ANALYZING MUSIC AND LYRICS OF THE CHILDREN'S SONGS OF THE NEW SONGS OF THE BATTLEFIELD

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Abstract. New Songs of the Battlefield is a song collection published during China's Cultural Revolution to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Mao Zedong's "Speech at the Yan'an Literary and Artistic Symposium." As a politically significant publication of its time, the collection reflects the ideological and cultural narratives promoted during the period. Despite growing scholarly interest in its musical and historical aspects, children's songs within the collection have received little academic attention. This study focuses on the three prominent children's songs in the collection, employing qualitative methods through musicological and lyric analysis. The findings reveal that the songs are characterized by simple structures, narrow vocal ranges, and repetitive melodic and rhythmic patterns suited to young learners. Lyrically, they emphasize patriotism, socialist values, and moral education, often portraying idealized images of children as obedient, diligent, and ideologically loyal. These songs not only served as musical entertainment but also functioned as tools for political socialization and value formation. The study provides new insights into the intersection of music, childhood, and ideology during the Cultural Revolution, offering implications for both historical understanding and contemporary approaches to children's music education in China.
Keywords: *new songs of the Battlefield, children's songs, musical characteristics, Chinese arts, musicological analysis*

Introduction

New Songs of the Battlefield, published between 1972 and 1976 during the final phase of the Cultural Revolution, holds a unique position as the only officially sanctioned songbook of its time. Owing to its distinctive socio-political context, various scholars have investigated the collection from diverse perspectives. Historiographical studies have highlighted its social background and ideological significance (Pang et al., 2016; Bryant, 2004), while editorial analyses have focused on how the compilation adhered to the aesthetic and political mandates of the era (Lau, 2008; Dai, 2004). Scholars have also examined the musical and performative dimensions of selected solo, baritone, soprano, and ethnic-style songs within the collection (Bryant, 2005), in addition to exploring its compositional traits and lyrical content as tools for political propaganda during a time when class struggle was central to cultural production (Bryant, 2018; Lau, 2008). Among the 556 songs contained in the five volumes of New Songs of the Battlefield, 63 are children's songs-a significant portion that remains underexplored in scholarly literature. Previous assessments suggest that many of these songs, shaped by the ideological climate of the period, are disconnected from children's lived experiences and lack elements of child-centric appeal (Bryant, 2018). Despite the pedagogical potential of children's songs in shaping musical literacy, aesthetic sensitivity, and moral consciousness, no dedicated study has yet addressed this subset of the repertoire. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by focusing specifically on the children's songs in New Songs of the Battlefield. It aims to (1) reveal the musical

characteristics of these works-considering elements such as melody, rhythm, modulation, and formal structure-and (2) examine the propaganda function of the lyrics, identifying how they reflect the educational ideals and ideological values of the Cultural Revolution. To guide this inquiry, the study addresses two primary research questions: (1) What are the musical characteristics of the children's songs in New Songs of the Battlefield? and (2) How does the lyrical content of these songs convey the educational concepts and values embedded in the political discourse of that historical period?

Literature review

Some researchers have explored the social background and historical value of New Songs of the Battlefield from the perspective of history. The song collection New Songs of the Battlefield was born during the"Chinese Cultural Revolution",when professional music groups, music periodicals, and music and cultural activities from the central to local levels were halted or even paralyzed, and many practitioners of literature and art were persecuted, with many outstanding musical works banned. Along with the rise of "rebel songs" and "discourse songs", songs at this time were filled with "struggle"slogans for a long period of time, creating an extremely scarce musical and cultural life. "After the Lin Biao Incident, Zhou Enlai presided over the state, criticized the "high, fast, loud, and hard" song tunes, adjusted the literary policy to a certain extent, and personally presided over the compilation of New Songs of the Battlefield (Bryant, 2018). The publication of New Songs of the Battlefield was a transformation of music creation during the Cultural Revolution. It changed the single mode of songwriting, and songwriting"returned"to the characteristics of music creation in the early years of the founding of the PRC. The New Songs of the Battlefield contains a number of outstanding vocal compositions that have had a significant impact on Chinese music history and are still relevant to songwriting today. In addition to the distinctive characteristics of the era, the songs in the New Songs of the Battlefield contain excellent aesthetic values and spiritual connotations (Bryant, 2004).

Some researchers have explored the characteristics of the editing of New Songs of the Battlefield from an editorial perspective. Based on Mao Zedong's poem "Cai Sang Zi-Chongyang", which reads "The yellow flowers of the battlefield are exceptionally fragrant", the collection of songs was named "New Songs of the Battlefield" (Bryant, 2005). The guideline for selecting songs for New Songs of the Battlefield was to "adhere to the political standard first, the artistic standard second, and the unity of revolutionary political content and the most perfect artistic form possible" (Dai, 2004). The process of selecting the songs begins with a preliminary and re-selection in each province, and then the central government reviews and selects the songs in the form of a symposium. The New Songs of the Battlefield songbooks are all typeset in the same way, with the cover labeled "In Commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of Chairman Mao's Speech at the Yan'an Literary and Artistic Symposium", and with quotes from Chairman Mao written in red letters on the first page of each book (Bryant, 2005). In New Songs from the Battlefield, the title word and Chairman Mao's quotations were highlighted with extra large and bold font sizes as well as red fonts, and the cover used red, yellow, and military green, with red becoming a symbol of politics during the Cultural Revolution, yellow symbolizing splendor, brilliance, and a golden, sun-like glow, signifying the light of wisdom that illuminates the darkness, and green representing the military, with the phenomenon of the green uniform pandemic that occurred during the Cultural Revolution.

Many researchers have explored the characteristics of songwriting in New Songs of the Battlefield. The songwriting in New Songs of the Battlefield is characterized by the following features: epochal, mass, lyrical, and ethnic (Zhou, 2020). The style of songs in New Songs of the Battlefield has some connection with the period of the Chinese Revolutionary War and also with the songwriting in the early period of the founding of the nation (Wei, 2009). The song collection New Songs of the Battlefield is an excellent collection of songs, and the music creators focused on the beauty of the melody when creating the songs to change the previous single tunes. The songs in New Songs of the Battlefield are categorized into the following styles: glorifying style, heroic style, lyrical style, ethnic style, and songs for children and teenagers (Bryant, 2018). The melodies of the songs in New Songs of the Battlefield are basically created on the basis of the Chinese national pentatonic tuning, which shows a prominent national style (Pang et al., 2016). Many researchers have analyzed the musical features and singing characteristics of different styles or types of songs in New Songs of the Battlefield. New Songs of the Battlefield demonstrates various ethnic music tunes, and many excellent minority works adopt pentatonic modulation throughout the songs, showing a strong ethnic flavor, which lays a deep foundation for the continuous integration of our present-day cultures of various ethnic groups (Bryant, 2004). Through exploring the solo songs in "New Songs of the Battlefield", concluded that the solo songs have lyrical and beautiful melodies, most of which have a stretching rhythm with large ups and downs, and try to create a majestic and heroic mood in the passionate and broad breath. The genre of "New Songs of the Battlefield" includes various popular forms such as unison singing, chorus, solo singing, and performance singing. Previous study explored the musical features and singing characteristics of the baritone songs in New Songs of the Battlefield from the perspectives of music and singing.

Some researchers have explored the lyrical themes and lyrical content characteristics of New Songs of the Battlefield from the perspective of lyrics research. The lyrics are rough and straightforward, the music is rhythmically distinct, the tone is bold and powerful, and it has a strong appeal (Wang et al., 2008). Lau (2008) quantified the lyrics of New Songs of the Battlefield with political and struggle colors, for example, "Revolution, Struggle", which is also filled with a large number of lyrics that glorify Mao Zedong and a lot of fake, big, empty and impractical lyrics. Dai (2004) combed through the evolution of song publication song topics in the five books of New Songs of the Battlefield, for example, the content of the songs in the fourth and fifth episodes were closely related to political movements. The lyrics of New Songs of the Battlefields have themes that glorify the Communist Party of China, Chairman Mao, and the socialist motherland; reflect the life of workers, peasants, and soldiers in their struggles on all fronts of the socialist revolution and construction; reflect the youth, young people, and children who thrive under the sunshine of Mao Zedong's ideology; and reflect the revolutionary friendship and combat solidarity between the Chinese people and the peoples of other countries (Lau, 2008).

Materials and Methods

This study utilizes a qualitative research method to examine children's songs in the songbook New Songs from the Battlefield. The songbook New Songs of the Battlefield has five books, containing a total of 63 children's songs, from the first to the fifth book are 11, 16, 12, 13, and 11 respectively, the researcher selected three music scores and

five song lyrics, a total of eight songs, respectively, from the perspective of music score analysis and lyrics textual analysis, to explore the children's song music characteristics and lyrics textual content characteristics in New Songs of the Battlefield. This study used music score analysis and text analysis to analyze the data. The researcher used score analysis to explore the musical characteristics of children's songs in the Chinese songbook New Songs from the Battlefield. During the analysis process, the researcher followed the core principles of music analysis proposed by Nikolsky (2021), which cover musical elements such as form, melody, range, tempo, meter, and rhythm, tonality.The researcher explores the educational concepts and values contained in the lyrical texts of the children's songs in the songbook New Songs of the Battlefield through the method of textual analysis. Finally, in the context of history, the researcher explores how these songs reflect the social climate, children's image and educational philosophy of a particular era.

Results and Discussion

Score analysis

This chapter focuses on the research perspective of musical characteristics, the researcher analyzed 3 representative songs from the songbook New Songs from the Battlefield using the method of score analysis based on the research objectives and research questions.In this chapter, the researcher followed the core principles of music analysis proposed by Nikolsky (2021), which include form, melody, range, tempo, meter and rhythm, and tonality six musical elements. *Figure 1* shows the music score was analyzed and *Table 1* shows the musicological analysis. This song adopts a paragraph structure, consisting of 5 introductory sections and 6 musical phrases (a total of 29 bars), with a short and concise musical form. The entire range of the song is only one octave (ascending D4 to ascending D5), and the melody is mainly progressive (2-4 degree intervals), accompanied by intermittent interval jumps, making the music concise, lively, and vivid. The 2/4 beat march style gives the song a distinct rhythmic feel, with rhythms mainly consisting of eighth, fourth, and second notes, strong repetition, and easy to sing. The melody adopts the D Palace pentatonic mode (Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi, Yu), which is bright and uplifting, with strong ethnic characteristics, enhancing the song's sense of power and inspiration. The slightly faster singing speed further enhances the passionate and enterprising emotions, perfectly fitting the revolutionary theme, making the entire work full of infectivity and appeal, especially suitable for children's singing.

Table 1. *Score analysis of The Red Star Song.*

Music elements	Interpretation	Description
Form	A one-part piece with a short form.	The song is a compositional form consisting of a 5-bar introduction and 6 phrases, the whole song contains a total of 29 bars, the range is short and only one octave (ascending D4-ascending D5), the song is not difficult to sing and is suitable for children to sing.
Melody	The melody is short, simple and lively.	The melody is short and simple, and the melodic development is based on a gradual progression, with each phrase having only 4 bars, and the intervals are mostly 2, 3 and 4 degree intervals. The intervals are mostly 2, 3, and 4 degree intervals. The song is characterized by intermittent interval jumps, highlighting the lively character of the song.
Meter and Rhythm	2/4 time, rhythmic, simple rhythm	The strong and weak 2/4 beat emphasizes the strong rhythmic nature, and the song has a simple rhythmic pattern with a marching style. The song has a simple rhythmic

		pattern with a marching style. Eighth notes, quarter notes and half notes are mostly used, and the rhythmic pattern is repeated more often.
Tonality	D-Gong Chinese Folk Tuning	The melodic development adopts the Chinese national five-tone tuning i.e. Gong, Shang, Jue, Zhi and Yu, with a bright and positive melody, which enhances the sense of dynamics and inspirational nature of the song.
Tempo	Slightly faster at medium tempo	The song is sung at a fast tempo and conveys a stirring and energetic emotion, in keeping with its revolutionary theme, giving it a sense of inspiration and motivation.
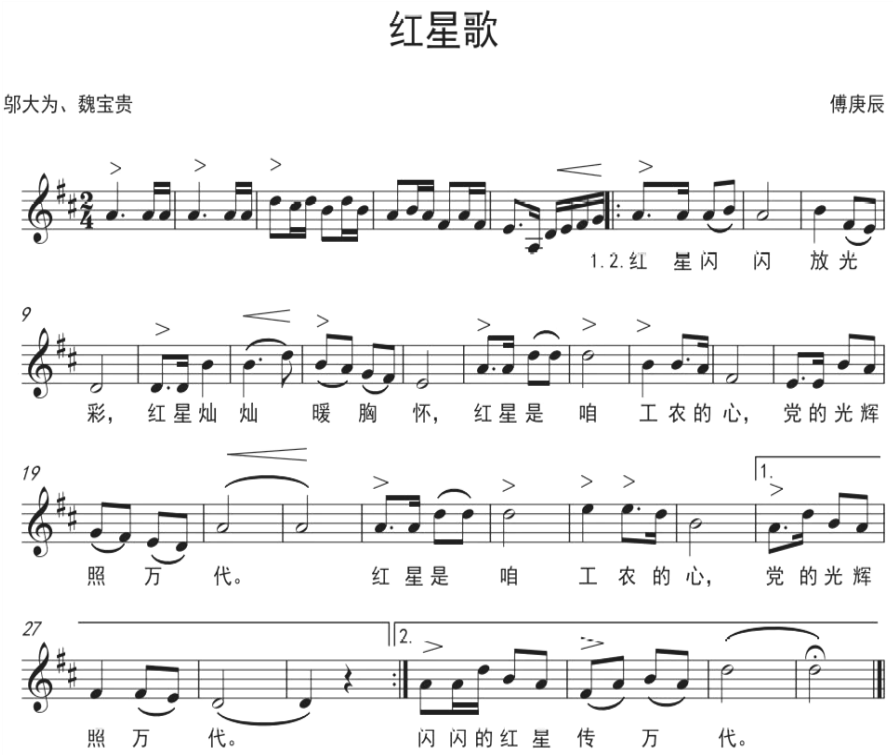


Figure 1. *Score "Red Star Song".*

Figure 2 shows the second music score was analyzed and *Table 2* shows the musicological analysis. This song adopts a linear structure consisting of two musical phrases, totaling 16 bars, and forms a concise musical framework through overall repetition. The melody is simple and smooth, mainly composed of second and third degree ascending notes, accompanied by a small amount of fourth degree jumps, adding lively and joyful fun while maintaining ease of singing. The playful melody design is particularly suitable for children's singing. 2/4 beats, with added rhythms and distinct strong and weak movements, retaining the lively characteristics of nursery rhymes while facilitating collective singing. The rhythm is based on quarter and eighth notes, regular and repetitive. Adopting the bright tonality of the natural scale in C major, without the use of diacritical marks, the musical language is pure and fresh, vividly conveying the image of the resilience and upward movement of the small pine tree. The medium singing speed perfectly balances childlike innocence and a sense of strength, allowing the work to express a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere while accurately interpreting the theme of tenacious growth.

Table 2*. Score analysis of The Little Pine Tree.*

Music elements	Interpretation	Description
Form	Single section of musical form	The musical form is neat and clear, and the song is composed of

		two musical phrases in a single section. The musical form is short, with a total of 16 sections, and the song is repeated twice as a whole.
Melody	The melody is concise, smooth, and cheerful	The melody is concise and smooth, with mostly ascending intervals, mainly using second and third degree intervals. The song is accompanied by a large number of jumping intervals, making the melody full of childlike charm and in line with the characteristics of children's songs.
Meter and Rhythm	2/4times, with a simple rhythm and a lot of repetition.	2/4 times, with distinct strong and weak two beats combined with dotted rhythms, not only maintain the lively characteristics of nursery rhymes, but also facilitate the unity of rhythm during collective singing. Songs with simple rhythms often use more conventional rhythm patterns based on quarter and eighth notes.
Tonality	C major	The song is in C major and only uses natural tones without any changes. The tone is bright and fresh, conveying a positive and uplifting emotion, which is in line with the theme of the small pine tree symbolizing resilience and tenacious vitality.
Tempo	Medium tempo	The tempo of the song is neither too fast nor too slow, maintaining a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, conveying the spirit of resilience and tenacious growth of the small pine tree.
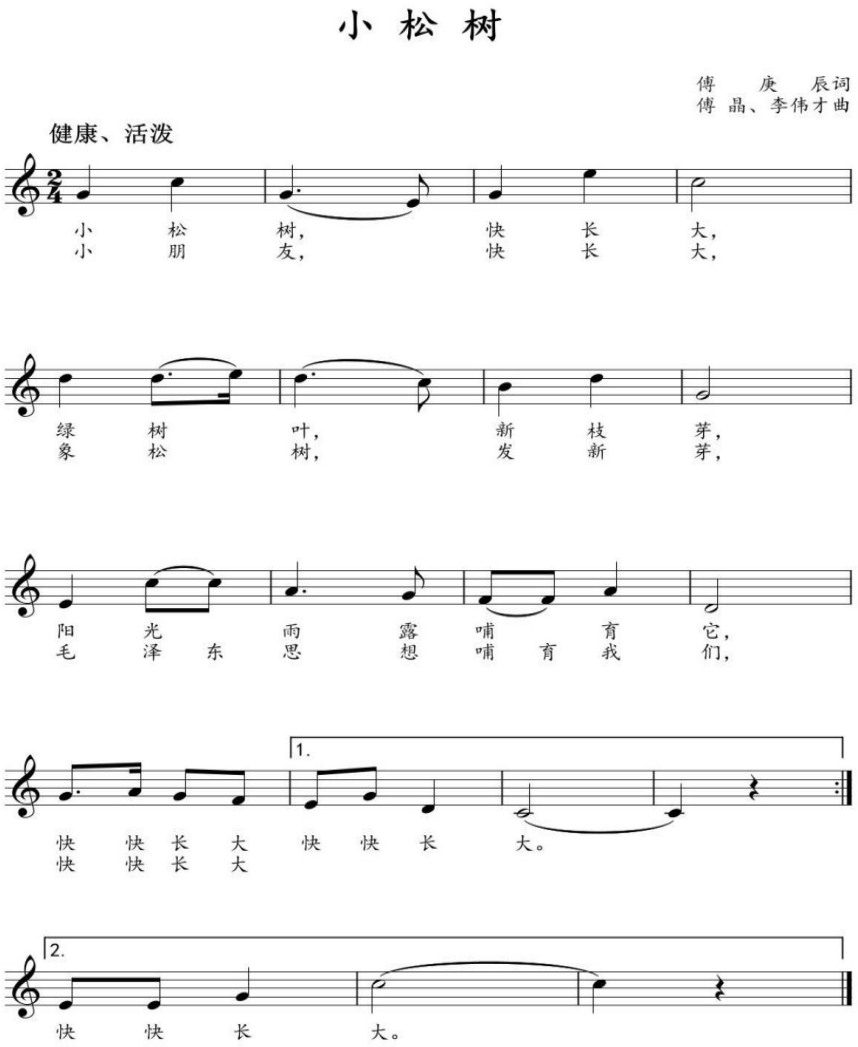


Figure 2. *Score "Little Pine Tree".*

Figure 3 shows the third music score was analyzed and *Table 3* shows the musicological analysis. This song adopts a two-part musical structure (A+B), consisting of a prelude and two contrasting sections, each section containing two 8-bar phrases,

and reinforcing musical memory through overall repetition. The A section uses continuous skipping marks to imitate the sound of a car horn, combined with fourth and fifth jumping intervals and eighth notes (repeated 17 times), to create a lively and humorous image of a young driver; The B section is transformed into lyrical and beautiful melodic lines, forming an emotional contrast. The whole piece is centered around the I-III-V notes in C major, with bright tonality and a melody that uses ascending notes and small jumps, making it both concise and memorable, as well as full of rhythmic dynamism. 2/4 beats enhance the cheerful quality through the design of strong beats and rhythmic patterns. Playing at medium speed not only maintains a sense of power, but also accurately depicts vivid scenes of busy drivers working, making the work both appealing to children and artistically expressive.

***Table 3**. Score analysis of Little Driver.*

Music elements	Interpretation	Description
Form	Two section musical form.	The whole song is a two-part structure consisting of a prelude and AB sections. The AB section is composed of two 8-bar phrases with clear structure. The melody of the AB section is clearly contrasting, while the A section is lively and humorous. The B section is lyrical and beautiful, and the song is repeated twice as a whole.
Melody	The melody is concise and full of joyful emotions	The melody of the song is concise, with intervals mainly consisting of ascending notes and small jumps. The melody is easy to remember and has a strong sense of rhythm. The melody is centered around the I III V notes in C major, with frequent use of fourth and fifth jumps. The song employs continuous jump marks, mimicking the sound of a car horn, expressing a cheerful mood.
Meter and Rhythm	2/4 times, simple and lively rhythm.	Strong beats of songs often use staccato entering the main beat, expressing the cheerful characteristics of the song. The rhythm is simple, for example, section A often uses a combination of eighth notes, appearing a total of 17 times.
Tonality	C major	The song is in C major, with C major I, III, and V tones as the core motivation. The tone is bright and conveys the cheerful emotions of the song
Tempo	Medium tempo and dynamic	The tempo of the song is moderate, the rhythm is strong, and it is full of motivation. The speed reflects the busy and lively image of the young driver during work, full of affinity and vitality.
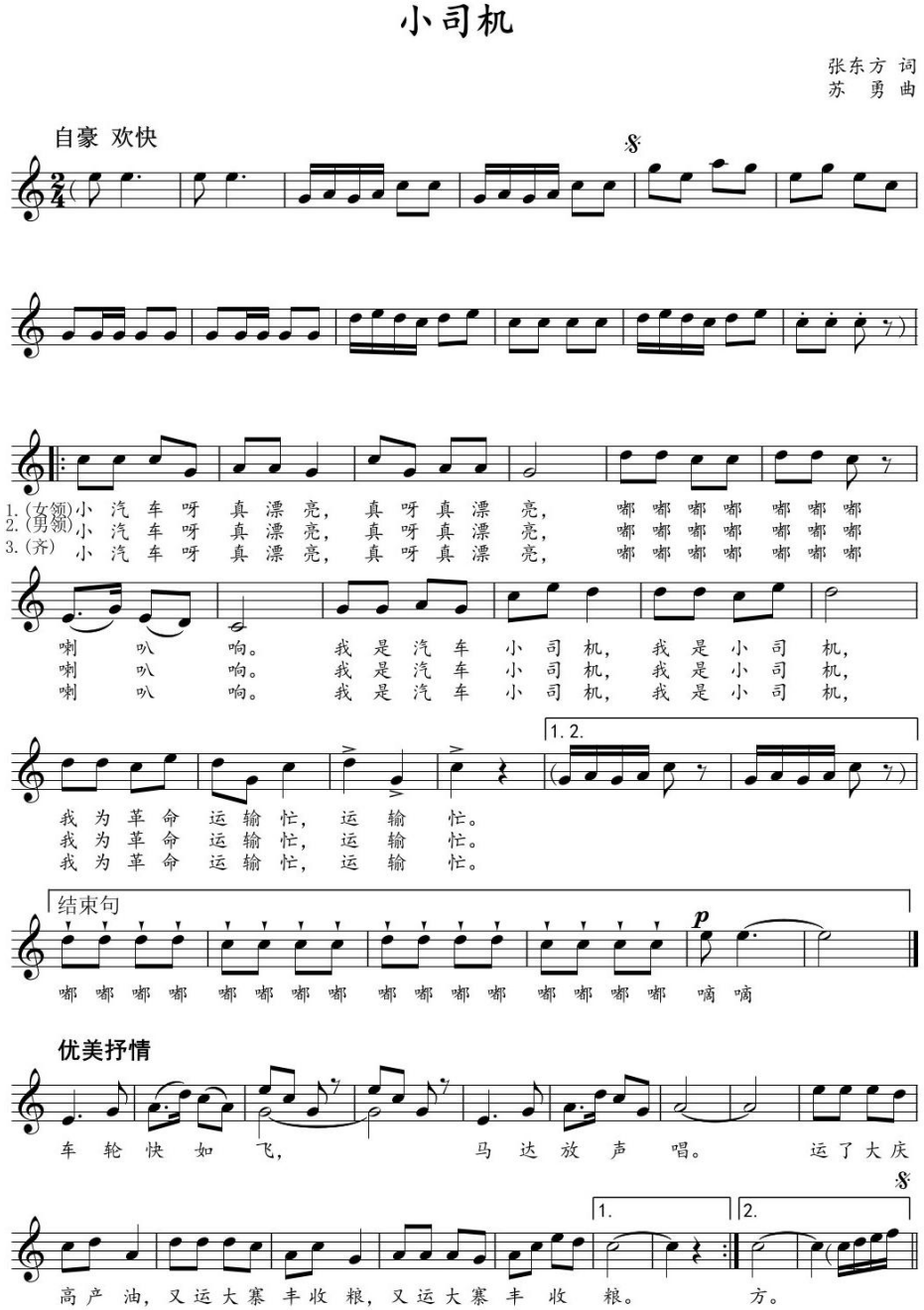


Figure 3. *Score "Little Driver".*

Lyric analysis

This chapter focuses on the research perspective of lyrics. Based on the research objectives and questions, the researchers used text analysis methods to analyze 5 representative songs in the song collection "New Songs in the Battlefield". Combined with social background analysis, the lyrics of children's songs were analyzed to shape social and cultural structures and form cultural identity. The following is the specific content of lyrics analysis. According to the lyrics in *Table 4*, the song "Revolutionary Story Club" mainly promotes that Chinese children should take heroic figures as role models and learn from their excellent qualities. Lyrics meaning: The lyrics "Little

brother, little sister, let's have a story gathering" showcase the atmosphere of collective learning of heroic deeds. The children told about the heroic deeds of Jin Xunhua, Dong Cunrui, Lei Feng, Wang Jie, Yang Zirong, etc., which reflected the inheritance and learning of the excellent qualities of heroes, learning from their bravery, selflessness, love of the collective, loyalty to the CPC and other qualities. The lyrics' Tell stories, learn from heroes, never fall behind 'express admiration for the heroic deeds and inheritance of revolutionary spirit. According to the lyrics in *Table 5*, the song "Little Screw Cap" showcases the spirit of diligence, thrift, and collectivism through the story of the "screw cap". Lyrical meaning: When my younger brother was in school, he found a screw cap. Although it was small, he realized its importance to the construction of our country, so he picked it up, wiped it clean, and gave it to the worker uncle. After the screw cap was installed on the machine, the machine made a sound and everyone clapped and laughed. The lyrics reflect the appreciation of labor achievements, the importance of collective interests, and the praise of the spirit of dedication, inspiring the new generation to start from small things and care for the collective, and contribute to the construction of the motherland.

***Table 4**. Analysis of the lyrics to Revolutionary Storytellers.*

Lyric line	Symbol	Denotation	Connotation
Little brother, little sister, let's have a storytelling session	Story-telling session	The lyrics describe a scene where a group of children (little brothers, little sisters) gather together to hold a storytelling event.	It embodies an atmosphere of collective participation and solidarity.
You talk about Jin Xunhua, I talk about Dong Cunrui, Lei Feng, Wang Jie, Yang Zirong, and their heroic deeds shine brightly.	Heroes	Described the children telling heroic stories such as Jin Xunhua and Dong Cunrui at the storytelling event.	It shows the excellent qualities of learning from such heroes, such as courage and fearlessness, selfless dedication, love of the collective, loyalty to the CPC and so on.
Tell stories, learn from heroes, and always move forward without falling behind.	Learn	The lyrics describe learning the spirit of heroism through storytelling and inspiring oneself to move forward forever.	This reflects that children in New China should take these heroic figures as role models and learn from them.

***Table 5**. Lyrics Analysis of Little Screw Cap.*

Lyric line	Symbol	Denotation	Connotation
There is a screw cap on the roadside that my younger brother saw while he was going to school.	Industrious and frugal	The lyrics describe the scene where my younger brother saw a screw cap on the roadside on his way to school.	This reflects the Chinese children's awareness of diligence, thrift, and cherishing resources.
Although the screw cap is small, it is essential for the construction of our country	Industrious and frugal	Emphasizing that although screw caps may be small, they are important for the construction of our country.	It reflects the collectivism and dedication spirit of Chinese children.
Pick it up, take a look, how good it is to wipe it clean, give it to the worker uncle	Dedication	The lyrics describe the scene where the younger brother picked up the screw cap, wiped it clean, and gave it to the worker uncle.	It demonstrates the Chinese children's appreciation for resources, their awareness of diligence and frugality, and their sense of social responsibility.
Install it on the machine, ye! The machine sings and we clap and laugh	Optimistic and positive attitude towards life.	The lyrics describe the scene where after the screw cap is installed on the machine, the machine runs and makes a sound ("singing"), and everyone clapped and laughed at it.	It embodies the collectivism and selfless dedication spirit of Chinese children.

According to the analysis of the lyrics of *Table 6*, the lyrics of the song "Study hard and make progress every day" emphasize the dedication spirit of loyalty to the CPC, socialism and communism through the self narration of "Red Little Soldier". Lyrics meaning: The lyrics "Study hard, make progress every day, and study diligently for the revolution" emphasize the pursuit of learning and progress by the "Red Army soldiers" for the socialist revolution in China. Red soldier aspires to become a worker peasant soldier when he grows up, expressing his desire to learn from workers, farmers, and soldiers, and to learn from their excellent qualities and collectivist spirit. Finally, "moving forward towards the sunrise, we must become the successors of socialism" and "becoming the successors of communism" further highlight our loyalty and sense of mission to socialism and the communist cause. According to analyzing the lyrics of *Table 7*, the lyrics of the song "We are the Red Little Soldier" show the loyalty and firm belief of the Red Little Soldier (Chinese children) to Chairman Mao and the socialist cause through the self-description of the Red Little Soldier. Lyrics Meaning: The lyrics of the song, "Learning from workers, farmers, and soldiers, the revolutionary spirit is high", reflects the determination of the red soldiers to learn from workers, farmers, and soldiers, and to learn from their excellent qualities and revolutionary spirit. Their song "Follow Chairman Mao, ride the wind and waves" expresses their loyalty to Chairman Mao and their firm belief in the path of socialism. The lyrics of the song, "Study hard, rise up every day, love the motherland, love the people", showed the Red Soldiers' enthusiasm for learning and progress, as well as their deep affection for the country and the people. Finally, "vigorous, united, vow to be the successor of the revolution" further emphasizes the collectivist spirit of the Red Soldiers and their sense of mission to be the successor of socialism.

***Table 6**. Analysis of the lyrics of Study Hard, Make Progress Everyday.*

Lyric line	Symbol	Denotation	Connotation
Little Red Soldier, with the reddest heart, loyal to the people loyal to the Communist Party of China.	loyal	The lyrics describe the Red Soldiers (a period name for children) as heartfelt and loyal to the Chinese people and the Chinese Communist Party	It expressed that as a Chinese child, we should first be loyal to the people and the Chinese Communist Party.
Study hard, make progress every day, and study diligently for the revolution.	Learn	The lyrics emphasize hard work and continuous progress, and point out that the purpose of serious reading is for the revolutionary cause.	Expressed admiration for collectivism and the spirit of dedication.
Study hard, make progress every day, and grow up to become a worker, peasant, and soldier.	Learn	The lyrics emphasize hard work and continuous improvement, and express the desire to become a worker, peasant, and soldier when grown up.	This reflects the spirit of dedication to learning from workers, peasants, and soldiers, as well as the emphasis on collective interests and social responsibility.
Advancing towards the sunrise, we must become the successors of socialism.	Successor	The lyrics describe advancing towards the sunrise and express the determination to become the successor of socialism.	It emphasizes the sense of responsibility and mission, and the significance of revolutionary education and value transmission for the younger generation.
Advancing towards the sunrise, we must become the successors of communism.	Successor	The lyrics describe advancing towards the sunrise and express the determination to become the successor of communism.	It emphasizes the sense of responsibility and mission, and the significance of revolutionary education and value transmission for the younger generation.

***Table 7**. Lyrics analysis of We Are the Red little Soldiers.*

Lyric line	Symbol	Denotation	Connotation
We are Red Little Soldiers, with hearts pointing towards the sun.	Red Little Soldiers(A contemporary term for children)	The lyrics describe the scene of the Red Little Soldiers with sincerity and a heart towards the sun.	It reflects the loyalty and firm belief of Chinese children in the Chinese Communist Party and the cause of socialism.
Learning engineering,	Learn	The lyrics describe children actively	This reflects that Chinese children

agriculture, and military, with a strong revolutionary spirit.		learning from workers, farmers, and soldiers.	should inherit and develop the revolutionary qualities and fine traditions of workers, farmers, and soldiers.
Follow Chairman Mao and ride the wind and waves forward.	Loyalty	Described actively and bravely following Chairman Mao	This reflects the loyalty of Chinese children to Chairman Mao and his leadership.
Study hard, make progress every day, love the motherland and the people.	Loyalty	The lyrics emphasize hard work, continuous progress, and express love for the country and its people.	It reflects the sense of responsibility and mission of Chinese children towards the country and society, as well as the spirit of patriotism and collectivism.
Full of vitality, united as one, vowed to be the successor of the revolution.	Revolutionary successors	The lyrics describe the young generation as full of vitality, united, and sworn to become the successors of the revolution	It demonstrates the sense of responsibility and mission of Chinese children towards the country and society, as well as their inheritance and promotion of revolutionary spirit.

According to analyzing the lyrics of *Table 8*, the song "Motherland, I Love You" shows the prosperity of the motherland and praises the socialist system and Chairman Mao. Lyrics Meaning: The lyrics "Socialism is so good, I love you, the motherland" expresses the deep feeling and pride for the motherland. The lyrics "The song of Daqing spreads for ten thousand miles, the red flowers of Dazhai bloom all over the place" and "Ten thousand miles of mountains and rivers are flying" symbolize the victories and achievements of the motherland in various fields and show the pride of the country's rapid development. The lyrics of the song "The Great Motherland is moving forward, the victory is all thanks to Chairman Mao" expressed the importance of Chairman Mao's leadership and the inheritance of the revolutionary spirit. Finally, the song "the Red Little Soldier Sing, Motherland, I Love You" further emphasizes the love and loyalty of the Red Soldiers to the motherland.

***Table 8**. Analysis of the lyrics of Motherland, I Love You.*

Lyric line	Symbol	Denotation	Connotation
The golden sunshine shines on the earth. The great motherland is waving the red flag.	Sunshine, Red Flag	The lyrics describe the scene of the sun shining on the earth and the great Chinese red flag fluttering.	It reflects the expectation for a better future for the motherland and the love for the motherland.
Socialism is so good, I love you for my motherland.	Socialism	The lyrics express love and praise for the socialist system and China.	It reflects the admiration and recognition of the socialist system, as well as a deep affection for the motherland.
The song of Daqing spreads for thousands of miles, and the red flowers in Dazhai bloom all over the ground.	Daqing, Dazhai	The song of Daqing spreads throughout China, and the red flowers of Dazhai bloom throughout China.	It expresses that Chinese factories are learning from Daqing and achieving great results, and farms across the country are learning from Dazhai and achieving great results.
Thousands of miles of mountains and rivers bring good news, motherland, I love you.	Good news	The lyrics describe the news of victory coming from all over the motherland and express the love for the country.	Symbolizes the victories and achievements of the motherland in various fields and pride in the country's rapid development.
The Great Motherland is moving forward, and victory depends on Chairman Mao.	Mao zedong	Under Chairman Mao's leadership, China continues to move forward.	Expresses the importance of Chairman Mao to the development of China.
The Red little Soldier sings in a loud voice, Motherland, I love you.	Deep love for the motherland	The lyrics describe Chinese children singing loudly to express their love for their motherland.	It expresses the deep feelings and pride of Chinese children for their motherland.

The analysis of three selected children's songs from the songbook New Songs from the Battlefield reveals a consistent use of simple and clear musical structures tailored to the capabilities and interests of young singers. In terms of form, all three songs exhibit brevity and clarity, with two composed in a one-part structure and one in a two-part form. This straightforward construction is further supported by the use of melodic repetition and variation, enhancing the memorability and thematic cohesion of the songs. Among the pieces, Little Pine Tree stands out as the shortest, comprising only 16 bars. The vocal range across the three songs remains modest, typically within an octave, with the lowest pitch noted at B♭4 and the highest at E5 suitable for the vocal limits of children. Melodic characteristics observed in the songs support their pedagogical and expressive functions. The melodies are primarily conjunct, progressing through stepwise motion and employing narrow intervals of seconds, thirds, and fourths. These small intervallic leaps maintain accessibility for young singers while introducing occasional moments of interest and vitality. For instance, Red Star Song incorporates small leaps of a perfect fourth (V–I), contributing to a sense of brightness and joy. Syncopation and other rhythmic embellishments are used sparingly to create lyrical beauty and reinforce expressive intent. Notably, in Little Driver, the melody mimics the auditory experience of a moving vehicle, demonstrating the composers' creative approach to engaging children's imagination through sound simulation.

Meter and rhythm in the selected pieces further contribute to their child-friendly character. All three songs are composed in 2/4 meter, a common time signature that emphasizes regularity and predictability, which are essential for young learners. The consistent use of strong-weak beat patterns generates a sense of liveliness, aligning with the thematic joy of the songs. Rhythmic structures are built around familiar patterns of quarter and eighth notes, with repetition playing a key role in reinforcing learning. Dotted rhythms appear occasionally, adding subtle rhythmic variation and enhancing the overall cheerful mood. The tonal structure of the songs supports their uplifting and didactic function. Two of the songs Little Pine Tree and Little Driver are set in C major, while Red Star Song utilizes the D gallery mode, a traditional Chinese pentatonic tuning. Both tonal choices produce a bright and positive sound, effectively conveying a sense of hope and patriotism aligned with the ideological aims of the Cultural Revolution. The absence of modulations or chromatic alterations ensures tonal stability, making the songs easier to sing and memorize, while also reinforcing a unified emotional tone across the repertoire. Tempo markings in the songbook suggest a deliberate emphasis on energetic pacing. The cues provided such as "cheerful," "lively," and "slightly faster" indicate the intended mood for performance. The uniform use of faster tempos across the three songs contributes to the spirited atmosphere typical of children's music and reflects the optimistic and mobilizing themes characteristic of Cultural Revolution-era propaganda. Importantly, there are no abrupt tempo changes within the songs, ensuring consistency and supporting ease of performance for young singers.

In term of lyrics, one of the most prominent themes found in the children's songs from New Songs of the Battlefield is a strong sense of patriotism, particularly the love for the motherland and its people. This ideological emphasis is explicitly conveyed through repeated lyrical phrases such as "love the motherland, love the people" in songs like Study Hard, Study Every Day and Study Well, Go Up Every Day. Similarly, the song Motherland, I Love You paints a vivid picture of national pride through imagery like "the golden sunshine shines on the earth" and "the great motherland flutters a red

flag." These expressions not only celebrate the physical and symbolic grandeur of the nation but also emotionally connect young listeners to its political ideals. As a socialist nation, China's patriotic education during the Cultural Revolution also included the endorsement of its political system, as exemplified by the line "Socialism is so good, I love you, motherland" in the song I Love You, Motherland, linking love for country directly with support for socialism. Beyond patriotism, the songs also serve as tools for moral cultivation and ideological guidance. The content reflects efforts to instill traditional virtues such as diligence, thrift, and hard work in the minds of young children. Songs like Revolutionary Storytelling and Little Screw Cap reinforce these values from various narrative perspectives, promoting persistence and simplicity as desirable traits. Other songs, including I Am a Little Member of the Commune and Little Screw Cap, extend the moral instruction further by emphasizing collective values such as cooperation, mutual aid, and respect for communal property. Through these themes, children are encouraged to not only become morally upright individuals but also active participants in a collective socialist society.

The transmission of revolutionary heritage and role models is another recurring theme that contributes to the ideological framework of these children's songs. Figures such as Lei Feng, Dong Cunrui, Wang Jie, and Yang Zirong are celebrated as exemplars of selflessness, bravery, and loyalty to the collective good. Songs like Revolutionary Storytelling, We Are the Little Red Soldiers, and I Am a Small Member of the Commune glorify these individuals while urging children to emulate their spirit of dedication. This emphasis on collective interests, sacrifice, and ideological continuity reflects the broader agenda of grooming the next generation as qualified successors to the socialist cause. Through accessible language and emotionally resonant imagery, these songs function not merely as entertainment but as pedagogical tools aligned with the political and moral education of children during the Cultural Revolution.

Conclusion

Children's songs directly influence the development of children's moral sentiments and have a key role in their growth process. This study used the method of musicological analysis to explore the musical characteristics of the song collection New Songs from the Battlefield. Through the analysis, it was concluded that the structure of the song is simple and short, with a moderate range and structure. The melody is simple, lively, lyrical and beautiful, and its music is characterized by obvious childishness. The beat is mostly 2/4 beat, the rhythm is simple and easy to learn, and the rhythm is repetitive and regular. The songs mostly use major modes and Chinese national modes, and there are no songs in minor modes, with uniformity of tonality, and no modulation or off-key in the middle. The speed of the songs is on the fast side, and the speed is uniform with no obvious speed changes. It can be seen that the music of these songs expresses the joyful and lively atmosphere that is unique to children's songs. This study used the method of textual analysis to explore the content characteristics of the lyrics of the song collection New Songs from the Battlefield. Through the analysis, it is concluded that the songs emphasize the value guidance and moral style cultivation for children and teenagers. First of all, they should love the motherland and the people, and be loyal to the Communist Party of China as well as the leadership of Mao Zedong. The song pays great attention to the cultivation of children's good traditions of hard work, diligence and thrift, love of labor, care for the collective, help each other, and the noble

quality of picking up gold, while at the same time, patting samples to inherit and develop the fine traditions of the revolutionary forefathers (Lei Feng, Dong Cunrui, Wang Jie, Yang Zirong), and attaching importance to the collective interests and dedication to the spirit of striving to be a qualified successor to socialism and communism. The results of the above study not only allow us to understand the ideological connotation and social value contained in the music and lyrics texts of children's songs during the Cultural Revolution in China, but also to understand children's lives, social customs, and the image of children during that period. At the same time, this study explores in depth the positive influence of children's songs on children's aesthetic ability and ideological and moral education, providing a theoretical basis and practical guidance for the development of children's songs and the healthy growth of children in China today.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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