

The Theoretical Basis of the Primary Piano Teaching Method

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Abstract

This article explores the theoretical basis of primary piano teaching methods, focusing on the innovative contributions of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, a Swiss composer and music educator. Dalcroze identified limitations in traditional music education, where theoretical knowledge and technical exercises were often disconnected from artistic expression. His approach integrates body movement, rhythm, and sensory experiences, emphasizing the importance of "inner hearing" and improvisation to enhance musical understanding and creativity. The article also examines common challenges in contemporary piano education, including unscientific learning concepts, uneven teacher quality, monotonous content, and rigid methods. By applying Dalcroze's ideas, particularly his emphasis on rhythmic movement and emotional expression, piano education can be made more effective and engaging for young learners, addressing these challenges and fostering a deeper connection to music.

Keywords: Theoretical; Basis; Primary; Piano Teaching Method

Introduction

In children's primary piano teaching, teachers often encounter a series of problems and challenges. First of all, in the setting of teaching content, some teachers due to the lack of systematic theoretical guidance, it is often difficult to develop teaching plans suitable for children's cognitive development level and interest characteristics. As a result, many children feel boring at the early stage of learning, and it is difficult to maintain their enthusiasm for learning. Secondly, the traditional teaching methods rely too much on demonstration and imitation, ignoring the cultivation of children's independent learning ability. In this teaching mode, students' music perception ability and creative expression ability cannot be fully developed. In addition, in the teaching process, how to effectively stimulate children's interest in learning, how to achieve efficient teaching in the limited class hours, these are the urgent problems to be solved.

In order to cope with these problems, the existing teaching methods must be comprehensively examined and improved. To study the teaching methods of primary piano for children, it is necessary to comprehensively consider the physiological and psychological characteristics of children, combine with modern educational theories, and explore more scientific and reasonable teaching strategies. Through systematic research and practice, teachers can provide targeted guidance to help them better cope with various challenges in practical teaching. At the same time, it can also provide parents with scientific family education advice, so that they can better cooperate with the school's teaching work, and create a good learning environment. By optimizing teaching methods and improving teaching quality, children can not only get more fun and a sense of achievement in piano learning, but also lay a solid foundation for their all-round development in the future.

The development process of children's piano teaching

As an important part of music education, the teaching of children can be traced back to the late 18th and early 19th century. During this period, aristocratic families in Europe began to attach importance to music education, and the piano, as a noble symbol, was introduced into family education. Many famous pianists and composers, such as Beethoven and Mozart, they were not only musical talents, but also received strict piano training as children. During this period, piano teaching was mainly a mentoring system, in which teachers taught students themselves and delivered skills through demonstration and oral teaching (Zhang, 2019).

The 19th century was a key period for the gradual formation and promotion of the children's piano teaching system. During this period, with the progress of piano manufacturing technology and the improvement of piano popularization, piano teaching gradually moved from aristocratic family to ordinary family. Many music educators began to explore and summarize the methods and techniques of piano teaching, and compiled systematic piano teaching materials.

Carl Czerny was one of the most important piano educators in this period. He was not only a student of Beethoven, but also taught famous pianists such as Liszt. Charney wrote a large number of piano etudes and textbooks, which focused on technical training and laid the foundation for the later piano teaching. Another important figure is Hans von Bulow (Hans von Bulow), who proposed a systematic piano teaching method emphasizing the importance of basic training (Sun, 2012).

In the first half of the 20th century, children's piano teaching entered a stage of innovation and diversification. The reform of music education concept and the development of psychology have promoted the continuous innovation of piano teaching methods.

Maria Montessori (Maria Montessori)'s educational theory has had a profound influence on children's piano teaching. Her concept of children's education emphasizes children's autonomy and initiative, which has been applied to piano teaching and emphasizes children's independent exploration and the cultivation of creativity in the learning process.

Another person who has had a significant influence on piano teaching methods is Toshiichi Suzuki (Shinichi Suzuki). Suzuki created the "Suzuki Teaching Method", which emphasizes the influence of early education and the environment, advocating piano learning through imitation and auditory training. This teaching method has been widely promoted around the world, especially in Asian countries, and has achieved remarkable teaching results.

In the second half of the 20th century, the continuous development and application of modern educational theory made the teaching method of piano for children more scientific and systematic. Music educators began to introduce cognitive psychology, behaviorism psychology and other theories into piano teaching, emphasizing scientific teaching methods and personalized teaching strategies (Han, 2013).

The cognitive development theory of Piaget (Jean Piaget) and Vygotsky (Lev Vygotsky) has exerted an important influence on piano teaching. Piaget's theory of cognitive development stage helps teachers to better understand the cognitive characteristics of children at different ages, so as to develop suitable teaching plans. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes the interaction and cooperation between teachers and students, and encourages the use of cooperative learning and problem-solving methods in teaching (Zhang, 2020).

In the context of globalization, the piano teaching methods of different countries and regions learn from and integrate with each other, forming a diversified teaching system. For example, the Chinese piano education has developed the piano teaching methods with Chinese characteristics on the basis of absorbing the advanced western teaching concepts and combining with the local culture.

With the continuous renewal of educational concepts, modern children's piano teaching pays more and more attention to comprehensiveness and personalization. Comprehensive education emphasizes the combination of piano teaching and other forms of art education, and cultivates children's comprehensive artistic accomplishment through the interaction of music, dance, drama and other artistic forms. For example, some piano teaching courses combine music appreciation, music history and music theory, so that children can have a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of music while learning the piano (Chen, 2016).

The theoretical basis of the primary piano teaching method

When Dalcroze was teaching at the Geneva Conservatory of Music, he found that some students could not feel and reflect the beauty of music, which made him gradually realize the disadvantages of traditional teaching — Music theory is separated from practical sound and music experience, and the technical practice is separated from the artistic performance of art. Based on this, he creatively put forward the view that the rhythm factors and strength factors in music not only depend on the hearing, but also are related to all parts of the body, and tried to explore new teaching methods to enable students to feel the music and express their inner emotions.

(1) Basic ideas. The core idea of Dalcroze's music education concept is to express music with the body, which has the following basic characteristics: First, attach attention to the relationship between music and the body. Dalcroze believes that the first musical instrument that students should master in music education is the human body. As long as listening to music and physical reactions combine, learners can gain the great power to understand and express music. Second, pay attention to rhythmic movement. Dalcroze believes that in music, rhythm is the first place, and without rhythm, the art of music will not exist.

(2) Main contents.

1. Training of body rhythm — synesthesia. Body rhythm is different from dance or rhythmic gymnastics. It does not pay attention to the body posture or external movements, but emphasizes the performance of the music heard with movements, and develops the "synesthesia" of sound rhythm and body rhythm. The so-called synesthesia refers to the mutual communication between various sensory organs in the literary and artistic creation and appreciation. In the body rhythm, children hear different sound will produce different feelings, if the sound with action, it is the mutual communication between hearing and motion, if the sound with language or brush painted, it is the mutual communication between hearing and vision. Therefore, body rhythm virtually helps children to conduct synesthesia training, which can help children feel music from a variety of senses and increase the dimension and depth of perceptual experience.
2. Refeggio and ear training — the development of inner hearing. Dalcroze pointed out that "all music education should be based on the basis of hearing, not on the training of imitation and mathematical operation." Therefore, he paid great attention to the cultivation of absolute sound sense and the development of inner hearing. Inner hearing, also known as "internal hearing" and "internal hearing", is a kind of complex psychological activity, which is the ability of people to imagine the musical image and the pitch, melody, rhythm, timbre and other contents in the heart without being stimulated by external sound. Dalcroze believes that the development of inner

hearing and the cultivation of absolute sound sense should be closely combined with the body rhythm. Because from the premise of inner hearing is constantly perception of music, form the sense of rhythm, melody, and music elements such as comprehensive cognition, and body rhythm is let children through hearing, motion, vision and other functional to music has a deeper and more dimensional experience, therefore, combining body rhythm and singing practice ear, can get twice the result with half the effort.3. Impromptu creation —— Emotional expression and creativity cultivation. In the traditional concept of the public, it is often believed that improvisation is mysterious and difficult. Without a profound theoretical basis and acoustic knowledge of music, it is difficult to carry out better improvisation. This idea subconsciously equated improvisation and composition, narrowing the scope of improvisation and increasing the difficulty of improvisation. The Dalcroze Teaching Law expands the scope of improvisation, including impromptu q & A, impromptu singing, improvisation, impromptu command and performance (Liu, 2007).

Enough for improvisation. Impromptu creation can first help children to express their inner emotions and thoughts. Vocal music and instrumental music are both forms of expressing emotions. In the process of improvisation, children can compile different rhythms and use different strengths to express different emotions. Secondly, it can cultivate children's creativity, whether it is the adaptation of the existing phrases or rhythm, or children's own creation, it can exercise children's imagination and creativity, and contribute to the formation of creative thinking (Sun & Zhang, 2013).

In the primary stage of students' piano learning, mastering basic skills is an important learning content. The teaching method of teaching basic content can affect students' understanding of piano to a certain extent. A good teaching method can get twice the result with half the effort. For example, in the teaching of non-connected music, generally speaking, students will imitate the teacher's playing method. At this time, the teacher should be very patient and detailed to teach the students to understand the fingers and arms. Let the students to learn how to make the wrist and arm naturally force feeling, good tutoring is for students every finger and finger joints to the students' palm arm are targeted teaching and training, in addition to students play different strength and the music discrimination should have a correct guide. Ligato method is also one of the basic skills that students master when learning the piano, which plays a very important role in the coherence shown by students when playing the piano music. When students master the method, the movement of the center of the gravity of the fingertips is the core of the training. Therefore, the teachers should correctly guide the students to relax their fingers, and learn to shift the center of gravity on the basis of maintaining the hand shape. At the same time, students should be correctly guided to feel the natural drop of their fingers. In

In the training process, I still start from the two-tone succession in a step by step way, and slowly master the three-tone succession and four-tone succession and so on,

Feel the coherence and shift of play in turn, and learn to enjoy the nature and fluency of the music. Avoid disrupting the students' playing for instruction. In our traditional teaching class, when the students make mistakes in the process of playing, the teachers will often interrupt the students to correct them. This behavior is very incorrect, because it not only frustrated students' confidence, makes students frustrated, but also greatly reduces the students' desire to behave. Some students self-esteem is stronger, this kind of interrupt performance will let students have rebellious psychology, reduce the piano, playing the piano, performing the piano interest, so the teacher in the acceptance of students' learning situation,

observe the students playing process, as far as possible as students' audience, let the students fully play a whole song, the teacher to comment on the students. Rigorous demonstration teaching. Compared with theoretical knowledge, piano teaching pays more attention to practical demonstration, so demonstration teaching is a very important way for the teaching process of piano. According to the survey report, it can be learned that many piano lessons are mainly taught by teachers on the platform, and the actual playing part is far lower than the teaching of oral theoretical knowledge, so it is difficult for younger students to understand (Lan, 2013).

Dalcroze is a famous Swiss composer and music educator, and his music education thought has a far-reaching influence in the world. With the development of our country social economy and the residents' cultural level, more and more people began to learn the piano, including young children, many problems in the current children piano enlightenment teaching, will cross music teaching method for children piano enlightenment teaching, can make it more scientific, systematic, solve the problems existing in the current piano training, however, in the process of children piano enlightenment, there is a learning concept is not scientific, teacher level is uneven, teaching material choose single, boring teaching methods.(1) Learning concept is not scientific. At present, parents' concept of children learning piano can be roughly divided into three categories: the first type of parents is to let children master piano skills, cultivate musical aesthetic, and make piano become a friend to accompany children for life. The second type of parents gradually deviate from the goal of sending their children to learn the piano. Their children only learn the piano for the sake of grades and certificate books, which runs counter to the original intention of learning the piano. The third type of parents blindly follow the trend, let their children learn the piano, and even through the grade examination for comparison, but they do not know that this kind of comparison will have a negative impact on children's piano learning, children can not feel the beauty of music in the process of comparison, but bear the pain of piano practice. (2) Teachers' level is uneven. The teaching level of teachers directly affects the effect of children's piano learning. At present, pianists in the teaching and training industry can be roughly divided into three categories: the first type of teachers have piano education background or music education, professional, the number of such teachers in the teaching and training industry is very small. The second type of teachers have received amateur piano education since childhood and have piano learning experience, but the knowledge of music theory is insufficient and the level of piano playing skills is not high. There are a large number of such teachers in the teaching and training industry. The third type of teachers have only been exposed to short-term piano training, lack music theoretical knowledge and basic piano playing ability, and are competent for teaching work. Although the number of such teachers in the teaching and training industry is small, they will have serious adverse effects. Unreasonable teaching content and incorrect playing methods will mislead children. They will not only let children master piano playing skills, but also waste children's precious time and energy, so that children miss the golden period of piano learning.(3) The teaching content is monotonous. At present, the piano enlightenment teaching material is increasingly rich, such as "John little Thompson" worship piano basic tutorial "fe Boer piano basic tutorial" series of textbooks have been widely used, however, the piano as a typical western instrument, most of the piano works are western, first contact the piano children tend to appear difficult to understand western music, experience music fun, these problems if not solved, children in the process to learn the piano will gradually evolve into mechanical boring practice, in the long

run, the piano learning is difficult to continue.(4) Teaching methods are single. In the current preschool piano enlightenment teaching, there are many problems in teachers' teaching methods. First of all, children are imprisoned on the piano stool when learning the piano, and the teaching time is longer. But children's nature is active and active, sedentary learning for a long time makes them difficult to pay attention, which not only affects the effect of learning the piano, but also will make children lose interest in the boring practice of the piano. Secondly, in the piano teaching activities, the commonly used teaching method for the teacher demonstration-student imitation-teacher correction-students practice again. Although this method is very effective, but a single teaching method is inevitably boring, and children are often mechanically imitate learning, lack of feelings and experience of music. Finally, the traditional teaching methods often focus on playing the existing works while ignoring the creation, and children virtually lose the opportunity to express and create (Meng, 2012).

Conclusion

The Dalcroze method emphasizes the integration of body movement, rhythm, and music to create a holistic learning experience in piano education, particularly at the primary level. His approach addresses the shortcomings of traditional teaching methods that often separate music theory from practical sound and artistic expression. By using body rhythm, inner hearing, and improvisation, Dalcroze's teaching cultivates a deeper emotional connection to music and enhances creativity. In modern piano education, the challenges of unscientific learning concepts, uneven teaching quality, monotonous content, and rigid methods still persist. Incorporating Dalcroze's principles could help overcome these issues, making piano education more engaging, systematic, and effective for young learners.

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