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การศึกษากระบวนการเตรียมนักเรียนเข้าแข่งขัน
เปียโน กรณีศึกษา การแข่งขันรุ่นเล็กงานยามาฮา
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A Strategy of Instruction for the Student Piano Competition Case Study: the Roon Lek (9-12 Years Old) Category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้ มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อค้นหาเทคนิคการสอนที่มีประสิทธิภาพอันนำไปสู่ความสำเร็จของนักเรียนในการแข่งขันเปียโนรุ่นเล็ก งาน Yamaha Thailand Music Festival เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในงานวิจัยครั้งนี้คือ แบบสัมภาษณ์ ซึ่งสัมภาษณ์ครูสอนเปียโน 10 ท่าน ซึ่งเคยมีนักเรียนผ่านเข้าสู่รอบชิงชนะเลิศในการแข่งขันรายการนี้อย่างน้อย 2 ปี ผลการวิจัยมีดังนี้

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วิธีการสอนของครู ซึ่งครูส่วนใหญ่เริ่มการสอนโดยให้นักเรียนฟังเพลงที่ใช้ในการแข่งขันเพื่อให้นักเรียนรู้จักและคุ้นเคยกับเพลง จากนั้นจึงให้นักเรียนฝึกซ้อมด้วยตนเอง หลังจากที่นักเรียนสามารถบรรเลงเพลงได้คล่องแล้ว ขั้นตอนต่อไปเป็นการเพิ่มรายละเอียดต่างๆ เข้าไปในบทเพลงเพื่อให้เพลงมีความสมบูรณ์มากขึ้น จากนั้นครูจะเป็นผู้ใช้เมโทรโนมประกอบ เพื่อให้นักเรียนสามารถบรรเลงได้ถูกต้องตามจังหวะ สำหรับการสร้างอารมณ์ในบทเพลง บางกรณีครูจะให้นักเรียนร้องโน้ตคลอไปกับกาบรรเลง หรืออาจใช้การเล่าเรื่องของ รวมถึงการเปรียบเทียบความหมายของสัญลักษณ์ต่างๆ ในบทเพลง กับสิ่งที่นักเรียนคุ้นเคยในชีวิตประจำวัน นอกจากนี้ครูจะบันทึกการบรรเลงของนักเรียนไว้ในรูปแบบของเสียงหรือวิดีโอ เพื่อให้นักเรียนได้ประเมินตนเองหลังการบรรเลงทุกครั้ง จากนั้นเมื่อนักเรียนสามารถบรรเลงเพลงได้คล่องแล้ว ครูจึงให้นักเรียนได้มีโอกาสดำเนินการต่อสาธารณชน เพื่อให้นักเรียนเกิดความเคยชินต่อการแสดงบทเวทีที่มีผู้ชมจำนวนมาก ซึ่งเป็นการช่วยลดความตื่นเต้นเมื่อต้องขึ้นแสดงบนเวทีการแข่งขัน

การฝึกซ้อมของนักเรียน สำหรับการฝึกซ้อมที่บ้าน ครูควรบอกนักเรียนถึงสิ่งที่ต้องซ้อมในแต่ละสัปดาห์อย่างละเอียด นอกจากนี้ ครูส่วนใหญ่จะให้นักเรียนมาฝึกซ้อมเพิ่มเติมที่โรงเรียนก่อนการแข่งขันอีกด้วย

การสื่อสารกับผู้ปกครอง ครูส่วนใหญ่มีการพูดคุยกับผู้ปกครองหลังคาบเรียนของนักเรียนทุกครั้ง โดยชี้แจงให้ผู้ปกครองทราบถึงพัฒนาการของนักเรียน และสิ่งที่ครูต้องการให้ฝึกซ้อมต่อไป

บริบทอื่นๆ ได้แก่ คุณลักษณะของนักเรียนที่ครูเลือกเข้าแข่งขัน จะต้องเป็นนักเรียนที่สนใจการแข่งขัน มีความตั้งใจ มีความกระตือรือร้น และมุ่งมั่นในการแข่งขัน อีกทั้งต้องเป็นนักเรียนที่มีความขยันและมีวินัยในการฝึกซ้อม สำหรับเครื่องแต่งกายที่ใช้ในการแข่งขัน ครูจะให้นักเรียนใส่ชุดที่ไม่คับหรือหลวมจนเกินไป ก่อนการแข่งขัน 1 วัน นักเรียนควรฝึกซ้อมเพียงเล็กน้อยเท่านั้น อีกทั้งในวันแข่งขัน ครูส่วนใหญ่จะให้นักเรียนผ่อนคลาย ไม่กดดันนักเรียน แต่จะให้กำลังใจนักเรียนอีกด้วย

คำสำคัญ: การแข่งขันเปียโน, เทคนิคการสอน, ยามาฮ่า ไทยแลนด์ มิวสิค เฟสติวัล, รุ่งลึก

Abstract

This research proposed to identify effective techniques and studio instruction that lead to student success in piano competitions in the Roon Lek (9-12 years old) category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. The instrument used in this research was a semi-structured interview of ten piano teachers who had students advance to the final round in at least two years of the competition. The results were as follows:

1. Teaching Techniques: Most teachers begin their teaching by asking students to listen to the music to provide students with an overall image of the music they are going to play, then letting students study and practice themselves. After that, add other details into the pieces. Teachers can use a metronome to help students play with the precise rhythm. For teaching musical expression, teachers can ask students to sing while they are playing, using teachers' storytelling or using metaphors. Furthermore, teachers should record students' performances and let students self-assess. Before the competition, teachers should have students perform to the public as many times as possible.

2. Students' Practicing: For home practice, teachers should tell students what to practice thoroughly each week. Moreover, most teachers get students to practice more at school before the competition.

3. Communication with Parents: Most teachers talk to parents after every class by telling parents about students' progress and about what to practice at home.

4. Related Contexts: Students whose teachers choose to participate in the competition must be students who intend to compete, are enthusiastic, are hard-working, and have discipline to practice. Most teachers ask their students to wear comfortable clothes. For the day before the competition, many teachers ask students to practice comfortably only a little to warm up their fingers. For the competition day, teachers should let students relax by not pressuring them and encouraging them.

keywords: piano competition, teaching technique, yamaha thailand music festival, room lek category

Significance and Background of the Research

Competition has been a part of human culture throughout history as it serves to celebrate excellence. In the music world, the first documented music competitions were held in Athens (Iakovlev, n.d.). In the Middle Ages, music competitions among musicians were commonplace. In 18th century Europe, instrumental competitions frequently involved keyboard and violin and in the 19th century, these competitions expanded to include other instruments, particularly in France. Some educators support music competitions as a means of motivating both teachers and students and gaining valuable performance experiences.

Motivation is one of the most important advantages of music competitions. Music competitions can motivate students and teachers in preparation of the pieces (Maddy, 1936). When students know that they have to participate in a competition, they try to work hard and practice more to reach the goal of the competition (Bastien, 1988). Similarly, teachers need to pay more attention to their students' studying and performing. Teachers need to find effective techniques for their students which can also improve their teaching. Moreover, music educators support the performance experiences by attending competitions. Students can gain more experience by facing performance pressure, such as performance anxiety and dealing with the expectations of other participants (Bastien, 1988). The students also gain benefits from receiving comments or evaluations from judges. These evaluations can help students to improve their performances. After receiving the comments from the competition, teachers will know the strong and weak points of their students which can be encouraged or adjusted (Bastien, 1988).

Music competitions in Thailand are very popular events for young musicians, akin to international music competitions. Many music competitions in Thailand were established and popularized in recent years. These include; Bangkok Chopin Piano Competition, Thailand International Piano Competition, and Siam InterNAtional Competition. One of the famous music competitions in Thailand is the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival. First held in 1970, it is a music competition that is held annually for the students of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School and allows students to show their talents and win prizes.

Yamaha Thailand Music Festival covers many types of instruments, such as piano, electone[□], guitar, singing, and violin. There are four age categories: Roon Jew which is for students who are not older than eight years old, Roon Lek which is for students who are not older than 12 years old, Roon Klang which is for students who are not older than 16 years old, and Roon Tuapai which is for students who are not older than 20 years old.

Candidates in the Roon Lek category are between 9-12 years old. Ray (2011) describes children between 7-12 years old as being in middle childhood. Children in middle childhood are developing their bodies, personalities, and minds. Children who are interested in the arts or any other subjects will develop and increase their potential in these fields quickly at this stage because they respond strongly to complex things such as complex tempo, wide range of melody, and music expression (Suttajit, 1998). Moreover, they are ready to perceive and develop musical harmony and pitch, and are able to play a musical instrument like a keyboard, unlike younger children. So, this stage is an ideal time to start learning a musical instrument. Even though children in this stage (Roon Lek) increase their potential more than students in the younger stage (Roon Jew), they still cannot judge or make decisions wisely, so they need support and encouragement from their teachers and parents. Students in the Roon Lek category differ from the older students in the upper category (Roon Klang and Roon Tuapai) because the latter two categories have their own intention and ambition to practice, so they try to do their best and win prizes. Teachers still play a significant role for the older students but parents play a lesser role

in the learning process. Moreover, the Roon Lek category contains over a hundred competitors every year which is the most popular category for piano students among the four categories. Thus, it is interesting to investigate how teachers teach students in the Roon Lek category, and how they improve students' potential in addition to how parents help their children in practicing at home.

Preparation is important for any music competition. Being well-prepared can build confidence and reduce performance anxiety. In preparation for a music competition, both teachers and students can see the strong and weak points; the strong points can then be promoted and the weak points can be corrected before the competition. In music competitions, everyone wants to be a winner, but there are no prizes for all competitors. In addition to students' potential and effort, their teachers are the key factors of students' success. Skilled teachers can produce better students. Many students who attend music competitions and win prizes sometimes share same teachers. There are many teaching techniques, but some teachers may have more effective techniques that help their students win competitions. Furthermore, teachers need to know many teaching techniques which can improve their teaching and lead to students' success. In Thailand, there are no Thailand-focused publications about piano studio instruction, teaching techniques, or preparing students for music competitions. This thesis proposes to: (1) identify effective techniques and studio instruction that lead to student success in piano competitions, (2) help teachers to improve their teaching techniques, (3) help students gain useful techniques for practicing to improve their musical skills, and (4) advocate further study on this topic.

For this thesis, piano teachers were interviewed on the following topics:

- Teaching techniques
- Students' practicing
- Communication with parents
- Related contexts

Objective of the Research

To study strategies of instruction for the student piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival.

Study Group

Ten piano teachers of the Yamaha (Siam Kolakarn) Music School, who have had students advance to the final round of the Roon Lek category of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival in at least two years of competition, were interviewed.

Instrument

Qualitative researchers generally collect data from interviews (Merriam, 2009). The tool used in this research for data collecting was a semi-structured interview. The researcher used interview protocol as a guideline during the interview process. Some of the questions could be flexible, depending on the conversation of the interviewee and time availability. Additional questions could be asked to respond to information offered by the interviewee.

Discussion

Teaching Techniques

1. Teacher's practicing plans for students

From the interviews, it was found that after teachers select repertoires for students, teachers begin teaching as follows:

1.1 Asking students to listen to the music first, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2001) that listening to the recording or watching concerts or videos of the works they have been playing is useful, because students need to get an overall image of the music they are going to play.

1.2 Letting students study and practice themselves first, then come back and play to teachers each week to check the accuracy. It is unnecessary for teachers to ask students to play the whole piece at one time; teachers should ask students to practice part by part. This conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009).

1.3 When students can play both hands well, teachers can increase the tempo little by little until students finally reach the real exact tempo by using a metronome to control the tempo of students' performances.

After students can play all the pieces well, teachers add more details into the pieces, for example, dynamics, articulation, phrasing, and other details. Finally, teachers add musical expression to make the pieces perfect.

2. Using a metronome

From the interviews, each teacher expresses the opinion about using a metronome and when to stop using it as follows:

2.1 When and how to use a metronome

- There is a use of the metronome after students can play the whole piece well, but do not use the metronome every time of practicing; they use the metronome when students cannot play the pieces with the precise rhythm and when students can play with the precise rhythm, those teachers will stop using it. This conforms to the statement of Berger (2009).

- One teacher asks students to practice with the metronome in slow tempo first, and then increase the tempo gradually every time until students reach the real tempo they have to play finally. This conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009) that a metronome can help students to increase their speed by an amount so small that ears cannot hear it.

2.2 When to stop using a metronome

- Some teachers stop using the metronome when it is close to the competition day or when they reach one month before the competition.

- Some teachers use metronome until the competition day but use it less and less and then switch to not using the metronome.

Furthermore, one teacher asks her students to practice at a slower tempo than usual with the metronome one month before the competition, which conforms to the statement of Bastien (1988).

3. Memorizing techniques

From the interviews, it was found that many methods that teachers use to help students in memorization are as follows:

3.1 The most popular method that teachers use to help students in memorization is listening and singing. Many teachers ask students to listen to music and sing with the right dynamics, articulation, and phrasing, then play exactly like they sing.

3.2 Recommending students to consider musical phrases in patterns or sequences which can help students to memorize easily and quickly, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009).

3.3 Using teacher's storytelling, then asking students to imagine a story.

4. Building musical expression in playing the pieces

From the interviews, it was found that many methods that teachers use to build students' musical expression in playing the pieces are as follows:

4.1 Asking students to sing while they are playing which students need to sing all details correctly first, then they can express the feeling by passing it on to their playing. This conforms to the statement of Lindstrom et al (2003) that it is necessary to feel the intended emotion while playing in order to communicate it to a listener successfully.

4.2 Using teachers' storytelling and let students imagine a picture following the teachers' story, which conforms to the statement of Woody (2000).

4.3 Using metaphors by comparing between markings in the piece and something in the students' daily lives to make the students understand the meanings completely. This conforms to the statement of Kovecses (2002) and Woody (2000) that many teachers

use imagery and metaphors to call attention to the emotional qualities of music in teaching students to perform expressively and metaphors are able to fulfill something that is uncertain or difficult to understand.

4.4 Using a method when students imitate teachers' playing to make the piece perfect as teachers want, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011), Karlsson and Juslin, (2008), Woody (2000) and Leonard and House (1972) that teacher modeling provides students with an opportunity to perceive an aural concept of what they are trying to achieve and students can improve their performance skills and attain much of their expressive ability through imitation of models.

5. Listening

From the interviews, it was found that all most teachers select music for students to listen to, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011) that for the best result in listening, teachers should guide students to proper recordings that will help students to identify rhythmic, harmonic, melodic, and formal patterns which can develop students' sense of music of the style they are studying. Furthermore, many teachers ask students to listen to details and ask students to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of others' performances with teachers, which can be adapted to the students' performances. This conforms to the statement of Oare (2011).

6. Recording students' performances

From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers record students' performances and let students self-assess, which conforms to the statement of Bastien (1988) and Anderson (1981). After that, teachers evaluate students' performances as follows:

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6.1 Students need to point out their weaknesses that can be seen in the recording and teachers add more points that students did not point out, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011).

6.2 Teachers point out the weaknesses that are seen in the recording to students.

6.3 Teachers and students assess the strengths and weaknesses together.

After students know their weaknesses, teachers provide corrections to allow students to correct and adjust their performances, which conforms to the statement of Anderson (1981).

7. Performing in public

From the interviews, it was found that after students can play their pieces well, all teachers have students perform to the public as many times as possible, which can help to reduce the excitement or nervousness when they need to perform on the real stage. This conforms to the statement of Stafford (2006), Zeigler and Ostromencki (1995) and Bastien (1988).

8. Asking experts to listen and correct students' performances

From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers ask the school owner and other teachers to listen to and criticize students' performances. After they listen to students' performances, the teachers will ask for comments to use in adjustment of students' performances. However, some teachers do not ask other experts to listen to and criticize students' performances while one teacher expresses the opinion that letting other people criticize students'

performances may make students confused, because more people means more opinions. It is better to have students listen only to their teachers.

Students' Practicing

1. Practicing at home

1.1 Telling students what to practice

- Most teachers tell students what to practice thoroughly each week by writing what students need to practice in their notebooks. These conform to the statement of Oare (2011) in which setting goals is a key element of independent practice, but young students may not know how to set goals. Teachers can begin by writing them their daily goals and telling them exactly what should be accomplished and what they must do to reach those goals.

- In addition to telling students what to practice, some teachers also tell parents about what students need to practice.

Furthermore, one teacher tells students and writes in their notebooks what to practice by coloring in the section where students need to correct, then summarizing all those points in their notebooks again. The most popular topic that teachers tell students for home practice is correction of many details, for example, tempo, dynamics, and articulation.

1.2 Duration of practicing and proper time for practicing

Most teachers do not specify how much students need to practice nor when to practice. They only need their students to accomplish what they have told, which conforms to the statement

of Satz and Satz (2009) that teachers need to encourage students to focus on quality, not quantity or practice.

2. Extra practice with teacher

From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers get students to practice more at school before the competition. They get students to practice on the other days in addition to their normal classes. In addition, one teacher extends students' normal classes, but she does not ask students to practice more on the other days. Furthermore, one teacher asks students to practice at her home on the other days in addition to their normal classes. She asks students to practice one more day a week in the early period of practice and three more days a week when it is close to the competition. Another teacher does not ask students to practice more at school or at her home.

Communication with Parents

Due to the fact that parents have the most influence on children, they are the key to children's success. Most teachers talk to parents after every student's class by telling parents about students' progress in each class and about what students need to practice at home, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011), Berger (2009), and Lewis (1996). The biggest thing that many teachers want parents to do is to look after students' practice by finding appropriate practice time and motivating students to practice consistently, which conforms to the statement of Oare (2011).

In addition, some teachers express the opinion that parents can help students to practice by warning students what to practice by

looking at what teachers write in students' notebooks. Also, another teacher explains to parents that in the early period of practice, students need to practice in a slow tempo, and parents must not ask students to play fast as the teacher will tell students what tempo they need to play.

Related Contexts

1. Student's qualifications and characteristics

From the interviews, it was found that selecting suitable students for the competition is an important factor which can bring competition success. Students whose teachers choose to participate in the competition must be students who intend to compete, are enthusiastic, are hard-working, and have discipline to practice. In addition, those students must respect their teachers and have responsibility. Moreover, some teachers express the opinion that selected students must also have parents who can support them.

2. Parents' qualifications and characteristics

From the interviews, it was found that parents' characteristics are factors for teachers to consider when choosing students for the competition. Parents need to cooperate in bringing their children to practice following teachers' schedule and need to make sure that their children practice consistently as well as encourage children. Furthermore, parents need to take an interest in a competition, support their children when they are participating in the competition, and they need to follow teachers' instructions.

3. Encouraging Students

From the interviews, it was found that when students practice for a competition for a while, they may get bored, tired, or feel that they do not want to compete. Teachers talk to students and solve these problems as follows:

3.1 Encouraging students, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009).

3.2 Showing students recordings of the previous competition to motivate them to compete, which conforms to the statement of Hargreaves and North (1997).

3.3 Talking to students about experiences they will have after the competition.

4. Clothing

From the interviews, it was found that clothing is another factor in students' success because it affects students' confidence, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009). Most teachers ask their students to wear comfortable clothes which are not too loose or tight. Students must wear a comfortable hair style and they must not wear accessories that can be annoying. In addition, if students wear their favourite dresses, they can feel more confident, which conforms to the statement of Satz and Satz (2009). One teacher expresses the opinion that students should not dress up too much because the clothing must not be the main point of the performance.

5. The day before the competition

From the interviews, it was found that almost all teachers ask students to practice comfortably only a little to warm up their

fingers, which conforms to the statement of Zeigler and Ostromencki (1995) that students should not spend many hours at the piano on the day before the competition or even on the competition day. Moreover, many teachers tell students to take enough rest, which conforms to the statement of Zeigler and Ostromencki (1995). Some teachers ask students to concentrate, keep clam, and not to worry about anything, which conforms to the statement of Stafford (2006).

6. The competition day

From the interviews, it was found that the competition day is the most important day for everyone. Teachers express the opinion about what they do and ask their students to do as follows:

6.1 Most teachers think that teachers should let students relax by not pressuring them, encouraging them, talking about something fun, and give students some compliments after they finish their performance, which conform to the statement of Bastien (1988).

6.2 Some teachers talk to students to make sure that students are confident in their performance, which conforms to the statement of Bastien (1988).

Conclusions

From the interviews of ten piano teachers about teaching techniques for student piano competition, it was found that if teachers want to have their students participate in the Roon Lek piano competition of the Yamaha Thailand Music Festival, they should do as follows:

1. Asking students to listen to the music first and letting students study and practice themselves which they should practice

part by part. After that, teachers should ask students to come back and play to teachers each week to check the accuracy.

2. After students can play all the pieces well, the next step is to add more details into the pieces, for example, dynamics, articulation, phrasing, and other details to make the pieces perfect.

3. If students cannot play the pieces with the precise rhythm, teachers can use a metronome to solve this problem.

4. Musical expression is quite an important aspect in performing pieces. Teachers can teach students to build musical expression in playing the pieces by asking students to sing while they are playing, using teachers' storytelling and let students imagine a picture following the teachers' story, using metaphors or using a method when students imitate teachers' playing.

5. Teachers should record students' performances and let students self-assess.

6. After students can play their pieces well, teachers should have students perform to the public as many times as possible to make them get used to performing in front of a lot of people which can help to reduce the excitement when they need to perform on the real stage.

7. For home practice, teachers should tell students what to practice thoroughly each week.

8. For the day before the competition, teachers should ask students to practice comfortably only a little to warm up their fingers. Also, for the competition day, teachers should let students relax by not pressuring them, encouraging them, talking about something fun, and give students some compliments after they finish their performances.

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