

Studying the Method of Teaching Initial Piano for Children in Shanxi Swan Art Academy, Xi'an City, Shanxi Province

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Abstracts

The research objective is to study the primary piano teaching method for Xi'an Swan Art College in Shaanxi Province for children aged 7-10 years old.

A qualitative interview with three key informants, and the study tools included interview sheets, observation tables, and IOC tables, provided a descriptive analysis of the interview data. The research results are as follows: Through interviews, it is found that the elements of piano education include: 1. Personalized teaching and adjusting teaching methods according to students' needs. 2. Games and interactions to stimulate interest. 3. Establish a technical foundation and avoid forming bad habits. 4. Diversified music education to broaden the horizons. 5. Encourage participation in music activities to improve your motivation and confidence. Comprehensive education cultivates students' musical potential and ignites their passion for music. Through observation, piano education aims to impart skills, inspire passion, emphasize interaction, and embrace diversity. It uses gamified learning and interactive software to develop musical skills and social skills. Students learn music theory in a pleasant atmosphere and practice at home via video instruction. They deeply explore the world of music, analyze the classic works, and enhance their understanding of music. Diversified assessment methods prioritize practical performance and individualized teaching programs. Piano education integrates tradition and modernity, technology and emotion, cultivates the potential of music, and ignites the love for music.

Keywords: Teaching Method; Initial Piano for Children; Shanxi Swan Art Academy

Introduction

The challenges that may arise in the process of piano learning include: First, the cost of piano learning may be very high, including the cost of piano purchase, teaching materials and tuition, which may cause financial burden to the family. For some families, high costs may hinder their children's access to piano education (Li, 2020 : 2). Secondly, the current piano education system may overemphasize technical skills and grading examinations, while ignoring the nature of music and the importance of music enlightenment education. This excessive focus on technical skills and tests may weaken children's interest and passion for music, making piano learning a process of test-taking and competition. Thirdly, there may be monotonous teaching methods and content in piano education (Xu, 2009 : 2). Traditional piano teaching may focus too much on technical practice and explanations of music theory, which may make the teaching process dull for children. Moreover, the quality of piano teachers and the allocation of teaching resources may be inconsistent. In some areas, there may be a lack of experienced and qualified piano teachers, while in others, there may be a wealth of high-quality teaching resources. This imbalance may affect the children's access to high-quality piano

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education. Also, piano learning may stress on children's physical and mental health. Prolonged practice and high-intensity training may make children feel tired and stressed, which may affect their physical health (Zhou, 2016:1). Finally, the time and energy invested in the piano study may also be a concern for parents and children. Piano learning requires long periods of practice and dedication, which may affect time for other academic learning and leisure activities.

Research Objectives

To study the teaching method of teaching primary piano to children aged 7-10 in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province

Research Methodology

This research use a qualitative research method. Collect data by interview and observation 3 key informants.

Research Conceptual Framework

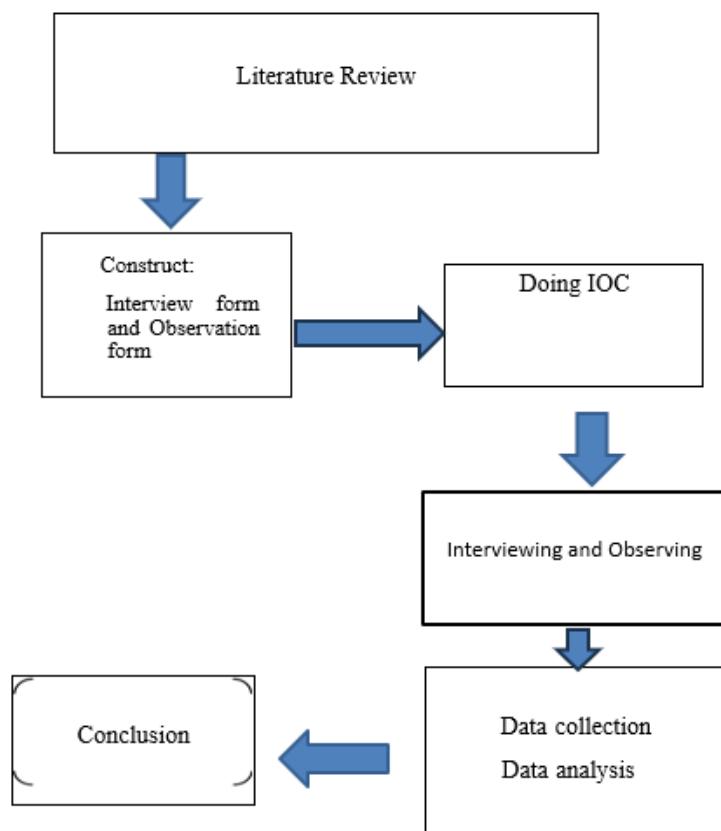


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Results

Result from interviews

In the noble path of teaching young children to play the piano, educators play a crucial role. They carefully select and design teaching materials suitable for the young students' age and skill levels, aiming to spark their interest in learning through rich and enjoyable lessons. The selection of teaching materials should be both educational and ensure that students can learn in a pleasant atmosphere, a balance achieved through continuous practice and innovation. Creative teaching elements are integrated into the classroom, such as involving students in music composition and recording, which enhances their deeper understanding of music and nurtures their technical skills and innovative thinking. Addressing individual differences among students, teachers provide one-on-one guidance, correcting hand positions and postures. They use video playback methods to help students self-observe and improve their playing techniques. Music theory is no longer a dull memorization task but is presented vividly through visual aids and practical musical examples, strengthening students' memory and comprehension. To make the learning process more engaging and enjoyable, teachers design a series of music games and activities, like the music card matching game, which not only increases classroom interactivity but also allows students to learn music knowledge through play. Student progress is assessed not only through traditional tests and assignments but also based on classroom performance. Teachers provide timely feedback based on this comprehensive information and engage in discussions with students to create personalized learning plans. In the selection of teaching materials, teachers pay particular attention to their progressive nature, ensuring that the materials gradually increase in difficulty, enabling students to progressively master music knowledge and skills. When students encounter difficulties during their learning journey, teachers patiently provide guidance and positive encouragement. They are readily available to answer students' questions to maintain their enthusiasm for learning. The cultivation of music appreciation skills and enhanced creative thinking is achieved through participation in diverse music activities. Students experience teamwork through ensemble and group practice, not only honing their musical skills but also fostering friendships among peers. In summary, educators use diverse teaching strategies to ensure that students develop their musical potential in a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment. Furthermore, they plant the seeds of love for the art of music in the lives of their students.

In Mr. Chen Ruijie's piano teaching, students will initially establish a solid technical foundation through classic Hanon finger exercises and Tchaikovsky's "Children's Album." The selection of these classic teaching materials ensures that students can gradually master basic scales, arpeggios, and pieces through systematic practice. Students will receive personalized guidance from him, learning how to sit correctly and shape their hands with great care. Mr. Chen utilizes personal demonstrations and video playback to help students gain a clear understanding of their posture and hand positioning, promptly correcting any improper practice habits. In terms of igniting students' interest, Mr. Chen will showcase various music styles and works of composers, allowing students to experience the richness of music and the charm of piano performance. Students will be encouraged to participate in concerts and competitions, not only as a platform to showcase their talents but also as an opportunity for learning and drawing inspiration from others' performances. Mr. Chen believes that such interaction and competition can greatly enhance students' enthusiasm and confidence in learning. When

teaching music theory, Mr. Chen guides students in applying theoretical knowledge to practical playing. For example, he teaches students how to analyze music scores' structure and harmony and then applies this theoretical knowledge to the piano keys. By applying theoretical knowledge in practical playing, students gain a deeper understanding of music and are better able to remember and apply the theory. As students progress, Mr. Chen plans to gradually reduce games and interactive activities, placing more emphasis on traditional exercises and performances. He views this transition as necessary because in-depth study and practice are essential for students to reach higher levels in music. Additionally, regular grading exams and competitions will be used as tools to assess students' progress accurately. Through these formal assessments, Mr. Chen can better understand students' strengths and weaknesses, providing more targeted teaching and guidance. Ultimately, through this teaching approach, Mr. Chen Ruijie hopes that his students not only improve their technical skills but, more importantly, develop a lasting self-driven passion for music. This way, they can continue progressing on the path of music and enjoy the pleasures it brings.

Mr. Chen Jun incorporates diverse methods into piano teaching, aiming to inspire students' enthusiasm for learning and their musical potential. Firstly, he carefully selects a set of high-quality piano teaching materials suitable for elementary students through discussions with other teachers and online resources. This ensures that children have access to the best learning materials available. In the classroom, he uses group cooperative performances to encourage students to collaborate, not only nurturing their teamwork but also allowing them to deepen their understanding of the charm of music through sharing. To establish proper piano hand positions and postures, Chen employs a reward system, offering praise and small rewards to encourage students. This approach helps children develop good playing habits while having fun. Music theory is typically seen as dull, but through educational games and applications that make learning enjoyable, Chen makes music theory engaging and interesting. Students easily grasp theoretical knowledge through these games. Additionally, he provides various music experiences, such as participation in musicals and group performances, to broaden students' musical horizons and increase the fun of learning. Chen emphasizes the importance of multicultural music education, introducing music from various international styles to help students understand and appreciate music from different cultures around the world. When students encounter challenges during the learning process, Chen encourages them to think independently and actively seek solutions. He also provides innovative practice methods to help them overcome difficulties. To foster students' music appreciation skills and creative thinking, he organizes music activities that involve music composition and discussions of music works, deepening their understanding of music. Through organizing musicals and collective creative projects, Chen enhances students' sense of community and teamwork, making the piano learning process more enjoyable and engaging. These specific teaching methods and strategies, when combined, not only contribute to improving students' piano skills but also lay a comprehensive and solid foundation for their music education.

In my view, from the experiences of the three educators, we can distill some common key elements in piano teaching. Firstly, personalized instruction occupies a central position in piano teaching. Teachers need to adjust teaching materials and methods flexibly based on the specific needs of each student, ensuring that students can progress at their individual pace. This involves understanding each student's learning style, interests, and proficiency levels and providing support and guidance accordingly.

Secondly, the use of various games and interactive activities is employed to ignite students' interest and passion for learning, making music theory and practice more lively and enjoyable. For example, methods like using music card games and group collaborative performances can enhance students' sense of participation and cooperation. Such teaching approaches not only make learning more engaging but also increase students' interaction and involvement.

Building a solid technical foundation is crucial in piano learning. Through careful guidance on correct posture, hand positions, and playing techniques, students can develop a strong technical base while avoiding the development of poor playing habits. The use of practical video replay techniques allows students to observe and assess their own performance, helping them correct errors promptly, which is highly beneficial for improving playing skills.

The diversity of music is also considered an important component of teaching. Teachers can broaden students' musical horizons by showcasing different styles and works by various composers, enhancing their understanding and appreciation of music. Furthermore, encouraging students to participate in public music activities such as concerts and competitions not only increases their performance experience but also boosts their motivation and confidence.

In conclusion, piano education is a comprehensive learning process that goes beyond the cultivation of technical skills. It also includes nurturing students' creativity, musical appreciation, and teamwork abilities. Through the integrated application of various teaching methods and strategies, educators are dedicated to nurturing students' musical potential in a relaxed and enjoyable environment and igniting their lasting passion for the art of music.

Results of observations

In Ms. He Nana's piano classroom, elementary school students employ diverse and engaging learning methods greatly influenced by her personalized teaching approach. The children sit in front of colorful pianos, repeatedly refining their basic skills by imitating the teacher's hand positioning and scale exercises. During class, Ms. He frequently incorporates music games, such as simulating orchestra conducting, allowing the children to learn basic rhythm and note knowledge through play. In ensemble activities, students must learn to listen to their peers' melodies and harmoniously integrate into collective performances, which not only hones their playing skills but also enhances their teamwork. Regarding theoretical learning, Ms. He guides students to understand complex musical rhythms through singing and clapping, followed by interactive exercises on music software to reinforce their note and rhythm memory. Additionally, children use educational apps to compose simple melodies, experiencing the joy of music creation.

Furthermore, students engage in music discussions, with each one learning to express their interpretations and feelings about musical pieces. This communication encourages them to think deeply about the meaning behind the music. During practice, they independently practice using music software, playing virtual keyboards. The app provides immediate feedback on their accuracy and rhythm, aiding in self-correction. After class, Ms. He assigns targeted practice tasks, such as practicing a specific scale or melody. Students need to practice at home and record videos to showcase their progress on the teaching platform.

Through these specific learning methods, Ms. He Nana's elementary school students not only improve their piano skills but also deepen their perception and understanding of music. Her teaching goes beyond imparting music knowledge; it inspires creativity and teamwork among students, allowing each one to find their place on their musical journey.

In Mr. Chen Ruijie's piano classroom, he carefully guides a group of enthusiastic students. In his lessons, each student sits in front of the piano, fingers lightly touching the black and white keys, eyes focused on the sheet music in front of them. They are not just practicing how to make their fingers leap on the keys but, more importantly, learning how to synchronize their souls with the music. Mr. Chen uses classic teaching materials to instruct students in the basics of sheet music, such as note identification, note values, and the construction of scales. He gradually leads students to recognize different chord structures, teaching them how to read and analyze complex sheet music.

On the technical side, Mr. Chen starts with hand positioning exercises to ensure that students' fingers can move flexibly and accurately. He closely observes each student's posture, correcting improper sitting positions and hand shapes to prevent the acquisition of incorrect techniques. As students' skills improve, Mr. Chen guides them in learning classical piano pieces, progressing from simple miniatures to complex sonatas. At each step, he ensures that students understand the technical and emotional requirements of the pieces.

In class, students not only learn to play but also engage in music dictation exercises. For example, they listen to a single note or chord and then write down their names or notate them on staff paper. Music analysis goes a step further, requiring students to analyze the structure of a musical piece, understand its harmonic progressions, and even grasp the composer's creative intent. These activities enhance their listening skills and music comprehension, enabling them to appreciate and understand music more deeply.

Assessments are also specific. Technical tests may include playing from simple hand positioning exercises to performing complex pieces. Music theory exams involve reading and writing skills for sheet music, recognizing chords and keys, and understanding music terminology. These assessments are not only for grading but, more importantly, for Mr. Chen to gauge students' progress and adjust teaching plans to help each student advance on their musical journey.

In Mr. Chen Jun's piano classes for elementary school students, he initially guides children to explore the keyboard independently. They discover pitch variations by touching different keys, sparking their initial interest in music. Subsequently, he teaches them notes and rhythms through simple music games, likening whole notes to "slow-moving elephants" and eighth notes to "fast-running rabbits," making basic music knowledge enjoyable through play. In teaching foundational piano skills, Mr. Chen not only emphasizes hand positioning and posture but also helps students understand the importance of hand positioning by imitating the movements of different animals, such as "cat-like steps" representing gentle key touches.

When it comes to music composition, Mr. Chen encourages students to create simple melodies based on their favorite stories. He guides them in translating the emotional aspects of the stories into musical language, allowing them to explore various possibilities on the piano, resulting in short compositions. For music appreciation, Mr. Chen plays music of different styles for students to listen to, prompting them to describe the emotions and visuals in the music. He then guides students in trying to mimic these styles on the piano, deepening their understanding of piece structure and style.

In the classroom, Mr. Chen also demonstrates how to create simple musical accompaniments using modern music software, and then lets students try to combine their piano melodies with these accompaniments. During this process, students not only learn basic music production knowledge but also gain practical experience in combining music and technology.

Evaluating student progress goes beyond traditional exams. It involves observing students' classroom participation, such as their collaborative attitude in music production, performance at concerts, and their engagement in music composition and discussions during regular classes. Mr. Chen records each student's progress, including their unique ideas in composition, confident performances, and critical thinking during discussions. Through these comprehensive assessments, he evaluates students' music understanding and expression.

This teaching approach not only cultivates students' musical skills but also ignites their passion for music and fosters creative thinking. It allows them to grasp music knowledge in an enjoyable atmosphere, transforming them into creative and appreciative music learners.

They believe that the essence of piano education lies not only in the imparting of technical skills but also in igniting students' passion for music through creative means. Modern teaching methods emphasize the importance of interaction and visual stimulation in the learning process of young students. Through gamified learning, children grasp scales and rhythms while having fun, which not only enhances their piano skills but also fosters teamwork and social abilities.

In specific teaching scenarios, teachers utilize simulation games and interactive software to make music theory classes engaging, allowing children to naturally absorb knowledge in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. At home, children can further improve their skills with the teacher's remote guidance by recording practice videos.

Once they have acquired the fundamental knowledge, students are introduced to the deeper world of music, where they learn classic pieces and understand the technical and emotional aspects of music through analysis. Activities such as music dictation and analysis further enhance their understanding of music.

The diversity of assessment methods also reflects the characteristics of modern education. It is no longer limited to written exams but focuses more on observing students' performance in practice, such as their participation in concerts and music composition. This comprehensive assessment allows for a more accurate assessment of students' progress and the adjustment of teaching plans based on individual needs.

In conclusion, this piano teaching approach, which combines tradition with modernity, technology with emotions, and personalization with teamwork, aims to develop students' musical potential comprehensively. It enables them to enjoy music while continuously improving and innovating on their artistic journey.

Discussion

Several key common elements in piano education can be identified. Firstly, the importance of personalized instruction is emphasized. Teachers need to recognize the unique needs and learning styles of each student and adjust teaching methods to accommodate each student's pace. Teachers must understand students' interests and skill levels and provide corresponding support and guidance.

Chu Mengrong also advocates innovative teaching methods that incorporate games and interactive activities. Through gamification approaches such as music card games and group performances, not only can students' learning interest be enhanced, but also their participation and cooperation abilities can be improved. Secondly, he believes that cultivating a strong technical foundation is equally crucial in piano learning. Training in correct posture, hand positions, and playing techniques forms the basis for preventing the development of poor habits. Utilizing video replay, students can self-observe and evaluate, which is an effective means to enhance playing skills. He believes that teaching the diversity of music should not be overlooked. Teachers should expand students' musical horizons by introducing works from different styles and composers, enhancing their musical understanding and appreciation. Encouraging students to participate in public music activities such as concerts and competitions helps to increase their stage experience, motivation, and confidence (Gu, 2014).

In conclusion, piano education is not merely about skill development; it also encompasses the comprehensive development of creativity, musical appreciation, and teamwork abilities. Educators employ a variety of teaching strategies aimed at creating a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment, thus igniting students' musical potential and long-term passion for the art of music. This holistic teaching approach reflects a deep and wide-ranging educational philosophy designed to elevate students' musical literacy comprehensively (Chang, 2016: 178.).

Fu Xin (2014:1) perspective emphasizes that the essence of piano education lies not only in the imparting of technical skills but also in igniting students' passion for music through innovative means. In modern teaching methods, interaction and visual stimulation are crucial for the learning process of young students. Through gamified learning, students grasp scales and rhythms while having fun, which not only enhances their piano skills but also fosters teamwork and social abilities.

He believes that in specific teaching scenarios, teachers make music theory classes engaging through simulation games and interactive software, helping students naturally absorb knowledge in a relaxed atmosphere. At home, students can further improve their skills with remote teaching by recording practice videos. Secondly, once students have mastered the basics, they delve into the world of music, understanding the technical and emotional aspects of music through the analysis of classic works. Activities like music dictation and analysis deepen their understanding of music.

He believe that the diversity of assessment methods is also a hallmark of modern education. Assessment is no longer confined to written exams but places greater emphasis on observing students' performance in practice, such as their participation in concerts and music composition. This comprehensive assessment method provides a more accurate reflection of students' progress and allows for the adjustment of teaching plans based on individual needs.

In summary, the piano teaching approach you have presented combines tradition with modernity, technology with emotions, and personalization with teamwork, aiming to comprehensively nurture students' musical potential. This approach not only allows students to enjoy the pleasure of music but also encourages their growth in an ongoing journey of improvement and innovation in the world of art.

Recommendation

1. Practical Recommendations

Strengthening Personalized Teaching Strategies: For children in this age group, teachers should pay closer attention to each student's individual characteristics and learning needs. Personalized teaching plans can be tailored through initial interest and ability assessments. For example, for children with specific musical interests or talents, more opportunities for related content learning can be provided. At the same time, for students progressing at a slower pace, more encouragement and support should be given to ensure they do not feel frustrated or neglected.

Introduction of Gamified and Interactive Learning Methods: Children in this age group typically have a higher interest in games and interactive activities. Therefore, integrating piano learning with games, such as teaching music theory and performance skills through music games, simulation software, or interactive teaching applications, can help enhance students' interest and engagement in learning. Additionally, this approach also helps foster children's teamwork and social skills.

Emphasis on Family Involvement and School-Home Collaboration: Given that children aged 7-10 are relatively dependent on their parents, the family plays an important role in their music education. Teachers should encourage parental involvement in their child's learning process, such as participating in family music activities together or practicing together at home. Meanwhile, schools should regularly provide parents with feedback on their child's learning progress and offer specific recommendations for home practice. This school-home collaboration model not only enhances students' motivation to learn but also helps parents better understand and support their child's music education.

2. Recommendation for future research

Exploring the Potential of Technology Integration in Children's Piano Education: Future research can delve deeper into how the latest educational technologies, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, interactive software, etc., can be integrated into piano education for children. Such research will help understand how technology plays a role in enhancing children's learning efficiency and interest and how it can address some of the challenges in traditional teaching.

Comparative Studies of Different Teaching Methods' Effectiveness: Future research can focus on comparing the effects of different teaching strategies and methods on children's piano learning, such as comparing traditional teaching methods with gamified learning methods or personalized instruction with standardized teaching. Such studies will contribute to understanding which teaching methods are most effective in improving children's musical understanding, technical skills, and long-term interest.

The Influence of Family Environment and Parental Involvement on Children's Piano Learning: Future research can also focus on the impact of the family environment and parental involvement on children's piano learning. Studies can explore how parental involvement, the musical atmosphere at home, and family support for children's piano learning affect their motivation to learn, the pace of their progress, and their lasting interest. This will help better understand the significance of family factors in children's music education.

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