

ARTS

FROM ORAL TRADITION TO CONTEMPORARY INSTRUCTION: A PROPOSED MODEL FOR TEACHING CA TRU SINGING¹ BASED ON TRADITIONAL FOUNDATIONS

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Abstract

This article explores pedagogical approaches to teaching Ca Tru singing, a traditional scholarly form of Vietnamese music, from the perspectives of musicology and music education. Based on research into the acoustic standards and vocal techniques specific to Ca Tru, the study delves into the oral teaching method traditionally practiced by master artists, characterized by the processes of listening–imitating–internalizing, individualizing the vocal expression, and integrating poetry, melody, and rhythm. Building upon these foundations, the article proposes a model for Ca Tru instruction in the modern context that harmonizes traditional principles with contemporary pedagogical tools—such as digital archiving, video-based instruction, and flexible vocal classes. Notably, the central role of the master artist in inspiring learners, guiding aesthetic perception, and evaluating artistic quality is emphasized as a key factor in the sustainable preservation of Ca Tru.

Keyword: Ca Tru, oral tradition, Ca Tru teaching method, digitalization in arts education.

1. Introduction

Ca Tru is a distinctive form of traditional Vietnamese performing art, recognized by UNESCO in 2009 as an Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. More than a scholarly musical genre, Ca Tru represents a refined form of traditional artistic thought—an intricate fusion of poetry, music, and sophisticated vocal techniques. However, in the context of modern society, the traditional oral transmission model for Ca Tru instruction faces significant challenges: constraints of time and learning space, lack of standardized materials and teaching tools for younger generations, and generational gaps between master artists and students that hinder both artistic perception and pedagogical continuity. As a result, the survival of Ca Tru is at risk if it remains reliant solely on individual oral transmission.

While numerous studies have approached Ca Tru from the perspectives of musicology, cultural studies, and heritage conservation, as evidenced in work², etc. However, most of these investigations focus primarily on musical analysis, vocal techniques, or cultural interpretation. In contrast, the pedagogical dimension - an essential aspect of safeguarding the heritage - has not yet been systematically addressed. The current teaching and learning of Ca Tru largely depends on the experiential knowledge of master artists and the oral tradition,

with limited presence of structured pedagogical models, standardized teaching materials, or support from modern educational technologies. This gap forms the foundation for this article, which aims to propose a structured instructional method for Ca Tru singing that preserves traditional vocal techniques while adapting to the demands of contemporary educational environments.

In light of this situation, clearly identifying the traditional pedagogical methods of Ca Tru and developing a teaching model adapted to modern educational conditions has become an urgent necessity—not only for the field of musicology, but also for broader efforts in the preservation and promotion of national cultural heritage. This article builds upon the research of previous scholars³ and the author's own work⁴ on the musical characteristics and vocal standards of Ca Tru, to further analyze the teaching methods employed by master artists. It seeks to identify technical principles essential for accurate performance within the traditional modes, highlight common vocal errors among learners, and propose a comprehensive set of solutions - from pedagogical approaches to supporting tools - in order to effectively preserve Ca Tru vocal techniques within contemporary educational contexts.

2.1. Theoretical foundations of Ca Tru vocal pedagogy by master artists

¹ Ca trù, often translated as ceremonial singing or song with clappers, is a traditional Vietnamese performing art that combines poetry, music, and vocal performance. Originating in northern Vietnam over ten centuries ago, it features a female vocalist (ca nương), a lute player (đàn đáy), and a percussionist using wooden clappers (phách) to maintain rhythm. Historically associated with court rituals, Confucian scholarly gatherings, and spiritual ceremonies, Ca trù is renowned for its sophisticated poetic lyrics and refined musical aesthetics. It was inscribed by UNESCO in 2009 as an Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

² Do Bang Doan – Do Trong Hue (1962), Vietnamese Ca Tru References, Ho Chi Minh City publishing house, Ho Chi Minh City.

³ Nguyen Hien Duc (2019), The Music of Ca Tru in Ha Noi, Doctorate Thesis in Musicology, Vietnam National Academy of Music.

⁴ Nguyen Thi Tan Nhan (2023), Music Feature and Characteristics in Ca Tru Singing, International Journal of Social Science and Education Research Studies, Volume 03 Issue 10 October 2023, Page No : 2155-2159

2.1.1. Research landscape on Ca Tru, teaching and preservation Ca Tru

Studies on the general aspects of Ca Tru

There have been numerous in-depth studies on various facets of Ca Tru, *Vietnamese Ca Tru References* by Do Bang Doan and Do Trong Hue⁵, *Special Examination of Vietnamese Ca Tru*⁶, *Ca Tru in Hai Phong: Now and Then*⁷, and *A Dao: A Study on the History and Music Theory* by Bui Trong Hien⁸, etc. These works have explored the historical development, cultural contexts, modal structures, musical forms, and the tonal system of Ca Tru. Additionally, they analyze the vocal techniques involved, such as vocal timbre, diction, ornamentation, rhythmic phrasing, and the intricate interplay between poetry, music, and performance. However, there remains a lack of specialized research that delves into the pedagogical methods of teaching Ca Tru from a music education perspective..

Research on the teaching and preservation of Ca Tru

A few dissertations have addressed the instruction and preservation of Ca Tru. Notably, *The Music of Ca Tru in Hanoi* by Nguyen Hien Duc⁹ analyzes the musical structure, artistic value, and suggests preservation through performance and instruction in traditional settings such as guild houses and cultural clubs.. Further, Le Thi Bach Van's doctoral dissertation *The Transformation of Ca Tru in Contemporary Life*¹⁰ takes a sociomusicological approach, researching changes in performance purpose, audience, and instructional methods. While these studies have not yet proposed a formal pedagogical model for teaching Ca Tru, they lay an important foundation for recognizing music education as a means to preserve this heritage.

Several projects led by the Vietnam Institute of Musicology and local Ca Tru clubs have facilitated master artist-led classes for young learners. However, the systematic development of curricula, instructional materials, and standardized teaching methods is still lacking. As of now, the author has not found any comprehensive educational model that formally integrates Ca Tru into folk arts or general education curricula through a structured pedagogical framework.

The above overview reveals a significant gap in the research regarding: the development of a structured teaching method tailored to learners, the standardization of instructional materials and vocal techniques based on traditional Ca Tru performance standards (such as quan, xuyen, dan, thet, khuon, ray, dieu, voi, etc.); the design of a learning pathway with supporting tools and hybrid classroom models that blend tradition and technology; And the central pedagogical role of the master artist as a folk educator,

alongside collaboration with academic musicologists in contemporary instructional settings.

2.1.2. Folk music education and the role of the Ca Tru master artist

2.1.2.1. Characteristics of folk music education

Based on studies by authors such as Do Bang Doan and Do Trong Hue, Nguyen Duc Mau, To Ngoc Thanh, Hong Thao, and To Vu, folk music education is the transmission and reception of artistic knowledge within traditional cultural spaces. This process primarily takes place through oral instruction and hands-on practice, with the direct participation of master artists. In contrast to academic music education, which relies on theoretical frameworks, notation systems, and standardized teaching methodologies, folk music education is distinguished by the following features:

Oral transmission - Non-textualized instruction

Folk music is taught primarily through listening and imitation, without the use of written scores or fixed theoretical materials. Learners listen to the master artist's performance and imitate, phrase by phrase, tone by tone, and technique by technique, in a natural way. This process requires patience, keen perception, and a long period of immersion to internalize the skills. The learning often occurs in community settings - festivals, household spaces - rather than in formal classrooms.

Individualization – respect for vocal identity

A central characteristic of folk music education is its respect for individuality. Each learner possesses a unique vocal timbre, auditory sensitivity, and expressive style. Rather than imposing a rigid mold, the master artist guides learners in developing their personal voice within the framework of traditional techniques. This fosters creativity within the boundaries of folk aesthetics, contributing to the diversity and vibrancy of traditional music.

Attached in cultural and communal contexts

Folk music is inseparable from the context of cultural performance. Learning occurs simultaneously with participation in community events, rituals, and village-based artistic activities. The primary learning environment is the dynamic space of live performance, where learners observe the master artist's interaction with audiences and internalize the performance ethos and societal role of the art.

Qualitative assessment

Evaluation in folk music education is based on artistic sensibility rather than quantified scores or standardized criteria. The master artist provides feedback that is intuitive and figurative, such as "the voice is still harsh," "the word doesn't fall softly," or "the singing lacks emotional depth." Learners adjust through listening and continued practice, not through formal testing or semester exams as in conventional education systems.

⁵ Do Bang Doan – Do Trong Hue (1962), *Vietnamese Ca Tru References*, Ho Chi Minh City publishing house, Ho Chi Minh City.

⁶ Dang Hoanh Loan et al (2006), *Special Examination of Vietnamese Ca Tru*, National Culture Publishing House, Ha Noi.

⁷ Nguyen Duc Giang (2015), *Ca Tru in Hai Phong: Now and Then*, Literature Publishing House, Ha Noi.

⁸ Bui Trong Hien (2024), *A Dao: A Study on the History and Music Theory*, Literature Publishing House.

⁹ Nguyen Hien Duc (2019), *The Music of Ca Tru in Ha Noi*, Doctorate Thesis in Musicology, Vietnam National Academy of Music

¹⁰ Le Thi Bach Van (2023), *The Transformation of Ca Tru in Contemporary Life*, PhD Dissertation in Folklore Studies, Vietnam Institute of Culture, Arts, Sports and Tourism.

Lack of standardization – vulnerability to loss

Due to the absence of curricula, learning outcomes, or pedagogical systems, folk music education depends entirely on the expertise and dedication of the master artist. When elderly master artists pass away without transmitting their knowledge, entire systems of instruction and musical technique risk disappearing. This raises an urgent need for documentation, digital archiving, and the development of suitable educational models for preservation.

In summary, folk music education is a process of live artistic transmission grounded in experiential learning, direct perception, and maximum individualization, closely tied to local cultural contexts and characterized by high adaptability. In the modern era, preserving and promoting traditional musical forms such as Ca Tru requires a thorough understanding of these characteristics to develop teaching methods that uphold traditional essence while adapting to contemporary educational environments.

2.1.2.2. The Role of the Ca Tru Master Artist

By the end of the 20th century, Vietnam saw the emergence of several master artists whose distinct vocal styles preserved the foundational principles of Ca Tru. Figures such as Quach Thi Ho, Nguyen Thi Chuc, and Pho Kim Duc showed different interpretations of the art, yet all upheld its traditional norms. As these generations of master artists passed on, concerns arose regarding the faithful transmission of Ca Tru's core techniques. According to major scholarly works such as those by Do Bang Doan – Do Trong Hue and Nguyen Duc Mau, the role of the Ca Tru master artist is expressed through the following key aspects:

Master artist is custodian and transmitter of indigenous artistic knowledge:

In the traditional learning model, the master artist is not only a performer but also a living archive of intricate vocal techniques such as vibrato, melisma, phrasing, rhythmic precision, and drum cueing. These nuanced elements cannot be fully conveyed through written curricula but must be directly experienced through personal interaction with the master artist.

Master artist is cultural architect of the learning environment:

Beyond vocal training, the master artist recreates a culturally rich, traditional learning space that reflects the ethical and ceremonial essence of the art. This includes maintaining ritualistic teacher-student dynamics, ceremonial gestures within performance guilds (phường hát), and cultural etiquette. Such an environment fosters not only technical competence but also an artistic mindset, a sense of respect for the art form, and a commitment to preserving cultural identity.

Master artist is artistic guide and intuitive mentor

Unlike modern vocal instructors who rely on structured syllabi, master artists use intuitive and affective language to guide learners. Phrases like “make your vibrato soft” or “let the note fall gently” offer

emotional and interpretive direction rather than technical precision. This intuitive mentoring helps students not only sing correctly but also show the emotional and spiritual essence of Ca Tru.

Master artist is teacher and inspiration

In traditional Vietnamese music, the teacher is also a moral and inspirational figure. Students often learn not only how to sing, but also how to speak, behave, and live through the example set by their master artist. Figures like Nguyen Thi Chuc, Pho Thi Kim Duc, and Nguyen Thi Mui left behind more than just technical skills—they passed on a deep set of cultural values and artistic ethics to their students.

Master artist is bridge between past, present, and future of the heritage

In modern efforts to revive and preserve Ca Tru, the master artist plays a vital role in linking tradition with contemporary educational and performance practices. They contribute to documentation efforts, perform in contemporary contexts, and teach in conservatories and community clubs. Through their ongoing educational engagement, they help transmit the legacy of Ca Tru to future generations.

In general, The Ca Tru master artist is central to the preservation and education of this refined traditional art form. They are not only technical mentors but also spiritual and cultural guardians who pass on the soul, aesthetic, and discipline of Ca Tru through lived practice and personal transmission.

2.1.3. Pedagogical methods in the transmission of Ca Tru by master artists

Through a combination of document analysis, field observation, and in-depth interviews with established master artists, it has been found that the predominant pedagogical strategies in Ca Tru vocal training are oral transmission, imitation, and hands-on practice.

Oral transmission as core pedagogy

Oral transmission represents the fundamental and most widely adopted method in Ca Tru pedagogy. The master artist sings exemplar phrases, syllable by syllable, while students listen, repeat, and imitate. Learners do not engage with formal music theory; rather, they develop auditory memory and embodied understanding through sensory experience. Instructional content includes pitch release, syllabic articulation, vocal ornamentation, vibrato and pulsation techniques, and the integration of vocalization with rhythmic accents played on the beat. Throughout this process, the master provides real-time corrections grounded in perceptual sensitivity, often employing metaphorical or affective language such as: “Your tone is too rigid”, “You need to soften the phrasing”, “Your syllable release is not clear”, “The vibrato lacks delicacy.”, etc. Crucially, artists assess the expressive essence of the performance, the maturity of the voice, and its alignment with the rhythms of the trong chau¹¹

Respecting vocal individuality with traditional standards

¹¹ Interviews with Distinguished Master Artists (DMA) Nguyen Thi Ngoan, Head of the Tranh Thon Ca Tru Club; Nguyen Thi Ha, Vu Thi Ngan

A distinguishing feature of Ca Tru instruction lies in its respect for the vocal individuality of each student. Master artists do not demand absolute mimicry; rather, they guide learners to develop their own vocal timbre within the technical confines of the Ca Tru tradition. Nevertheless, learners are still required to meet established aesthetic standards rooted in centuries-old vocal criteria—such as quan, xuyen, dan, thet, khuon, ray, dieu, and voi—as articulated in prior studies¹². This approach ensures that while individual expression is fostered, students also attain traditional competencies: mastery of rhythmic phrasing, delicate and precise tonal projection, round syllabic articulation, dynamic nuance, smooth melodic inflection, tonal clarity, and an overall ability to embody the spiritual and performative essence of a Ca Tru song.

Structured curriculum with technical progression

"Learning Ca Tru is difficult," is a sentiment frequently echoed by both practitioners and scholars. According to Meritorious Artist (MA) Le Thi Bach Van, "Ca Tru vocal technique is not solely about vibrato or pulsation. One must also focus on phrase release, syllable articulation, and precise melodic intonation. Singing and percussive rhythms must be tightly synchronized. In addition to vocal skills, students must learn proper beat techniques for each stylistic form, attune their ears to the trong chau, and respond musically in real time without falling out of

rhythm¹³". Given this level of complexity, instruction cannot be fragmented or improvised; instead, it follows a structured progression, from basic to advanced levels, aligned with each learner's capacity for absorption and practice.

According to People's Artist (PA) Nguyen Thi Tam: "In the early stage, students must memorize the lyrics, then learn to strike the beat. Only after synchronizing with the lute and drum can they begin singing¹⁴". MA Luu Thi Kim Lien further elaborates: "A ca nuong must simultaneously activate four senses: sing with the mouth, recall lyrics, listen attentively to the lute and drum, and strike the beat with precision. Achieving this is tremendously difficult. Only deep passion and consistent, rigorous practice can lead to success¹⁵". Other artists affirm that beginners are first introduced to simple, memorable melodies to acclimate to the rhythmic system, and only thereafter proceed to more complex techniques and expressive nuances¹⁶.

To evaluate the current pedagogical landscape and emerging needs in Ca Tru education, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 master artists from traditional Ca Tru guilds in Thai Ha, Lo Khe, Hang Buom, Tranh Thon, Dong Chu, among others. The qualitative data collected reflects both contemporary challenges and recommendations for methodological renewal. The results are summarized in the following table:

Table 1

Survey on Methods of Teaching Ca Tru Singing

Surveyed Content / Issue	Percentage of Agreement Among Artists	Ghi chú & trích ý kiến tiêu biểu
Ca Tru singer simultaneously sings and beats the beat	100%	"That is the most distinctive feature. Singing without the beat loses its soul."
Oral transmission remains the primary teaching method	100%	"You must listen – feel – and sing back. There is no other way."
Use of video/audio as supporting tools	60%	"Nowadays we have audiovisual devices. Teachers and students can record and edit conveniently."
Availability of official curriculum	10%	Most noted: "There is no standardized curriculum, only handwritten notes."
Feasibility of teaching Ca Tru in formal education	90%	"It is teachable, but requires specialists."
Average time to reach basic singing proficiency	3–6 months	Depending on age, talent, and dedication.
Possibility of self-learning	40%	Requires high-quality reference recordings. "Someone must correct your mistakes for it to be accurate."
Evaluation of current master artists	75% satisfied	However, 65% expressed concern: "As artists grow older, few young successors emerge."
Agreement with the model where the master artist is the core source of inspiration	100%	"Without someone to inspire, students cannot preserve the soul of Ca Tru."
Support for a multimedia teaching toolkit	95%	"Very necessary, especially video demonstrations and practice software."
Support for flexible learning models	100%	Many called for community or public classes to expand the artform's reach.

¹² Dang Hoanh Loan et al (2006), Special Examination of Vietnamese Ca Tru, National Culture Publishing House, Ha Noi.

¹³ Interview with Dr. Le Thi Bach Van

¹⁴ Interview with PA Nguyen Thi Tam, Chairwoman of the Thuong Mo Ca Tru Club, Hanoi

¹⁵ Interview with MA Luu Thi Kim Lien

¹⁶ Interviews with master artists Nguyen Thi Ngoan, Nguyen Thi Ha, and Vu Thi Ngan at Tranh Thon Ca Tru Club

Based on the interview results, it is evident that the current methods of Ca Tru transmission still heavily rely on oral instruction, emotional inspiration, and traditional apprenticeship. This approach positions the master artist not only as a technical instructor but also as the essential source of aesthetic direction and cultural spirit.

Consequently, findings from field research indicate that while traditional methods of transmitting Ca Tru remain fundamentally effective, they should be complemented, integrated, and systematized. Such a synthesis would allow for adaptation to contemporary educational settings, laying the groundwork for the standardization and sustainable preservation of this intangible heritage.

2.2. Proposing a model for teaching Ca Tru singing in the contemporary context based on traditional foundations

2.2.1. Principles for constructing a Ca Tru teaching methodology in modern society

The method for teaching *Ca Tru* singing in the new context should be based on the following principles:

Preserving core values: Distinctive elements such as techniques of word articulation vibration, single-note singing, ornamentation, and subtle accentuation must be passed down intact, without simplification or modernization to suit contemporary tastes.

Respecting learner individuality: Acknowledging differences in vocal quality, speed of acquisition, and artistic perception. The master artist plays the role of guiding technique and aesthetics, but does not impose uniformity, instead helping learners

develop their unique voice within the standards of Ca Tru..

Integrating technology to support the teaching process: Digital resources (e.g., demonstration videos of master artists, technically annotated audio recordings, online learning platforms) will enrich and visualize learning content, while expanding accessibility to a broader audience.

Organizing flexible teaching formats: Combining traditional forms (direct meetings with the master for apprenticeship and correction) with modern learning forms such as online learning, group study, video analysis, and interaction on digital platforms. This approach suits the living conditions, work, and learning habits of learners in the digital era.

Placing the master artist at the center as the source of inspiration, Master artists play a key role in preserving core techniques and transmitting the artistic spirit. In parallel, building a team of instructors with backgrounds in musicology, capable of researching and systematizing traditional knowledge and working alongside master artists to standardize content, methods, and evaluation will establish a sustainable and effective Ca Tru teaching ecosystem in the new context.

2.2.2. Proposed model for teaching Ca Tru that integrates tradition and modernity

2.2.2.1. On the learning pathway

Based on traditional teaching principles combined with modern methods, the author proposes a Ca Tru singing learning pathway consisting of three stages, from initial acquaintance to trial performance, with pedagogical content and methods appropriate to each ascending level.

Table 2:

Proposed learning pathway for Ca Tru combining traditional and modern approaches

Stage	Learning content	Teaching methods and learning support
Stage 1 (Familiarization – Orientation)	- Becoming familiar with poetic forms, rhythmic patterns, and how to enter a Ca Tru verse. - Learning simple, gentle, and popular pieces such as: Hat noi Canh ngay he, Hue tinh, Chu tam moi bang ba chu tinh. - Practicing pronunciation techniques, word articulation, breath control, and light vibration.	- Learners listen and imitate demonstration videos by master artists. - Practicing singing each line in combination with basic beat beating. - Home practice using slow-motion videos and accurate rhythmic recordings, with beat-feeling support software
Stage 2 (Technical training – Applying traditional repertoires)	- Learning pieces with rich imagery and clear melodic ornamentation such as: Hat noi Ty ba hanh, Cung oan ngam khuc, Dao Hong, Dao Tuyet, etc. - Practicing singing in combination with trong chau rhythm and dan day accompaniment. - Deepening techniques of articulation, vibrato, ornamentation, and breath control.	- Small-group direct learning with the master artist. - Recording individual singing, self-assessment and comparison with standard models, and tracking progress across sessions.
Stage 3 (Trial performance – Advanced refinement)	- Trial performance before peer learners and master artists. - Full coordination of singing, beat, trong chau, and dan day. - Deepening emotional connection with the song, expressive nuance, and the spirit of Ca Tru.	- Full video recording of the performance for overall analysis. - Participating in in-depth feedback sessions with master artists and musicology instructors. - Practicing and refining technical details: rhythmic precision, word softness, phrase release, articulation, vocal projection, lyrical expression...

This three-stage learning pathway ensures that the process of learning Ca Tru progresses along a natural developmental arc, from initial appreciation, to technical mastery, to expressive performance, aligned with an individualized learning pace that respects each learner's vocal development.

2.2.2.2. Multimedia-integrated teaching materials

To effectively support the process of learning Ca Tru singing, especially in the context of modernized and digitized education, the author proposes developing a multimedia-integrated teaching toolkit that blends tradition with technology, including the following components:

Demonstration videos by master artists

Traditional Ca Tru repertoires are professionally recorded by reputable master artists, ensuring performance authenticity. The videos feature close-up shots of mouth movements, hand gestures on the beat clappers, facial expressions, and eye movements, enabling learners to absorb both vocal techniques and performance spirit. Each video is segmented by technical sections, entry into the verse, vocal sustain, conclusion, allowing learners to practice step-by-step.

Technical analysis subtitles

Each video is embedded with specialized subtitles that directly highlight essential technical elements such as: beat entry points, vocal sustain moments, vibration, melodic ornaments; suggestions on articulation, breath control, and word emphasis; annotated phrases such as: "soft articulation – continuous vibration," "slightly delayed entry," "pause breath here," etc.

Printed/digital learning materials

Compiled into specific lessons, these materials provide step-by-step learning guides: introduction to poetic forms, song meanings, breath control, vocal placement for each line; detailed descriptions of vocal techniques like sustain, ornamentation, tremolo, and rhythmic features of each piece. Illustrated with images depicting posture, beat handling, breath flow charts, acoustic contours, and emphasized notes to support visual and physical understanding.

Learning support software

A simple, user-friendly app offering features such as: recording and comparing learners' voices with master examples; tracking individual progress across practice sessions; allowing users to mark weak sections, replay specific parts, take personal notes; integrating a verified database of standard performances by master artists.

Developing this toolkit not only standardizes the Ca Tru teaching process but also helps preserve valuable materials from current master artists; expands accessibility for younger generations, remote learners, and online students; and lays the groundwork for systematic training in traditional arts that applies technology while preserving the spirit of transmission.

2.2.2.3. Flexible Ca Tru class models

Based on field surveys and current educational trends, the author proposes three flexible models for Ca Tru classes, each with distinct characteristics in terms of learning environment, instructors, learners, and instructional goals.

Master artist – student class (traditional model in clubs)

Learning space: Ca Tru guild halls, folk art clubs, or the private residence of a master artist

Format: Direct master-to-student transmission through listening – imitation – error correction.

Teaching content: Tied to traditional methods, including singing techniques, phách beating, rhythm perception, vocal expression, and performance spirit.

Role of the master artist: Both teacher and inspiration, playing a key role in preserving original techniques and styles.

Special value: Provides a community-based learning space that transmits not only technical knowledge but also the "mindset" of Ca Tru art.

General education classes (primary to university level)

Learning space: Primary/secondary schools, art centers, or universities and colleges with music programs.

Talent Group: Students without prior Ca Tru knowledge, approaching from a basic level.

Format: A combination of music teachers with foundational Ca Tru knowledge and digitized resources from master artists; lessons utilize multimedia.

Teaching approach: Focus on appreciating Ca Tru, introducing it as an intangible cultural heritage, along with basic singing practice.

This model helps integrate heritage education into the formal education system and inspires younger generations with traditional music.

Community-based classes – oriented toward media and heritage education

Learning space: Cultural centers, village communal houses, public performance venues.

Organizing format: Run by Ca Tru clubs or folk art centers, held periodically or through community outreach projects.

Target group: Individuals interested in heritage, foreigners, traditional music lovers, etc

Teaching content: Overview of Ca Tru history and repertoire structure; instruction in basic techniques (beat, ornamentation, tremolo, single-tone singing); performance demonstrations.

Objective: Educate the public about heritage value, enhance media outreach and hands-on experiences, and provide a foundation for future generations to access Ca Tru.

The implementation of flexible class models is a necessary direction in the context of modernization and digitalization, where adaptability and connectivity are key to the sustainable dissemination of heritage. Each model can operate independently but may also be linked together into a Ca Tru teaching ecosystem in which: master artists serve as the traditional core; music educators act as knowledge transfer bridges; and digital resources function as tools for expansion and accessibility.

3. Conclusion

The method of teaching Ca Tru singing, although never systematized according to modern pedagogical standards, remains a valuable heritage, embodying indigenous knowledge of vocal techniques, rhythm,

sound aesthetics, and performance artistry. Researching and restructuring this method within the framework of contemporary education aims to support master artists in their role as inspirational teachers and as creators of traditional aesthetic standards for the younger generation.

By integrating digital tools, multimedia materials, and flexible class models, this study proposes a feasible direction for preserving the vocal techniques of Ca Tru amidst the modernization of music education. More importantly, it reaffirms the central role of the master artist. If these efforts are strategically and synchronously implemented, they will not only help sustain the vitality of Ca Tru, but also enrich the cultural identity of Vietnam in the flow of globalization.

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