

The Literature Review on Application of Chinese Children for Piano Works in Piano Education at Universities in Guangxi

Hao Lu¹,
Nataporn Rattanachaiwong² and Lingling Liu³

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University,^{1,2} Thailand.
Guangxi Arts University, Nanning, Guangxi,³ China.
Corresponding Author, E-mail: 75832079@qq.com

Abstract

This study aims to review the current application and development trends of Chinese children's piano works in piano education at universities in Guangxi. By analyzing relevant domestic and international literature, it focuses on the application of Chinese children's piano works in Guangxi university piano teaching, covering areas such as curriculum development, teaching methods, teacher training, and student learning outcomes. The research sample includes recent academic journals, dissertations, and conference papers. The research tool is literature analysis, which involves classifying, organizing, and conducting content analysis of the literature to evaluate the effectiveness and challenges of applying Chinese children's piano works in Guangxi university piano education. Data collection is based on academic resources and educational policy documents, summarizing the current research achievements and gaps. The findings reveal that although Chinese children's piano works have been preliminarily applied in Guangxi university piano education, significant issues remain in areas such as the curriculum system, localized content, and teaching methods. The study concludes that integrating Chinese children's piano works into teaching enhances students' cultural identity and artistic expression, improves the overall quality of piano education, and holds profound cultural and educational significance.

Keywords: The Application of Chinese Children; Piano Works; Piano Education; Universities in Guangxi

Introduction

Chinese children's piano works, as a unique form of art, blend the acoustic language of traditional Chinese culture. Their educational value lies not only in enhancing students' technical abilities but also in helping students understand and express the deeper connotations of Chinese culture. Sun Juan (2008) noted in her research that Chinese children's piano works can spark students' interest in traditional Chinese culture. Through learning these works, students not only improve their piano performance skills but also develop a sense of identity with ethnic music and emotional expression abilities. Shang Chengzhi (2022) further emphasized that the uniqueness of these works lies in the richness of their musical forms and expressive techniques, making them widely applicable in piano education, especially as foundational materials for developing students' technical skills and expressiveness.

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In the undergraduate stage of piano education, especially for students majoring in music education, there is a high likelihood that they will engage in piano teaching for children and adolescents in the future. Therefore, integrating Chinese children's piano works into undergraduate education is not only of great educational value but also helps students prepare for their future teaching careers. Chinese children's piano works, with their simple melodies, lively rhythms, and ethnic characteristics, are particularly suitable for children and adolescents. Through undergraduate studies, students can learn how to teach these works to future students while deeply understanding their artistic and educational value. This not only helps students develop effective teaching methods but also lays a solid foundation for their future roles in education.

However, in the context of piano education in universities in Guangxi, there are still many challenges in integrating children's piano works. Cen Mian (2014) pointed out that, despite Guangxi's unique advantages in ethnic music and local culture, the teaching methods and philosophies in piano education still lean toward the traditional Western music education system, especially in the selection of textbooks and teaching content. There is a relative lack of in-depth understanding and research on local piano works. She argued that the failure to fully explore and utilize local music resources in Guangxi's piano education has resulted in limited exposure to Chinese children's piano works, and a lack of cultural integration and transmission in the teaching process.

Therefore, researching the application of Chinese children's piano works in the piano education of universities in Guangxi holds significant theoretical and practical value.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the cultural and educational value of Chinese children's piano works.
2. To evaluate the current status and challenges of piano education at universities in Guangxi.

Research Methodology

This study employs a literature review methodology, aimed at systematically reviewing and analyzing relevant literature to explore the current status and development trends of Chinese children's piano works in piano education at universities in Guangxi. The specific research methods are as follows:

1. Research Sample

The research sample primarily includes academic literature from recent years related to Chinese children's piano works and university piano education. This includes domestic and international academic journals, dissertations, conference papers, and educational policy documents. The criteria for selecting the sample literature are: first, the literature must involve the application of Chinese children's piano works in piano education, particularly at the undergraduate level and above; second, the literature must have sufficient theoretical depth and supporting research data to ensure its relevance and contribution to the research topic.

2. Research Tools

The main research tool used in this study is literature analysis. Through a systematic review and analysis of the relevant literature, this study extracts theoretical perspectives, teaching practices, and research findings related to the application of Chinese children's piano works in university piano education. Additionally, content analysis is employed to classify,

compare, and summarize the data, conclusions, and research methods in the literature, providing a theoretical foundation and practical experience for future research.

3. Data Collection

The primary sources of data collection are domestic and international academic databases (such as CNKI, Google Scholar, etc.), journal articles, dissertations, and government and educational policy documents. During the literature collection process, the researcher focused on studies conducted in the past decade regarding Chinese children's piano works and piano education in universities in Guangxi. The data collection process included manually searching for relevant literature, selecting literature that aligns with the research topic, and ensuring the quality and relevance of the literature.

4. Data Analysis

Data analysis adopts qualitative analysis methods, primarily through the induction, summarization, and comparison of the main viewpoints, research methods, and conclusions in the literature. In the analysis process, particular attention is given to educational practices, teaching models, the use of textbooks, and the teaching effectiveness of Chinese children's piano works. Through content analysis, the findings from different studies are compared, revealing the current status, problems, and future development directions of the application of Chinese children's piano works in piano education at universities in Guangxi.

5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this research is based on three core theories: cultural transmission theory, music education theory, and constructivist learning theory. This framework, combined with the specific application of Chinese children's piano works in piano education at universities in Guangxi, explores how to enhance students' cultural identity, performance techniques, and teaching abilities through these works. The framework is built around three main dimensions: cultural understanding, teaching innovation, and professional application (Figure 1).

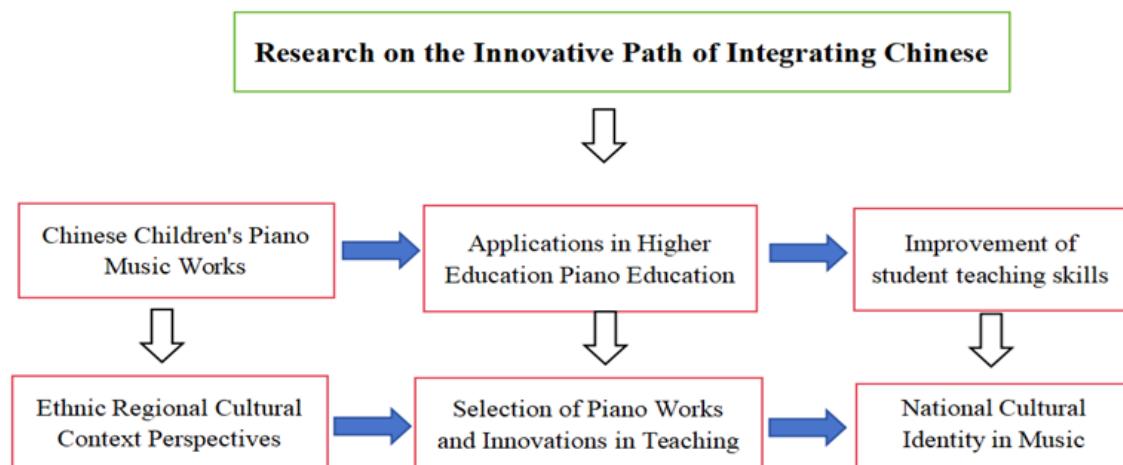


Figure 1 Conceptual framework
(Source: Constructed by the researcher)

Research Findings

1. Analysis of the Cultural and Educational Value of Chinese Children's Piano Works

1.1 Overview of Theoretical Research on Chinese Children's Piano Works

This study conducts literature collection, screening, and analysis according to the standards of a systematic literature review. Google Scholar and CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) databases were used as the main search platforms. Published academic papers were the primary focus of the study, and keyword searches were performed using terms such as “Chinese children's piano works” and “piano education in Guangxi universities,” with no restriction on the publication year (up to November 30, 2024). Based on the available data, the related literature is categorized as shown in the table below:

Table 1 Summary Table of the Number of Published Papers on Chinese Children's Piano Works

Literature Categories and Research Directions	Number of Journals	Number of Master's and Doctoral Theses
Educational and Teaching Research	10	12
Research on Developmental Literature and Theoretical Studies	6	0
Research on Musical Works	2	2
Research on Performance and Interpretation	1	2
Research on Musical Nationalization	4	4

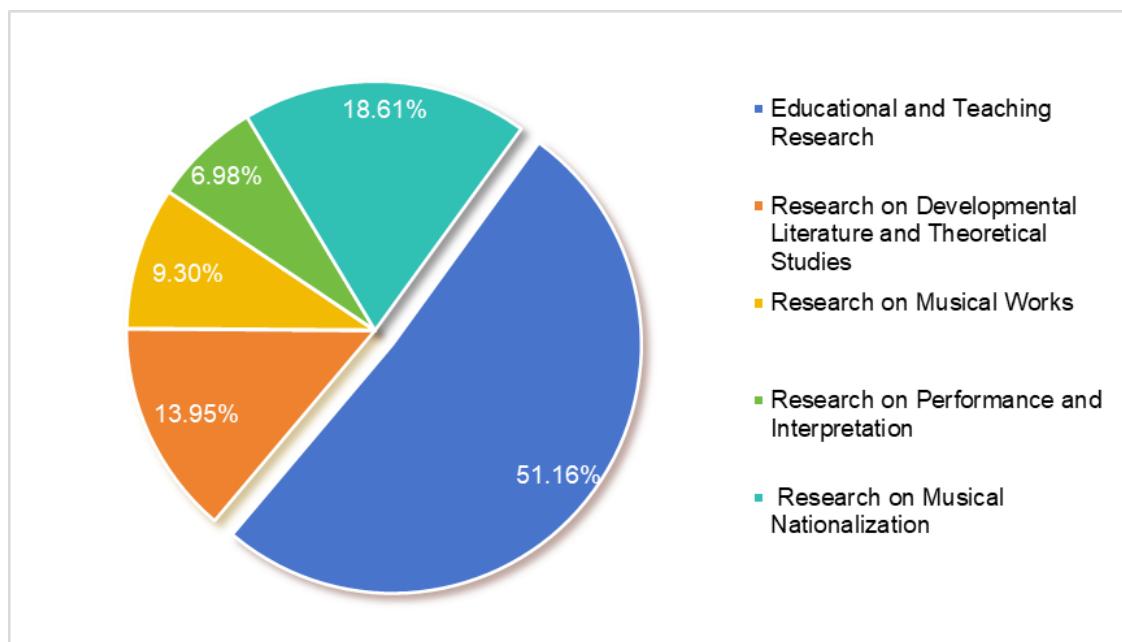


Figure 2 Proportional Distribution Chart of Published Papers by Literature Category

(Source: Constructed by the researcher, 2024)

According to the data displayed, the current literature on the application of Chinese children's piano works in piano education at universities in Guangxi mainly focuses on five research directions: educational and teaching research, music localization research, developmental literature theory research, music works research, and performance and interpretation research.

The largest proportion of literature falls under the category of "Educational and Teaching Research," reflecting the widespread academic attention to the role of Chinese children's piano works in piano education. The research mainly focuses on curriculum development, teaching method innovation, and teacher training, emphasizing the teaching value of these works and their contribution to enhancing students' skills. For example, Liu Bowen (2021) studied the development and evolution of local children's piano teaching materials in China since the founding of the People's Republic, emphasizing the importance of such materials in cultivating technical proficiency and cultural awareness. However, despite the extensive discussions on teaching methods, there is a lack of in-depth analysis of the works and detailed research on teaching specifics, failing to fully demonstrate the dual role of the works in technical training and artistic expression.

The "Music Localization Research" category examines the role of Chinese children's piano works in the inheritance of ethnic culture, particularly how piano teaching can enhance students' cultural identity. For example, Han Xuechen (2018) emphasized that integrating ethnic music elements into piano education can help students develop a stronger connection to their cultural roots and foster a sense of national pride. Although this area of research has significant cultural value, its relatively small proportion indicates that the deep integration and innovative application of ethnic culture in piano education still require further development.

The "Developmental Literature Theory Research" category focuses on the historical evolution and creative background of Chinese children's piano works. For example, Wei Lian (2010) discussed significant milestones in the development of these works, starting with compositions like He Luting's *The Cowherd's Flute*, which established a unique style blending Chinese folk elements with piano techniques. This early work marked the beginning of a distinct genre in Chinese piano music. Similarly, Li Sinan (2020) explored the progression of children's piano teaching theories, highlighting how these works integrate educational goals with cultural values. Both studies emphasize that understanding the historical and theoretical context of these compositions is essential for integrating them effectively into piano education practices. However, despite the contributions of these studies, this category remains insufficiently developed in terms of systematic frameworks that connect historical insights to teaching practice. Most research highlights individual milestones or theoretical advancements but fails to provide comprehensive guidelines for educators to utilize these works in modern classrooms. Additionally, there is limited discussion on how to adapt these historical works to the evolving needs of contemporary students, leaving a gap between theory and practical application. Addressing these shortcomings could significantly enhance the relevance and usability of developmental literature in piano education.

The "Music Works Research" is relatively scarce, indicating insufficient research in the area of detailed analysis of specific works. Although there are some analyses of the

technical and expressive aspects of the works, the overall depth and comprehensiveness remain limited, with a lack of a thorough examination of the details of the works.

The "Performance and Interpretation Research" is the smallest category, reflecting that there is little academic attention to the performance and emotional expression of these works in piano education. This suggests that future research should further strengthen the focus on interpretation and emotional expression.

Based on the data, it is clear that current literature is concentrated in the areas of educational and teaching research and music localization, but there is relatively little research on specific works, performance techniques, and the construction of theoretical frameworks. Future research should focus more on in-depth analysis of Chinese children's piano works, particularly on the integration of technical aspects, artistic expression, and cultural identity. This would contribute to the localized development of piano education and enhance students' comprehensive competence.

1.2 Chinese Children's Piano Works: Cultural Value and Educational Significance

Chinese children's piano works are not only a form of music but also carry profound cultural connotations, offering unique educational value. Through the language of music, these works express the essence of traditional Chinese culture, providing significant artistic and educational meaning.

1.2.1 Cultural Value: Preserving Chinese Traditional Culture and Ethnic Characteristics

The cultural value of Chinese children's piano works is primarily reflected in their preservation and expression of traditional Chinese culture. For example, the famous piano piece Hundred Birds Paying Homage to the Phoenix was composed by Wang Jianzhong, based on a traditional ethnic suona piece. The work's melody adopts the unique pentatonic scale of China, imitating the timbre and rhythm of the suona, portraying a lively scene of birds singing and dancing, symbolizing the revival of all things and the harmonious beauty of nature. Through piano performance, this piece presents the traditional Chinese imagery of "birdsong" and "phoenix song," vividly conveying the cultural meanings of good fortune and happiness. In piano education, students learning Hundred Birds Paying Homage to the Phoenix not only develop flexibility in their performance techniques but also gain a deep understanding of Chinese musical culture. These works integrate elements of Chinese customs, habits, and natural scenery into piano teaching, subtly immersing students in traditional culture during their performances.

1.2.2 Educational Significance: Enhancing Students' Musical Literacy and Emotional Expression

The role of Chinese children's piano works in music education is especially significant in cultivating students' musical literacy and emotional expression abilities. Children's piano works composed by Chinese composers generally feature simple, lively melodies and rhythmically engaging structures. These pieces are not only suitable for the performance learning of children and adolescents but also present technical challenges and expressive potential. In piano teaching, these works help students improve their artistic expressiveness and emotional expression through diverse musical forms, technique training, and emotional guidance.

For instance, The Red Women's Army Suite, adapted by Du Mingxin from the music of China's first revolutionary-themed ballet The Red Women's Army, carries the emotions of revolutionary history and conveys strong artistic expressiveness and technical

difficulty through the piano form. In terms of improving musical literacy, Du Mingxin made adjustments and enhancements to the harmonies from the ballet in his piano arrangement, making the harmonic structure more complex. When students perform these sections, they gain a better understanding of the role of harmony and its function in musical expression, enhancing their harmonic awareness. Additionally, these works demand high technical proficiency. In terms of emotional expression, these pieces allow students to experience a range of emotions in different contexts—from solemn oaths to powerful marches, and the combination of gentleness and resilience. By grasping these emotional layers, students can develop their emotional expression abilities. The Red Women's Army Suite profoundly reflects the spirit of China's revolutionary history. Through performing such historically significant works, students can emotionally resonate with history, thereby deepening their understanding and identification with national history and culture. This emotional conveyance is an important aspect of emotional development in piano education.

This suite, adapted from a ballet, itself an intercultural art form, further elevates its value in music education. As a vital instrument for musical expression, the piano helps students experience the fusion of Western artistic forms with Chinese revolutionary themes through the music of ballet. It also aids in understanding the mutual influence and borrowing between different art forms. By performing these works, students not only improve their piano techniques and emotional expression but also learn how to combine and transform the expressive methods of different art forms within a broader artistic perspective. This interdisciplinary learning provides students with a deeper artistic understanding within music education.

2. The Current Situation and Challenges of Piano Education at Universities in Guangxi

Although Guangxi has made some achievements in piano education, there are still many challenges in incorporating Chinese children's piano works into the teaching process. Based on a literature analysis of current studies on piano education in Guangxi universities, the following key issues can be identified:

2.1 Insufficiency of the Curriculum System

The piano curriculum system at universities in Guangxi lacks diversity and local characteristics. Most teaching materials rely on traditional Western classical repertoire, such as works by Czerny, Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin, which mainly focus on technique and the European classical music tradition, while neglecting the study and application of Chinese children's piano works. This teaching model, which depends heavily on Western classical pieces, exposes students primarily to Western musical forms and styles, overlooking the transmission and expression of local culture. In particular, many textbooks fail to adequately present the characteristics of Chinese indigenous music when introducing Chinese children's piano works, making it difficult for students to appreciate the ethnic musical nuances through piano learning. For instance, Chinese children's piano works like Li Yinghai's Zoo Suite and Wang Zhenya's Small Variations on a Mongolian Folk Song hold unique educational value and cultural significance, yet due to the lack of suitable textbooks, many students do not have the opportunity to study these ethnically stylized works in depth. The shortage of appropriate teaching materials not only limits students' understanding of Chinese music but also hinders their future ability to teach Chinese piano works to children, particularly in the context of local cultural traditions.

2.2 Limitations of Teacher Quality

Another challenge faced by piano education in Guangxi universities is the inadequacy of teacher qualifications. While some piano instructors have a strong foundation in teaching techniques and theory, their understanding and application of Chinese children's piano works are relatively weak. Some teachers lack a systematic understanding of these works, especially in terms of their historical background, technical features, and emotional expression. Moreover, many teachers still rely on traditional Western piano teaching methods, placing too much emphasis on technical training and failing to integrate Chinese children's piano works effectively into technical instruction. This teaching approach can result in students lacking an understanding of Chinese children's piano works, leading to a focus on technical skills after graduation while neglecting the psychological characteristics and learning abilities of children and adolescents.

2.3 Shortage of Teaching Resources

Another critical issue faced by piano education in Guangxi universities is the scarcity of teaching resources. Although Guangxi is a region rich in ethnic culture, teaching resources related to local music are relatively scarce. Most existing piano education resources focus on the performance and theory of Western music, with insufficient exploration and promotion of regional music, particularly Chinese children's piano works. For example, traditional ethnic music from Guangxi and works by local composers appear infrequently in piano textbooks, leaving students with limited opportunities to engage with and understand local culture. This resource shortage makes it difficult for students to form a comprehensive understanding of local culture during their piano studies, and they are unable to fully experience and pass on the rich musical heritage of Guangxi and other Chinese ethnic groups. While some universities have attempted to introduce works by local composers, the overall teaching effect has been suboptimal due to limited teaching resources, leading to weak student perceptions of local culture.

Discussion

1. Summary of Key Findings

This study emphasizes the important role that Chinese children's piano works play in enhancing the cultural and educational value of piano education at universities in Guangxi. While the significance of these works has been recognized, integrating them into the curriculum remains challenging, particularly in terms of curriculum design, content localization, and adjustments to teaching methods. The findings indicate that while these works are beneficial for fostering cultural identity and technical skills, the current teaching methods in Guangxi are still largely influenced by traditional Western music education models. Moreover, learning Chinese children's piano works is crucial for students to better meet societal demands. As the music education environment continues to evolve, students trained in these works will be better equipped to teach young learners, bridging the gap between traditional Western music and Chinese ethnic cultural contexts. The integration of Chinese children's piano works into university piano education not only enhances students' technical and interpretive abilities but also prepares them for future roles as educators in primary and secondary schools.

2. Comparison with Existing Literature

The findings of this study align with previous research on the value of Chinese children's piano works in music education. Sun Juan (2008) and Shang Chengzhi (2022) highlighted the unique educational and cultural value of these works, noting that they not only help students develop technical proficiency but also establish a strong emotional connection with Chinese culture. However, our study also reveals a gap in the application of these works in piano education in Guangxi, which echoes the observations of scholars like Cen Mian (2014). Cen pointed out that, despite the region's rich ethnic and musical heritage, local music resources have not been fully developed or integrated into the educational framework. This study confirms that challenges such as the lack of localized teaching materials and the over-reliance on Western teaching methods have hindered the full integration of Chinese children's piano works into the curriculum. Additionally, Zhao Juan (2013) emphasized the importance of adapting teaching practices to the cultural and developmental needs of children in Chinese music education. Learning Chinese children's piano works provides students with a unique teaching opportunity, allowing them to connect with these needs and ensuring that future educators can teach works that resonate with the cultural experiences of young learners. This ability to engage with culturally relevant music helps future teachers better prepare students for the ever-changing demands of society, particularly as the demand for culturally competent music educators continues to grow.

3. Implications for Practice

The significance of this study lies in two main areas: first, incorporating Chinese children's piano works into university curricula plays a crucial role in enhancing students' cultural awareness and technical abilities. Second, there is an urgent need to develop a comprehensive, localized teaching framework to integrate these works. Educators should focus on creating more region-specific educational resources and methods to meet students' learning needs. The findings also suggest that integrating local ethnic music into teaching practices can provide a more holistic educational experience, fostering stronger identity and cultural pride among students. In the context of children's piano education, this approach improves students' career prospects. By mastering these works, students will be better prepared to teach the younger generation, cultivate a deeper connection with Chinese culture, and improve the overall quality of school music education.

4. Limitations and Future Research

This study primarily focuses on the current state of piano education in Guangxi, and while it provides valuable insights, its scope is limited to this region. Future research should expand to other provinces in China to explore whether similar challenges exist elsewhere. Additionally, a longitudinal study could provide a deeper understanding of the long-term impact of incorporating Chinese children's piano works into the curriculum. Further research is also needed to test the effectiveness of specific teaching methods in enhancing student engagement and technical development when using these works.

Another valuable avenue for future research is to explore the practical teaching practices employed by music educators specializing in Chinese children's piano works. Understanding how these works are presented in the classroom and the challenges teachers face when implementing them could provide actionable recommendations for curriculum improvements and teacher training..

Recommendations

1. Theoretical Suggestions

At the theoretical level, academic research should strengthen the pedagogical study of integrating Chinese children's piano works into piano education, especially with regard to theoretical support for teaching piano to children and adolescents. Research should explore how these works can be integrated with children's psychological development and music learning principles, and how Chinese children's piano works can be used to cultivate students' teaching methods and abilities. Specifically, theoretical research should focus on teaching strategies for children's works in piano education, including how these works can help students establish child-appropriate teaching methods, improve their classroom management, teaching techniques, and emotional expression skills. Additionally, scholars should propose a clear theoretical framework and pathways for teaching Chinese children's piano works, providing a solid theoretical foundation for practical teaching.

2. Policy Suggestions

Government and educational authorities should develop policies that support the integration of Chinese children's piano works into university piano education, particularly practice-oriented educational policies. First, educational authorities should encourage universities to include children's piano works in the compulsory curriculum for piano education programs, with clear course objectives, especially in terms of training students to teach piano to children and adolescents. Through policy guidance, universities should be supported in providing practical teaching opportunities closely aligned with real-world teaching, such as collaborating with primary and secondary schools to offer teaching internships and children's piano teaching training. Additionally, policies should promote the creation of local works and encourage the development of teaching materials for Chinese children's piano works, ensuring sufficient teaching resources and practical guidance in university piano education.

3. Practical Suggestions

In practical teaching, to help students better teach piano to children and adolescents, universities in Guangxi can adopt the following measures:

3.1 Curriculum and Textbook Development

Universities should add specialized modules on children's piano teaching to their piano education curriculum. The course content should focus on Chinese children's piano works, helping students master the basic skills needed to teach children. Textbooks should include works suitable for different age groups and incorporate case studies to help students understand the teaching methods for each work.

3.2 Aligning Teaching Methods with Practice

Piano teachers should adopt practice-oriented teaching methods, emphasizing simulation and rehearsal to help students translate theoretical knowledge into practical teaching abilities. For example, through simulated classes, teaching demonstrations, and role-playing, students can learn how to effectively teach Chinese children's piano works to young students in real-world teaching situations.

3.3 Internship and Accumulation of Teaching

Experience Universities should provide more teaching internship opportunities for students, such as collaborating with local primary and secondary schools to offer children's piano courses. These opportunities will help students accumulate experience in actual teaching, enhancing their teaching confidence and abilities. These internships not only help students

understand the educational value of Chinese children's piano works but also allow them to test and refine their teaching skills in real teaching environments..

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