

## PROCEEDINGS ARTICLE

# Discussion on Teaching Characteristics of Children's Dance

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## ABSTRACT

Children's dance is an important part of socialist dance art in China. It is an important means of cultivating children's truth, goodness and beauty, and providing children with comprehensive education of morality, intelligence, physique and beauty. Through scientific and systematic dance training methods, children's limbs are coordinated, and bad habits such as bowing their chests and hunchbacks disappear, and they are replaced by elegant posture and better appearance and temperament. Even if the children are not dancing on the stage, but mixed in the crowd, they will also show their special beauty and temperament. At the same time, scientific dance education can also cultivate and enhance children's attention, imitation, performance ability, image thinking ability, etc., improve children's learning effect, realize the improvement of children's academic performance, cultivate children's comprehensive ability, and lay the foundation for their all-round development.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The author is trying to study the characteristics of children's dance teaching, put forward how to implement the specific methods of dance teaching according to the characteristics of children, point out the mistakes that are easy to occur, propose how to avoid common problems, and propose effective improvement methods for others to learn from.

In recent years, the number of children's dance training institutions has been increasing, and the good and the bad are mixed. It requires a correct theoretical guidance class rather than a scientific teaching system. This topic is based on the characteristics of children's dance teaching and the problems that often arise, using modern educational scientific research methods such as observation, statistics, and interviews to study how to solve various problems in the process of children's dance and how to better adapt to the teaching plans formulated for children's psychological development, in order to provide useful discussion to improve the level of children's dance teaching under the new form of teaching reform.

## 2. PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN

### 2.1. Psychological Development Stage of Children

If people want to study children's dance in depth, they must first understand the psychological development of children. Therefore, the author chooses to study children's dance education from the perspective of psychology.

The Swiss psychologist Piaget cited the concept of "operation" from logic as the basis for dividing the stages of intelligence development, and the children the author studies are in the pre-operational stage (2-7 years old) and concrete operational stage (7-11 years old) [1].

#### 2.1.1. Pre-Operational Stage

Children in the preoperational stage like to use representational symbols to replace external things, thinking that all external things are alive. Therefore, when teaching children at this stage, teachers should pay more attention to observing the objects that children usually like, and use these objects to replace

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certain actions in class, so that it is convenient for children to remember actions. And the teachers need to not make the action too abstract, because the child's thinking at this stage is not yet reversible. For example, lying on the crotch, if the teachers use ordinary language to explain "the body lies on the ground, put the feet behind, bend 45°..." This explanation is too complicated and difficult for children to understand. If they put it another way, "Little frog quack quack, let's all be good frogs. Kids, let's lay on the frog's crotch (and demonstrate it once), see who's lying on the frog is not good, and I will catch them..." Such a vivid and interesting description is more acceptable to the children, and in the future, everyone will know what to do when they talk about lying on the frog's crotch, which not only saves effort but also saves a lot of time.

### 2.1.2. Concrete Operational Stage

The sign of this stage is the formation of the concept of conservation. The so-called conservation means that the child realizes that the object has changed in appearance, but its unique properties remain unchanged. For example,  $1+1=2$ , if it is changed,  $2-1=?$  Children at this stage will know that it is equal to 1. Children at this stage have reversible thinking and can carry out logical reasoning. Therefore, in teaching, teachers should make full use of the students' reversible thinking. For example, jete, then they can tell students to classify them. Jetes include jete, mid jete, leg-sucking jete, single-leg jete, and big jete. And then, the teachers can start teaching some coherent combinations to connect all the jetes together. Although students have a certain logical thinking, they still need specific things to support them. Therefore, when teaching the simplest jete, the teacher should explain the essentials of the specifications clearly, and then develop it into other jetes, and let the students do it by themselves and think about why they are jumping like this and what to do next.

## 2.2. Behavioral Characteristics of Children

### 2.2.1. Children Like to Play

Wherever children gather, there is always laughter. Children are innocent by nature and have no burdens in life, so laughing loudly has become their privilege.

### 2.2.2. Children Like to Imitate

Imitation is the mother of learning. Children have strong interest and enthusiasm for various things. And they develop infinite imagination, until imitation. From language to expression, from walking to running and jumping, especially all kinds of small animals in nature, flying, running, jumping, as well as chickens,

ducks, pigs, dogs and rabbits are the objects they imitate. Children's imitation is like the absorption of water by a sponge, which is very powerful. Therefore, the environment is particularly important. Teachers should not bring their own indiscreet style to the classroom. Perhaps a small action or an inconspicuous word will affect the child's life.

### 2.2.3. Children Have Strong Desire for Performance

Desire for expression is a desire for people to show their self-worth in front of others for affirmation and promotion. The younger children are, the simpler their expression will be. They do not have adult consciousness and the concept of face, so they are not afraid to behave badly and be laughed at. This kind of psychology is the source and foundation of children's developmental expressiveness. Their expressiveness is related to personality traits. Extroverted children are bold and expressive; introverted children are timid and implicit. Teachers must correctly guide children's expressive desires according to their personality characteristics. Extroverted children should not allow their expressive desire to expand indefinitely, so that they are keen on self-expression and breed vanity; for introverted children, teachers should stimulate their expressive desire, encourage them to boldly express their talents, let them taste the fun of self-expression in practice and enhance their desire to express. In order to develop children's physical and mental health, teachers should treat and protect children's desire to express themselves correctly, so that children can develop and improve themselves through continuous self-expression. The reason why the researchers study children from the perspective of psychology is that they want to have a more thorough insight into children and analyze them. Children's psychological development is a fulcrum. The more stable and bright this fulcrum is, the more beautiful the artistic charm it exudes. People cannot do anything against the essence, they must proceed from the essence. The above is combined with psychology to show how to better carry out children's dance education.

## 3. TEACHING PRINCIPLES OF CHILDREN'S DANCE

Different teachers will have different teaching styles, and different teaching styles will bring different artistic influences to children.

### 3.1. Scientificity and Normalization

From a physiological point of view, the bones and muscles of children are in a weak and balanced development stage during the growth stage. The rapid

growth of the epiphyseal cartilage tissue of their bones cannot withstand excessive and overloaded pressure, and the contraction ability and relaxation force of each part of their muscle tissue cannot be retracted and released as easily and quickly as adults. From a psychological point of view, children's ability to accept, understand and judge in dance learning is relatively slow. To this end, any kind of extraordinary, excessive teaching behavior will harm the physical development of children. Therefore, children's dance teaching should be scientific and normative, and should be adapted to children's physical and psychological development [1].

First of all, the rhythm of training movements should not be too fast, because children's muscle control ability is weak and coordination is poor, if the rhythm is too fast, it will cause children to feel dizzy and stumble; secondly, the training intensity should be moderate. If the training intensity of the teacher is too high, in the long run, the dense bone mass of the child will be thickened, the arrangement of the trabecular bone in the bone will speed up the process of shaping, and it will become thick and powerful prematurely. In this way, the two sieves of the long bones of the child will undergo super stimulation and prematurely calcify, thus limiting the further development of the child's height to a certain extent; in the end, overall training is the main focus. From the perspective of the muscle characteristics of children's dance training, the overall movement can make the expansion and contraction of muscle fibers in each muscle group during the exercise relatively balanced and coordinated in benign stimulation. On the contrary, if local training is increased, local mitochondria of the muscle fibers will multiply rapidly, and then the local muscles will be abnormally bulged, which will destroy the modeling effect of line beauty in dance education.

### 3.2. Interestingness

Tolstoy said: "What successful teaching needs is not coercion, but arousing the interest of the students." For early childhood children, in addition to eating and sleeping, the main activities in their daily life are play and games. Therefore, the interestingness and entertainment of children's dance should be put in the first place. Traditional dance teaching is to decompose the movements, as a single movement, simply repeat. With repeated training, it is easy to make the dance class become monotonous, mechanical, and boring. Children's most concentrated attention time is 10 to 20 minutes. Therefore, boring and monotonous dance training will quickly make children lose interest in learning and cannot mobilize their enthusiasm for

learning. If the teacher only teaches for the purpose of teaching, does not pay attention to the physiological characteristics of children and does not pay attention to reasonable arrangement of the teaching content, the best effect of dance teaching will not be achieved. Children's psychological thinking is characterized by images and changeable tastes, so teachers should emphasize clear subject, easy to understand, novel and unique in the selection of teaching materials, which can arouse children's interest and inspire their imagination. First, when considering the theme of dance, teachers should choose the content of children's game life that children are familiar with and love, and which has a certain positive meaning and can be expressed by dance. Second, in the choice of music for children, teachers can choose songs (music) that children are familiar with to arrange, such as the children's music of "Lost the Handkerchief" combined with the handkerchief flower of the Northeast Yangko, the music of "Little Duck" combined with Tibetan tap, the music of "Picking Grapes" combined the Uyghur people's wrist to wrist, etc. The movements are interesting and the music is good. The children learn dance in a relaxed and happy atmosphere, which increases their interest in learning, and they learn quickly and well.

### 3.3. Subjective Initiative

Under normal circumstances, when children learn dance at the beginning, they are joined by certain external forces, such as the requirements of parents and elders, or the setting and arrangement of school courses. So when starting to learn dance, children are obedient to the teacher's teaching, often passively. In this regard, teachers should pay attention to stimulating children's performance awareness in teaching, and infect children with accurate demonstration movements and full of enthusiasm and happy emotions. First, teachers should work hard on teaching methods. Attention should be paid to adopting methods that children like to see and hear to strengthen the guidance of children, and gradually change children's passive learning into active learning. Second, teachers should leave more time for the children to think about the action. In this way, children's brains can be better activated and excited, so that children can learn "targeted", and through their own reflection and understanding, they can practice according to their own priorities, so that children can learn more actively. For example, when learning the Mongolian dance "Little Patrol Soldiers", teachers can guide children to understand the living environment and living habits of the Mongolian people in the form of stories. Mongolian children live

in the beautiful prairie, green grass, blue sky, white clouds, and round yurts. They are good friends with herds of sheep, cattle and horses. They like to ride horses in the vast grasslands, so they must be cheerful and have a strong sense of rhythm when doing horseback riding. They love their hometown and want to protect their hometown, so their eyes are bright. When they see that the sheep and cattle are in danger of being attacked by wild animals, they will protect them. This explains that children will open their little eyes wide when doing movements, and they will be particularly energetic and straightforward when doing head shakes and whiplash movements. When they are learning the action of an eagle spreading its wings and flying high, teachers can guide them to imagine that the eagle's wings are wide when they are spread and high when they are flapped. So when the children are doing movements, they should be guided to straighten their arms, lift and press their wrists vigorously, and hold their heads up so that they can show the spirit of an eagle. Third, teachers should play a guiding role. Teachers should guide students to imagine the situation and integrate into the situation. Due to the limitation of children's age, this transformation process from passive to active is relatively slow, and it is impossible to do it overnight. However, teachers should focus on inspiring and arousing children's inner subjective initiative in teaching, that is, to let the internal factors act as quickly as possible to achieve this transformation under the influence of external factors.

### 3.4. Personification

Innocence and immaturity are the characteristics of children's emotions and thoughts, and they have a different way of thinking and a unique perspective on everything from adults. Rich imagination and bizarre fantasies are often the characteristics of children (especially early children) thinking activities. They often see inanimate toys and objects as animate friends. If a child can be the mother of one or more dolls, feed him to eat, and sing nursery rhymes to lull him to sleep; she may play the role of a doctor or nurse, and treat the baby, give injections, and take medicine. They also regard some small animals as children with human nature and human feelings. They have special feelings for kittens, puppies, rabbits, chickens, birds, little goldfish, etc. They can play with them and tell stories to them... In the creation, it is necessary to treat objective things with the thoughts and feelings of children, and choose the theme of dance from the life of children, especially the fairy tales and fables, etc. There are also dance themes that can be chosen. For example, the dance "Baby and Crayons" tells a little story about the baby's painting. During the dance, the crayons jumped out happily one

by one. The baby kissed the red and hugged the yellow. When the black one took the initiative to run to the baby, the baby didn't like it and closed it in the pen case. The baby instructed the crayon to draw the villain, but when he wanted to draw the eyes he could not draw it, so the baby took the initiative to apologize to the black one and asked it to draw the eyes. By anthropomorphizing crayons, this work vividly educates children to treat everyone equally, and the truth of everything is easy for children to accept.

### 3.5. Encouragement

Affirming children and letting them have a healthy and confident psychological state is an important method for children's education today. Only when a child is full of self-confidence can he bravely face new things, accept new challenges, and better develop his potential. Therefore, in the process of teaching, teachers should have an enthusiastic and patient attitude, insist on using vivid language, high emotions, and beautiful dance postures to educate, infect, guide children, and mobilize the enthusiasm of students to learn and express the nature of dance emotion maximally [2]. For those children with poor receptive ability, teachers must not say that children are stupid, which will hurt children's self-esteem and affect their future learning and growth. Teachers should make the whole teaching process full of a happy and harmonious atmosphere, so that children can maintain a strong interest in learning and a positive attitude, to make children be able to grow up happily and healthily in dance education.

## 4. COMMON PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN CHILDREN'S DANCE TEACHING

### 4.1. Common Problems in Children's Dance Teaching

In recent years, the forms of children's dance education have gradually diversified, and various types of children's dance training classes across the country have become increasingly prosperous, which has provided more opportunities for children to learn dance, but also encountered many problems. Combined with the observation of the dance industry over the years and the understanding of the dance training class, the author would like to talk about some of understanding.

#### 4.1.1. Adultization of Children's Dance

The teaching of children's dance is an important form of dance enlightenment education for children. It is



not only an important way to carry out quality education for children, but also an important way to achieve the goal of "germinating children's taste and skills of feeling beauty and expressing beauty" [3]. Therefore, the development of children's dance education activities must take the development of children's quality as the fundamental goal. However, in recent years, four- and five-year-olds have become more and more qualified in belly dancing, and some elementary school students have even begun to challenge traditional adult dances such as pole dancing, jazz dancing, hip-hop, and belly dancing. More and more children are involved in the adult dances. Published in 2005, the book "Flying Hope - CCTV Children's Art Competition Five Years Review" (edited by Meng Zhaoyuan) included comments on children's dance from previous dance judges and dance theorists, all of which mentioned the adultization of children's dance. problem, and called for children's dance to change this situation in the future. However, a few years have passed and the problem is still not well resolved, and there are still many expressions of love, drunkenness or otherworldly leisure in children's dances. The main reasons for the problem are as follows:

First of all, the instructors and choreographers are adults, they did not use the eyes and thinking of children to see and think about the things to be expressed when they were creating; or they are not yet familiar with the lives of children and do not understand the thoughts and feelings of children.

Secondly, many teachers have their own emotions when choosing music. They will choose the music they listen to when they are in love or when they are in love. Maybe the tune is very beautiful, but the children have to dance to the lyrics of love and love. It can't be imagined that what kind of picture it will look like.

Third, the dance that children learn tends to be adult, and is influenced by TV and screen [4]. Children's aesthetics and interests will change accordingly, and they will hope that they can be as versatile as TV idols, and can sing and dance vigorously. From this perspective, there is a positive side. However, the child is still young after all, and the childlike innocence should not be lost.

#### **4.1.2. Parents Are Reluctant to Let Children Suffer**

It is said that modern parents regard their children as treasures, they are afraid of losing them when they hold them in their hands, and they are afraid that they will melt when they are in their mouths. Every parent has the eagerness to hope that their children will become dragons and their daughters will become

phoenixes. It is believed that the original intention of many parents who let their children learn dance is to hope that their children have outstanding temperament and can dance gracefully, but whenever they saw the painful expression when children are pressing hips, they felt extremely distressed, and even began to blame the teacher, saying that the teacher abused their children. In this way, the teachers feel very embarrassed and aggrieved. In essence, every teacher is an experienced person. They know that dancing is not as simple as dancing and making some movements. They teach their students the most tangible things that cannot be understood.

#### **4.1.3. Performance Is Too Chaotic**

Some teachers like to deceive parents by saying that they take their children to participate in performances and increase their stage experience. In fact, they are taking their children to participate in commercial performances and let the children make money for themselves. In some commercial performances, in order to attract the attention of the audience, children wear adult-style costumes. The dance moves are also choreographed according to adult standards, and some moves even look indecent. Children are still young, if they participate in such activities now, they will definitely be polluted. Moreover, the commercial atmosphere at the scene and the money transactions during the performance will affect the children.

#### **4.1.4. Teachers Are Easy to Be Eccentric**

Teachers usually like children who are cute and dance well. Teachers pay special attention to such children during class. If the child does well, the teacher will always praise him/her, and the teacher will often correct him/her if he/she does not do well. After class, the teacher also took special care of him/her, giving him/her candy and playing with the child. This kind of teacher's approach will make many children look jealous and feel unhappy. A class is a group, and the teacher should not always revolve around one child. In this way, children with inferiority complex will only become more inferior when they are not affirmed. Children who are always praised will appear proud.

### **4.2. Solutions to the Problems**

First, the adultization of children's dance can only be said to be a phenomenon of social progress. There is nothing wrong with this, but people still have to correct their concepts. Children are children, and they must grow up healthily under the supervision of their parents. Therefore, first of all, parents must be

responsible for the children's living habits. In life, spend more time with children, tell stories to children, and try to avoid children's exposure to adult things, such as love movies, and songs with negative emotions. However, the teacher is the second parent of the student. Therefore, teachers should extend his tentacles into this children's life circle, feel life with a childlike innocence, observe everything around him with a childlike perspective. On the basis of being familiar with children's life characteristics, they should also experience children's emotional activities and understand children's joy, anger, sorrow and joy. On this basis, works that conform to their physical and mental characteristics can be created [4]. Feng Shuangbai said, "Children's dance teachers should keep in mind: we are not just teaching children a dance move, you are conveying the ideal of beauty every moment, and you are an example of beauty." Therefore, teachers should lead by example and not cut corners to perfunctory children. The habits formed inadvertently may accompany the child for a lifetime. Whether it is the selection of the theme, the choice of accompaniment music, or the choreography of dance movements, it is necessary to stay away from the adult model, and reflect the characteristics of children's innocence and cuteness.

Second, today's children are spoiled and over-nutritioned, and parents are reluctant to bear hardships for their children. Therefore, for dance teachers, it is really more difficult to cultivate students into white swans than to ascend to the sky. It is a must to know that dance is a cruel art. In dance training, some movements must be completed with pain and hardship. This is a fairly lengthy process, and it doesn't happen overnight. This requires children to have a strong awareness and a spirit of enduring hardship, and it also requires the strong support and encouragement of parents [5]. Since children choose dance, they should not spoil them too much. As long as they choose the right training institution, have professional teachers and a scientific teaching system, their children will have unexpected gains. The author thinks that the current training class should build a parent's lounge. If parents keep staring at their children and say, "Baby, come and drink some water and eat something, don't practice when you are tired", "Our baby can't do that action. Don't do it.", etc., they will affect the teaching process and disrupt the classroom atmosphere. The exclusion of parents from the classroom is also not absolute. After all, there is nothing wrong with the parents who are worried about their children. So let the parents come in when the class is about to end, and then ask the children to perform what they have learned today. Children have a strong desire to express themselves, and they want adults to affirm themselves. In this way, it not only strengthens the emotional communication between

children, parents and teachers, but also enhances the children's desire for performance. At this time, when parents see their children making a little progress every day, they will be very happy, and they can give their children to teachers with more confidence.

Third, although things like children's commercial performance rarely happen, it is hoped that it will never happen. After all, children are not tools for making money. Children should have a good childhood. Premature exposure to business may also lead to the gradual disappearance of children's interest in dancing. Dancing is a very happy thing, so what's the point of taking dancing as work to complete when they are young? The author thinks that teachers can take part in performances, but they should take part in activities such as TV station activities and competitions, which will encourage children to be self-motivated. The original intention of learning dance is to let the child become a person with good morals, art and beauty. Therefore, teachers should not add too many social factors to children, and organize more children to participate in some children's dance competitions and Chinese dance grading tests. Only by comparison can there be progress. Teachers of any subject hope that their students will have a positive and healthy attitude, and then move forward positively.

Fourthly, children are lively and lovable by nature, but it does not exclude those "children hiding in the corner" who are introverted, speak softly, and dare not make trouble with other children, so they are easily ignored by teachers. The reason why children develop this character is mostly related to family [6]. Therefore, as a teacher, it is quite necessary to guide children's psychological development correctly. For children with better professionalism, don't always praise them, otherwise they will develop a proud personality. Children with weak majors must be encouraged, and their desire to learn and self-esteem must not be undermined. Such children are very fragile. Teachers should not only avoid partiality, but also adjust the classroom links. With so many children of different levels together, the teacher can't handle it at all. So, teachers can use some small ways to adjust the classroom. For example, a dance move, a child who accepts fast can easily learn it, and then let the child be a small teacher. Teachers can tell the child that if him/her help a person to complete this action, there will be a small red flower, and a few small red flowers can be exchanged for a gift. Then tell the whole class that everyone has the opportunity to get a gift, so that the students can actively practice and strive to be "little teachers". When the "little teacher" takes other students to practice, the teachers can guide the students who are slow to learn and encourages him/her to do it boldly. As long as he/she

does it, teachers can praise him/her for "well done, good job!" etc. In this way, the good students have learned, and the poor ones have also been taken care of. That is, it does not affect the classroom process, and the children also learn happily.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In the 21st century, the competition in various fields of science and technology and society is more intense. In the future, talents should not only have comprehensive knowledge and skills, but also have noble sentiments and healthy and perfect physique, in order to become interdisciplinary talents needed by society. Quality education has been carried out across the country, and it is a future-oriented education. Dance education is a form of education that children love, and it is also the best educational method to implement aesthetic education for children.

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