

# **Studying on Piano Pedagogy in Primary Schools at China Wuxi Liren Primary school, China**

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## **Abstracts**

The research objectives were to study piano pedagogy in primary schools at China Wuxi Liren primary school.

The qualitative research methodology collected data by interviewing 5 full-time piano teachers at Wuxi Liren Primary School with more than 3 years of special piano course teaching. The research findings found that the teaching method of Wuxi Liren Primary School is stratified teaching, focusing on collective teaching. According to the age and degree of the students, the study is done step by step. Based on training basic skills, with the traditional use of teaching materials widely used in different degrees. At the same time, in the grading textbook selection matching teaching, the teaching method is the teacher in the class demonstration, explaining the details, collective practice, and then going home to consolidate.

**Keywords:** Piano pedagogy; Primary school; China Wuxi Liren Primary School; China

## **Introduction**

In recent years, the state vigorously supports the construction of characteristic courses in public schools. In the Outline of the National Plan for Medium-and Long-term Education Reform and Development, it is proposed to "support schools in innovating their systems and mechanisms and education models, improve their quality, develop their characteristics, and run several high-level schools." Through the above review and literature analysis, the researchers established the significance and advantages of piano teaching. They learned that many scholars had done many studies on piano education, which provided sufficient references for researchers. At the same time, the researchers found a big gap in the research on the piano curriculum in primary schools at the "best time" to learn piano.

Under the educational background of the comprehensive promotion of the new curriculum reform in China, the characteristic curriculum construction activities of primary schools have also been widely concerned by the education administrative departments and all sectors of society. How to do a good job in this education work is worth the attention of every primary school teacher (Zhou, 2013 : 1). Piano education and learning will be more common than other instruments. In many western developed countries, the piano has developed into a national musical instrument, where almost every family has a piano, and every family member can play the piano. Thus, all countries around the world attach great importance to piano education. In today's environment of aesthetic education, many schools regard piano learning as a compulsory course in routine teaching to improve students' musical literacy and aesthetic taste (Hu, 2018 : 1). This study specific to Wuxi city as a starting point, according to the present situation of piano teaching in Wuxi city, and combined with the parents and students the

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attitude toward piano learning analysis, the study of Wuxi city primary school extracurricular music activities piano teaching path, let the students in the school education at the same time, also can learn the piano, and hope that through this study of Wuxi primary school music piano teaching to form a certain role.

### **Piano lesson teaching method in public primary schools**

Many units carry out piano courses in China. In addition to public universities, music colleges, or primary schools affiliated with comprehensive universities for professional students, a large number of them are actually for amateur piano learning, that is, training institutions for piano children who do not go to piano majors. For example, there have been many arts training similar to the city children's palace, private art schools, piano shops, and art training classes. However, some professional school graduates or music teachers are part-time teaching. However, compared with professional colleges and public institutions, small music schools opened by individuals, both management, professionalism, faculty, and piano quality could be more satisfactory, which gives great restrictions on teaching.

Today, the largest number of piano students in China are in primary school. The golden period of piano learning is also in the primary school period. Many parents hope that their children will be successful, hope that their children can master a skill or develop an elegant interest, and will do their best to choose for their children to learn the piano. Due to various objective reasons, quite some areas have yet to offer piano lessons in public schools, so primary school students cannot receive piano education in schools. Therefore, parents will visit various channels, and most will blindly choose piano teachers for their children in private social training schools (Liu, 2012 : 118-118).

Carrying out piano characteristic courses in the school is conducive to various comprehensive quality education. There are many music appreciation lessons in school for piano works. If students can play, the understanding will be more profound. When appreciating the works, teachers will cultivate students' sense of collective honor, patriotism, and other positive energy of emotional education. It is also more in line with the national requirements for aesthetic education. It can also build different stages for students, such as the school art festival and class party show, which are conducive to cultivating students' confidence and playing practice (Chen, 2016 : 1).

In Chinese schools, preschool teaching is divided into a combination of separate teaching and collective teaching. Due to a large number of students in the school, teaching new classes is the collective mode of a large class. There are many benefits of a group class. As primary school students are young, big classes can help them integrate into the collective and learn in a lively environment. Teachers are also more convenient to encourage children to accompany each other to study and be each other teachers. Give your child the most of your confidence. When teaching alone, the teaching can be targeted to solve the students' problems. Collective teaching also saves teacher resources, solves the common problems of students, greatly improves teaching efficiency, and increases the interest of the classroom. Students rush to participate and interact with teachers and make progress with each other (Sun, 2015 : 1).

### **Research Objectives**

To study on piano pedagogy in primary schools at China Wuxi Liren primary school, China

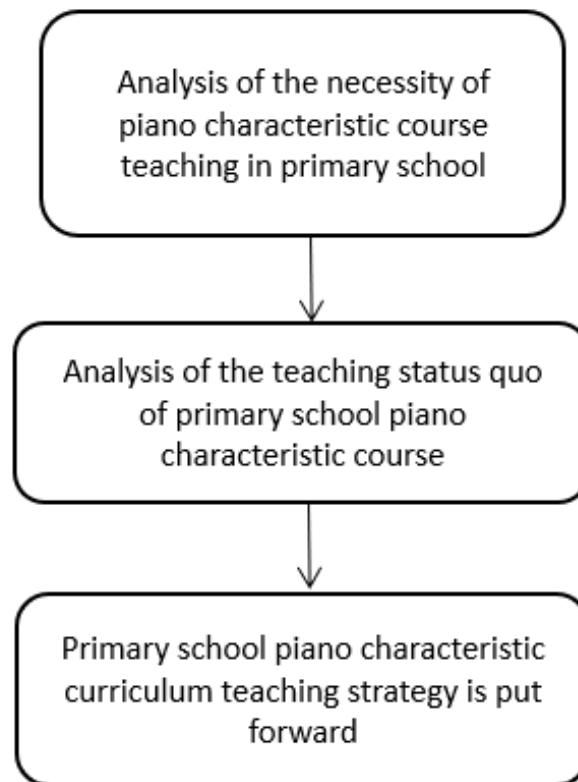
## Research Methodology

The qualitative research methodology collected data by interviewing 5 full-time piano teachers at Wuxi Liren Primary School with more than 3 years of special piano course teaching.

## Research Scope

- Time: Interview data were collected from 2022 to 2023
- Place: Wuxi City, China
- Person: Piano teacher in primary school
- Contents: Piano pedagogy, Primary school, Music education

## Research Conceptual Framework



## Research Findings

### **The piano Teaching method of Wuxi Liren Primary School, China**

The teaching method of Wuxi Liren Primary School is stratified teaching, focusing on collective teaching. According to the age and degree of the students, the study is done step by step. Based on training basic skills, with the traditional use of teaching materials widely used in different degrees. At the same time, in the grading textbook selection matching teaching, the teaching method is the teacher in the class demonstration, explain the details, collective practice, and then go home to consolidate.

Because the expected direction of parents for students is also based on interest, parents hope that their children can have a method of testing and supervision, so they will generally choose to participate in the social amateur piano test. Teachers choose the central Conservatory of Music piano amateur test in this context. At a certain level of Czerny, with some corresponding level of tracks. You will avoid the simplicity of the track style. For example, each stage will be trained in several directions, such as etudes, polyphony, classical sonatas, and small and medium-sized Chinese and foreign music. When teachers choose different styles of music in the grading textbooks, they will involve a lot of music knowledge at the same time, including music theory, music history, comprehensive culture, playing skills, and so on to explain. When some students have higher requirements for themselves, teachers will also explain some foreign grading systems.

The interview and observation also concluded that the primary school students' difficulties in playing are divided into two kinds. One is the problem of poor finger function. The finger is not independent. The sound could be more concentrated, and the granularity; the second is in a new class, spent too much time on the score and no extra energy to consider the musical expression and melody. This kind is difficult. Therefore, to improve the efficiency of students' playing, teachers will start with training basic skills and train the independence and strength of the fingers through techniques such as high finger lifting and weight playing. In the second type of students who feel the difficulty of visual playing, the teacher will drive the method of familiarity with the tune, playing what tune should be familiar with which group of tone scale arpeggios. This will not cause the adjustment to be unfamiliar or make it difficult to recognize the spectrum problem. Still have to pay attention to fingering. Fingering must have two principles scientific and fixed. Good fingering habits can sum up the common when the hand can form "the sense of position." A good visual play level is also the key to improving piano learning efficiency.

In the requirements for students to practice after class, teachers' pay attention to students to take notes every time, when the key and difficult lessons learned, home targeted practice, scientific practice. Scientific and efficient practice is effective playing, such as playing with one hand first, using the metronome to fix the rhythm, and dividing sentences and sections, each time the paragraph is easy to mistake the circle with a pen to play alone. At the same time, teachers require parents to participate, such as urging and checking children's practice time, whether there is a certain time of practice every day. For the school piano lessons, the teachers hope that the school can increase the investment in all aspects.

### **Learning status of students in Wuxi Liren Primary School**

#### **1) The visual-playing ability needs to be improved**

Lao Tzu once said, "A nine-story platform begins with the earth; a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. "Building a good foundation is the key to learning, and correct reading of music is the most important stage in learning piano knowledge. Teachers plan the basic learning of reading music well. Especially in the primary stage, with one to three students, a small part of the ability is still slow. As we know, the problem of basic reading in music has yet to be solved, just like the Chinese discipline cannot read articles and cannot conduct normal technical training and performance.

Music knowledge is the most basic learning content for children, abstract and theoretical. In the early stage, the first to master the name and reading staff notes, to the next step of the keyboard, students 'psychology faces many changes in learning. Some children do not understand the characteristics of the staff, have poor reactions or learning methods, have problems that cannot adapt to this learning, and affect their enthusiasm for learning, even producing aversion. Because it is a form of collective teaching, and the children's reaction ability is uneven when teachers ask questions, there are always some children who can answer first and intuitively see staff. Also, some students need more intuitive thinking, which causes some slow students to lose confidence. Teachers must modify the teaching method to avoid such situations affecting the child's interest in piano learning.

While the advanced-stage students can skillfully perform the repertoire, the advanced-stage students take out a piece of the same difficulty, but their visual play needs to be improved. Some are not familiar with the tips of the visual play, and the tone of the new work needs to be clearer. This also reflects the theory's weakness and the need for more basic skills practice.

#### **2) Review is not in place**

Some people say that the review is the cycle of knowledge. The researchers think that review is not only the cycle of knowledge, is also the cycle of interest. Through talking with the students after class, many children because a home without class this atmosphere, interest, nature is no initiative to review the idea, review the inadequate. Each class teacher speaks "repeated new knowledge," formed "playing unfamiliar — is reluctant to take the initiative to review — review is not — playability did not improve" of the vicious circle. Pupils at this stage, everything is the stage of interest, but persistence is low. Interested in things will only maintain for a while, so attention is not enough concentration. In elementary school music class, most of the teachers often use the form of a game to improve the child's attention, but the effect is small due to the classroom space, and game form is also limited. At this time, students need to record the content of each section and clarify how to practice.

#### **3) Basic skills are not solid enough**

In students' playing, they will find that some timbre is only sometimes clean and concentrated. Most of the reason is that more than the basic practice of fingers is needed. Some students have metacarpal joint collapse, folded fingers, arm and wrist stiffness, and other problems. After performing the key touch exercise, Some students do not play with their full arms. Instead, using the muscle strength connected to the elbow joint, Raise and support the forearms to play. Keep the muscles contracted at all times. The elbow joint is in a fixed state, It is difficult to carry the weight of the upper arm and the whole body, and It is hard to produce full, bright sound quality and volume. The shoulder muscles can feel the tension. The students did not learn to relax immediately after touching the key. When the finger is raised, and the falling key makes a sound, The whole arm should be relaxed immediately. Let the muscle that

has just touched the key and contract return to relax immediately, But the finger cannot be lifted. Still, the weight keeps the keys sounding. The sound is bright and clear. Otherwise, the muscle "memory" will make the tension form an acquired nature. It is very difficult to change it again. Therefore, teachers must guide children to play with full arms. It is also necessary to strengthen the number of basic skills and operations.

#### 4) Students need more enthusiasm.

Because the primary school students are younger, the oldest sixth grade is only eleven. Therefore, for children, attention is not easy to focus for a long time, it is easy to be attracted to other things, and the teacher is always lacking enthusiasm. "Music education psychology" has mentioned that teaching attention and thinking is the teaching process, before said the pupils' interest and enthusiasm are covered in "attention," "attention" is both concrete and abstract concept, it is the psychological activity pointing to and focus on a certain object process, pay attention to photographic interest in things can be in-depth knowledge and connotation, so only "attention" without "thinking" guide exploration not only complete enough, more likely to let children develop aimless learning habits and random bad learning way. Make use of students' extracurricular time in the second class to learn music knowledge, not only for the children's 100,000 why to give answers but also for the children to bring a systematic and complete "interest-knowledge-memory" benign learning process.

## Discussion

In Wuxi city in China, primary school piano teaching method research found that the domestic public chooses most teaching materials. Universal teaching materials, such as primary use "little Thompson," "worship," and intermediate use, employs teaching material collocation and technical playing Czerny series etudes. This kind of teaching material, as teaching collocation, is relatively mature and can guarantee student learning. This is similar to the research results of teachers at Harbin Normal University. Nowadays, domestic textbooks are mainly traditional teaching, which is very suitable for students to play good basic skills. For example, Czerny are good training materials (Wu, 2015: 187). However, the research results of teachers in Xi'an show that the single use of traditional textbooks will affect students' interest, and some textbooks of the same degree can guide students. For example, "Piano Fast Etude Op. 61" and "Czerny 299" are quite difficult, but from the perspective of melody and harmony, they pay more attention to music, and students love to play more. Unlike traditional public textbooks, only a few local teachers use traditional ones (Wang, 2007: 80-81).

Most teachers believe that the way for students to improve their playing efficiency is to improve their basic skills training and get familiar with the music score, similar to Daqing Normal University's research results. To improve the level of the piano, the construction of basic skills is an important process. In this process, we should also pay attention to the understanding of music music, so that we can play works with connotation and depth (Jin, 2011: 76.). However, the research results of teachers from the North University of China show that although solid basic skills are important, the piano, as an instrument of comprehensive artistic accomplishment and emotion, should pay more attention to cultivating students' connotation and artistic taste, and let students truly "feel beauty" (Liu, 2012: 118-118).

Most teachers believe that students' after-class exercises should be targeted at playing, slow play, breaking up practice, using a metronome, and other methods step by step, which is similar to the research results of teachers at Changjiang Normal University. Focus on breaking

up with the greatest patience and detailed targeted exercises can achieve effective practice and improvement (Zhang, 2009: 166). However, the research results of Shenyang teachers show that teachers should cultivate students' efficient practice methods in daily teaching, not only teaching students to play but also teaching efficient practice methods after class, including the practice time after class and how to summarize in time (Feng, 2011: 112-114.).

## Recommendation

### Theoretical Recommendation

This study can reference piano teaching in schools that develop piano characteristic courses. Teachers can use it as a reference for the teaching plan and choose the teaching mode and method most suitable for their school through some comparison in the text. The researchers found little literature on primary school piano training, so this study provides a reference value for piano characteristic courses. It can also help some parents understand the school's piano teaching.

### Practical Recommendations

It is hoped that future researchers of related topics will continue to have a more comprehensive discussion of all this paper's shortcomings. The researcher also hopes that piano lessons in public schools will be improved in the future. Each pupil grasps the critical period of piano learning and opens the door to music and art through the piano. You really can apply what you learn.

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