materials, but neglects the modern translation of traditional clothing cultural connotations, and does not consider the adaptability of clothing texture, color, dance movement amplitude, and spatial scheduling. This creative thinking views music as a rhythmic background and clothing as visual decoration, resulting in a disconnect between the emotional expression and cultural narrative of dance movements. For example, if traditional yangko dance is paired with cyberpunk style costumes, or modern street dance movements are accompanied by formulaic opera music, the overall appeal of the work will be weakened due to cultural logic conflicts in audio-visual language. The root cause lies in the lack of a deep grasp of the creative rules of "audio-visual integration" by the creators, who failed to unify multiple artistic elements with dance themes as the core, resulting in the emotional rendering of music, symbolic metaphors of clothing, and narrative functions of movements being separated from each other.

4. Integration Strategy of Traditional And Modern Elements in Children's Dance Creation

4.1. Extracting traditional element symbols and enhancing the cultural heritage of dance

In the creation of preschool dance, the extraction of traditional element symbols should follow the principle of "simplicity in form and depth in meaning", which not only preserves the recognizability of cultural genes, but also conforms to the concrete characteristics of children's aesthetic cognition. Creators should deeply analyze the typical symbol systems in traditional art forms, such as the rhythmic characteristics of folk dances, the formulaic movements of traditional opera performances, and the visual imagery of traditional crafts. Through deconstruction, recombination, simplification, and transformation techniques, they should transform them into dance vocabulary that conforms to children's physical expression and comprehension abilities. Taking the movements of "twist, swing, and walk" in Shaanbei Yangge as an example, the creators can extract the core rhythm of "cross step", weaken the large waist swing and complex steps in adult dance, and instead strengthen the light rhythm

of the steps and the wave like swing of the arms, forming a combination of childlike movements such as “small twist step” and “clapping and spinning”. At the same time, the use of Yangge silk ribbons is transformed into colorful silk scarf props that children can manipulate. Through gamified designs such as throwing and wrapping, the flowing beauty of silk ribbon dancing is preserved while reducing the difficulty of operation. This refining process needs to pay attention to the narrative transformation of symbols, such as transforming the “Tuanhua” pattern in Paper Cuttings art into circular formation scheduling, so that children can intuitively feel the traditional cultural connotation of symmetry and harmony in the dynamic of rotation and gathering. Through the creative transformation of symbols, traditional elements are able to break free from the stereotype of replication, and activate and inherit cultural memory in the rhythm of young children’s bodies [3].

4.2. Integrating modern music rhythms to enhance dynamic dance performance

In the fusion of traditional and modern elements, the creative use of modern music rhythm can effectively activate children’s physical expression and inject vitality into traditional culture. Creators need to base themselves on the cultural genes of traditional music, reconstruct the auditory experience through modern technologies such as electronic sound effects and multi track mixing, and enhance the impact and layering of rhythm while retaining melody recognition. For example, when integrating the gentle melody of Jiangnan Silk and Bamboo “Purple Bamboo Tune” with modern electronic music, the rhythm base of electronic drums can be implanted within the framework of the original pentatonic scale, interweaving the timbre of traditional flute and erhu with the arpeggios of synthesizers to form a composite rhythm of “light and lively flute sound+electronic beat”. Based on the characteristics of young children’s movements, the soothing 2/4 beats of the original song can be adjusted to a more jumping 4/4 beat. Through segmented sound design, emphasis can be placed on heavy beats, guiding young children to naturally respond to rhythm changes in movements such as “stepping and turning” and “clapping and jumping”. At the same time, utilizing the recyclable nature of electronic music, a paragraph comparison of the “main song chorus” is designed. The main song retains the clear and beautiful sound of traditional instruments, while the chorus promotes emotional climax through the gradual processing of electronic sound effects, allowing children to experience the gentle atmosphere of the Jiangnan water town and release physical energy through strong rhythms in the alternating dance of movement and stillness. This kind of music reconstruction not only avoids the dissolution of traditional cultural symbols, but also strengthens the infectious power of dance through rhythm innovation, enabling children to establish a sense of closeness to traditional music and inclusiveness of modern aesthetics in their body movements[4].

4.3. Innovative body composition techniques and construction of compound action vocabulary

The creation of preschool dance requires breaking through the disconnect between traditional movements and modern body expression, and constructing a composite movement system that combines cultural recognition and children’s expressive power through techniques such as deconstruction, recombination, and cross-cultural grafting. Creators should base themselves on the dynamic characteristics of traditional dance, extract the core power generation methods and motion trajectories of typical movements, and combine modern dance concepts such as improvisation and spatial

scheduling for secondary creation. Taking the “8-character winding fan” movement of “twisting the waist” in Jiaozhou Yangge as an example, the waist movement rhythm of “lifting, twisting, and pushing” can be decomposed, weakening the large waist twisting amplitude in adult dance, retaining the rhythmic characteristics of wrist flipping and foot sliding, integrating the “joint separation” training principle in modern limb development, and designing a childlike action combination of “wrist circle drawing+single foot point ground”. In response to the unstable center of gravity of young children, the traditional fan rotation technique is transformed into a wave like swing of holding colored silk with both hands. Through the trajectory change of “high throw low connection”, children are guided to complete spatial scheduling during running and jumping. At the same time, the concept of “contact improvisation” in modern dance theater is introduced, and a two person “push-pull swing” game is designed to allow children to naturally generate dynamic movements such as “forward leaning and backward leaning” and “left and right traction” in interaction. This not only retains the beauty of the “three bends” of Yangko, but also endows the movements with creativity and freedom of extension. This creative technique, through the dissection of traditional movements and the infiltration of modern concepts, enables the compound movement vocabulary to carry cultural genes and meet the stage specific needs of young children’s physical development, achieving contemporary translation of traditional aesthetics through dynamic innovation [5].

4.4. Create themed situational games to achieve immersive experiences

In the creation of children’s dance, the construction of themed situational games can dissolve the cultural barriers between traditional and modern elements through narrative and interactive elements, enabling children to achieve an organic unity of cultural cognition and physical expression through role immersion and game exploration. Creators need to build a narrative framework centered around traditional cultural themes, such as “solar term stories” and “mythological adventures”, to transform traditional dance movement symbols into body language in game tasks, while incorporating modern technological means to enhance the realism of the situation. For example, when designing an adventure scenario of “searching for intangible cultural heritage treasures”, traditional dance steps can be broken down into “clearance codes” - children unlock new levels in the virtual map by completing the “Yangge Cross Step”, activate sound and light devices with the “Mongolian Shoulder Shake” action to obtain clues, and naturally learn the cultural meaning of traditional movements through the interaction of virtual and real. Modern elements present dynamic scene transitions through AR technology, interweaving Dunhuang flying murals with urban street scenes in projection, allowing children to understand the contemporary value of cultural heritage through immersive experiences of time and space travel. Situational design should focus on multi sensory linkage, such as transforming traditional folk music melodies into tactile vibration feedback, creating an environmental atmosphere with modern electronic sound effects, guiding children to respond to sound and light stimuli through body movements, and forming a three-dimensional experience of “auditory visual kinesthetic” coordination.

5. Conclusions

In the creation of children’s dance, the organic integration of traditional and modern elements not only opens up new paths for cultural inheritance, but also injects vitality into children’s aesthetic education practice. By extracting cultural symbols,

reconstructing music rhythms, innovating action vocabulary, and creating situational games, the profound foundation of traditional art can be revitalized in a form that children enjoy, and modern aesthetic characteristics can also be rooted in cultural soil to achieve creative transformation.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

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