

The Nature and Objectives of Piano Teaching

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Abstract: Piano teaching is a training activity for teachers to guide students to learn piano knowledge, master piano skills, understand piano music, comprehend piano art and promote the healthy development of their individual psychological quality. This article defines and analyzes the concept of piano teaching from several aspects, reveals the specific nature of piano teaching, and expounds the nature and objectives of piano teaching.

1. The Connotation of Piano Teaching

Piano teaching is a training activity for teachers to guide students to learn piano knowledge, master piano skills, understand piano music, understand piano art and promote the healthy development of their personality and psychological quality. This definition reveals the following properties of piano teaching.

1.1. Piano teaching is a form of general teaching activities

Piano teaching is not a teaching activity independent of general teaching activities. On the contrary, it belongs to a form of general teaching activities and has the basic characteristics of all teaching activities. For example, piano teaching is also composed of teachers, students and teaching materials; as an organizational part of school education, it also has the function consistent with school education. Piano teaching plays a special and unique role in promoting the all-round development of students' morality, intelligence, physique and beauty.[1] Like all other teaching forms, piano teaching is a teaching activity with clear purpose, planning, systematicness, coherence and cultivation.

1.2. Piano teaching is a skill teaching

The main feature of piano teaching is that it is a skill teaching based on piano--a large musical instrument. According to the viewpoint of psychology, human learning can be divided into three categories: concept learning, skill learning and moral learning. The study of piano skills undoubtedly belongs to the category of skills. Although concept learning will be involved in piano knowledge, the most important part of piano teaching is skill teaching. Moreover, the teaching of piano knowledge is completely for the needs of piano skill teaching. Piano skill teaching cannot leave piano music and piano art, but the latter two are also based on the development level of piano skills. Without piano skills, there is neither piano music nor piano art.[2]

1.3. Piano teaching is a kind of developmental teaching

The purpose of piano teaching is to promote the development of students' piano ability and personality quality, pay attention to the learning process, emphasize students' performance practice, and strive to internalize piano skill learning and positive attitude towards piano learning, such as hard work, hard work, seriousness, meticulous and holding identity into students' personality quality. Unlike the general knowledge teaching, it focuses on the recitation and understanding of concepts. It takes promoting the formation and application of students' playing skills as the teaching main line.

1.4. Piano teaching is a kind of subjective teaching

In the process of teaching, students are the main body of development. The development of the subject is realized through the active practice of the subject (i.e. active, serious and continuous piano playing).[3] No one can replace the students' learning, mastering and understanding of piano knowledge, skills, music and art. Therefore, teachers must respect students' personality, pay attention to students' interests and hobbies, and constantly stimulate students' initiative, enthusiasm and tenacity in piano learning; respect students' understanding rules and technical level, arrange teaching procedures scientifically and flexibly, and teach students according to their aptitude according to their individual differences.[4] In class, we should ensure that students have sufficient time for activities and thinking. Piano teaching also emphasizes the leading role of teachers. Without the guidance of teachers, the content and method of students' piano learning will lose the scientific guarantee. However, the teachers' "leading" is not equal to the teacher's "dominating". Teachers can not treat students with an authoritative identity and a cold face like traditional teaching, cannot "take charge of the classroom" or allow any form of "replacing learning with teaching". Teachers should create a pleasant and harmonious teaching atmosphere of equality between teachers and students and teaching democracy, and allow and cherish students' creativity.

2. Methods of Piano Training

Piano music is a kind of performing art, which must be felt by the audience through performance, so as to produce artistic effects. Therefore, the ultimate goal of piano teaching is to enable students to successfully complete piano performance at the concert. To achieve such a goal, teachers need to train students in many aspects, and the results of these training also have the meaning of "sub goals" or "sub goals".

2.1. Train your hands to meet the needs of playing the piano

The first step in learning the piano is to train both hands to play the piano. People who like to play the piano are often reluctant to treat the piano as a simple instrument, but the fact is that the piano is a machine, and the teacher is to teach students how to use the machine. Playing the piano is inseparable from ten fingers. The so-called playing technology is the application method of palm and ten fingers.[5]

It is difficult to summarize what kind of hand is suitable for piano performance in one sentence. Generally speaking, the palm is large, the fingers are long, the distance between the thumb and the little finger is large, and the fingers can stretch and move freely. Each finger can independently strike various sounds and control freely. Such hands are suitable for piano performance.

2.1.1. Training finger independence

The so-called independence of fingers means that the fingers can control freely and play the desired

pitch, sound quality and timbre on the piano easily and freely.[6] Therefore, it is necessary to let the left and right ten fingers do the practice of tapping the keyboard alone. We often have the experience that we clearly want to use the little finger to hit a key, but the ring finger also conditionally follows the little finger; the thumb is often competent to play all kinds of keyboards, but the little finger has more heart and less strength; the ring finger and little finger of the right hand are still at the command, while the ring finger and little finger of the left hand are stiff and slow.

Fingers can be controlled freely. After the brain sends out instructions, the left and right fingers can hit the keyboard with the same intensity, flexibility and speed. To achieve this ideal state, we must first train the independence of fingers. The training method is to let students practice playing "Hanon" or similar etudes. When training, we should combine the training purpose and pay attention not to make the training become a repetitive mechanical movement of the fingers. Even if there is no suitable etude, we can also use other methods to train the fingering. It is important to emphasize to the students that they should concentrate their attention. The force should be used on the fingertips and stretch, expand and lengthen the hand muscles as much as possible. In this way of thinking, let the students practice fingering, which will eventually achieve the expected results.

2.1.2. Exercise the muscles of both hands

Every movement of fingers is inseparable from the support of strong palm and arm muscles. The wrists of piano players are generally strong and powerful. Looking at the depth of a person's piano playing skills, you can understand it by touching his elbow joint to the under arm muscles of his wrist. The movement of fingers is mostly supported and restrained by the muscles of this part. A well-trained piano player's muscles in the lower part of the arm are strong and powerful. After a little force, the arm will be as hard as steel. The players' good endurance comes from their fully developed arm muscles.[7] To have such ideal muscles, we need to remind students to relax their shoulders and extend the muscles in the fingers as much as possible during training. As long as time and physical strength allow, we should repeatedly and quickly do the mechanical movement of the fingers. The specific method is to move your fingers on the piano keyboard after relaxing or softening your arms. Professional piano practice should last for two hours a day.

2.1.3. Training finger span

No matter how flexible the fingers are, if the palm is too small, it will be very difficult to play. The piano is a large instrument and the keyboard range is wide, which cannot be changed. People born with a pair of big hands can easily reach the width of an octave with their fingers and can play powerfully; on the contrary, people with small hands can even have more talents than others. Talent requires more effort and patience than others. However, if students are in the period of development and growth, their palms will grow. [8]At the same time, they can also make their palms bigger through the day after tomorrow.

In addition to the palm size, we also pay attention to "what kind of hand". The palm should be wide, but the fingers don't have to be very long. The palm is thick and powerful, the fingers can stretch and contract freely, and can do any action quickly and correctly on the keyboard. This is the most ideal hand for playing the piano. How to make the hands wider? You can train by widening the distance between the thumb and index finger. After the distance between the thumb and index finger is widened. The problem of the palm not wide enough can be alleviated or even fundamentally solved.

In addition, we should pay attention to prevent the atrophy of finger muscles. When we don't play the piano on weekdays, we should move our fingers as much as possible and try to lengthen the finger muscles. When practicing on the keyboard, it's best to train our left and right hands to reach the interval of an octave from the beginning. Many people open their left hand more easily than their

right hand. That's because there are many piano tracks that require the left hand to practice, unknowingly, the left hand will have more training opportunities than the right hand. In order to prevent this difference in the development of the left and right palms, we can train the left and right hands in the same way from the beginning.[9]

2.2. Promote the coordinated development of all parts of the body

When the fingers are in direct contact with the piano, the players will notice the slightest change of the fingers, and the movement changes of other parts of the body are often ignored because they are inconspicuous. In fact, the movement changes of other parts of the body are also very important. Although direct contact with the piano keys depends on the fingertips, this does not mean that playing the piano can be completed only by the fingertips. All parts of the human body are closely connected. In other words, playing the piano is a whole body movement, and the fingertips are the intersection of the human body and the piano. For example, the action of raising the hand is first issued by the brain. If the brain commands the hand to be raised above the head, naturally, the hand and arm will be raised. To complete such a simple action, in addition to the up and down movement of the arm, it is also inseparable from the support of other parts of the body. When playing the piano requires the rapid movement of both hands, it requires the close cooperation of all parts of the body.

First of all, we should pay attention to the joints of the whole body and the auxiliary role of muscles. Joints can help people's limbs move flexibly, while muscles play an auxiliary role. Taking the hand as an example, among the five fingers, the thumb plays a different role from other fingers. The index finger, middle finger, ring finger and little finger can only move up and down, and only the thumb can move left and right. Another example is that the wrist joint can rotate up, down, left and right. The elbow can be lifted up but not twisted down. The movement of muscles and fingers is mainly pulled by the muscles from the elbow to the wrist. People call the muscles in this part "the second arm". In addition, the back muscles are also very important. It can be seen that only the fingertips are in direct contact with the piano. However, every movement of the player is carried out with the cooperation and support of other parts of the body. Without the cooperation of other parts, it is difficult to play the piano well with ten fingers alone.

Secondly, the sitting posture when playing the piano must be correct. The so-called correct sitting posture refers to the posture in which the player can play most flexibly and freely after sitting down. Of course, everyone's physical conditions are different, and different people sitting posture will be different. But some of the basic principles mentioned below are common.

First, sit upright and go to jail from the waist segment to the lower body, otherwise it is difficult to support the upper body during intense exercise. Always pay attention to lowering the center of gravity of the body. If you don't pay attention to it, the upper body will become stiff easily. Then, in order to avoid excessive tension of the upper body, what is the best sitting posture or which part of the body will relieve the tension of the upper body? Teachers can remind and encourage students to make various attempts to find the most suitable sitting posture for students.

Second, choose a sitting position that is convenient for the upper body to move freely. The piano keyboard is very wide, and it is difficult for adults to reach it with their arms outstretched. It's good to say that if you encounter a track that frequently uses the middle tone area. If you encounter a track that needs to use the low tone area or high tone area, you can hardly play if your upper body can't move freely. People with good posture can play freely from the left or the right; on the contrary, if the sitting posture is not good, even if there is no difference on the surface, if external force is applied, the tense state of the muscles will easily appear.

2.3. Develop a sense of sound

The sense of sound is the abbreviation of the sense of sound. Cultivating the sense of sound is to improve students' sense of sound through training, so that students can accurately identify various characteristics of sound - pitch, sound and timbre. This is one of the basic objectives of piano teaching.

People sometimes equate the feeling of pitch with the feeling of pitch. In fact, the feeling ability of pitch is only one aspect of the feeling of pitch. The feeling of pitch not only refers to the feeling ability of pitch, but also includes the ability to recognize different sounds and distinguish different sounds and timbres of the same sound. Students have a sensitive period for their response to timbres. Teachers should make use of this characteristic of students to help students strengthen the training of sound perception. In the past, music education aimed at cultivating absolute pitch was once popular in society. As long as a child has received absolute pitch education, he is regarded as a child prodigy. The reason for this is that people who have received absolute pitch training since childhood will have a very accurate sense of pitch. However, recently, people are not as keen on absolute pitch as they used to be the pitch is too high. Especially for piano players, what is more important than absolute pitch is the accommodative relative pitch. There is no need to be too strict with absolute pitch. Of course, absolute pitch is a very fine feeling of pitch, but from the perspective of piano teaching, it does not matter that the piano pays attention to the average law. Music is an art based on musical sound. Music is a wonderful sound selected from nature. The richer the feeling of music, the wider and deeper the music performance will be, and the music works created will be richer and deeper. Therefore, students should try to listen to the sounds of various musical instruments as much as possible. What can be emitted by the piano is music. However, the music emitted by the piano is different from the music selected from the feeling of natural interval. The difference is that they have been adjusted by the average law. The so-called equal temperament, also known as "twelve-tone equal temperament", is a chromatic system that divides an octave into 12 equal intervals. Due to the setting of this law system, the transfer of piano playing becomes easier, which enhances the simplicity and standardization of piano learning.

However, if students only listen to the interval emitted by the piano, they will unconsciously forget the unique natural sounds in the music. Therefore, students should try their best to listen to natural sounds, which will help students experience the music full of natural sounds. Songs are the easiest to touch natural sounds in music. Therefore, students can listen to more songs and sing more. Musical instruments can be relatively simple. When string instruments are close to the natural sound, they are always influenced by the piano interval when they are played with the piano. However, when string instruments are used only like string quartet, people can enjoy the spatial music composed of pure natural sound.

2.4. Cultivate a sense of music

Musical sense is the abbreviation of musical sense, which mainly includes the sense of rhythm, melody and musical beauty. As music is an art form reflecting life, musical sense is a higher and more complex psychological phenomenon compared with the previous musical sense. It is the overall feeling of the arrangement and combination of many factors of music and the process momentum, beauty, harmony and priorities of music.

We set the cultivation of musical sense as one of the objectives of piano teaching, first of all, because musical sense affects people's evaluation of music. For example, when listening to two concerts, it is generally easier for everyone to identify which concert is better. Just tell them exactly what they feel when listening to the concert. If they listen to two concerts, one is first-class and the other is not, it will be easier for you to feel the difference between the two. However, if both concerts happen to be held by first-class performers, it is no longer easy to compare which one is more musical.

Moreover, people's interpretation of music feeling is always different from person to person. In the end, you may use "like" or "don't like" to answer. If you ask why you like it and where the musicality is reflected, few people can give a satisfactory answer to the questioner. At this time, the sense of music can work.

Secondly, the sense of music will also affect the artistic skills of piano playing. For example, Debussy's famous song "the Girl with Flaxen Hair" is included in his complete works of preludes Volume I, preface No. 8, which can be said to be Debussy's masterpiece. From the music score, the music is not very difficult. People who have studied the piano for 3 ~ 4 years can basically play it smoothly. As long as they play according to the music score, the style of this work can be more or less conveyed through the piano sound. However, if you want to play to make the audience resonate, you have a poor sense of music. It's not easy for people. Although the score of this music is only two pages, the musical elements it contains are very profound and difficult to understand. It requires certain artistic skills to play the first two sections perfectly. It's not easy to show people music skills, which requires the player to have a rich musical feeling.

Teachers should adopt as many methods as possible to cultivate students' sense of music. First, students can often listen to all kinds of music, which is the most effective way to cultivate or enhance their sense of music. It is important to listen to the music of first-class performers, but in addition, they should have extensive contact with all kinds of performers (whether they are famous or not). When teaching students, teachers should remind them not to listen only to piano music because they are piano learners. They should let them listen to more music played by other instruments, such as violin, cello, flute, etc.; they can also listen to larger music, such as symphony, opera, etc.; if they have the opportunity, they can also let them. Another good way is for students to listen to and compare the same music played by different performers, such as the girl with flaxen hair. There are many performers who have played. Take some recordings of different performers to the students, and let them compare and tell which performer or part of the performance can most resonate with the audience. The teacher can repeatedly put a part of the performance recording to the students and let them compare, which is a very effective learning method.

The second is to sing more. Another good way to cultivate a sense of music is to sing. Music comes from ballads. Playing the piano in the final analysis is to sing with the help of the piano. The beautiful songs floating in your heart will reach the hearts of the audience through the sound of the piano and deeply resonate with them. People can find that people with a good sense of music often sing well.

However, there seems to be a prejudice that people majoring in piano either hate singing or sing badly. Although this is just a prejudice, I think it is a great pity. Piano learners do not necessarily sing well, but many piano learners are introverted. They are not used to or suitable for singing loudly. Because singing requires courage standing in front of people, let your body from head to toe, and every part is under people's attention. In some foreign music colleges, students majoring in piano must also minor in vocal music courses at the same time. When taking the vocal music examination, many students majoring in piano have to show their voice under the attention of many examiners. They must be very embarrassed to play the piano. Due to the large body of the piano, the player can only face the audience on the side of his body with the help of the piano and play in a chair. Once the performance starts, the player is immersed in his own world and is not affected by the audience.

However, singing is a very effective way to cultivate students' sense of music, which can virtually enhance students' sense of music. Therefore, students should sing consciously, even if they don't make a sound, they should try to sing in their hearts with the sound of the piano.

2.5. Enhance students' practical ability of performance

Every piano practice has its specific goal, some to strengthen finger training, some to be able to

play Bach's creative music or Mozart's Sonata, etc. However, no matter which goal, piano practice is ultimately to cultivate students' performance practice ability, so that students can swing wine freely in performance, not only express themselves, but also be accepted by the audience. To achieve this goal, we must let students participate in more piano concerts. Participating in piano concerts is regarded as a means to cultivate students' performance practice ability, because it provides students with opportunities and occasions to express themselves and promotes the agreement between the two goals of "expressing themselves" and "satisfying the audience".

Experience shows that at a certain age, as long as you listen to a short piece of music in piano performance, you can understand all the personality characteristics of the player to a certain extent. The performance methods of each note and melody reflect the personality characteristics of the player. The piano music played by the determined person is strong, while the piano music played by the indecisive person is lifeless. In other words, players express themselves with the help of the piano. The piano should not play isolated notes and rigid melodies, but express themselves with the help of the piano, which is regarded as entering a higher level. Therefore, when practicing the piano, teachers should try to respect the opinions of students and accept their ways of expression. You know, even children will express their unique characteristics through the sound of the piano. It can be said that it is the common goal of all piano practitioners to express themselves through piano performance, no matter whether he is interested in piano or aspires to become a professional piano player. The ultimate goal of ordinary piano teaching can be said to enable students to successfully express themselves and satisfy the audience.

Expressing yourself and satisfying the audience are two different issues. Of course, it is ideal for the performer's self-expression to be consistent with the audience's satisfaction, but the reality is often unsatisfactory. Only paying attention to the performance of oneself often ignores the audience and cannot arouse their resonance; on the contrary, the performer has to make some compromise to take into account the satisfaction of the audience, and the performance will become boring. Therefore, helping students successfully coordinate the relationship between the two is the ultimate goal of piano teaching. When practicing the piano, students should often be reminded to strive to coordinate the two goals of self-expression and audience satisfaction. Teachers should organize students to participate in piano recitals as much as possible, enhance their practical ability of performance, encourage students to relax their tension and let them fully and freely express themselves in performance, which is the first step for students to play successfully.

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