

Benefits and Pedagogy of Teaching Piano to Preschoolers

Ju Meiling,

Faculty of Music, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia.

E-mail: 2021454012@student.uitm.edu.my

Chong Yew Young,

Faculty of Music, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia. E-mail: chongyew@uitm.edu.my

Abstract--- Music education especially piano training is crucial for young children encouraging their curiosity and creativity. It fosters growth in the virtues of tolerance, perseverance, dedication, attention span, and focus as well as self-awareness, respect, pride, and fulfillment. However, using appropriate techniques is much more important as the preschoolers are different from the adults. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to highlight is not only highlight the benefits of teaching piano to the preschool children but also to explain the relevant piano teaching techniques towards achieving the maximum results. This is necessary considering the nature of these children in terms of linguistic capacity, physical abilities, and social behaviors. The paper concludes that when instructing the preschool children, the systematic introduction of new concepts is very crucial. A piano teacher should take into account elements like the student's age, auditory development, and practice setting. This will in no small measure contribute to successful encounter.

Keywords--- Preschool, Children, Music, Piano, Methods, Developmental Characteristics.

I. Introduction

Recently, there has been a rise in interest in the study of early childhood music. This is related to some of the developmental psychologists' work from the 20th century, according to Jacobson (2006), who supports the notion that music education is crucial for young children. For instance, Montessori (1870–1952) noted that children learn readily in a setting that encourages their curiosity and creativity, and leads them to inquiry, manipulation and experience. The same goes for Vygotsky (1896-1934), who highlighted that play is a crucial part of early learning and that children's interactions with adults are crucial to learning.

According to these psychologists' theories, exposure to music at a young age in developmentally appropriate ways strengthens inherent musical instincts. It makes the idea that exposing children to music from an early age can benefit their entire development. For instance, the study of music and movement in preschool fosters growth in the virtues of tolerance, perseverance, dedication, attention span, and focus as well as self-awareness, respect, pride, and fulfillment (Jacobson, 2006). According to Costa-Giomi (2004), learning music fosters specific cognitive talents necessary for performing verbal and math activities, which is consistent with research on the educational implications of active music engagement (Vaughn, 2000; Thompson et al., 2002). It has also been asserted that exposure to music, especially in relatively undemanding settings like those where background music is played, may enhance academic performance. Similarly, it was discovered that youngsters who grow up in musically rich environments later on in elementary school have greater language achievement ratings (Harding, 1990 cited in Costa-Giomi, 2004).

These, and other studies, show that students who participate in music classes or instruction frequently achieve greater academic results in math and/or language tests than nonparticipants (Teaching Music, 2001). This is because, according to Huseynova, Egilmez, and Engur (2019), learning music fosters children's ability to develop skills like analysis, synthesis, coordination, and creativity by encouraging intentional thought. Based on the foregoing, the goal of this study is to highlight the developmental characteristics of preschoolers in relation to the advantages and techniques of teaching them piano. This examination of piano teaching strategies is crucial because, as noted by Uszler, Gordon, and Smith (2000), piano teacher education programs at universities, colleges, and conservatories do not focus on young

children, placing pianists and performers in awkward situations when it comes to instructing very young beginners.

II. Concept and Characteristics of Preschool Children

Huang (2007) asserts that in the modern era of piano instruction, the term "preschool piano student" has evolved to refer to the "average-age beginner." Thus, Uszler, Gordon, and Smith (2000) claimed that preschool piano students are kids who start learning the piano "between four and six years old". In the world of piano teaching, this age range is accepted (Bastien, 1995), and the majority of preschool piano method books' authors agree (Huang, 2007). Bredekamp and Copple (1997) stated that in their opinion, the term "preschool" refers to "the years before school enrollment". This age range, which still encompasses the years between two and a half and six, is a significant subset of what is currently referred to as early childhood, which is defined as the period from birth to eight years. Therefore, it is acceptable to say that children between the ages of three and six fit under the term of "preschool" when using the age divisions supplied by Uszler, et al. (2000) in conjunction with those used in early childhood music instruction.

Characteristically, by the time they are preschoolers, young children have achieved numerous developmental milestones in the areas of linguistic capacity, physical abilities, and social behaviors. Therefore, for teaching and learning to be successful, teachers must be aware of the developmental traits of their students. Preschoolers physically display characteristics such as size and body proportion that are distinct from those associated with the toddler's image (Berk, 2000). The gross-motor stage of development shows the most astounding physical achievements. Children in this age range love participating in role-playing games and quick plays that give them plenty of opportunity to explore and develop their gross motor abilities. Therefore, the best method for teaching music and specialized instrumental playing techniques is through gross motor movements (Heyge, 2002), however for young children, the amount of time spent sitting at the piano needs to be carefully evaluated. Children of preschool age, according to early childhood educators, should be given the chance to develop their hand muscles and fine-motor skills through activities like drawing, painting, counting small play objects, stringing beads, working with playdough, building with Legos, or even practicing pouring milk. With the use of these kinds of exercises, teachers of young children can make sure that their students' fine-motor abilities grow in a healthy way (Huang, 2007).

Additionally, children, during this period, develop their sense of touch and perception. Young children's hearing is a miracle of nature, allowing them to not only identify the direction and tone colors of diverse sound sources, such as the timbre of musical instruments, but also later to distinguish phonetic sounds for the purpose of language acquisition (Huang, 2007). Despite having well-developed aural perception by the time they reach preschool, children's binocular vision coordination is still weak and immature (Yang & Kapoula, 2003; Bucci & Kapoula, 2005). Preschoolers have farsightedness as a result. Therefore, with this age group, large, clear print should be employed. Additionally, kids in this age range start to recognize visual patterns, which later serve as inspiration for many of their own creations in fields like painting, puzzles, construction, letters, and words. Piano teachers will know which physical activities are best for young students of the piano if they are familiar with children's psychomotor development. It can be necessary to modify piano lesson activities so that the physical demands are age-appropriate.

Furthermore, the level of development in the language, communication, and cognitive domains at the proper developmental stage of preschoolers is referred to as intellectual development. This age group of kids exhibits verbal and articulated linguistic aptitudes. When a young child learns a language, they experience a "language explosion," adding 50 new words to their repertoire each month (Huang, 2007). Likewise, preschoolers' social development is boosted by improving linguistic and communication abilities. Playing pretend is one of the new social tactics that emerges. Early childhood educators support the benefits of pretend play and play for kids' linguistic, cognitive, and social growth. According to studies, make-believe play helps preschoolers develop their symbolic thought skills as well as their language, memory, logical thinking, imagination, and creativity (Berger & Cooper, 2003; Guilmartin, 2002; Hicky, 2002; Jordan-DeCarbo & Nelson, 2002). The inventiveness spurred by pretending and playing extends to the use of musical instruments for improvisation, investigation, and discovery (Jordan-DeCarbo & Nelson, 2002; Kiehn, 2003).

In addition, between the ages of 3 and 6, children's cognition experiences a significant transformation based on language development and the growth of mental representation. Early childhood educators must

comprehend the developing cognitive abilities of these young children, such as how they reason, think, recall, or solve problems, in order to engage preschoolers in learning activities. Only after having this knowledge can piano teachers develop effective methods for evaluating the knowledge and cognitive abilities of their students. For instance, these young infants are mostly interested in themselves. So, side-by-side play, also known as parallel play among younger preschoolers, is an example of egocentrism. Preschoolers can joyfully create knowledge based on their responses to sensory stimuli (Taetle & Cutietta, 2002). The primary responsibility of the preschool piano teacher is to promote decentration and to seize the readiness moment, which is crucial for learning, in order to assist these young children in growing out of their egocentric world.

Preschoolers also have a propensity to focus perceptions on a single aspect or dominant component of a complicated perceptual field. Centering is the term for this. Therefore, young toddlers are only able to focus on one specific musical element at a time (Huang, 2007). It is challenging for these kids to pay attention to two or more things at once, such as dynamics and pace, or both the melodic and harmonic elements of a song. Young children under the age of eight will more easily identify dominant rhythm patterns than timbre due to central restrictions. Similarly, the egocentrism and centration inclinations have an impact on the conservation preoperational trait. This suggests the capacity to recognize an object's defining characteristic, or invariance, even when its outward appearance changes. It has been said that the inability to conserve is what prevents people from hearing consistent beats within shifting rhythms or the same melody played by several instruments. By the same reasoning, young listeners might not pick up on a rhythmic pattern that persists despite the allocated major tonality changing to minor or a major chord that stays major despite the designated dynamic. Early childhood educators therefore stress the importance of "hands-on" activities for young children during the preschool years. These young toddlers learn by direct, meaningful experiences as they discover and develop knowledge. As a result, the guiding principle for music educators of preschoolers should emphasize doing music rather than talking about it (Elliot, 1995).

Social Maturity, which has to do with the degree of full development or the "capacity to control one's own feelings, knowledge about other people, interpersonal skills, friendships, intimate relationships, and moral reasoning and behavior" (Berk, 2000) is another developmental trait of preschoolers. For instance, during the preschool years, the initial stage of social emotional development is connected to the child's evolving self-concept (Berk, 2000). The main determinants of young children's self-concept and sense of good self-esteem during the socialization process are their parents and instructors. Children throughout this time behave more cooperatively than toddlers because they get pleasure from pleasing adults. Also, preschoolers enjoy taking the lead and acting skillfully, especially while playing and participating in artistic activities. The opportunity to learn music or how to play the piano is frequently the young child's first time being alone without their parents, and their insecurity toward the teacher's and their parents' unknown expectations can be overpowering. Thus, one of the key responsibilities of the piano teacher is to help young novices gain confidence in order to enhance their personal and social competency and raise their level of self-esteem.

III. Benefits and Methods of Teaching Piano to the Preschoolers

Music education specialists emphasize that learning an instrument (such as the piano), which is a crucial component of music education, is crucial for children's personality development, emotional growth, and skill development. It also helps them learn to be self-assured, patient, and self-disciplined, as well as develop long-lasting attention skills (Hallam, 2015). As a result, Minina (2012) showed that the younger a child begins music lessons, the better the outcome as playing an instrument like the piano needs accuracy and precision, both of which require flawless coordination between the eye, hand, and foot. This indicates that piano lessons benefit kids' psychomotor development. According to Ulugbay (2013), learning to play the piano till the age of 12 is the most effective strategy to develop cognitive structure that influences preschoolers' ability to demonstrate high levels of math and scientific proficiency. Chess and mathematics both require high levels of brain function.

Pavlov's (2008) research emphasized the value of instrument education. In one of his studies, there were 25 children who did not play an instrument and 41 children who did (14 playing flute and 27 playing piano). The traits and cognitive abilities of each youngster, who was between the ages of 6 and 7, were the same. All of the students underwent six separate neuropsychological tests to gauge their cognitive and attentional skills after 7-8 months of instruction. Children who participated in musical activities showed more

improvement than those who did not. Children who played the flute had better spatial sense than the other kids. Children who played the piano accelerated more quickly and showed improvements in their cognitive, psychomotor, and logical abilities as well as their verbal reasoning and verbal memory.

A study done by Permiakova and Tkachenko (2016) on young piano students produced comparable findings. 50 kids were included in their study, which was conducted in Ekaterinburg; 26 of them did not play an instrument, while 24 of them have begun taking piano lessons. These kids had to take the necessary examinations at the Neuropsychology Laboratory of Moscow State University after a year. The cognitive and psychological skills of the kids who played the piano improved more quickly, and their motor development accelerated by 1.5 times. Permiakova and Tkachenko (2016) conducted a second experiment on 10 male youngsters who had hyperactivity and attention deficit disorder. Five of them could play the piano, and five could not. Both groups underwent the same attention, memory, and cognitive ability assessments as the preceding groups. Children who played the piano had much better outcomes after a year than the children who did not. In light of this, these experts suggested piano lessons, especially for kids with ADHD and hyperactivity.

In her own study, Demirova (2008) claimed that learning to play the piano improves elementary school students' ability to pay attention. This was later confirmed by Kuscu (2010), who discovered that musical activities, including the Orff Schulwerk technique, dramatically improved preschool children's attention skills. According to Mundy (2021), reading music and playing an instrument are challenging but incredibly delightful activities that enhance a child's cognitive, physical, emotional, and musical abilities. These activities have a well-known effect on a child's cognitive ability and emotional condition. This means that piano lessons are significant because they have the potential to positively impact both academic and personal growth.

Piano lessons assist kids develop the exact same skills needed to master language arts, including reading. For this reason, piano lessons should begin early in a child's life so they may begin the process of developing for playing. Collins (2014) asserted that studying the piano teaches kids how to follow instructions, mentally scan written materials, analyze critically, come up with answers, and translate text into action, which lends credence to this claim. According to Nelson (2013), the effect that music has on a person's social and personal growth may have an impact on general accomplishment. A sense of accomplishment, a rise in self-esteem, improved confidence, perseverance in overcoming difficulties in learning, self-discipline, and a way of self-expression can all be gained through playing an instrument like the piano. These could encourage greater achievement by boosting overall learning motivation (Nelson, 2013). Taking part in musical ensembles thus fosters relationships with like-minded individuals, self-confidence, social skills, networking, a sense of belonging, teamwork, self-discipline, a sense of accomplishment, cooperation, responsibility, commitment, mutual support, bonding to achieve group goals, increased concentration, and provides a release for stress. In sum, learning to play an instrument enhances fine motor co-ordination. There may be particular health benefits for singing in relation to the immune system, breathing, adopting good posture, improved mood, and stress reduction. According to Musacchia et al. (2007), playing a musical instrument triggers changes in the brainstem not only the cortex.

At this juncture, it is crucial to remember that the word "method" denotes a methodical process, technique, or way of carrying out an action at this point. It is simply "a means of teaching someone to do something, and it frequently refers to showing someone how to do a certain skill" in the educational field (Uszler, et al, 2000). According to Nelson (2013), throughout the past 300 years, piano instruction has changed. Learning to read musical symbols has replaced the traditional teaching method of carefully copying what the teacher performed. All around the world, music symbols have developed and standardized. Hence, books have evolved on technique and on how to teach piano specifically for the student, and in realization of the importance of piano to children, virtually all the method books published in the early 20th century were geared to children aged six to nine.

There are various methods for teaching young children the piano, including both group piano classes and private lessons (Yang, 2015). This indicates that there is no particular strategy or procedure for instructing beginning piano players. And that is why authors have highlighted a number of approaches. There are those that assist teachers with young beginners, older beginners, and adults (Coats, 2006; Fisher, 2010; Uszler et al., 2000); there are those on how to teach piano as part of the public school general music classroom (Jacobson, 2006; Last, 2002); and there are those on instruction for private lessons and for group lessons (Anderson & Lawrence, 2007).

Private sessions typically feature one student and one teacher meeting one-on-one once a week. Multiple students can take a class from a single teacher in a group setting. This occurs often once per week. Less than 10 pupils are often required for group classes (Boyce, 2012; Charlotte Academy of Music, 2012). A developing trend in the independent music instruction industry is group teaching. The main driving force behind group instruction is "the stimulation, competition, and increased excitement of the group dynamic" which motivates pupils to learn more effectively (Huang, 2007). The use of group instruction extends the amount of time students spend in lessons each week and upholds the teacher's commitment to helping students become well-rounded musicians. Although some teachers demand their pupils to take both individual and group classes, the majority of students typically do one or the other. With this strategy, a teacher can go over material with the class and then further explain anything a student does not grasp in a private lesson (Amble Music Academy, 2012).

In private piano classes, the piano student prepares a body of work which may include numerous pieces, technical assignments, and even some theory papers. Writing tasks are examined, recommendations are made, demonstrations are given, and compositions are critiqued during lessons. Many of the current preschool piano approaches use this traditional form of private instruction, which has an oral and aural foundation and relies on pupils "imitating how the teacher plays" (Uszler, 2003). In the group piano lesson, students continue to think independently, come up with their own solutions, and give each other advice. Because group piano students have the opportunity to learn from each other in class and experience ensemble with one another, they are less reliant on their teachers for guidance in individual piano lessons. According to Huang (2007), "the combined approach" or teaching mode combines an individual lesson with a group lesson to develop musicianship skills through practice. Music theory classes are designed to fill in the musical gaps with exercises that the private session gives little time for. They are scheduled weekly and may cost extra. Concentrations on pieces, techniques, and specific problems fill the lesson time for regular private instruction. Preschoolers will profit from the advantages of both private and group education if arranged correctly; otherwise, pandemonium may result. The teacher's discretion will determine when, what, and how to use the information in this way.

There are various methods for teaching piano in the private studio. These strategies include both conventional and unconventional ones, like Suzuki (Uszler et al., 2000). According to the conventional method, students are taught how to read music, how scales, chords, and harmonies fit together, how to listen and determine whether what they hear on the sheet matches what they are playing, how to employ proper technique, and how to perform well. The most crucial element in this method is reading music. The traditional approach is designed to result in musical performances of the compositions. Teachers who employ this strategy frequently hold annual recitals, require their pupils to pass state theory exams, and have them play in festivals where their performance is judged (Music Teachers' Association of California, 2012). Regardless of whether the method starts the students on or off the staff and regardless of the starting hand position, this method incorporates the majority of written approaches. In this strategy, parents' participation is also up to the individual teachers; they are not needed to monitor practice sessions outside of class or to come to lessons.

The Suzuki method, as pointed out by Nelson (2013), was created by Shin'ichi Suzuki (1898-1998). The approach aims to teach music—regardless of instrument—in a way that is analogous to how kids learn their native tongue. Suzuki felt that children would acquire their musical skills to the same extent as they do their mother tongue if they were exposed to musical sounds in the same way they were exposed to their parents' speech. Students are taught to play by ear using this technique by emulating the teacher's playing. As much time as they spend playing, students should also spend time listening. In this approach, parents play an equal role to teachers by participating in lessons, showing their children affection and support, and ensuring that the child practices and listens every day. Teachers must also be kind to students and supportive of their efforts. After the learner has mastered the instrument to a reasonable level, music reading is introduced (Nelson, 2013).

It is important to note that the standard method and the Suzuki method are just two methods of teaching piano. There are other further methods. Huang (2007), for instance, mentioned the complete body strategy. This is designed exclusively for preschoolers, and it blends slow-paced learning of standard notation with movement exercises like marching and dancing into the piano sessions. According to Nelson (2013), this is comparable to the late 1800s Curwen approach, which promotes dancing, singing, and learning to read music before learning to play an instrument. Another approach is known as the Multikey Approach, and it

teaches pupils how to play the keyboard's 12 five-finger patterns. This approach also emphasizes directional music reading and the use of chords from very early in the process of learning to play the piano (Uzler et al., 2000).

Besides the teaching techniques, a teacher's rapport or relationship with the students can influence how well they learn the piano. This is due to the fact that, given their age and upbringing, children are sensitive to interactions with adults. In a similar spirit, it should be highlighted that there are a variety of sources that might motivate students to learn, including parental desire, student interest, and instructor support (Nelson, 2013). The assessment of the students' readiness is a crucial component of piano instruction. Huang (2007) claims that this is the reason why a lot of method books include information about determining whether a child is ready to learn the piano, including how well they can sing, match, or distinguish between rhythms and pitches, as well as how well they can listen and even write.

In considering the readiness for applied instrumental lessons, Kaesler (2002) therefore, conducted a survey to uncover "the portraits of the ideal beginning piano students". Analysis of responses returned from the field revealed two general qualities of the ideal beginning pianist: (a) ability and skill and (b) attitude and involvement. The ability and skill quality include the following areas of concern: children should demonstrate the ability to sing, to listen, and to distinguish musical material with verbal and physical responses; children should demonstrate the cognitive ability of symbol reading and understanding (e.g. rhythm notation, alphabet letters, color symbols and pictures) by responding verbally and physically; children should exhibit understanding of basic concepts like high and low, loud and soft, slow and fast; they should have a concentration span of 25-30 minutes; and should show physical maturity, with "good eye-hand coordination and a degree of finger dexterity" (Kaesler, 2002). Overall, these qualities describing ability and skill reveal an emphasis on the musical, intellectual, developmental, and physical maturity of children.

The second characteristic of the perfect piano student has to do with involvement and attitude. The child's eagerness and the family's support are seen by all participating teachers as the essential qualities. The child's excitement denotes "social maturity," which includes the student's outlook, curiosity, and interest in exploring the world of music, as well as the desire and capacity to "pay attention, follow directions, and feel comfortable around the teacher" (Kaesler, 2002). The background of the family, the second important factor, comprises ongoing dedication and support, as well as the responsibility of the parents to help with homework and practice scheduling. Preschool piano teachers should be familiar with the fundamentals of the instrument, including reading, technique, musicianship, repertory, design, and format. The process of interpreting music involves "viewing symbols, communicating the symbols to cognitive centers, sending physical signals to the body, and realizing the sound" and is intricate and multifaceted (Richards, 1996). This suggests that when reading, eyes should remain fixed on the music. While performing sightreading, pianists' eyes travel ahead of their hands in most situations (Udtaisuk, 2005). Teaching music reading is a piano teacher's main objective and duty because it is one of the numerous purposes of studying the instrument, along with learning to play at sight (Chronister, 1996).

Hence, the general elements of music reading, as adapted by Huang (2007), indicate the following four steps:

1. Pitch direction: up, down, and same, with each direction taught independently and moving to the next when concepts are aurally, mentally, and physically mastered.
2. Keyboard topography: from black keys to white keys. Black-key groups, preferably the two-black-key group before the three-black-key group, serve as reference points for the white-key groups. This procedure gives the student ownership of the entire keyboard.
3. From keyboard topography, music reading progresses to the introduction of the musical alphabet. With the knowledge of the relationship between black-key-groups and white-key-groups, the use of musical alphabet letters for naming notes becomes more meaningful.
4. Learning keyboard anchoring points, the notes learned for reference, is a critical step, whereby the focus on five finger hand position, notation on the staff system (either partial or grand), whole and half notes, line and space notes, and the feel of intervallic relationships both by reading and by doing, will take a different route for each method book.

Technique is defined by Pace (2000) as "the physical, mental, and emotional talents one possesses to perform music at the piano keyboard". Playing techniques serve as the means by which one acquires ownership of an instrument, much like one acquires musical ownership through reading music. Two significant characteristics are (a) the knowledge of the body in relation to the instrument and (b) the

understanding of the instrument through the body, according to a synthesis of pedagogical viewpoints on teaching methodology. The whole-body philosophy; the understanding that the hand is an extension of the arm; the timing of when the young child should sit at the piano bench; the experience of weight transfer; and good hand form and sitting posture, according to Huang (2007), are the five main factors that affect how initial body knowledge is presented to children. In the same way, four general categories can be used to describe educational viewpoints on learning an instrument through the body. These include scales, touch, sound production quality, and listening ability (Uszler, Gordon, & Smith, 2000). In conclusion, the proper development of musical technique is ensured by the integration of both parts of technique education (i.e., knowledge of the body in relation to the instrument and knowledge of the instrument through body). Technical advancement that is well-balanced is incomplete without both.

Furthermore, according to Huang (2007) musicianship includes all the musically relevant characteristics that allow a person to be a well-rounded musician. Therefore, musicianship is more than just learning music theory; it is the comprehensive understanding of many different aspects of music, including history, theory, music reading, fundamental musical concepts, applied analysis and improvisational skills, creativity, as well as listening and sight-singing abilities used in solfège training. Teachers advise looking at "what youngsters are doing musically in their spontaneous music-making activities" and "taking cues from the children" during the early stages of music study. In other words, the best repertoire selections to stimulate learners are songs and rhymes with material that is relevant to daily life and that young children are already familiar with. According to Kodály philosophy, "the folk songs of a child's own linguistic heritage comprise a musical "mother tongue" and should therefore be the vehicle for all early training" (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie, Woods, & York, 2001). This translates to choosing the preschool piano repertoire as the young novices should begin playing with well-known folk tunes and classic nursery rhymes that they already know how to sing and recite. The right repertoire for preschoolers is music with catchy melodies and aesthetic value, which can develop beneficial musical experiences and learning. The piano repertoire for children also includes songs that the creators of the piano technique have written or prepared with the intention of teaching concepts. Text for singing is frequently included in this kind of composed repertoire. The study of classic repertory from various countries, styles, and eras can foster the development of children's musical taste in addition to folk, traditional, and created songs.

The preschool piano method's design and format components mainly focus on the color palette of the images or drawings, print size and legibility, and structural arrangement. According to Uszler, Gordon, and Smith (2000), a book's visual presentation should be readable and uncluttered, the illustrations should be appealing, entertaining, and supportive of the given concept that is meant to be learned, and the type and music should be large enough to distinguish between line notes and space notes. Preschoolers may pay attention to simple images that represent the current job better than complex ones, and illustrations by themselves may communicate meanings to these children more effectively than written explanations. Last but not least, on this note, Knerr (2016), in an effort to improve piano teaching, provided 152 strategies based on the notion that a piano teacher should be an artistic pianist, understand how children learn and relate well to children, understand how to teach and sequence various concepts that students need to learn, and be knowledgeable about the available piano methods and student repertoire. Among the tactics mentioned by Knerr (2016) are the following:

1. Throughout the class, let the student read a text aloud many times. For a physical action to become automatic, for aural memory and comprehension, and for confidence in one's ability to carry out a passage, repetition is essential.
2. Allow Creativity. Efficiency in the classroom is not always the aim. The most effective method of instruction is occasionally indirect. Allow a learner to experiment creatively if he is moved by a sound. This demonstrates that he is learning music and listening. It may take him five minutes of the session to experiment with the sounds, but it is well worth the time to support his innovative spirit.
3. Analogy. The use of analogies of all kinds will help a student understand the music.
4. Instead of explaining a whole piece to a student, analyze one small phrase or section, and then have the student play it. Repeat this process with other small sections, working through the piece.
5. To determine whether a student truly comprehends an idea or not, ask the student to describe it to you. If you inquire, "Do you comprehend?" Even if they don't understand, some kids will answer yes because they believe it is expected of them. To determine whether a student has understood the material, teachers must be able to read their students.

6. Divide a task or a practice area into small sections. Typically, if a student struggles to play a passage, it's because there weren't enough Steps used, the chunk was too large, or the tempo was too fast (Slowly).
7. It is not required to keep your attention on one thing being learned during every class minute. Long-term, taking short breaks to relax and have fun can make students happier and more engaged and enable deeper learning.

IV. Conclusion

The aforementioned information leads one to the conclusion that when instructing pupils at the primary levels, the systematic introduction of new concepts is very crucial. When creating his course of study, a skilled teacher will take into account elements like the student's age, auditory development, and practice setting. The level of assistance from home (such as whether or not the parents are familiar with music and can assist with writing assignments), unique learning difficulties, and a student's prior educational experiences are other considerations (Jacklein, 2016).

References

- [1] Amble Music Academy (2012). Amble Music Academy group lesson page. Retrieved from <http://amblermusicacademy.com/our-programs/group-lessons>
- [2] Anderson, W.M., & Lawrence, J.E. (2007). Integrating music into the elementary classroom. Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education.
- [3] Bastien, J. (1995). How to teach piano successfully (3rd ed.). San Diego, CA: Kjos.
- [4] Berger, A. A., & Cooper, S. (2003). Musical play: A case study of preschool children and parents. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 51(2), 151-165.
- [5] Berk, L. E. (2000). *Child Development* (5th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- [6] Boyce, S. (2012). Southlake Music Academy group lesson page. Retrieved from <http://southlakemusicacademyh.com/groupinstruction.html>
- [7] Bucci, M. P., & Kapoula, Z. (2005). Binocular coordination of saccades in 7 years old children in single word reading and target fixation. Epub. (Pubmed: The National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health).
- [8] Charlotte Academy of Music. (2012). Charlotte Academy of Music group lesson page. Retrieved from http://charlotteacademyofmusic.com/music_group_lessons.html
- [9] Choksy, L., Abramson, R. M., Gillespie, A. E., Woods, D., & York, F. (2001). *Teaching music in the twenty-first century* (2nd Ed.), Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- [10] Chronister, R. (1996). Naming notes is not reading – A sequential approach to music reading. In J. Lyke, Y. Enoch, & G. Haydon (Eds.), *Creative Piano Teaching*, (pp. 69-87), Champaign, IL: Stipes Publishing.
- [11] Coats, S. C. (2006). *Thinking as you play: Teaching piano in individual and group lessons*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- [12] Collins, A. (2014). The Potential Benefits of Music Education. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueqgenARzIE&t=555s>
- [13] Costa-Giomi, E. (2004). Effects of three years of piano instruction. *Psychology of Music*, 32(2), 139-152.
- [14] Demirova, G. (2008). The effect of piano education on the attributes of primary school students. *Mehmet Akif Ersoy Universitesi Egitim Fakultesi Dergisi* 16: 58-69.
- [15] Elliott, D. J. (1995). *Music matters: A new philosophy of music education*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [16] Fisher, C. (2010). *Teaching Piano in Groups*. New York, Oxford University Publishing.
- [17] Guilmartin, K. (2002). Ages and Stages: Is that the same child I taught last year? The very young child. *American Music Teacher*, 26-28.
- [18] Hallam, S. (2015). *The power of music: its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people*. Great Britain, University College London.
- [19] Heyge, L. (2002). The well-prepared beginner: Prepared in body, mind, spirit, and family. *Early Childhood Connections*, 8(1), 28-33.

- [20] Hicky, M. (2002). Creativity research in music, visual art, theater, and dance. In R. Colwell, & C. Richardson. (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning* (pp. 398-415). New York: Oxford University Press.
- [21] Huang, F. T. (2007). *Preschool piano methods and developmentally appropriate practice*. An unpublished dissertation submitted to the University of Missouri-Columbia.
- [22] Huseynova, E., Egilmez, H. O. & Engur, D. (2019). Effect of piano education on the attention skills of 7-12 year old children. *Educational Research and Reviews*. 14(10), 327-39.
- [23] Jacklein, J. S. (2016). *Contemporary approaches to elementary piano pedagogy: A Study of Original Pedagogical Pieces and Representative Elementary Learning Scenarios, with a Study on the Integration of Visual Art and Literature into Music Instruction*. An unpublished thesis submitted to the University of Waterloo.
- [24] Jacobson, J. M. (2006). *Professional piano teaching; A Comprehensive Piano Pedagogy Textbook*. Los Angeles, Alfred Music.
- [25] Jordan-DeCarbo, J. & Nelson, J. A. (2002). Music and early childhood education. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning* (pp. 210-242). New York: Oxford University Press.
- [26] Kaesler, N. (2002). Portraits of the ideal beginning piano student. *Early Childhood Connections*, 8(1), 15, 24-26.
- [27] Kiehn, M. T. (2003). Development of music creativity among elementary school students. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 51(4), 278-288.
- [28] Knerr, J. (2016). *152 Strategies for Effective and Efficient Piano Teaching*. Windsor, Connecticut.
- [29] Kuscu, O. (2010). *The effect of Orff-Schulwerk approach on attention skills of preschool children*. Unpublished thesis. Selcuk Universitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitusu, Konya.
- [30] Last, J. (2002). *The young pianist: An approach for teachers and students* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- [31] Minina, Y. (2012). *Russian piano music for children written from 1878 to 1917*. An unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Washington. Washington.
- [32] Mundy, D. C. (2021). *The benefits of offering classroom piano lessons as part of the curriculum in public elementary school*. An unpublished thesis submitted to the Liberty University.
- [33] Musacchia, G., Sams, M., Skoe, E., & Kraus, N. (2007). Musicians have enhanced subcortical auditory and audiovisual processing of speech and music. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA*, 104(40), 15894-15898.
- [34] Music Teachers National Association. (2012). MTNA programs. Retrieved from <http://www.mtna.org/programs/>
- [35] Nelson, P. (2013). *Piano Curriculum: What Teachers are Using and How It Aligns with Jerome Bruner's Enactive, Iconic, and Symbolic Learning Theory*. An unpublished dissertation Submitted to the Baylor University.
- [36] Pace, R. (2000). *Third topic: Keyboard technique and effective psycho-motor skills. The essentials of keyboard pedagogy*. Chatham, NY: Lee Roberts Music Publications.
- [37] Pavlov, A. E. (2008). *The correctional developing impact of music lessons on the neurocognitive development of primary school children*. An unpublished dissertation submitted to Moscow State University. Moscow.
- [38] Permiakova, M. E. & Tkachenko, E. S. (2016). Music classes influence on the cognitive development of primary school children. *Obrazovanie i Nauka*, 4(133):155-170.
- [39] Richards, W. (1996). Music reading at the piano. In J. Lyke, Y. Enoch, & G. Haydon (Eds.), *Creative Piano Teaching* (pp. 56-68), Champaign, IL: Stipes Publishing.
- [40] Taetle, L. & Cutietta, R. (2002). Learning theories as roots of current musical practice and research. In R. Colwell, & C. Richardson. (Eds.), *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning* (pp. 210-242). New York: Oxford University Press.
- [41] Teaching Music (2001). 'SAT Scores and the Arts: Consistent Results', *Teaching Music* 8(4): 62-3.
- [42] Thompson, W.F., Schellenberg, E.G., & Husain, G. (2002). *Decoding Speech Prosody: Do Music Lessons Help? A paper presented at The Neurosciences and Music conference, October, Venice*.
- [43] Udtaisuk, D. B. (2005). *A theoretical model of piano sight playing components*. An unpublished dissertation, University of Missouri, Columbia.

- [44] Ulugbay, S. (2013). The effects of music education on child intelligence. *Kastamonu Egitim Dergisi* 21(3):1025-1034.
- [45] Uszler, M., Gordon, S., & McBride Smith, S. (2000). *The well-tempered keyboard teacher*. New York: Schirmer Books.
- [46] Uszler, M. (2003). *That's A Good Questions...How to Teach by Asking Questions*. Fort Lauderdale, FL: The FJH Music Company.
- [47] Vaughn, K. (2000). Music and Mathematics: Modest Support for the Oft-claimed Relationship. *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 34(3/4): 149–66.
- [48] Yang, Q., & Kapoula, Z. (2003, Oct. 2). Binocular coordination of saccades at far and at near in children and in adults. Epub. (Pubmed: The National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health).
- [49] Yang, L. (2015). *Pedagogy and Materials for Teaching Piano to Children in China and the United States*. An unpublished dissertations submitted to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee