

The Dalcroze Teaching Method and Development in Chinese Music Education

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Abstract

In China, music education is developing rapidly, but the development of piano teaching is slow. Compared with the piano teaching in western countries, there are still a lot of deficiencies in the piano teaching in primary schools in China, such as students' weak playing ability, short practice time, loss of interest in learning the piano once they practice, and the teachers' teaching method is not scientific enough, which are the key factors for the low quality of piano learning for the primary school students in China. Teachers can add the Dalcroze method to guide students to learn the piano, which is more helpful to improve students' interest in learning.

Keywords: Dalcroze Teaching Method; Development; Chinese Music Education

Introduction

In China, piano has its own uniqueness, and the art of piano has become one of the contents of people's spiritual and cultural life. Learning the piano is a long-term process, we need to lay a solid foundation from the primary school stage, standardised learning, in order to understand the art of the piano and master the essentials of piano playing. Nowadays, children learning piano are getting younger and younger. Learning piano helps children to develop their intelligence and cultivate their co-ordination skills. However, children are tired of facing boring practice and boring teaching. Today, most districts still use one-to-one teaching. The whole course is boring, students are not interested, lose patience and don't want to continue learning piano (Fu & Tong, 2021). Piano teaching methods in foreign countries are roughly the same as those in China, but teaching methods in foreign countries is a general term for the ways and means adopted by the teacher in both teaching and learning activities in order to fulfil the teaching tasks more effectively. It includes the teacher's teaching method and the students' learning method under the teacher's guidance. The advanced Orff teaching method, Kodály teaching method and Suzuki teaching method in foreign countries all follow the main body of teaching and learning, but they are different in the ideological system and teaching methods. As foreign students are exposed to different ideas and different educational methods from childhood, their classes may be more lively and vivid, vividly capturing the psychological characteristics of children. Even one-on-one teaching gives full play to the child's lively nature and the classroom atmosphere is more active, but the child's classroom progress will be relatively slow and interest-based.

Dalcroze's teaching method is a landmark in the cause of music education, and he established a whole set of music education system. Dalcroze's education system has made outstanding contributions to later generations of music education, setting an example for later generations of music education reform and music education, and also influencing the formation of the Orff method and the Kodály method, which is innovative and pioneering. It has a wide influence in the world (Chen, 2020). The core idea of Dalcroze's pedagogy is that he believed that music education should firstly combine music with the body, so that the body's rhythm can stimulate one's musical instincts. Sight-singing and ear-training can develop students' musical sensitivity. At the same time, improvisation accompaniment can also exercise students' ability to respond to music with agility, so that they can gain the ability to experience and express music, and achieve the harmonious development of body and mind.

Development of Dalcroze Method in China

The Dalcroze Method was first introduced to the Chinese music education community in May 1982, when the Shanghai Conservatory of Music invited Professor Virginia Mead of the Ohio State University to conduct a demonstration of music education and body movement. Since then, the Dalcroze Method has been gradually accepted and studied (Wu, 2020).

Nowadays, China is developing quality education, which is for the all-round development of students, who need to learn not only cultural subjects, but also moral, intellectual, physical education, art, labour and other courses, such as music, art and physical education. Nowadays more and more parents also choose music as a subject, piano is known as the king of musical instruments, so many families in China also choose piano as a musical instrument to learn, but in the development of the piano course due to the piano teaching there is no uniform teaching materials and teaching methods.

Learning the piano is a long-term process, it is necessary to start from the primary school stage to lay a good foundation, standardised learning, in order to understand the art of the piano and master the essentials of piano playing. At present, the concepts and teaching methods of domestic piano education are relatively isolated, and the teaching methods are mechanical and rigid, etc. Children are by nature active, and teachers are unable to have good interaction with students. The Orff Method, Dalcroze Method and Kodály Method are known by experts and scholars as the three most famous music teaching methods in the world. Dalcroze established for the first time the important role of the body's motor response in theory and practice. At present, Dalcroze's pedagogy is widely used in Chinese primary and secondary music classrooms. The author will analyse the application of Dalcroze's pedagogy in Chinese piano teaching from the teaching content of Dalcroze's music education system (Pan & Lin, 2023).

Dalcroze Teaching System

The main contents of Dalcroze's teaching system include three parts: body rhythm, sight-singing, aural training and improvisation.

1. Body rhythm.

Body rhythm is the core focus of the Dalcroze method, which means that in the process of musical expression, the human body is used as an instrument to naturally form body movements to experience the music's emotions. Dalcroze teaching method emphasises that the human body is the most important teaching medium, and that all parts of the body, including the head, hands, feet, muscles, arms, and senses, etc., are "musical instruments", through the

body parts of the body, the body's body is a "musical instrument". All parts of the body, including the head, hands, feet, muscles, arms, and five senses are "musical instruments". Through different combinations of body parts, different strengths, different angles, and different body movements, different musical expressions and emotions can be expressed. In piano teaching, rhythm and body movements are the most important elements in piano teaching. The combination of rhythm and posture in piano teaching is one of the most outstanding features of the Dalcroze method, I.E students need to use all parts of their bodies as "instruments", and when they hear the teacher's improvisation or accompaniment, they will show various postures according to the rhythm to express the music (Wang, 2015). For example, if the teacher's accompaniment is a dance, students are asked to improvise a dance to the rhythm. Clapping, turning, bending, or slapping various parts of the body to make different sounds, or distorting the body, language, singing, commanding or even walking, running, jumping and other body movements to express the mood of the music, the use of physical rhythmic teaching can enhance the students' attention, concentration strength, and cultivate the students' memory and inhibition. It fosters the desire to improvise and the ability to combine movement with inner sound, develops inner movement with sound, and develops inner auditory and kinesthetic skills, motor details and memory. This is in keeping with the active nature of the pupils. Dalcroze's approach is to stimulate the pupils' physical senses through rhythm and sound, helping them to understand the rhythm and tempo of the music. Students are guided to perceive the melody and harmony of the music through body movements. The use of sound and physical movement deepens students' understanding of music and performance. Generally speaking, children's physical movement training can be divided into the following three stages: the first stage is to choose improvised music materials, especially those music clips that children are familiar with, as materials for physical movement training; the second stage is to train physical movement through rhythmic vocabulary, i.e., to regularly perform clapping, stomping, squatting, wandering, jumping, crawling, and interacting with music based on the characteristics of the tempo, speed and strength; the third stage is to combine the meaning of music with movement based on the previous two training, so that internal auditory ability and kinetic imagination can be closely linked and the children can get a stronger ability to perceive music. The third stage is based on the previous two trainings, combining the connotation of music with movement, so that the internal auditory ability and kinesthetic imagination are closely linked, and children can get a stronger music perception ability. Through the training of physical movement, children can feel, understand and express music better, increase their interest in learning and playing piano, make their performance more vivid and flexible, and show strong artistry (Yang, 2017).

2. Breathing training

Breathing training plays an important role in piano practice. In specific teaching, we can first train children to breathe rhythmically, and then let them experience breathing through singing accompaniment so that they can have a better understanding of breathing. The combination of games and piano teaching can to a certain extent attract children's attention and increase their interest in the piano.³ Musical games allow children to communicate with each other in the process of playing. Musical play helps children's language and emotional development, promotes integrity and personality development, and promotes children's communicative skills. Teachers can use common phrases in children's daily life to demonstrate, such as "what are you doing", "I am eating", etc., and then let the children give examples to

fully explore the meaning of the phrases and promote children's musical imagination (Wang, 2014).

2. Sight-singing and aural training.

Sight-singing and aural training is a basic subject of music and a basic ability of music learning. It mainly cultivates students' sense of pitch, rhythm, sight-reading ability, auditory thinking and overall musicality. Sight-singing and ear-training is mainly the study of music and singing, students in the process of repeated listening and singing, and gradually enhance the inner sense of music, the development of musical emotion. Sight-singing and ear training is not a "static reproduction" of a particular aspect of a student's ability or skill, but rather a way of applying the skills learnt to the practice of music through the mastery of the relevant skills. The synchronisation of sight-singing and aural training, and the long-term study of sight-reading and singing, scales, intervals, chords, harmonies, etc. The Role and Effect of Sight-Singing and Ear-Training Teaching Methods in Children's Piano Teaching Sight-singing and ear-training are the basic courses of music learning, and in our children's piano teaching, sight-singing and ear-training teaching methods also have excellent effects. 1. If a student does not have the ability to read music, it will be very difficult for him or her to learn the piano. (Dalcroze's teaching of sight-singing and ear-training advocates a step-by-step method of reading music by adding lines to the pentatonic scores for children. The first step is to start with a certain scale and practise at the top and bottom of the line. The next step is to practice two-stringed music, and then to learn the treble, bass and alto clefs of two-stringed music, so as to lay the foundation for four-stringed and full-fledged five-stringed music. When there is a great distance between tones, or when there are many lines above and below, a concept should be established in your mind: the intervals of two adjacent lines are in thirds, between them in fourths, one line apart in fifths, and so on, up to the octave. After mastering this conceptual approach, students' ability to read music will be greatly improved, and accurate and time-saving. (2) Sight-reading The sight-reading of the piano refers to the ability of the player to play a piece of piano music immediately without practice. First of all, the player must be familiar with the keyboard, so that he can change the tempo and rhythm flexibly (Jiang, 2022).

3. Improvisation.

Improvisation belongs to the higher level of music learning, which guides students to start from listening to music, to gain emotional experience through physical movement, and to cultivate musical creativity. Improvisation includes improvisation, improvisation and question and answer, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation and improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation, improvisation and conducting. It combines sight-singing, ear-training and rhythmic movement, guides students to play melody, harmony, pattern and rhythm, awakens perception, mobilises imagination, awakens individuality, stimulates creativity, and raises the level of theory through the integration and analysis of emotional experience, creating space for students to develop their creative musicality. Therefore, I add Dalcroze's rhythmic and rhythmic exercises and improvisation into my piano teaching. In my opinion, the improvisation of Dalcroze can cultivate the comprehensive ability of the students, which is mainly expressed in the following: (1) Before the students perform the improvisation, they will analyse and categorize the rhythm, melody, pitch and other elements of the music; (2) they will recall the movements they have created in the past by combining the elements of the similar music with the elements of the same type of music, and they will think about whether the movements they have made before can be used in the music, and then they will make a choice; (3) after choosing the movements,

in order to emphasize the movements they have created, they will create their own movements, which can be applied in the music. After choosing the movement, they will add their own feelings to the movement and modify it in order to highlight the uniqueness of the movement they have created. This is a very comprehensive process, and only with considerable theoretical knowledge and practical practice can students react, analyse, differentiate, select, adapt, create, and modify quickly in their brains. Therefore, improvisation is an important part of music learning, and it requires a great deal of synthesis, reaction, thinking and action, but it is an indispensable part of the music learning process. The importance of improvisation in children's piano teaching is also emphasised in Dalcroze teaching philosophy. Piano teaching for different children must have different teaching methods, so it cannot be rigidly assumed that children are all taught in the same way. The same lesson requires different teaching methods for different children, so it is important to pay attention to the teaching method of improvisation. In view of the fact that children's hands are poorly coordinated, their technique is lacking, and they do not yet have a basic knowledge of harmony, we can start with simple improvisation to increase children's interest in improvisation (Zhou, 2008).

In the past, the traditional teaching mode relied not only on the teaching materials but also on the teacher's teaching. The traditional piano teaching method is a set of piano teaching methods formed by combining the European, American and Russian piano teaching methods that were introduced into China in the early days with the actual Chinese practice at that time, and it has cultivated a batch of piano players with different styles by the teaching of teachers and students through teaching them by example and passing them on by word of mouth. The traditional piano teaching method usually includes courses in sight-reading and ear-training, separating listening, music theory and performance, with less training in sight-reading and improvisation, and more in the pursuit of refinement of playing skills. Students who are less able to learn on their own are easily frustrated when they find it difficult to achieve the required piano skills. The Dalcroze method starts from interest, uses rationality, creativity and sensibility to enhance the "musical IQ" of beginners, advocates the concept of happy learning, strengthens students' self-confidence and brings them a sense of achievement. Teachers promote the teaching progress from five aspects: performance, music theory, listening, sight-reading and composition, focusing on enabling students to acquire the ability to master music through exploration, discovery, creativity and fun activities, and equipping students with a keen sense of listening, a solid foundation of musical knowledge and a rich imagination, so as to comprehensively enhance students' knowledge and creativity of music and thus improve their piano playing skills - This teaching sequence allows students to develop their "musical IQ and intelligence". -This sequence of teaching allows students to acquire the ability to play the piano through the mastery of music while accumulating musical knowledge and improving their musical ability (Jiang Yi, 2022). Therefore, I think that Dalcroze's teaching method is very suitable for piano teaching nowadays.

Conclusion

As primary school students are not mature enough in all aspects, their character traits directly determine that it is difficult for them to maintain a long-term interest in one thing, and they are easily influenced by many external factors in the learning process. Coupled with the curious and active nature of primary school students, it greatly increases the difficulty of teacher management and hinders the smooth development of piano teaching. Therefore, in the piano teaching of primary school students, teachers should start from the perspective of psychology, understand the psychological needs of primary school students, be good at discovering the interest characteristics and differences of primary school students, and tailor the teaching to the needs of the students. Through a series of effective means, to tap the motivation of primary school students to learn the piano, so that they can maintain the enthusiasm for piano learning for a long time. Dalcroze music teaching method has many advantages, such as being able to effectively connect the sensual material of music with rational knowledge, combining teaching with fun, promoting the development of students in the teaching mode, respecting the characteristics of students' physical and mental development during the teaching process, and cultivating students' sense of cooperation. It can solve the problem of single teaching content with the choice of guiding materials, and stimulate students' learning interest with the movement of primary school students' body.

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