

# The Reform of Piano Teaching in Higher Normal Schools for the Training of Application-oriented Talents

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## Abstract

For decades, piano teaching has obtained achievements of world interest through the unremitting efforts of Chinese piano teachers. In the new era, the country is shifting towards diversified and practical talents, followed by urgent reforms in piano teaching. This paper takes national documents as the yardstick, combines the needs of social talents, analyzes and interprets the importance, ideas, methods, textbooks, and evaluation models of piano teaching, etc., and proposes various targeted reform opinions in order to provide references of broad music workers.

## Keywords

Application-oriented; piano teaching; reform.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, piano teaching in higher normal schools in our country has mainly experienced the exploratory period from 1949 to 1965, the stagnation period from 1966 to 1976, the recovery period from 1977 to 1998, and the comprehensive promotion period after the enrollment expansion in 1999. In recent years, as the country attaches great importance to higher education, higher normal education has also been pushed to unprecedented new heights, especially in the "National Standard of Undergraduate Major Teaching Quality in Ordinary High School" issued by the Ministry of Education in January 2018 [1], It clearly points out the orientation and tasks of music education in normal school, which also puts forward new requirements for piano teaching in normal schools.

## 2. IMPORTANCE OF PIANO TEACHING IN HIGHER NORMAL SCHOOLS

### 2.1. Piano Teaching in Higher Normal Schools Affects the Training of Music Talents

Higher normal schools are the cradle for the nation to train music talents, and it is also the main front for training music teachers of primary and secondary schools, social training institutions and grassroots literary and artistic workers. Piano has always been used as a core course and basic course in music majors in higher normal schools, often including: piano performance, piano accompaniment, piano playing and singing, piano teaching methods, etc. It has the longest semesters, the most lessons, and the most credits. Whether it is vocal music, sight singing, ear training, composition, teaching methods, music appreciation, even instrumental music, and dance, all are based on the piano, as a result, four of the seven programs set up in the college students' basic skills competition are related to piano, therefore, piano teaching not only affects students' piano achievements, but also affects the academic performance of other related subjects, and directly affects the training quality of music talents.

## 2.2. Piano Teaching in Higher Normal Schools Affects the Employment of Music Talents

With the development of the times, society has continuously put forward new requirements for music talents in higher normal schools. Whether it is primary and secondary school, cultural department, and training institution, music talents with good ideological quality, solid professional ability, rich practical experience, and balanced comprehensive ability are needed. In recent years, with the increase of piano shops and piano studios; the continuous construction of school choirs, pipe bands, dance teams, and instrumental bands, various units have paid more and more attention to piano performance, piano accompaniment, and piano singing. Some units even hire students who are good at piano accompaniment with high salaries, and some departments decide whether to hire them based on their piano playing and singing level, this makes the employment success rate of music talents more and more inclined to students who are good at piano, it not only reflects the importance of piano subject, but also puts forward new requirements for piano teaching.

## 2.3. Piano Teaching in Normal Schools Also Affects Other Social Functions

The ancient Chinese music literature "Yue Ji" mentioned the relationship between "music" and "morality" many times, the so-called "music is the essence of morality", "music is used to guide morality", "good music can cultivate good morality; during the Spring and Autumn Period, Confucius also put forward the viewpoints of "there is no better way to govern the people than courtesy; there is no better way to change folk customs than music, people's cultivation starts from learning poetry, stands on learning etiquette and completes in learning music, it can be seen that music has multiple social functions of education, sentiment, wisdom and self-cultivation. Under the new situation, with the widespread popularity of piano, an important part of music, people's appreciation and depth of understanding of piano have been greatly improved. The sound of the piano can be heard everywhere in schools, squares, supermarkets, stations, and entertainment venues, the piano has fully entered into people's lives. People appreciate the exquisiteness of the piano itself, the sound of the piano, and are intoxicated in the emotions and pictures of piano music: such as "Revolutionary Etude" (Chopin), "Yellow River Concerto" (Yin Chengzong, Chu Wanghua, Liu Zhuang, Sheng Lihong, Shi Shucheng and Xu Feixing); "Spring Journey Suite" (Ding Shande), "Spring Song" (Mendelssohn); "For Alice" (Beethoven), "Dream of Love" (Liszt) ) Wait. The "smell, feel, think, and act" are integrated through the piano, perceive "truth, goodness and beauty", spread "truth, goodness and beauty", and practice "truth, goodness and beauty".

## 3. CURRENT SITUATION AND EXISTING PROBLEMS OF PIANO TEACHING IN HIGHER NORMAL SCHOOLS

### 3.1. Educational Idea Deviation

In teaching, teachers often take teacher as core and teaching as the main body, so that students passively accept in the learning process, forget the student-based teaching ideas, and restrict students' subjective initiative and independent creativity. For example, when students play arpeggio, the teacher often tells the students how to play and what to pay attention to, although there is nothing wrong, it is lacking in students' independent thinking and multi-directional exploration. Why students make mistakes? Is it a question of attitude, method, thinking, or even understanding, or hand type? Teachers should judge more, discuss more, let students express their opinions more, and fully reflect the student-oriented teaching thinking.

### 3.2. Single Teaching Method

The traditional teaching method has played an important role in piano teaching, but facing the background of diversified, networked, rapid and practical society in today's society, the

training of application-oriented talents is not comprehensive and scientific enough. For example, teachers are not good at using MOOC, flipped classroom, and mixed teaching methods in teaching, which make students lack learning interest, low learning efficiency, and poor application.

### **3.3. Slow Updating of Textbooks**

In traditional teaching, teachers like to use familiar textbooks and are not good at updating or creating them. Even some teachers used those two textbooks for decades, which make students not receive enough new knowledge in the learning process; many excellent new works cannot enter into the classroom or enter into the students' piano room, which will inevitably lead to poor teaching effects, moreover, it cannot articulate with the international and social new era.

### **3.4. Old Evaluation Modes**

The piano evaluation modes are simple and outdated, they has always applied the traditional mode when students playing on stage and teachers evaluating off stage, neglect the training of students' performance and paying no attention to students' investigation and attention at ordinary times. All makes the students' ability to perform on the stage is poor, and they are not serious enough to practice the piano at ordinary times, they only study the works in the final examination, which affects the training of students' application ability.

## **4. REFORM OF APPLICATION-ORIENTED TALENT TRAINING IN PIANO TEACHING**

### **4.1. Change Teaching Ideas**

Teachers should take students as the main body, strengthen and give play to students' subjective initiative and independent innovative thinking, focus on cultivating students' curiosity, enterprising spirit, and responsibility, and strengthen their sense of social responsibility, self-identity, scientific self-evaluation, and cooperative ability, innovation and entrepreneurship, and other aspects of training, the application as the goal, compound talents as the goal, change the traditional teaching ideas that only focus on teaching.

### **4.2. Improve Teaching Methods**

Facing the diversified, networked, rapid and practical background of today's society, teachers should continue to learn new teaching methods, use QQ, WeChat, Weibo, Tencent Classroom, Tencent Conference, Wisdom Tree and other network platforms carry out online teaching, and combine offline classroom teaching, continuously implement, optimize, and innovate flipped classroom, MOOC, and mixed teaching methods, and continuously cultivate students' application ability in teaching.

### **4.3. Innovate and Optimize Textbooks**

Textbooks should be used in a targeted way. For example, students with poor finger independence, inactive running, irregular double-tone legato, and insufficient time-keeping should practice in combination with the relevant skills in the "Hanon" and "Schmidt Piano Finger Practice" textbooks; students with poor left-hand ability should choose the Behrens Piano Left-Hand Etude (Op.89), Czerny's "twenty-four Piano Etude for Left-handed" (Op.718), Saint-Saëns "Six Piano Etude for Left-handed (Op.135) and other textbooks, excellent students can also use twenty-two in Godowsky's "53 Etudes d'apres Chopin" for the left hand to conduct teaching; The students who have a certain performance foundation, but have a poor musical feeling, they should match Tchaikovsky's "Four Seasons", Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words", Schubert's Improvisations, Chopin's Preludes and Nocturnes, Debussy's "Childrens

Corner", "Estampes" and "The Complete Preludes", Wang Jianzhong's "Five Folk Songs of Yunnan" and Chu Wanghua's "Jiangnan Scene Suit" and other textbooks. Similarly, in the piano improvisatory accompaniment and singing teaching should also integrate "Keyboard Harmony and Improvisatory Accompaniment" (Sun Weiquan, Liu Dongyun), "Piano Improvisatory Accompaniment Guide" (Sun Weiquan, Chao Zhiyu), "Keyboard Harmony and Improvisatory Accompaniment" (Zeng Xiaolan, Wang Liming), "New Edition of Piano Improvisatory Accompaniment Course" (Liu Cong, Han Dong), "Self-Playing and Singing Course" (Zhou Yinchang) and other high-quality textbooks.

Moreover, it is necessary to increase the contents of national music and inherit national classics. For example, the etude can select Li Jialu's "Basic Piano Skill Training", Li Yinghai's "Pentatonic Piano Fingering Practice", Du Mingxin's "Etudes" (1955), Guo Zhihong's "Etudes" (1958), Chu Wanghua's "Concert Etude—Dance Music" (1961), Ni Hongjin's "Four Piano Etude" (1979), Zhao Xiaosheng "Six Piano Solo Concert Etude" (1980), Ding Shande "Sixteen Simple Piano Etude" (1988), Xue Weien's "Chinese Pentatonic Piano Etude" (2000) [2], Dou Qing's "Sixty Piano Etudes with Chinese Style" (2012) as textbooks. The polyphony can select Zhai Jingwei's "Polyphonic Piano Pieces Collection (2009) 11", Chen Mingzhi's "40 Piano Polyphonic Pieces", and "Polyphonic Piano Collection with Chinese Style" compiled by the editorial department of People's Music Publishing House (1997), and Sheng Ming, Feng Dan's "50 Chinese Folk Songs Polyphonic Piano Works" (2014) and other textbooks to conduct teaching. Solo can refer to the "Chinese Piano Solo Classics in One Hundred Years" (Volume 1-7) published by Shanghai Music Publishing House. The ensemble can select "Selected Works of Chinese Style Piano Ensemble-Four Hands, Double Piano" OF Zhang Kai and Zhan Yihong (2014), "Selected Works of Chinese Double Piano" compiled by Zhang Youyu, Zhao Xi, and Piano and Pipa Concerto "Mulan", piano and erhu concerto "Red Plum Caprice", piano and Guzheng concerto "Night Mooring by Maple Bridge", piano and Yangqin concerto "Rhapsody" as textbooks, etc. [3]. Increase the study of folk music and strengthen the wide application of Chinese piano works in piano teaching.

#### **4.4. Improve Evaluation Modes**

The higher normal schools should continuously optimize the evaluation model, pay attention to the cultivation of students' practical and application ability, increase the inspection of students' usual learning situation, and improve students' various abilities. implement the evaluation model of "performance replace examination", "make students independently complete from planning, training, rehearsal, and the final performance in team, which greatly exercises students' collaboration ability, planning ability, stage performance ability and application ability.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

In the new era, demand for talents of the country and society are more diversified, moreover, the demand for piano talents in higher normal schools is more application-oriented, the training of application-oriented piano talents must require full reform of piano teaching. Only by continuously changing teaching ideas, improving teaching methods, optimizing and innovating teaching materials, and improving the evaluation model can the piano teaching of higher normal schools achieve greater and better results in the training of application-oriented talents.

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