

# Reflections on Practical Teaching of Piano Course in Music Major of Local Higher Normal Colleges

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**Abstract**—Under the new curriculum standard, the music major of higher normal colleges should cultivate new music teachers as needed in the new curriculum reform, and innovative talents meeting the demands of the employment market. Practical teaching plays an important role in the process of talents' training and adapting to the society. This paper mainly reflects on the current situation of practical teaching of piano skills in music majors of local higher normal colleges, and puts forward some rough views on how to establish a piano practical skill training system.

**Keywords**—musicology; piano; art practice; educational practice

## I. INTRODUCTION

Practical teaching occupies a very important position in the music education of higher normal colleges. It is an important platform for students to connect theory to practice, and improve their ability and teaching quality. The problem to be reflected on and solved is about how to strengthen the practical teaching of music education, cultivate students' practical ability, and construct a very distinctive training system for cultivating higher normal college students' music education specialized practice ability. This paper mainly reflects on the current situation of practical teaching of piano skills in music major of local higher normal colleges, and puts forward a rough view on how to establish a piano practice skill training system.

## II. MAKING ACCURATE POSITIONING TO DEVELOP DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS

In China, the piano skill course of music major in many local higher normal colleges has long been using and simply imitating the piano curriculum setting system and teaching mode of higher music colleges, and has blurry positioning on it self. The goal and orientation of music major in local higher normal colleges is to train and deliver qualified music teachers for primary and secondary schools and other secondary vocational education institutions. Most of the students passed the enrollment examination just through a period of time of boning up on music, without a systematic learning of music. However, the cultivating objective of higher music colleges is to cultivate high-level music talents for the society, and mainly to cultivate talents specialized in music performance, music theory and music creation for the

stage of literature art and professional performance groups. The students have certain music foundation and have subjected to systematic learning music. So, higher normal colleges and higher music colleges are greatly different from each other in cultivating objective, professional positioning and the source of students. Normal nature is the major difference between the two types of colleges. If blindly imitating higher music college, higher normal college may lose its self.

The setting of skill courses in music major of higher normal colleges should focus on the characteristics of the normal nature, make accurate positioning, go out of the pure professional mode, and construct a multi-channel, multi-angle, multi-level and all-round practical skill cultivation system based on basic education skills, art practice and social education internship.

## III. THE PRACTICAL SKILLS TRAINING SYSTEM

According to the professional training program and professional orientation of music major in higher normal colleges, and taking the piano skill course as an example, the following text further illustrates the construction of the practical skill training system in aspects of basic education skills training, art practice and social education internship.

### A. Skills Training

Piano basic education skills training is the basis for the presentation of piano practice skills. The teaching of piano foundation is a very important part of the teaching of music major in higher normal colleges. The teaching quality of piano foundation directly affects the quality of music majored graduates.

The piano basic education skill training courses for higher normal colleges include three modules of learning content such as piano techniques, piano skills (piano accompaniment, piano ensemble, etc.), and piano theory (piano teaching methods, piano literature and piano art history, etc.). Many higher normal colleges overemphasize the teaching and training of piano techniques and less emphasize the teaching of skill practice and skill theory and method. In response to this phenomenon, the piano basic education skills course for higher normal colleges should form a basic skill training curriculum to improve student's

playing skills by learning piano techniques, improve the students' ability to practically use and operate piano by learning piano skills, and improve the students' self-cultivation and enhance their teaching ability by learning theory. By learning the piano basic piano skill training curriculum, students should not only know about how to master the knowledge they have learnt, but more importantly, be able to pass the learnt knowledge to others and develop their ability to teach.

### *B. Professional Internship*

According to the visit and talk with students and graduates in college, and the follow-up surveys and statistics on students' educational internships in recent years, it is found that there are many problems to be solved during the educational internship. Wherein, the two main problems encountered in piano can be summarized as follows: first, students' primary teaching ability of the piano is too weak; second, it is urgently needed to improve students' piano accompaniment ability in music teaching.

#### *1) Cultivation of primary teaching ability of piano:*

Piano teaching is one of the important contents of music educational internship. "The cultivation objects of musicology should meet a dual requirement; namely, they are required to understand both music and education." For the piano teaching in higher normal colleges, it is not only needed to teach students the basic knowledge of piano theory, but also make students master good basic piano playing skills; student should not only be able to play the piano, but also know how to teach future students in pedagogy and other aspects of teaching methods. The objective of piano teaching in higher normal colleges is to enable students to both learn and teach.

Teaching students how to teach future students cannot be simply completed by the teacher of teaching methods; practical teaching of piano teacher can make up for the shortcoming in the single teaching method course. Therefore, it is necessary to reform the mode that higher normal colleges always use traditional one-on-one teaching mode of the performance major in higher music colleges, and change it into a collective class, group class, individual class, accompaniment class, ensemble class and other teaching methods combined piano teaching mode. The purpose is to enable students to learn basic theory of piano and the basic playing method of piano in collective class, learn from each other's strengths in group class, improve students' individual playing ability in individual class, cultivate and train students practical cooperative playing ability in accompaniment class and ensemble class, and learn piano teaching methods from practical teaching of teacher. The proposed teaching mode not only follows the rules of piano teaching, but also collectively unifies and embodies the teaching and learning of the piano curriculum in higher normal colleges.

*2) Cultivation of piano accompaniment ability:* In the educational internship, the students of higher normal colleges are not able to proficiently play the regular piano accompaniment spectrum in the music textbooks of primary

and secondary schools. In the actual music teaching, when there is no ready-made accompaniment spectrum, the students can only provide simple improvisational accompaniment and apply monotonous harmony rather than normatively and effectively formulate improvisational song for the accompaniment. In view of this fact, it has already been imperative to improve students' understanding of piano accompaniment, open up piano accompaniment course in advance, get the regular piano accompaniment of the songs in the primary and middle schools' music textbooks incorporated into the compulsory course content of piano skills and counted into the total scores of the examination of compulsory piano course, encourage student to do more practices and exercise, and take the advantage of various chances and platforms to exercise their piano accompaniment skills.

### *C. Art Practice*

Strengthening the practical teaching of art and improving students' ability to practice, operate and adapt to the society are very important issues in the current teaching reform of colleges and universities. In practice of piano art, it is necessary to change the single "piano room and classroom teaching mode" adopted in traditional piano class, actively create a platform for students to practice based on the actual teaching conditions in order to improve students' comprehensive quality, and enable students to truly combine theoretical methods and artistic practice together.

*1) Establishing practical art groups:* The establishment of college practice art groups as an extension of art practice and classroom teaching provides a practice base for practical art teaching in higher normal colleges, and provides a space for students to show their talents and develop their skills. By learning in classes of piano skills such as piano accompaniment and piano ensemble, students can play the role of accompaniment, solo or concerto player in an orchestra. In the practice of art group, students can give full play to their subjective initiative, effectively promote the formation of teamwork spirit, apply what they learnt in classroom into practice, and constantly improve their comprehensive quality.

*2) Regular concerts:* Most of the students cultivated in higher normal colleges became teachers. After graduation, the students majoring in music may not only the music teachers in primary and secondary schools but also play an important role in enlivening campus life and organizing campus stage cultural activities. In order to improve the quality of teaching, promote the mutual exchange of the teaching of professional skills, increase the opportunities for students to practice on the stage, and have students better adapt to social needs, it is available to organize and hold various concerts for students, such as regularly holding freshmen talent show, special concerts for students, special concerts for teachers, teachers' teaching achievements reporting meeting, graduate concerts and other forms of

concerts, so as to promote students walking out of the piano room and classroom and going to the stage.

3) *Providing opportunities for observation and learning:* For higher normal colleges located in regions having relatively developed local culture and art, they can take their own advantages to regularly organize students to participate in live performances for observation and learning. For higher normal colleges in regions having less developed culture and art, they can use the network and mobilize teachers' personally-collected resources, and regularly play some video materials related to piano performance and teaching (such as the CDs of famous pianist's live performances, teaching demonstration CDs of famous educators, videos of Chinese and foreign piano music events, and biography and pictures of famous pianists) in multimedia classrooms in a selected and planned manner. To sum up, it is necessary to create a good observation and learning platform for students as much as possible.

4) *Holding piano lectures:* Each semester, teachers having the title of associate professors or above title can regularly hold piano lectures with rich contents and in various forms, such as the history of piano development, the analysis of Chinese and foreign piano composers and their works, teaching and answering questions, and piano teaching for observation and learning.

Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth. Piano basic education skills training is the foundation for piano practice skills; piano art practice can truly combine piano theory learning with art practice; educational internship is an important way to test students' learning outcomes and improve students' practical operation ability. It is important to let students participate in the practice of piano teaching, apply the knowledge learnt from textbooks into practice, find problems in practice, and solve the problems, so as to quickly supplement and improve themselves.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

To establish a piano practice skill training system for music majors in local higher normal colleges, it is necessary to make accurate positioning, formulate training goals suitable for their own development, develop their own characteristics, form a pure professional mode, and construct a multi-channel, multi-angle, multi-level and all-round piano practical skills training system. Only by making continuous reform and innovation, and continuous experiment and summarization can it be available for the piano teaching of music majors in local higher normal colleges to keep up with the development pace of the times, and for the students to better adapt to the needs of the employment market and gain a foothold in the society.

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