

CHILDREN'S CHARACTERISTICS AND PIANO EDUCATION FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract

Piano lessons are compulsory courses for students majoring in preschool education. As a skill course, piano lessons mainly aim to train students majoring in preschool education in music notation recognition ability and basic piano playing ability through some piano pieces practice. Students majoring in preschool education do not need high skills to play piano pieces, because their practice should mainly focus on fundamental, practical and comprehensive piano pieces. The purpose is to be able to undertake preschool education work in the future and better serve preschool education. At present, in the practice of piano teaching in colleges and universities, students' learning interest and enthusiasm are not high due to the uneven foundation of each student, weak self-control ability of learning, unscientific practice methods, low efficiency, lack of goal planning and professional demands, etc. The corresponding problem of students' lack of musical expression is more prominent. Through years of piano teaching practice and the application of corresponding teaching methods, the current situation of piano teaching will be continuously improved. This article presented (1) children's characteristics; (2) piano education for preschool children.

Keywords: children's characteristics; piano; education; preschool

Introduction

The preschool education major aims to cultivate professionals with professional knowledge of young children, who can engage in teaching and research work in early childhood institutions, and play a decisive role in the development of early childhood education. In recent years, along with the overall development of higher education, the preschool education major in colleges and universities has also been improved in many aspects. However, due to historical and other factors, there are still some bottlenecks that need to be solved urgently in teaching (Yang, 2023).

In recent years, the Party Central Government has been committed to the deepening reform of education, combined with the development trend of China's times and the requirements of industry development, and carried out all-round rectification and reform of education and teaching work, which has greatly promoted the deepening reform of education methods, education concepts, education models, guarantee mechanisms, and management systems. This move not only promotes the improvement and establishment of the main framework of the socialist education system with Chinese characteristics, but also lays a solid foundation for the effective cultivation of talents with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physique, aesthetics and labor. In particular, in order to further promote the improvement of the quality of preschool education, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued the *Several Opinions on the Deepening Reform and Standardized Development of Preschool Education* in 2018, emphasizing the important value of preschool education to the construction of the national education system and to lifelong learning. In 2022, the Ministry of Education also issued the "Guidelines for the Assessment of the Quality of Kindergarten Childcare Education", which clearly pointed out that the preschool education stage should pay attention to the integrity of early childhood education and promote children's all-round development in various fields such as art, language, science, health, and society.

As the main position of early childhood education professionals, preschool education bears important responsibilities in the cultivation of high-quality and excellent preschool education personnel. The cultivation of artistic literacy is included in the target scope of the preschool education professional

talent cultivation system, and the piano course, as a discipline with strong technical, practical and independent requirements, can provide many outstanding teaching talents for the cause of preschool education through the optimization of piano teaching work by the preschool education major, so that it can undertake the important task of children's piano enlightenment education. It not only conforms to the general trend of deepening reform of preschool education, can meet the practical needs of preschool education to promote the all-round development of young children, but also is conducive to the improvement of the professional piano education system of preschool education, and then lays a solid foundation for the effective development of piano teaching activities in the preschool education stage.

Mastering basic piano performance skills and methods requires mastering the correct sitting posture, hand shape, and fingering before mastering the basic piano performance skills and methods. The average age of students majoring in preschool education is between 18 and 22 years old, and their fingers have fully developed. The plasticity and flexibility of their finger muscles are not comparable to that of children. For adults, more emphasis should be placed on finger training and development. Training the strength of fingertips by raising fingers high, relaxing arms and wrists through staccato, and providing targeted piano playing skills training for preschool education students. It is recommended to use targeted piano textbooks and train finger skills through targeted piano exercises (Wen, 2022).

The fundamental goal of piano teaching in preschool education is to apply what has been learned. In response to the current situation where students only know how to play music, it is important to focus on improving their teaching and application abilities. Firstly, teachers should consciously encourage students to observe how the teacher teaches and showcase the entire teaching process to students. This kind of immersion can allow students to naturally switch roles in future teaching. On this basis, teachers can also carry out more simulated teaching activities. Every student should serve as a teacher and carry out teaching. Secondly, schools and teachers should provide students with more opportunities for practical experience. On the one hand, it is necessary to provide more opportunities for students to perform on stage, cultivate their practical skills on stage, overcome tension, anxiety, etc. In the future, no matter what occasion, as long as they stand on stage or in front of the piano, they will

always be elegant and confident. On the other hand, a good cooperation mechanism can be established with local kindergartens, such as jointly rehearsing programs and participating in performances. At present, many local universities have conducted special explorations on the integration of local music culture and early childhood art education, and have achieved good results, which are worth learning and learning from. On this basis, regular internships and employment agreements should be arranged for students to achieve seamless integration between graduation and employment (Liu, 2021).

Compared to teaching advanced performance skills, piano teaching is more important in helping children flexibly use basic skills and perform smoothly. Therefore, it is necessary to develop teaching plans for different students. Piano teachers should develop appropriate teaching methods based on the age and psychological characteristics of young children, as well as the actual situation. In the process of piano teaching in preschool education majors in universities, the primary point is to cultivate students' ability to understand the psychological state of young children, that is, to be able to grasp what children like, know what children can understand, and ultimately master the teaching curriculum. Only in this way can students observe their words and expressions, and teach according to their individual personality traits (Gao, & Xu 2012).

In the process of teaching piano music, educators should pay attention to creating an atmosphere for students to learn music, allowing them to constantly feel and be exposed to music, making music an indispensable habit in their daily lives. Provide more opportunities for piano students to perform and showcase their talents, thereby attracting them to actively participate in the piano education environment. Teaching experience has shown that performance-based teaching has a great influence on students' musical education. The creation of a good piano music atmosphere can enable students to better engage in piano education in a joyful and joyful atmosphere, thereby improving their piano music literacy and making them more passionate about music art (Liu, 2023).

Children's Characteristics

Human society is made up of different group, and children, as one of these groups, play an important role in the development of human society. Children are often seen as the hope for the survival of the human race from generation to generation. This is why all sectors of society are concerned with children.

The term children are explained in the dictionary (1936) as "a young minor". The Oxford Law Dictionary (2013) defines the term children as a person who has not reached the age of majority, in particular a minor who is related to a specific person who is his or her parent. From the perspective of growth and development, Huang (2022) argues that Children are the initial stage of human development, in which groups of children continue to develop physically and mature mentally, a process of development from ignorant infants to mature natural persons. Zhang (2021) argues that biology generally uses "sexual maturity" as a criterion for classifying children and adults, and that the age range for this criterion is approximately 17-24 years. The developmental process leading up to adulthood can be summarized as follows: the prenatal period before birth, the neonatal period from 0-3 years, the preschool period from 3-6 years, the school age period from 6-12 years and the adolescent period from 12-18 years.

In the field of education, Huang (2022) divides children into groups based on the stage of receiving education. He believes that children can be defined as minors who receive early education, early childhood education, and basic primary education, with a span of about 0-12 years old. They are then considered as teenagers or adolescent groups when entering secondary and higher education, rather than children; They are in the age range of 18 years and above for the adolescent population. The characteristic of this classification is that it clarifies the age limit of the child group, further divides the concept of minors, and refines the names of different age groups of minors. Children have five developmental stages: breastfeeding at 0-1 years old, infancy at 1-3 years old, preschool at 3-6 years old, school at 6-12 years old, and adolescence at 12-18 years old.

Psychological characteristics: Breastfeeding and infancy: Liu (2021) believes that the first cry at birth is the first song of a child's life, which is an instinctive response. They are curious about the new world, able to respond to external sounds, and show happy or unhappy, like or dislike emotions towards the sounds they come into contact with. They can also follow the simple rhythm of music, but due to their attention span and instability, they are easily distracted.

Preschool period: This is the optimal period for the psychological development of young children, with increasingly rich emotional expression and high interest and motivation towards certain things. Psychoanalysts believe that this period is a sensitive period for personality development. According to Italian educator M.Montessori during the sensitive period, children are very sensitive to certain knowledge or behavior and learn very quickly. Once this period is missed, this knowledge and behaviors will disappear. During this period, they had already developed a rich imagination, so when it comes to musical activities, they easily paid sufficient attention to various performances and music. They enjoy talking, dancing, and anything that can produce sound. They often learn music because it is interesting, has attractive sounds, and has rich colors and rhythms. Their music activities are often integrated, but due to their short attention span and interest, they are prone to fatigue. During this period, music learning should not be prolonged, but should mainly focus on capturing the sensitive period and cultivating their passion for music.

Zhang and Ma (2021), proposed in his research on the effective integration of psychology and music education in preschool children that: (1) the trend of psychological development in preschool children, and the characteristics of psychological changes in preschool children are gradual, from simple to complex; From concrete to abstract; From passive to active; From chaos to systems, there is a close relationship between them, rather than simply parallelism. For example, in the process of playing games, the emergence and resolution of conflicts can promote the corresponding development of children's thinking. Concrete and non-randomness are the main manifestations of psychological processes in this stage. Children can easily remember anything vivid and interesting. During this period, the structure of the cerebral cortex becomes increasingly complex with the development of begging thinking, and the myelin sheath of nerve fibers is formed and completed, which makes the

transmission of neural excitement more accurate and rapid, and memory capacity also increases. (2) The psychological characteristics of emotional roles in preschool children include a love for imitation, liveliness and activity, concrete and vivid thinking, hands-on organization of games, and a willingness to learn and ask questions. These are all psychological characteristics of children in this age group. For example, when playing a game of driving, everyone has to be a driver, resulting in a car with several drivers or even no passengers, but they don't care and instead play happily. Therefore, the kindergarten class should have enough identical toys. Normal children are active, constantly looking, listening, touching, and moving. When they see something new, they always hold or touch it with their hands. In other words, babies are actively using their various sensory organs. Specific characteristics are not only reflected in children's thinking activities, but also in cognitive activities such as memory and attention, as well as in children's language activities. Children are more likely to focus on specific phenomena and less likely to focus on abstract things. In daily life, we will find that when children talk about language context, they are talking about the scene of their soul.

School age: At this point, children have entered primary school and their sensory organs are well-developed. Their abstract logical thinking has not yet developed well and is in a new stage of development. Their attention span is limited, and the older they are, the longer they need it. In terms of music, 6-year-old children can now recognize pitch, and as they age, their recognition ability becomes stronger. Children's imagination continues to develop during this period, so they are able to create rhythmic lines based on the melodies of the music they come into contact with, engage in imaginative activities in their minds, and thus develop musical aesthetics. For younger children, they do not know how to read music scores, and they mainly experience the beauty of melody during the teaching process. They will have their own aesthetic standards for what sounds good or not. In the senior years, men have developed a certain level of musical literacy, mastering certain musical skills and knowledge. They can fully understand the thoughts and feelings of works, and they can accept the knowledge taught by teachers.

Adolescence: Adolescence is also known as the middle school stage and the later stage of school age, at which point they have gradually entered the middle school stage. They are able to express their aesthetic preferences, have a deeper understanding of music, and are more active in music.

Physical characteristics: Child psychology is the scientific study and exploration of children's psychological characteristics and activity patterns through their psychological processes and characteristics. And children's psychology is also a branch of children's music psychology. Children's psychology focuses on the changes and development of individual psychology from birth to adulthood, studying the phenomena and characteristics of children's psychology, as well as the irregular branch of developmental psychology. Based on the psychological characteristics of children today, we can improve their understanding of music education by following the following points. (1) Based on the psychological characteristics of children, we should strengthen and cultivate their interest in music education, because children's thoughts and thinking are relatively immature. It is during this special period that children's self-control ability is weak, and they have not yet formed a good worldview and cannot make correct judgments of good and evil. Therefore, we must combine the different psychological characteristics of each child and teach according to their aptitude, provide them with some help and guidance to develop their interests. Interest is the best teacher, and only when they are interested in something will you be willing to learn with your heart. Children of this age are extremely curious. Therefore, in children's music education, teachers must understand the psychology of students and be good at using simple life skills to explain music works. At this stage, they like lively, infectious, and interesting things. Teachers should be good at change, and teaching should explain music works based on children's favorite cartoons, fairy tales, children's games, and some simple and interesting actions. Playing is their nature, and teachers should guide children to learn music knowledge and use correct and scientific thinking methods to cultivate their interest in learning music based on their psychological characteristics of playing. (2) Strengthen and concentrate children's attention based on their psychological characteristics. Children's attention can be diverted in seconds, which is their nature. When they are listening, the teacher can divert their attention by discussing a difficult point or something they have not yet been exposed to. It is difficult to maintain student concentration throughout the classroom, and the ability of adults to concentrate

is more or less influenced by the environment and dispersed, let alone children. We can improve the concentration of students at the beginning of the class, so teachers can seize this moment to explain some new knowledge. In the second half of the class, students' attention will be less focused. At this time, teachers should use some interesting things to focus their attention. Adding some performances can arouse their interest, and their concentration will naturally maintain a learning state. At present, in order to better concentrate students' attention, children's music education adopts a comprehensive curriculum teaching class style. In actual playing teaching, we often adopt a student active participation approach, allowing students to unconsciously develop a strong interest in music learning in a pleasant teaching atmosphere. Common methods include dividing students into small groups and using collaborative learning methods to cultivate their teamwork spirit. Over time, they will gradually experience the joy of learning music and better learn more music knowledge. (3) Strengthen and cultivate children's creative thinking based on their psychological characteristics. Music is a relatively intuitive discipline, which is a psychological characteristic and phenomenon that children develop in terms of thinking, feeling, logic, and other aspects during long-term learning and labor practice. This is also commonly known as music consciousness. Teachers should be able to fully utilize creative thinking, use vivid techniques to fully regulate the classroom atmosphere and students' learning interests, and stimulate their creativity in music. Provide students with more learning content, give them creative thinking space, and do our best to create a good classroom environment, so that children's creative thinking and space can be better released, thereby cultivating their interest in learning music. Enable them to create emotionally. Based on the psychological characteristics of children, cultivating and developing their personalities and strengths is beneficial for the development of creativity. In the process of music teaching, subconsciously inspiring children's creative thinking can not only increase their interest in music, but also strengthen their understanding and cognition of music (Sheng, 2011).

In the early stage of piano training, train their hand shape and fingering skills, from simple single handed performance training to two handed performance training, teach them different performance methods for piano playing, based on personal physiological and psychological conditions, and teach them how to play with emotions.

Piano Education for Preschool Children

The piano has the reputation of being the "king of musical instruments," and it has unique advantages. It has a beautiful tone, a wide range of sound, can fully show profound performance skills, can play various types of music, and can achieve the acoustics of a symphony orchestra. This is one of the reasons why the piano is becoming more and more popular. Usually, we measure a good or bad piano playing by the player's hands. Many focus only on the dazzling technique of running fingers over the keyboard. Piano playing is a performing art that combines all kinds of great skills, and playing a piano piece well with skills is possible. It is the basis for creating the perfect piece. However, one thing should be considered, which is why we must train these techniques by all means. Ultimately, it is to accurately and fully reflect the composer's intentions and to express the content of the music. Therefore, the expression of the musical idea is the ultimate goal of our piano playing. The technique is only a means of musical expression, which is the purpose of piano performance. Like other art forms, Piano music has its period and school of thought, and different composers from different periods and styles have their characteristics. However, excellent musical expression is the common goal (Liu, 2021).

With the development of the times, there has been a wave of learning piano in China after the reform and opening up. Especially in the past decade, more and more children have been learning the piano. Therefore, how to play the piano correctly requires a systematic and correct piano enlightenment teaching. Due to the fact that piano is a course that is more practical than theoretical, it has become a top priority for teachers on how to teach and how to teach. For university students who will engage in piano teaching in the future, teachers should combine the actual professional abilities of preschool education students, combine the theoretical foundation and training methods of piano teaching, and offer piano playing suitable for students majoring in zero basic preschool education. Through training, students should have the following abilities: (1) Master the basic theoretical knowledge of playing the piano, correct posture, basic playing methods, master the ability of sight singing and sight reading during playing practice, the finger arrangement rules of playing the piano, the use of pedals, have the basic ability and completeness of basic piano performance, proficiently and correctly play corresponding piano works and

accompaniment. (2) By studying piano courses, one can develop a keen sense and understanding of music, the ability to express music through piano playing, and the ability to perform creatively. Cultivate students' good musical sense, analyze and process works, and enhance their comprehensive musical literacy. (3) Enable students to recognize the importance of art education for the growth and development of preschool children, and recognize the role and significance of teacher work in the growth of young children. Enhance students' sense of teacher responsibility and mission, and cultivate students to establish a correct view of teaching. (4) Cultivate students to establish a correct learning perspective and a development concept of self-directed learning and training. Cultivate the spirit of diligence, perseverance, and the ideal belief of pursuing excellence.

New Knowledges

Preschool children, typically aged 3-5, are in a critical stage of development characterized by rapid growth in cognitive, motor, and emotional skills. They possess short attention spans, a high level of curiosity, and a propensity for play-based learning. Piano education for this age group should be tailored to their developmental needs, incorporating short, engaging activities that use play and imagination. Lessons should focus on fundamental musical concepts such as rhythm, melody, and simple finger exercises, using colorful and interactive materials to maintain interest. The goal is to foster a positive, enjoyable introduction to music that builds foundational skills and encourages a lifelong love of learning and music.

Conclusions

The piano lessons mainly aim to train students majoring in preschool education in music notation recognition ability and basic piano playing ability through some piano pieces practice. The purpose is to be able to undertake preschool education work in the future and better serve preschool education. In the practice of piano teaching in colleges and universities, students' learning interest and enthusiasm are not high due to the uneven foundation of each student, weak self-control ability of learning, unscientific practice methods, low efficiency, lack of goal planning and professional demands, etc.

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