

# On the Cultivation of Students' Independent Learning Ability in Piano Teaching

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**Abstract:** Piano education is an independent and basic subject in music education. In the process of piano teaching, the task of teachers is not only to teach piano playing skills, but also to let students learn and master the ability to independently perform music works through various training and training. Therefore, in the process of piano teaching, the cultivation of students' independent learning ability is a crucial content. The author will elaborate on how to cultivate students' independent learning ability from four aspects of "listening", "reading", "thinking" and "acting".

As the saying goes: "A minute on the stage takes ten-year practice" This well-known proverb shows that in the process of learning, every player not only needs to acquire knowledge, but also needs a lot of independent practice and independent thinking to complete the learning task and achieve the learning purpose. Teachers' task is not only to impart knowledge, but also to guide and cultivate students' ability of independent practice and independent learning.

Piano playing is a complex work. What students learn is not to master the playing methods and skills in a narrow sense It needs to learn how to understand the essence of music works, analyze the background of the times, expression techniques, musical structure, harmony and other contents of the works, and then think about what kind of voice and timbre the works need to use to show the music image and style of the works[1]. Finally, we can determine which playing methods and ways to use, and solve the technical difficulties in the works, and finally achieve the purpose of correctly performing music works. In the process of learning, the above contents are complementary and indispensable[2-3]. For this reason, in the process of piano teaching, teachers should conduct more enlightening teaching for students, guide students to systematically and comprehensively learn various knowledge in the process of learning, and let students learn to think and learn independently[4].

In order to cultivate students' independent learning ability, teachers need to make a comprehensive and systematic plan. According to the characteristics of music education and the content of piano teaching, it can be roughly divided into "listening", "reading", "thinking" and "acting".

## 1. "Listening" -- expanding music vision and improving aesthetic ability

Listening is one of people's inborn abilities. It helps us to perceive the rich information in the world. The appreciation of music art is an activity completed by hearing, in which "listening" is the most important link. From different perspectives, listening includes two aspects: perception music and self-listening.

1. Playing methods and playing skills are often understood in a narrow sense as specific hand type, fingering, or holding fingers high, etc., but in fact, playing methods are various, which are adjusted with the needs of different music, so playing methods and playing skills cannot be one-sided understanding.

Perceiving music refers to the appreciation of music, through listening to music works, feeling the culture and connotation conveyed in music, feeling its emotions and arousing resonance. Through the appreciation of music, gradually understand music, read music, and ultimately achieve the purpose of improving aesthetic ability. In piano teaching, the education of students is not limited to the classroom, students should be encouraged to expand their learning to extracurricular. Because students need to have extensive contact with music works of different periods and schools of

composers, such as vocal music, solo works of musical instruments, ensemble works, symphony, opera, dance drama, etc., as well as other art forms, such as literature, art, drama, etc., which are helpful to cultivate students' perception of art.

Self-listening mainly refers to the player's self-listening, which includes listening to melody, harmony, timbre and emotional expression. In the cultivation of listening ability, self-listening ability is particularly important, which involves the technical ability and control ability of players. In the process of teaching, students should strengthen the training of self-listening in the process of improving their skills.

Listening to melody, melody is the main means of expression of musical thinking, and it is a musical language composed of the basic elements of music, such as mode, rhythm, beat, speed, strength and so on. The change of rhythm and playing speed. In the process of self-listening, students' control of inner rhythm is controlled by regular strong and weak beats, and then on this basis, analyze the division of music sentences in melody and its representative significance. Listening to harmony, the change of harmony and music texture. Harmony is the basis of music color. Music texture is a means of changing music color. Different emotions need to be performed with different music texture. For students to learn how to listen to the change of harmony and music texture, changing music is undoubtedly a very good choice. On the basis of the same melody and harmony, through the change of music texture, it will show completely different emotions.

Listening to timbre, in piano playing, the timbre changes according to the player's playing method. The subtle difference of touch key mode will lead to different effects of sound. Therefore, we should listen carefully to the touch key mode and distinguish its differences. From the most basic staccato, legato and jump, they have already represented different emotions and styles; the change of touch intensity is easier to reflect the change of music mood. The direct and decisive touch usually plays a strong and powerful effect. The slow and soft touch will play a quiet and soft effect. For example, the use of pedal will enrich the effect of voice change. Through the repeated listening practice of each touch key mode, students' ability to control the change of timbre can be strengthened.

## **2. "Reading" -- the cultivation of music basic accomplishment and independent analysis ability**

Music score is not only the composer's record of his music works, but also an important material reflecting his thoughts[5-6]. Every sound and mark on the music score needs the performer to understand the works through careful "reading"[7]. Therefore, in the process of learning, we need to combine rich theoretical knowledge, such as music theory, harmony, musical form, music history, etc., to analyze the work in detail, analyze the creation background, era characteristics, cultural characteristics, work structure and composer's creation ideas, so as to know the correct performance methods and methods, and correctly grasp the music style and artistic characteristics of the work[8].

### **2.1 Reading background -- Analysis of cultural characteristics**

In the process of piano performance teaching, it needs strong theoretical support to grasp the style and emotion of the work accurately. When students are faced with music works of different styles, the first thing they should do is to guide them to understand the background and cultural characteristics of the works. Under the influence of the background of the times, social events, cultural background and other factors, composers in different periods have great differences in the expression of music. For example, in the style of classicism and romanticism, music in classicism is influenced by the background of the times, social fashion, philosophy, enlightenment thoughts and other factors, and "rationality" is the basis of people's thoughts and behaviors[9]. Therefore, generally speaking, the music language of the classical period is simple and refined, the rhythm is smooth, natural and rigorous, and the music works are more rational; while the music of the romantic period is influenced by the liberalism and nationalism thoughts from the end of the 18th century to the 19th century, which is more abundant and free in music form, good at using lyric and descriptive techniques, and more personalized and national.

Therefore, in the process of teaching, whenever the teacher arranges a new work, the first thing the students should do is to understand the story behind the work and read the relevant materials extensively, rather than just reading and reading the spectrum[10].

## **2.2 Reading music -- an analysis of music form**

Music form includes the style, structure, logic and content of music works. In the teaching system of music major, the school offers many courses of music theory to teach the students to analyze the music form, such as music theory, music form analysis, harmony, accessories, etc. In piano teaching, as a teacher, we need to guide students to combine these professional theoretical knowledge with performance, analyze the music we are learning carefully, and let students know what it is and why it is.

For example, in the teaching of piano performance, the famous Russian pianist and educator G. negotz suggested that students should learn the piano music score the same way they learn the score: not only study the whole work, but also decompose the work into some components - Harmony structure and polyphony structure - to study the details. Study the main thing and the secondary thing respectively. Under such requirements, students will use their music theoretical knowledge to explore, think and analyze music in many aspects, such as musical structure, harmony, musical texture, musical language, etc., which will help to improve students' logical thinking and imagination. Over time, students will have memories of harmony, music texture and tonal style, and then when they come into contact with new works, they can directly reflect the same kind of music form.

## **2.3 Reading marks: an analysis of musical language**

The transmission of music information comes from its rich music language, including melody, rhythm, speed and strength, etc., while music language is the specific means to transmit music content, which shows the style and characteristics of music language through notes, connections, jumps, stresses, strength marks, music terms, pedals and other marks. In the process of music performance, each element represents different meanings in different environments. Therefore, when treating each mark, teachers should warn students to be cautious. And by comparing different versions and consulting materials, we can think about and choose the right way of deduction. For example, with regard to the speed of Beethoven's works, different versions have different understandings of the mark of speed. It includes the different views of Carl Czerny (1792-1857) and Anton Schindler (1794-1864) on speed. Therefore, for students, active learning and expanding their reading will help to improve their ability of active learning and independent thinking, and help them to judge and choose the right way to play through careful analysis.

## **3."Thinking" -- independent thinking and the cultivation of musical imagination**

After the analysis of the music, the next goal of the performer is to accurately express the content and connotation of the music. Rational analysis can help us understand music, and independent thinking and musical imagination is an important step to complete music performance. The significance of musical image to piano performance is much greater than that of other instrumental music performance, because the orchestra can be in the process of pronunciation, but the pianist has no possibility of correction.

### **3.1 Melody, timbre and musical image**

Piano is a kind of musical instrument with rich expressive force. It has a wide range and rich voice color, so it is known as the king of musical instruments. Compared with many musical instruments, piano can play more parts of music, showing more levels of music. Piano works contain rich and multi-level contents. In addition to the theme melody, composers will use different forms of music texture to create according to the needs of music, and harmony is the basis of these music texture changes. Through the changes of different fabrics, different situations and musical images can be created.

### 3.2 Music level and the shaping of music image

In the process of piano performance, the performer's expression of musical language depends on the correct judgment and interpretation. Each piano work has rich levels and complex structure. The rich association ability can help the performer to understand and imitate the music language effectively. Students at any stage of study need to have a deep understanding and imagination of music works. For melody, we can associate it with vocal music, orchestral music or string solo. In the process of learning, students should be guided to think and imagine in many ways: from every sound, every rhythm type, every phrase to think, if you use vocal music or other instruments to perform, what kind of effect will you get; From the perspective of rhythm, whether the process from strong to weak means the end of the phrase, and whether the process from weak to strong means the progress; in multi part works, the content of each part is associated with a variety of instruments, which can more clearly feel the interaction and continuity between the parts. Through constant speculation and imagination, gradually establish the music image, and show it from the complex music structure, so as to make the music image more distinct, the music level more rich, and further improve the performance level of students.

### 4. "Performance" -- performance technique and the cultivation of independent learning ability

"Performance" is the basis of piano teaching and learning. Compared with "play", it contains more and more appropriate contents. The purpose of piano teaching is to let students understand music, understand music, and finally present the artistic image created by composers and performers together through playing, which includes not only the work of playing the piano.

Of course, performance technology is the foundation of performing music works, and also the cornerstone of creating musical images and feelings. In order to perform musical works accurately and expressively, the performer is required to have comprehensive and skillful performance skills, all of which are inseparable from the word "practice".

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2. [Su] G. negoz, translated by Wang Qizhang and Wu Peihua, [M] on piano performance art, music press, 1963, P. 25

3. Carl Czerny was a disciple of Beethoven. Anton schendler was Beethoven's Secretary since 1816 and took care of Beethoven until his death. He wrote the biography of Beethoven. They had different views and opinions on the speed mark in Beethoven's works.

The training of piano skills should be planned according to the students' own level and progress. Generally, the training of piano skills is combined with the works. Many students like to practice from the beginning to the end repeatedly in the process of practice, which is not a good and efficient way of practice, because there is no solution to the problems in practice. Usually, the teacher will point out the students' problems in the class, and give them some practice methods to solve the performance technology. Therefore, students should practice pertinently in the process of practice, and through thinking through the truth. And through the way of practice thinking practice, we can find the truth in practice and find the correct way of deduction, which is an effective practice method.

After mastering the practice method, we must think carefully, combine the "listening", "reading" and "thinking" mentioned above with practice, so as to sublimate from "playing" to "performing" and truly understand the essence of piano performance.

To sum up, in piano teaching, it is more difficult to teach students how to shape the artistic image of music than how to play it. It depends on whether the students have the qualities mentioned above, but this is the key problem in piano teaching. As Anton Rubinstein said, everyone can play, but few can perform. Therefore, in the piano teaching, teachers must guide and cultivate students' independent learning ability in four aspects of "listening", "reading", "thinking" and "acting", and form the independent learning habit of independent exploration, independent analysis and independent thinking, so that they can improve their performance level more effectively in the

process of learning the piano, and perform music works correctly and with personality.

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