



# Problems and Strategies in Piano Music Teaching Performing Arts

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## Abstract

Piano playing is both elegant and noble. It requires not only the mastery of traditional techniques, but also the use of various skills, including visual, auditory, memory, rhythm, and expression. This diversified teaching approach is highly suitable for beginners as it fosters their thinking, rationality, and innovation, while also activating their brains. However, there are some common issues in piano music teaching and performance art that require corresponding strategies to address. Firstly, students may face technical difficulties and challenges in tackling the difficulty level of musical pieces. Teachers can assist students in overcoming these challenges by employing appropriate teaching methods and practice strategies. Secondly, cultivating performance skills and expressive abilities is crucial. Teachers can enhance students' musical expression by guiding musical interpretation and emotional conveyance. Moreover, stage performance anxiety is another common issue. Students can overcome this anxiety through stage training and psychological support. Lastly, encouraging students to engage in self-directed learning and creative performances is an important strategy for enhancing piano music teaching and performance art. By addressing these issues and implementing the relevant strategies, the quality and effectiveness of piano music teaching and performance art can be greatly improved.

## Keywords

Piano Teaching, Performing Arts, Teaching Strategies

## 1. Introduction

Piano music education and performance art is a challenging yet exhilarating field. Learning to play the piano is not just about mastering techniques; it requires students to utilize multiple senses and abilities to convey elegant and profound musical expression. However, there are common issues in piano music education and performance art, such as technical difficulties and expressive capabilities. In order to help students overcome these challenges, teachers need to employ corresponding strategies and methods. This article will explore the common problems in piano music education and performance art and provide some solution strategies. By understanding these issues and strategies, teachers will be better equipped to guide students and enhance their musical performance skills and artistic expression. Whether beginners or experienced piano players, the content of this article will positively contribute to their progress and success in the field of piano music education and performance art (Qian H, 2022).

## 2. Piano performing arts teaching status quo

### 2.1 Change the traditional "teacher"-centered teaching model

In recent years, due to the rapid progress of education in China, the teaching of piano performing arts has moved

away from the past. The teacher's role is to indicate the students' learning goals and to cultivate their interest through encouragement and guidance so that they can gradually be exposed to and master the skills of piano performance, and ultimately truly enhance their musical literacy.

## **2.2 Western works dominate instruction**

Our teachers need to have a keen eye for observation, exploration, and appreciation, and strive to give our students a better understanding of this traditional culture. Through these efforts, we hope that our students will gain a better appreciation of the classical repertoire of "Western Music" and thus a better understanding of this traditional culture. By using traditional folk instruments in the "Chinese-style" classroom, we hope to inspire our students to understand the beauty of "Chinese style" music from a new perspective.

## **3. Piano music works in the teaching mode and problems**

### **3.1 Current piano classroom teaching mode**

Due to the rapid development of the market economy in recent years in our country, people's interest has shifted from their original enthusiasm for pursuing artworks to learning how to play artistic pieces more effectively. As an ancient instrument originating from the West, the piano has been widely used and has become a compulsory course in many art institutions. Most universities employ traditional teaching methods, allowing students to understand, appreciate, and master Western music through listening, observing, practicing, and listening again. They also practice emulating popular performance styles from around the world. Through continuous contemplation, they can better understand the songs composed by musicians and the artistic ideals they pursue. Although traditional piano courses have been in existence for a long time and have improved students' musical foundation and performance abilities, people often find that their cultural background is not comprehensive enough when they immerse themselves in appreciating outstanding artworks.

### **3.2 Problems**

Today, many people tend to base their music on Western music and make it mandatory in all their classes. However, since many of them only follow the traditional routines, their classes become monotonous and fail to capture their interest. Therefore, we need to pay more attention to our own traditions and strengthen our language skills and cultural heritage. If we are to develop a healthy sense of national cultural identity, we need to understand and accept traditional culture at its roots. Therefore, we should incorporate traditional cultural elements into our language and culture so that our students can be inspired by the arts (Ya H, 2022).

#### **(1) Balance of skill training**

In piano music education and performance art, the issue of balancing technical training encompasses the challenge of improving playing skills while maintaining the integrity of emotions and artistic expression. The technique forms the fundamental foundation, enhancing students' finger agility, hand positions, and sense of rhythm. However, an excessive focus on technical prowess can lead to performances devoid of emotion and individuality, rendering the music mechanical and lacking in artistry. When students place excessive emphasis on technical training, they may overlook the emotional significance that music should convey, concentrating their attention solely on note accuracy and speed. Consequently, they struggle to truly comprehend the composer's intentions and struggle to infuse their own emotions into their performances. Therefore, achieving a balance between technical training and the integration of emotions and artistic expression is crucial in order to elevate piano music performances, endowing them with greater expressiveness, uniqueness, and artistic value.

#### **(2) Depth of emotional expression**

The depth of emotional expression poses some challenges in piano music education and performance art. One of these challenges is that students may encounter limitations in expressing emotions. Despite having excellent technical skills and musical understanding, they may struggle to truly convey their inner emotions to the audience. This could be due to a lack of emotional expression techniques or a lack of confidence in their own emotions and expression. Another issue is excessive emotional expression. Sometimes, students may overemphasize emotions, resulting in overly exaggerated or overly emotional music performances. Such situations can disrupt the balance of the music and affect the audience's understanding and appreciation of the piece. Moreover, the depth of emotional expression is also tied to students' personal experiences and emotional states. Some students may face emotional challenges that

make it difficult for them to fully experience and express the emotions within the music. This requires them to enhance their emotional expression abilities through personal growth and accumulated experiences.

### (3) Artistic development

The development of artistic expression in piano music education and performance can face several challenges. One of these challenges is that students may become overly focused on technical skills and techniques, neglecting the importance of artistic expression. They may excessively pursue perfect notes and precise execution, overlooking the emotions and meaning that the music seeks to convey. This can result in robotic and dull performances that lack uniqueness and personalization. Another issue is that students may lack a deep understanding of the music and creative interpretation (Teng F, 2022). They may simply follow the instructions in the sheet music without exploring the depth and backstory of the music. This mechanical approach may fail to truly move the audience or evoke emotional resonance. Furthermore, some students may be constrained by standardized teaching methods, lacking opportunities for innovation and free expression. They may be required to learn and perform following fixed guidelines and traditional approaches, limiting their personal artistic exploration.

## 4. Basics of piano playing and basic skills training

### 4.1 Reading music

#### 4.1.1 Theoretical knowledge of music foundation

When we start playing a new piece, it is essential to first grasp certain fundamental musical concepts, including music theory, chords, and melody. This is especially useful for children or individuals who have not been exposed to these concepts before. Teachers may simultaneously teach music theory knowledge relevant to the performance and record it so that we can better understand through continuous practice. Through differentiated instruction, we can discover that learning to play the piano not only helps us review our musical foundation but also enables us to master techniques more effectively. Teachers strive to create an active classroom atmosphere, ensuring that our thoughts keep up with their pace and apply appropriate instruction based on individual needs. This helps students firmly imprint the acquired knowledge into their minds and apply it for thinking and reasoning.

#### 4.1.2 Reading the music

Before demonstrating a musical piece to students, it is important to ensure that they carefully read the music. Training in reading skills is crucial. Each symbol in music, including key signatures, time signatures, melody, notes, and fingerings, represents the creative thoughts of the composer. We should introduce and demonstrate them to students one by one, helping them understand the symbols, dynamics, and emotional markings in music. We should also provide the Chinese translation of these terms and record them for students to practice. When starting to perform a new musical piece, it is necessary to maintain a continuous understanding of the music. Before the performance, we should train our skills through independent practice and determine if we have mastered and met the standards through active listening. The performance process should proceed in an organized and gradual manner, requiring patience to allow for continuous improvement in our performance skills. By accurately playing the notes, we can better understand the intentions of the musical masters (Chen Z, 2022).

### 4.2 Auditory training

To improve our skills, it is important to listen regularly and listen carefully to our performances. Through listening, we can identify different tones, speeds, timbres, and expressions, and we need to pay attention to controlling tones and expressions. We should listen carefully and experience our performances. Through repeated practice, we can train our skills and become more focused on mastering the music. By observing and correcting, we can gain a better understanding of our techniques and strengthen them in our daily practice. Furthermore, through practice, we can better master our skills and develop a greater love for our music. When aiming to master an *étude*, it is important to utilize a range of techniques and maintain focus. It is also advisable to regularly play CDs, listen carefully, and understand the message they aim to convey. Using CDs can help us better grasp a piece and focus on impeccable skills. A meticulous performance can assist us in comprehending the essence of meticulousness. Over time, we will deepen our understanding of the significance of meticulousness and be able to remember every detail of the performance more effectively.

### **4.3 Beats**

Mastering good rhythm is crucial for performers. It requires a systematic technique and continuous training. Many individuals may not have perfect singing skills and need guidance to master proper rhythm. Adjusting the performer's technique can improve the quality of the performance. In training, teachers often start with easy music to help students practice and gradually introduce more complex music to enhance their understanding. Students need to put in effort and practice until they can sing independently. Additionally, teachers frequently provide prompts and guidance on how to correctly count the pitch of the music. During demonstrations, teachers should encourage students to sing with a quick and lively tone, following strict singing rules. If needed, students can try singing fast and energetic melodies and emphasize repeated melodies. After the performance, it is important to maintain the rhythm and fully interpret the melody and repeated phrases. To achieve outstanding performances, performers must cultivate their musical abilities, which can only be truly mastered through repeated training. While mastering musical abilities is challenging, it can only be achieved through diligent learning. To make a piece of music captivating, it is necessary to accurately grasp its essence, rather than relying on occasional mistakes. The correct rhythm can make our voice soft yet bring out the emotions deep within us, making our mood joyful. The correct rhythm can make our voice soothing while igniting our emotions and bringing happiness to our hearts.

### **4.4 Touching the keys**

In order to play the instrument with greater ease, we need to concentrate on controlling the rhythm and maintaining a slow tempo. We need to carefully adjust our hand positions to ensure that the power of the instrument we are playing is balanced and that our bodies are in good health. Our teachers will also play some of the instruments themselves and provide us with proper instruction to help us become more familiar with the instrument (Ning Z, 2021).

### **4.5 Relaxation**

Relaxation techniques include adjusting our breathing at the right time, keeping our limbs flexible, and allowing them to be used naturally. For example, when we are moving slowly, our shoulders will naturally stretch forward without being deliberately stiff. When playing the piano, it is important to allow every part of our body to be fully relaxed, paying particular attention to the posture of our hands. The hands should be as perpendicular to the fingertips of the piano as possible, avoiding excessive pulling and twisting. Avoid the use of hand strength as much as possible, and allow our body and mind to be fully conditioned.

### **4.6 Use brain**

Firstly, by performing with full focus and dedication, we can enhance our playing technique. Secondly, we should carefully observe the music and study various details, including the dynamics, hand position, rhythm, and duration of the voices. We should strive to make our performances stand out. However, we should also make full use of our thinking, rather than relying solely on idle time. To improve mastery of technique, it is crucial to master the movements of our fingers. For example, training with Hanon exercises at extremely slow speeds and using a metronome can be beneficial. During training, we pay special attention to the dynamics of various voices and ensure that the fingers used remain consistent without affecting the voices. When starting to think and play, we begin slowly and gradually increase the speed, ultimately aligning playing with the rhythm. Aim to avoid any flaws during the performance until we can execute it flawlessly. When playing a song, we divide it into sections and then integrate them to better understand the overall structure of the lyrics, aligning our performance closely with the theme of the lyrics.

### **4.7 Practice**

To improve the tone quality, we recommend that students practice the piano following the correct steps. This helps avoid repetitive playing and enables them to understand the meaning of the notes effectively. We suggest dividing the notes into sections, focusing on practicing one section at a time and gradually deepening the practice. This approach not only enhances their tone quality but also saves a significant amount of time in understanding the meaning of the notes, allowing for more accurate interpretation. Playing technique is crucial; it involves not only the agility of finger movements but also control over our thinking and emotions. When we play music with full focus, our thinking and emotions will also shift, making our music richer and more vibrant. If we persistently put in effort, our

thinking and emotions will continue to evolve, and our music will become even more diverse and colorful. Therefore, it is important to find as much time as possible to contemplate, allowing our thinking and emotions to freely express themselves before truly performing.

## 5. Analyze the structure of the work

Professor Zhu emphasized that careful reading of sheet music can help people gain a clearer understanding of the composer's thoughts and emotions, which is crucial for interpreting a masterpiece. Through meticulous reading, individuals can grasp the composer's ideas more accurately and comprehensively, using them as a foundation for interpretation. The first step is to provide each performer with a detailed understanding, including their music history, thoughts, emotions, and the unique aspects of the music. We should select outstanding works that reflect the current level of music and teach them how to interpret these excellent pieces. Secondly, we should help students develop independent analysis and processing skills. After class, we can assign them to read and deeply study relevant musical works, linking them to the current social context in order to gain a profound understanding of the emotions conveyed in practical performance. We should also inspire students' creativity and imagination in order to achieve optimal results. We should encourage them to seek solutions independently and cultivate their ability to gather information through personal efforts.

## 6. In terms of musical performance

To better express music, we need to practice diligently and improve our skills. By carefully handling musical compositions, we can gradually delve into the composer's inner world and gain inspiration from their life experiences and social background. Additionally, we can use the logic of the music and our personal feelings to determine which notes need emphasis, which ones need to gradually increase or decrease in intensity, and which ones need to accelerate or decelerate. The expression of music requires the correct performance technique, often necessitating the use of specific performance techniques. By selecting appropriate performance techniques, we can present the music effortlessly, accurately, and harmoniously.

## 7. Conclusion

In music expression, consistent practice and continual improvement of skills are vital. By carefully reading sheet music, delving into the composer's thoughts and emotions, and selecting appropriate performance techniques, we can better convey music, communicate it to the audience, and touch their hearts. Cultivating independent analysis, creativity, and the courage to think and express our own ideas is equally crucial. By maintaining a love and dedication for music, and merging it with our own thoughts and emotions, we can develop a unique musical style and create diverse and vibrant musical works. Whether as students or professional musicians, we should continuously strive for artistic perfection in order to truly understand and interpret music.

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