

Study on Educational Patterns and Values of Children's Musical Practice Activities

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Keywords: Children; music activities; educational pattern

Abstract: In this paper, based on the understanding of children's psychological activities such as musical perception, musical talent, musical thinking and musical consciousness, the musical practice activities are designed in these aspects: goal setting, content selection and organizational pattern. In addition, the type of activities and their educational patterns are analyzed. The purpose of this study is to embody educational values of music practice activities in the children.

1. Psychological Activities of Children in Musical Practice Activities

Children's psychological activities are closely associated with musical practice activities. In musical practice activities, children can determine their directions more clearly, hence realizing their self-tempering life values.

1.1 Children's Musical Perception

1.1.1 Cultivation of musical perception

For children, the cultivation of their musical perception depends on their inherent physical and mental characteristics. Children are curious about new things, and they are easily affected by the development and change of things in the world outside. Therefore, in teaching, teachers should actively take advantage of their physical and mental characteristics to cultivate their musical talents and develop their imagination and understanding of music phenomena. Proper languages of teachers and their true and accurate evaluation on music phenomenon can, to a great extent, stimulate the children's musical perception and promote their correct understanding of music.

1.1.2 Arousal of music perception

Composing training can effectively stimulate students' musical perception. Teachers can arouse students' creative interest through creating an environment suitable for students to write music. The relaxing learning atmosphere in the classroom and the way of playing games are conducive to the success of creative activities. By doing these, the children can gain the experience in pitch and rhythm, forming wonderful inner hearing.

1.1.3 Deepening of musical perception

Full understanding of melodies in the music facilitates further deepening of musical perception. The teacher must help children fully understand musical thoughts, which depends on not only their inner hearing, but also their understanding of music and various phenomena in the surrounding world and even their ability in musical association of things and phenomena in the world outside in their musical consciousness and sub-consciousness.

1.2 Children's Musical Talent

Children's musical talent is a kind of unique psychological characteristics, which determines their understanding of music. In fact, each child has his/her own musical talent, but their musical talent is different. Some have the gift for music because they have distinctive musical talent with strong expressive force. Although a child's gift will influence the development of his/her musical

talent to some degree, it cannot absolutely determine his musical development. By virtue of learning and musical practice activities, a child's positive music imagination can be cultivated.

1.3 Children's Musical Thinking

Children's musical thinking refers that children understand and evaluate musical works. It is an intellectual sensing process, characterized by complexity and diversity. A child's music perception and his/her music thinking ability develop under the interaction of two aspects: 1) perception of melodies and consciousness of music; 2) understanding and interpretation of music. In teaching, the teacher can allow children to touch and perceive the music through some musical practice activities.

1.4 Children's Musical Consciousness

Children's musical consciousness is more selective. If they are willing to accept some music, they will show a positive attitude toward it; vice versa; if they show a cold attitude towards some music, they will reject such kind of music. Therefore, teachers should take full advantage of this to teach music. Children's musical consciousness will be affected by internal and external factors; meanwhile, they will take change accordingly.

2. Design Principle of Musical Practice Activities of Children

The purpose of this section is to understand the significance of goal setting for children's musical practice activities as well as their basic requirements for content organization and selection. In addition, according to children's different ages and their characteristics, teachers should select proper musical materials and organize proper musical practice activities.

2.1 Setting of activity goals

Musical practice activities help children not only improve their music knowledge and practical skills, but also build their characters. In other words, the final purpose of activities is to mold children's perfect personality rather than cultivate professional musical talents. The musical practice activities enable the children to obtain the edification of aesthetic feelings, beautifying and enriching their souls while meeting their psychological and emotional needs. Moreover, they can allow music to come into their life, creating the life full of music. Obviously, music is an integral part in children's life and practice. It will be a pleasant thing for children to grow up with music. And finally, they will gain overall health and harmonious happiness.

2.1.1 Emotional goal in musical practice activities

Children can practice music in the way they like and participate in a variety of music practice activities. In musical exchange activities, they can feel pleased, enjoy their happiness and attain a sense of achievement.

2.1.2 Development of skills in musical practice activities

In musical practice activities, children will appreciate the beauty of music, understand the expressive form and means of music, master the necessary knowledge and skills and accumulate the relevant experience. Moreover, they can also develop their aesthetic perception, aesthetic understanding, aesthetic memory and aesthetic creation.

2.1.3 Personality molding in musical practice activities

In musical practice activities, children can share each other's understanding of music and establish a sense of cooperation and team spirit through mutual communication. So such activities help them gradually form good personalities: being lively, cheerful and positive, and having a spirit of solidarity and cooperation. Finally, they will grow into persons with wide interest, physical and mental health and all-round development.

2.2 Selection of activity content

2.2.1 Aesthetic values

Children's musical practice activities must comply with basic requirements of aesthetics. Only beautiful music and pleasant practice can arouse children's interest in learning, bringing aesthetic pleasure to the audience and themselves.

2.2.2 Educational values

Singing is an important element in children's musical practice activities, which has an imperceptible impact on their souls. So, in selecting songs, teachers should attach importance to their education values. The lyrics must play a great role in moral education. The lyrics displaying healthy and positive mental outlook can inspire children's love and longing for life. Moreover, beautiful melodies can promote children's education.

2.2.3 Suitability

The music practice activity should be designed according to children's ages. Children's life experience is limited, so it is appropriate to choose the themes which are familiar, easy to understand and interesting as the themes of musical practice activities. Whether in content or in language, the element of "playing" should be necessary; for children, they are easier to accept and memorize those funny lyrics. In addition, for children, they are lively and active by nature. So, it is appropriate to use some body movements or musical plays to perform music.

Some children may be in the voice changing period, so for these children, teachers should select the musical works and practical activities which must be suitable for their vocal range characteristics. Too high or too low melody should be avoided in the singing activities; the songs should be smooth as much as possible. Only in this way, can children protect their own vocal cords.

2.2.4 Diversity

The themes of children's musical practice activities should be extensive. They should not only cover their favorite animals, plants and things changing in nature, but also reflect their daily life, games and learning and even social life, festivals and characteristics of Chinese nation. In one word, musical practice activities should be rich and diverse in terms of content, form and style.

2.3 Organization of musical practice activities

Children have stronger imitating ability. In the musical practice activities, teachers should properly use body rhythms, dances and creative activities to stimulate their imitating ability. Some actions such as combing hairs, washing face, playing drums, blowing a bugle, clapping hands and walking, or their favorite figures can be properly applied to the musical practice activities. In these activities, children can experience the strength, speed, intensity, rhythm and pitch height of music by themselves.

3. Category of Children's Musical Practice Activities and Their Educational Patterns

3.1 Category of Children's Musical Practice Activities

Children are the participants of musical practice activities. Their musical education can be practiced through musical courses, themed activities and project approaches.

3.1.1 Musical courses

Based on children's learning characteristics and the subject characteristics of music, music learning covers these contents: singing, rhythmic activities, musical instruments and music appreciation. The teaching of each part is independently designed and implemented. Through learning of these contents, children can improve their music emotions, music knowledge and music skills. In fact, there are strong internal logical relationships between these contents; so children

should systematically grasp music knowledge and skills following the logic of music courses. Through learning step by step, they will make great progress.

3.1.2 Activity themes

Themed activities are a series of educational activities that are carried out centering on some themes. In the course of implementation, the teacher can use daily social life as a link, achieving their educational purpose.

(1) Searching the themes of musical practice activities

In children's life, there have existed diverse themes suitable for artistic performances and artistic creation. As we know, the operas, bands, master classes, animal world, music channels and art festivals all originate from what people see and hear in life. Music teachers, as the organizers of activities, should guide students to explore these themes. For example, if the teacher chooses the drama as the theme of musical education activities, he/she can arrange the activities of visiting the local opera with students. Through the introduction of opera, clothing, props, musical characteristics, singing opera, etc., children can have a preliminary understanding of the opera. In addition, through collecting opera materials on the Internet and in the library, the teacher can allow children to learn to make opera props, promoting mutual communication between children.

(2) Developing the themed musical practice activities

Themed activities must be based on children's experience and life. The teacher can discuss with children the relevant topics centering on one theme. For example, if "love" is taken as the theme, the teacher can explore this theme starting from "parent's love", "family love", "friends' love" and "love of animals". The teacher should select the musical works suitable for children to appreciate. The music education practice should be comprehensive, in which various artistic forms such as music, fine arts, literature and drama can be integrated. In addition, to meet the needs of the activity, the teacher can also introduce some new forms of activities, such as performance, comedy and musical play, to make music education activities more colorful.

(3) Innovating musical activity materials

In the musical practice activities, the selection of musical works is always based on one theme. So sometimes, it is difficult to meet different needs of different children. In this case, the teacher can conduct the second creation according to the demands of activities, such as rewriting of lyrics, role-playing for musical works, remaking musical instruments, expressing musical content in the way of pictures, changing music rhythm in a wonderful way. The second creation makes musical activities more vibrant.

3.1.3 Project approach

Project approach is also an important part of children's musical practice activities. Through observation, listening, communication, rhythm, handmade works and painting, children can collect music materials and design music reporting activities by themselves. Project education activities are oriented by the interest of children. Their purpose is not to learn music skills, but to understand internal integration in music. They belong to comprehensive practices.

3.2 Educational Patterns of Children's Musical Practice Activities

3.2.1 Training of singing skills

Children are more willing to sing the songs which are familiar to them. Sometimes they create some melodies or lyrics on a whim; these small pieces of music can be combined into creative singing. In this link, some different tones, rhythms, speeds, pitches, note values, voices and facial expression can also be blended. Teachers can also use the audio equipment, musical instruments, spectrum, music stories, video, etc., to play their favorite songs, and allow them to learn new songs while playing games.

3.2.2 Training of body rhythm ability

Children's body rhythm abilities are trained in two ways: performing while singing; spontaneous

rhythmic motions in the background of music. In the training, some actions can be properly added such as twisting fingers, clapping hands, tapping legs, walking, stop-and-start, nodding and shrugging. In addition, some small instruments can be used simultaneously, such as drum, sand hammer, sand egg, playing stick, triangular iron and bell. The teacher can guide them to perform with music alternately in groups: singing group, musical instruments group and rhythm motion group.

3.2.3 Training of rhythmic ability

The training of children's rhythmic ability can be done by means of dance, singing, small musical instruments and musical performance. For example, the minim rhythm can be trained in the way of walking; the crotchet rhythm can be trained in the way of clapping hands; the quaver rhythm can be trained in the way of twisting fingers; the semiquaver rhythm can be trained in the way of tapping legs or stamping feet; the syncopated rhythm can be trained in the way of food in chains. Meanwhile, different rhythms can be combined together. In addition, these training can also be conducted together. The purpose of training is to allow the children to grasp the rhythms in happiness through simultaneously using hands and feet.

3.2.4. Training of children's musical appreciation ability

Music appreciation focuses on the appreciation, understanding and perception of music. In the process of listening to music, children can learn about the story in music, experience the emotions expressed in music, know musical instruments used in music and feeling the change in music beat, rhythm, speed and strength, improving children's aesthetic ability.

4. Educational Significance of Children's Musical Practice Activities

4.1 Promoting the development of children's aesthetic ability

In children's musical practice activities, music, performance, rhythmic motion and musical instrument are blended perfectly, displaying picturesque beauty and rhythmic beauty. In addition, a colorful world of fairy tales is manifested in the form of singing while dancing, which brings children strong beauty in form. In these activities, children learn to understand things through perceiving phenomena and express thoughts through actions, molding and expression. This kind of learning process adapts to the children's psychological and physiological characteristics. Children like to participate in musical practice activities in a relaxing and happy atmosphere; moreover, they can also perceive the world, recognize things and receive aesthetic education in the lively activities.

4.2 Promoting the formation of children's healthy emotions

Music is a kind of art adept in expressing and stimulating emotions. It can allow children to alleviate tension and achieve emotional balance. Through extensive exposure to music manifesting different emotional content, their emotional world will gradually become rich and full, conducive to the formation of healthy emotion.

4.3 Promoting the development of children's sound personality

Distinctive rhythms and beautiful melodies enable children to have a happy mood, experience pleasure and cultivate interest in music and life, conducive to the development of children's healthy personality.

4.4 Promoting children's development in brain potential and coordination of body organs

Through the coordinative functions of ears, eyes, brain and limbs, children's keen feelings can be cultivated and the reactive flexibility of their brains can be improved. In one word, musical practice activities help develop children's brain potential further and promote the coordination of their body organs.

4.5 Promoting children's imagination and creativity

Music is invisible and intangible. The discrimination of pitch, rhythm, intensity and tone and the understanding of the relationship between music time and space have great significance in cultivating children's ability in analyzing problems and stimulating their imagination, hence promoting their creativity and imagination.

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