

Children Piano Teaching Methods and Characteristics of Children's in Learning

**Zhang Jie,
Thanyawat Sondhiratna and Bhannavichaya Vadhanasiriphongs**

Bangkokthonburi University, Bangkok, Thailand

Corresponding Author, E-mail: nicha.musiced@gmail.com

Abstract

With the vigorous implementation of quality education, piano education, as one of the important forms of music education, has gradually attracted great attention from all walks of life. In such a large educational environment, many schools have set up piano teaching courses, and social schools have also incorporated piano teaching into their own educational content. Piano was introduced into China in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China. With the continuous development of China's politics, economy and culture, the learning and popularization of piano also increased. First, since the 1980s, there has been a piano craze in many big cities in China, living in that era, many parents train their children to learn the piano, and it is seen as a very fashionable thing. Now almost all cities and even rural areas in China are filled with piano children, it can be seen that the popularity and learning of piano has entered an unprecedented climax period. Nowadays, there are so many piano learners and lovers in China, which pose a challenge to piano education.

Keywords: Children; Piano Teaching Methods; Characteristics; Learning

Introduction

As an elegant instrument, piano has always played an important role in music education. Piano is not only a musical art form, but also a tool of enlightenment education, which has a profound impact on children's physical and mental development. Letting children learn the piano can promote their physical and mental development. Piano playing requires children to have good finger flexibility, music perception and sense of rhythm, so learning the piano can exercise children's hand-eye coordination, brain memory ability and concentration, and help improve children's learning and thinking ability (Xu, 2018).

In the growing process of children, learning piano cannot only cultivate their musical talent, but also promote their intellectual development, emotional expression ability and social skills. Therefore, the importance of piano in enlightenment education cannot be ignored. First of all, learning piano can promote children's intellectual development. Piano playing requires children to master musical elements such as notes, rhythms and chords, which require complex thinking activities in the brain. By learning piano, children can cultivate their musical perception ability and musical expression ability, improve their auditory and tactile coordination ability, and promote the coordinated development of the left and right brain. In addition, piano playing also requires the flexible movement of children's fingers, which is also a good exercise for their hand-eye coordination and fine motor ability. Learning the piano can promote children's emotional expression. Music is an expression of emotions, learning piano can help children learn to use music to express their feelings. In piano playing, children can

¹Received: March 26 2024; Revised: April 9 2024; Accepted: April 11 2024

express their emotions through music, so that they learn to use music to vent emotions and relieve pressure. This has a positive impact on children's emotional management and emotional regulation, which helps them grow up healthily (Ma, 2020).

Learning the piano can also improve children's social skills. Piano playing usually needs to be done in public, which can help children overcome shyness and develop their self-confidence. At the same time, learning piano also requires cooperation with teachers and classmates, which can help children learn teamwork and communication, and cultivate their social skills and interpersonal skills. The piano is a musical instrument that can be learned by various organs. When students play, they need to look at the music with their eyes and play with their hands. While looking at the music with their eyes, they also need to look at the keyboard. Therefore, piano playing can develop the left and right brain, develop intelligence, expand thinking, and play a crucial role in the development of limb coordination. Change character, temper will music is an abstract art, indirect use of piano to achieve abstract music, can touch the students' deep feelings. By playing and singing beautiful music, students will gradually become cheerful and lively. Students dressed for the stage can also build student confidence (Xu, 2022).

Piano learning is a persistent course. Students are required to bear hardships and stand hard work. The study of musical instruments requires students to practice the piano hard after class. With the increase of the difficulty of learning the piano, the practice time will gradually increase, which can hone the development of students' will and endurance. Piano playing also needs children to have perseverance and patience, through repeated practice and constantly breaking through their own technical barriers, children can cultivate their own perseverance and will quality, enhance self-confidence, and cultivate good personality (Ma, 2020).

To improve students' cultural literacy and artistic literacy, every piece of music needs to be carefully interpreted by students to interpret the era of composition, creation background, and life of the author. In the process of interpretation, students will be influenced by cultural literacy, so as to enhance the comprehensive artistic aesthetic ability and students' music appreciation ability. To sum up, learning piano is of great significance to children's achievement education. It cannot only promote children's intellectual development, but also cultivate their emotional expression and social skills. Therefore, in children's achievement education, parents and teachers should attach importance to piano education, give children more opportunities to learn piano, so that they can thrive in the world of music (Zhao, 2020).

Children Piano Teaching Methods

With the improvement of living standards, and the overall level of teachers is uneven. Therefore, in order to ensure the overall quality of students' piano learning, it is necessary to improve the overall quality of piano teachers, enhance the overall strength of teachers, organize teachers to go out to study, and increase some opportunities for exchange activities. For teachers of different levels, schools can learn from each other, and teachers and students can hold piano recitals together to exchange ideas. Piano teachers should change the inherent traditional education concept, and combine the modern innovative concept with the traditional concept. Children have rich imagination and creativity, in education should stimulate children's creativity, tap children's learning interest, so as to lay a solid foundation for future piano learning.

With the development of the network era, education is also upgrading, changing the traditional cramming teaching, combining innovative teaching with traditional teaching. The classroom not only adopts the way of combining teaching and practice, but also adopts the mode of combining online and offline teaching. The teacher should make clear the goal of each student, and formulate a small concert or family concert according to the learning content to increase the learning interest. Piano, as a special instrument, expresses emotions and transmits thoughts and feelings through performance. Each song can cultivate the temperament and enrich the inner world of children and children. With the improvement of piano teaching concept and teaching methods, children and children's aesthetic and emotional attention. Under the impact of "exam-oriented education", piano education is particularly important. It can express people's truest emotions through music, using music to delight and art to educate people, and achieving the role of edutainment.

For children to learn the basic skills of piano training piano performance skills are very strong, the learning process needs to carry out a large number of long-term pure technical training, the most basic part is called basic skills exercise. Basic skills practice is very important for children to learn the piano, it can improve the children's hand and finger function, while allowing the brain to be perfect control. When learning the piano, many children do not pay attention to the training of basic skills, but only practice music under the urging of their parents and catch up with the progress, which is wrong and unscientific. Music is important, but we should not rush to the immediate achievement and neglect the future development. The correct way should be to practice music under the premise of having a solid basic skill. In this way, the training of basic skills can be consolidated in the music, and the training of basic skills can also focus on the difficult points in the music, and the two complement each other. The training of basic skills includes staccato training, legato training, syllable arpeggio training and rhythm training. Etude training, piano etude is a combination of piano performance in a variety of playing methods, a variety of skills, a variety of difficult comprehensive repertoire, to exercise technology, is a very technical, special piano music. Typical etudes contain several types of techniques: scales (including chromatic scale, triple sixth scale) and arpeggios (belonging to the seventh and diminished seventh chord arpeggios), chords, double tones, octaves, legato, staccato, grace note, long distance dancing, double voice, homophonic rotation and other playing techniques, there are many kinds, key and difficult points. In the ordinary training of children, they can complete the training of a certain or certain playing techniques. Through the practice of etudes, the shortcomings and weaknesses of children in piano learning can be sorted out one by one, and the comprehensive ability of children's piano level can be improved comprehensively.

Piano teaching in step by step, many children in learning the piano, cannot bear the patience, starting from the basic skills, little by little, step by step to learn the piano; In addition, some parents also see that their children do not progress on the piano repertoire, and they force them to practice some larger piano repertoire that is beyond their current level. These have led to children in learning the piano, ignoring the basic skills of training, in the level, skills are far from reached, fingers, wrists, etc. have not developed a correct habit of playing in the case of practice some relatively large repertoire, in order to meet the wishes of children and parents. I do not know that this is harmful and beneficial, only for the large repertoire at hand and ignore a series of basic skills training such as fingerings training, finger training, rhythm training, etc., thus forming a lot of bad habits and bad habits that are difficult to change, so that children's piano learning in a certain stage because some basic problems cannot be solved, so that piano

learning stagnates. There is a learning bottleneck. Therefore, children must pay attention to step by step when learning the piano.

Etudes include many kinds, there are simply exercise finger flexibility and control ability, suitable for children beginners etudes, such as "Hanong Etude"; There are comprehensive training piano skills, suitable for the intermediate level of etudes, such as Czerny series of etudes "Piano Preliminary Course 599", "piano Fluency Etude 849", "Piano speed Etude 299", "Piano Etude 50 740"; There are etudes suitable for a certain level of difficult practice, such as Chopin, Liszt etudes. The correct use of "Hanong Piano fingering", "Hanong piano fingering" is a very good basic skills training material, it focuses on improving the independent ability and flexibility of each finger, is conducive to the balanced development of the five fingers, and enhances the independence and flexibility of the metacarpophalangeal joint. It plays an important role in piano teaching. However, its practice method for the etudes in the book only mentions "raising the finger high and correctly, and playing each note very clearly." This leads to different children have different understandings of "Hanong fingering", so there are many wrong ways to play "Hanong". Some of these methods strain the child's wrists; some make the child's fingers stiff, these are not right. (Zhang, 2020) Put on a score from Hanon's practice book.

In practice, it can be trained in a variety of playing methods. Below, here are some common order of learning piano. The primary stage: The use of Byer's "Basic Piano Lessons", Thompson's "Modern Piano Lessons" volume 1 and other textbooks: this stage is mainly to learn to play with arm weight, learn to support the weight of the arm with fingers. Running the basic five-tone position of hand training and initial learning of scales, arpeggios, and broken chord playing: the main material is small music and practice some basic exercises. Then you can learn Czerny's "Preliminary Piano Lessons" (599), "Simple Piano Etudes" (Op.139), "Piano Fluency Etudes" (Op. 849); Bach's "Elementary Piano Pieces", "Preludes and Fugues", "Minor Sonatas", Burgmuller's "25 Piano Steps" (Op.100), Tang Jin Sen's "Modern Piano Lessons" Volume 2, etc., are also available. The content of this stage of learning is that children on the basis of the previous stage, step by step expansion of the technical scope in speed, strength, endurance and other requirements have been improved. The training of polyphony in Bach's works is a new subject for children. Playing small sonatas and exposure to various Chinese and foreign music can enrich children's ability of musical expression. Intermediate stage: The commonly used etudes are Czerny's "Fast Etudes for Piano" (Op.299), "Piano Etudes 50" (Op. 740), and Kramer's "60 Piano Etudes". The polyphonic works can be used in Bach's two or three creative works, the French Suite, and some of the easier works in the Twelve Equal Temperament Piano Collection. Large works can be selected from the sonatas of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and other composers to learn some of the less advanced works. In terms of music, it can be selected from Grieg's "Lyric Pieces for Piano", Mendelssohn's "Song without Words", Tchaikovsky's "Four Seasons", Chopin's "Waltz", "polonaise", "Nocturne" and other works. Advanced stage: In terms of etudes commonly used are: Clementi's "Piano Etudes Selected 29", Moszkowski's "Piano Skill Etudes 15" (No. 72), Chopin, Liszt's "Etudes". In terms of polyphonic works, It mainly studied Bach's "Twelve Equal Temperament Piano Pieces", "English Suite", "Ancient Suite" and so on. The range of sonatas, concertos and music is even wider, in addition to the selection of Viennese classical composers, romantic period composers such as Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff and Impressionist composers Debussy, Ravel and modern composers can be selected.

Children's piano learning is a long and personalized process, and every child will encounter their own problems when learning piano. For example, some knuckles have no strength and cannot be supported: some palms are stiff and their movements are not agile; Some curved bullets are rough and not fine; The impatient rhythm of some curved bullets is unstable. In the actual teaching, teachers need to observe carefully and help children solve the actual problems (Zong, 2019).

Characteristics of children's in learning

Children are in the process of development, and the skeletal development of their hands is gradually perfected. The developmental sequence of children's physiology extends from big muscles to small muscles, and the learning of fine movements of small muscles lags behind that of big muscles. Children learn the skill of the piano movement is an automatic, rapid, correct, gentle movement, it is not a single movement, but a series of hundreds of muscles and nerves coordinated action. Therefore, it can be seen that, due to the relatively slow development of small hand muscles in children's piano learning, teachers should give guidance according to the age characteristics of children, and avoid improper practice leading to hand injury. In addition, children's fingers are softer and more flexible than adults', but the disadvantage is that the hand shape is easy to deform, and teachers need to remind them often, and they should often consider arranging the practice works of the hand shape. Children relative to adults, although the purpose of learning the piano is also very clear, but the purpose and motivation of learning is mostly the external force of parents, the real internal need to learn the piano is not ten points obvious. The body of children and children is still in the development period, the bones of their bodies and hands have not yet formed, and the sports muscles have strong plasticity, and the bones of their hands are small, and the fingers are soft and flexible. Therefore, the earlier the learning, the more conducive to the development of children and children. In piano education, teachers should avoid improper finger exercises to avoid finger injury. Because children and children have a strong memory, they can quickly memorize the position of the keyboard and improve their ability to understand the staff. Because of his young age, his goal was not very clear. Lack of self-consciousness, learning motivation mostly rely on external forces to complete, the real internal learning motivation is not obvious. Poor understanding, for more difficult songs, their confidence in overcoming difficulties is relatively insufficient. Because of its strong plasticity, piano teachers can use correct piano learning methods to carry out correct piano education according to this characteristic, in order to achieve the effect of twice the result with half the effort.

Due to the physical and psychological development stage, children's understanding ability is poor, the confidence to overcome difficulties is relatively insufficient, and the attention was relatively short compared with adults; However, children are not yet mature, all aspects are not stereotyped, their plasticity is extremely strong, as long as the teacher can grasp this characteristic, scientific education, so that students master the correct method of playing, will lay a solid foundation for its future development, play a multiplier effect. In the learning process of children, teachers should first pay attention to the healthy physical and mental development of children, use scientific methods to inspire children's brain awareness, and stimulate children's internal energy. Since most children in this age group live and study in kindergarten, this period was called early childhood. Early childhood can be divided into three stages according to age: The psychological characteristics of early children (3-4 years old), middle children (4-5 years old), and early school (5-6 years old). In early children's stage, the

rapid development of language enables them to express their own will and be full of curiosity about the world around them, especially for some novel things. At this stage, the main way of learning for children is imitation, and they learn how to deal with new things by imitating the behaviors of others. Children in this period also like to continue to repeat their favorite activities, not only to meet their own emotional needs, but also to promote memory and action. At the same time, children need parents to give children enough sense of security, at this stage, children have a greater dependence on adults, so adults should pay more attention to have a good demonstration on the behavior style, and help children form good behavior habits in the early stage. Psychological characteristics of the middle stage of children, in the middle stage of children, children will become more active than the early stage, the amount of activity and activity time have increased, but children's self-control is not enough. The main characteristic of thinking mode in early childhood is concrete image thinking. Children can carry out activities according to the behavior mode that has been impressed in the mind and carry out thinking activities according to the surface phenomenon of things, so their thinking was image and concrete. However, it was difficult for children to understand things they are not familiar with, so adults can choose things that children are familiar with in daily life, use specific images for example, and tell children the characteristics of things, so as to facilitate children to understand and learn. In the middle stage of children, with the active thinking, intentional behavior also begins to develop, and you can consciously listen to and remember the tasks assigned by parents. Children can imagine according to certain requirements, at this time, children's imagination has improved, and they can consciously imagine. Children in this period can abide by a certain standard of life, in the process of learning can cultivate children's good learning habits; Can also abide by the simple rules of the game, can cultivate children's spirit of cooperation in the game. The psychological characteristics of the early school stage, in the early school stage, with the growth of children, the desire for knowledge of unknown things will increase, early school children are good at asking, sometimes because they do not know and ask questions, sometimes they want to ask others with the answer to the question they know. At the same time, children's personal thoughts and emotions are not easy to be disturbed by the outside world, but some of their own behavior will produce tension and anxiety. Therefore, although the thinking of children in this period is still concrete, we can find that causality has been included in the questions asked by children, indicating that children in the early school have initially formed basic logical thinking and have the ability to develop cognition and generalization of things. Children dig into the things and phenomena they like, and for the understanding of conceptual knowledge, they have begun to notice the internal connections between things. Children in the pre-school stage can probably transition from surface understanding to deeper concepts, and can make simple causal judgments on things. They get a sense of achievement from the process of exploring things, which helps children establish self-confidence. Through the above analysis of the characteristics of children's piano learning at different ages, piano teachers should continuously accumulate teaching and learning experience according to the psychological characteristics of children at different ages, so that children can exercise their physical functions in the process of learning the piano, so that children can grow up healthily. Piano teachers use scientific and effective teaching methods to ensure that children are full of interest and curiosity in music learning in the early stage of piano learning, promote the establishment of children's self-confidence, and lay a solid foundation for children to persist in learning piano for a long time (Li, 2020)..

Infant piano learning does not last long. Piano performance is rich in techniques, which requires a scientific, systematic and relatively long learning process, and short learning is of little significance to piano performance. Secondly, there are more passive learners. Many children are reluctant to learn the piano, only forced by the requirements of parents, passively accept the piano learning, which is also an important reason for children to die in the middle of learning the piano; Third, you are eager to achieve success and enjoy success. Many parents and teachers are eager to succeed, do not proceed from reality, violate the rules of learning, resulting in children playing the piano is irregular, or even wrong performance, to the students in the piano playing learning caused a lifetime of adverse impact; In addition, many children who have just learned the piano pay attention to the learning of piano playing skills, but ignore the synchronous learning of music theory knowledge. This kind of suspended building education has greatly limited the piano education for children. The first step should be to cultivate children's interest in piano playing. For any learning, interest is the best teacher, is the most important motivation and guarantee for human long-term learning. Due to the psychological reasons of children, when learning the piano is still more interested, with the further strengthening of the difficulty of learning, the interest in learning the piano gradually weakened, and even appeared tired of learning, giving up the phenomenon. Therefore, in the piano education of children, we should first cultivate interest in piano learning, gain happiness in learning, and make them accept and like piano learning, which is an important premise for children to carry out long-term piano learning. How to cultivate children's interest in piano? First of all, it is necessary for the piano teacher to guide the children with some melodic piano music when they are learning the piano, so that they can determine the piano is "beautiful" from the sound, so that young children like the piano for beginners, so that they can love to learn the piano. Children's piano learning should pay attention to basic training, method training, any subject should pay attention to the training of basic ability, which is the premise of subsequent learning, but also an important guarantee that learners can learn to what extent, piano learning is no exception. For children's piano learning, especially for children who have just learned the piano, the basic training is extremely important, which affects the process and depth of children's piano learning. At present, some teachers and parents are overambitious, do not follow the objective laws of learning, are eager to achieve, are affected by various grades and competitions, do not pay attention to the training of basic ability, and often directly carry out the difficulty coefficient is large, children cannot handle it, and are not suitable for children to play piano works. These phenomena often cause a large number of errors in the performance process, and even the phenomenon of malformation of performance, which seriously affects the physical and mental development of children. Therefore, we should follow the law of the development of things, pay attention to the basic training, remember to aim high, at the same time, but also pay special attention to the training methods of beginners. Young beginners are too young, and their ability to learn and understand and persist is relatively weak, which is particularly important for the training method of beginners. Too specialized training methods are more monotonous and boring, and long-term use in children can easily cause children to hate learning, which is also one of the important reasons for many children to die in the middle of piano learning. Therefore, children's piano learning, especially children who are just learning the piano, should pay special attention to the fun of piano learning, so that they can maintain a strong interest in piano learning. In addition, children's piano learning must be from simple to difficult, so that young children can build self-confidence in piano learning (Gao, 2018).

Conclusion

The teachers should strengthen the cultivation of the comprehensive quality of music. Any discipline, a technology is not isolated, in the learning of the piano is also like this, other related disciplines, knowledge learning and accumulation of the learning of the steel piano have one way or another to help. However, many learners of the steel piano nowadays only train their piano skills and do not know any other relevant knowledge of performance. They often "lose all three things" in piano performance, and only the pitch and rhythm of the works are played. They ignore other changes in strength and speed, let alone emotional experience. Cannot express the original content of the work itself. Therefore, in addition to piano learning, for piano learners, especially for children with shallow social cognition, it is necessary to strengthen the cultivation of their comprehensive musical quality, such as basic music theory knowledge, strength, speed signs and some related emotion-related terms, solfeggio and ear training. In addition, it is also necessary to understand the creation of some works and the author's life in a story-oriented way to increase children's interest in learning piano. Only by taking interest as guidance, paying attention to its basic training, and talking about methods in the training process, and strengthening the cultivation of the overall comprehensive quality at the same time, can we better make continuous progress and move forward in children's piano learning.

References

Gao, L. (2018). Thoughts and Suggestions on Improving interest in Piano learning. *Popular Literature and Art*, (14), 233-234.

Li, F. (2020). *Questions and Answers on Piano Teaching for Children*. Beijing. People's Music Publishing House.

Ma, L. (2020). *Psychological Analysis of Children's Learning Music*. People's Music Publishing House.

Xu, Y. (2018). On the cultivation of children's interest in piano learning and the use of piano teaching materials -- A study on teaching methods based on John Thompson's Modern Piano Course. *Nanjing University of the Arts*, (08), 65-69.

Xu, Z. (2022) *Music Education for Preschool children*. Beijing: People's Music Publishing House.

Zhao, S. (2020). *Introduction to the Psychology of Music Education*. Shanghai. Shanghai Music Publishing House.

Zong, Y. (2019). On the Cultivation of Children's learning interest in piano. *Talents*, (13), 253-254.