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Alternative Thoughts on the Liberation of Piano Sight Reading: A Model Suggestion

Özlem Doğan [1]

Abstract

This article has been prepared with the aim of developing sight-reading skills from the beginning of piano performance in music education. The aim of the study is to provide sight-reading skills to students who are new to piano education, offering methodological suggestions and example exercises. These suggestions are of great importance as they serve as vital supplementary materials for piano performance. The curriculum includes original compositions specifically written for this study by the researcher, as well as works by composers such as Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Graupner, Berens, Türk, and Kabalevsky, arranged from simple to complex. The study conducted using the action research method was carried out over a 10-week period with 10 students studying in the music department of Kayseri Fine Arts High School. The reason for selecting 10th-grade students is the belief that the foundational music education provided in the 9th grade would allow students to better internalize their transcription skills in the 10th grade. Process evaluation includes student interviews conducted at the end of each lesson and pre-test/post-test designs implemented to measure the effectiveness of the method. The research results have revealed that the developed methodological approach significantly contributes to students' decoding skills. The study argues that the development of transcription, which is a fundamental element of modern music education and performance freedom, should be initiated in the early stages of education and continued throughout the entire educational process These findings indicate that a well-designed transcription curriculum not only enhances musical literacy but also supports a more autonomous approach to piano performance by encouraging students to independently explore new repertoire. In this respect, the study contributes to piano education by filling the methodological gap in the literature.

Keywords: Music Education, Piano Education, Sight-Reading, Model, Action Research

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[1] Asistant Prof. Dr. Erciyes University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Music, Kayseri, Türkiye, ozlemdogan@erciyes.edu.tr, ORCID 0000-0003-1784-3904

İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi
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2026, 15 (1), 591-618 | Research Article

Piyanoda Deşifre Becerisi Üzerine Özgürleşmeye Yönelik Alternatif Düşünceler: Bir Model Önerisi

Özlem Doğan [1]

Öz

Bu makale, müzik eğitiminde piyano icracılığının başlangıcından itibaren deşifre çalma becerilerinin geliştirilmesine yönelik olarak hazırlanmıştır. Çalışmanın amacı; ilköğretim, ortaöğretim ve lisans düzeyinde piyano eğitimine yeni başlayan öğrenciler için deşifre becerilerini kazandırmak, metodolojik öneriler vererek deşifre eğitimi için örnek alıştırmalar sunmaktır. Makalede sunulan metodolojik öneriler, piyano icracılığında deşifre becerisini geliştirmek için yardımcı materyal olarak kullanılması açısından önem arz etmektedir. Araştırma kapsamında hazırlanan metod, hem farklı bestecilerin eserlerinden hem de araştırmacının bu çalışmaya özgü yazdığı bestelerinden oluşmaktadır. Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Graupner, Berens, Türk, Kabalevsky'nin eserleri/etütleri çalışmanın metodolojisinde basitten zora doğru sıralanarak verilmiştir. Piyano icracılığında deşifre becerisini geliştirmek için yapılan bu çalışama, eylem araştırması yöntemi kullanılarak Kayseri Güzel Sanatlar Lisesi'nde eğitim gören 10 müzik bölümü öğrencisi ile 10 hafta çalışılmıştır. Araştırmanın verileri Güzel Sanatlar Lisesi 10. Sınıf öğrencilerine yönelik hazırlanmıştır. 10. Sınıf düzeyinin seçilme sebebi; akademik müzikle yeni tanışan öğrencilerin müziksel alt yapılarının 9. sınıfta oluşturulduğu düşünülerek 10. sınıfta piyano eğitiminde deşifre becerilerini daha iyi algılayabilecekleri içindir. Bu süreç içerisinde öğrencilerle her ders sonunda görüşme yapılmıştır. Görüşmeler değerlendirilerek araştırmanın etkileri ortaya çıkarılmıştır. Ayrıca öğrencilere çalışmanın başında ve sonunda uygulanan ön test son test uygulaması ile hazırlanan metodun etkinliği ölçülmüştür. Çalışmanın sonucunda öğrencilerin deşifre becerilerini geliştirmede öne çıkan unsurlar sıralanmış, hazırlanan metodolojik yaklaşımın öğrencilerin deşifre becerilerine katkı sağladığı görülmüştür. Deşifre okuma becerisinin oluşturulmasına yönelik çalışmalar, eğitimin ilk aşamasında başlamalı ve tüm eğitim süresi boyunca devam etmelidir. Özgür ve akıcı deşifre okuma, modern müzik eğitiminin temel unsurlarından biri olarak görülmektedir. Gelişmiş deşifrenin, öğrencinin icracılıktaki özgürlüğünün temelini oluşturduğu söylenebilir. Ayrıca çalışma, literatürdeki metodolojik boşluğu doldurarak piyano eğitimine katkı sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Müzik Eğitimi, Piyano Eğitimi, Deşifre, Model, Eylem Araştırması

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[1] Dr. Öğretim Üyesi, Erciyes Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Müzik Bölümü, Kayseri, Türkiye, ozlemdogan@erciyes.edu.tr, ORCID 0000-0003-1784-3904

Introduction

This article aims to improve the sight-reading skills of young pianists in the early years of piano education. The usefulness of sight-reading in music pedagogy has long been recognised. Morozova stated that in the 19th century, much attention was paid to sight-reading and that Antoine Marmontel, the patriarch of French pianists, considered sight-reading the primary skill. For example, J. Brahms' teacher, E. Marksen, forced Brahms to read the transcription for hours by transposing the performed work to different tones. On the other hand, the brilliant pianist Teresa Carregno mentioned that deciphering as systematic training is a skill that should be emphasised every day with only 10 minutes a day. At fourteen, Carregno could decipher any piece without preparation (Morozova, 2017,p.4).

Sight-reading should be taught systematically from an early age to foster musical independence and broaden artistic horizons. Neglecting this skill limits a student's ability to explore diverse repertoires and historical styles autonomously. Ultimately, proficient sight-reading serves as a catalyst for the entire educational process, facilitating a deeper and more comprehensive acquaintance with musical literature.

The teacher who creates and develops a young artist's sight-reading skills faces several problems. The teacher should first develop the student's ability to concentrate for a long time in deciphering. In studying, the student should read several layers of text - rhythmic, musical, and dynamic features - quickly and simultaneously. The lack of this skill may cause difficulties for the student. First, sight reading develops hearing and auditory ideas, a sense of rhythm and musical memory, and active attention.

Purpose

In this study, the works of domestic and foreign pedagogues are analysed. The study is based on the systematisation of some methodological suggestions in the literature and the author's pedagogical experiences. This study aims to provide methodological suggestions and examples for teaching sight-reading skills to students new to piano education at primary, secondary and undergraduate levels.

Importance

The study is vital in terms of the literature for developing sight-reading skills in piano education, as well as suggestions and sample etudes that can be made. The methodological suggestions presented in the article are helpful materials for mastering and developing deciphering skills for primary school students of conservatories, students of Fine Arts High Schools, and students of music departments of Fine Arts Faculties.

Method

The study used the action research method, one of the qualitative research methods. Bogdan and Biklen defined action research as "the process of systematically gathering information to bring about social change" (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003) . Johnson defines action research as a process to understand and improve the quality of teaching or actions in a real school or classroom environment and a type of research that is pre- planned, organised and can be shared with other relevant people (Johnson, 2003).

After the literature review and evaluation, examples of sight-reading skills in piano

education are presented. Various methods to support the development of sight-reading skills are presented with scanned sources and professional experience. Piano educators have their own methods to develop deciphering skills. Two methods are generally applied when deciphering in piano performance. Firstly, the right hand and left hand are deciphered separately and then combined. The second one is to decipher the right and left hand vertically, measure by measure simultaneously. Since the first method took much time for this study and was thought to slow down the students' practice, the second method was used. While selecting examples for the students week by week, care was taken to have finger numbers on the pieces. The students must get used to the finger numbers guiding the performer while gaining deciphering skills. Students who acquire this habit over time will be able to solve the situation more quickly when they want to renew the finger numbers that do not have finger numbers or when they have difficulty writing them.

Validity in qualitative research is researcher's unbiased portrayal of the situation, phenomenon, or event that the researcher is investigating. In order to fulfil this condition, the researcher can apply for peer confirmation if necessary (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2021, p.227). In order to ensure the validity of this study, two academicians who are competent in the field and who will contribute to the study were included in process with questionnaires. In order to understand the role of the 10-week deciphering training of the students in affecting their development, the "Academician Evaluation Scale", in which the researcher was also involved, was conducted as a pre-test and post- test application.

Collection and Analysis Process

The research data were prepared for 10th-grade Fine Arts High School students. In the 9th grade, the musical infrastructure of the students who are newly introduced to academic music is thought to be formed, and the 10th-grade level was chosen in order tobetter perceive the deciphering skills in piano education in 10th grade and to use them more effectively in their future music life. The study was conducted with 10 students. The reason for this is that in the province of Kayseri, the group of students receiving professional piano education at the 10th-grade level is only found at the Fine Arts High School. The number of students in this class consists of 10 students.

The 10-week training was prepared within an activity plan that progresses from simple to complex steps to develop students' deciphering skills.

"Individual Evaluation Scale for Improving Piano Education Sight-Reading Skill" was taken as pre-test and post-test data before the students' sight-reading training. The data were analysed using the free TURCOSA application. A dependent two-sample t-test was used. The scale applied according to the 5-point Likert scale contains 7 questions. The scale includes the main elements important for the skill of transcription. Attention to the tone of the piece, its keys, ability to read the treble and bass clefs, recognition rhythmic patterns, and perception of the piano register have been taken as the basis.

The 10-week training programme was organised according to a plan. Notes in the key of G and F, extension ties, loudness terms, different weighing patterns and altered voices, which are essential for the development of deciphering skills, were prioritised for the

selection of works. Necessary arrangements were made in the weekly work programme according to the progress levels of the students. This can be considered as the opportunity offered by action research to the research.

Ethical Procedures

Ethics committee permission was obtained from Erciyes University Ethics Board for the study's implementation (28.11.2023, No: 464).

Data Collection Tools

Student diaries, researcher diaries, and lesson plans have been used to collect data.

Lesson Plan Preparation Process

Before starting the research, the piano teachers of 10 students were interviewed, and the students' piano lesson readiness levels were evaluated. The skills that the students especially had difficulty in piano education were learnt and included in the lesson plan preparation process.

Researcher

He was a piano instructor at the Fine Arts High School affiliated with the Ministry of National Education for 15 years. His students participated in various concerts and competitions and won degrees. He has been working as an academician for three years and gives piano lessons at the university.

Literature Reviews on Deciphering in Piano Education

Leading performance and music pedagogy teachers have published several theoretical studies and practical manuals for students of sight-reading in the early years of piano education. All studies have undoubtedly contributed to the development of music

education. Due to the increasing flow of information, piano pedagogy has raised the requirements for the learning process, increasing the need for intensive training in sight-reading.

Efforts should be made to identify the underlying causes of difficulties and deficiencies. In order to develop teaching strategies in sight-reading, all cognitive steps involved in sight-reading training should be applied. It is also vital to investigate how cognitive development in childhood interacts with these components. Because music reading skills are usually acquired at an early age and are closely related children's developmental level (Gudmundsdottir, 2010).

Wolf defines music reading as a complex process involving at least two different skills. These are reading skills and mechanical skills. Wolf (1976, p.150) emphasised the importance of acquiring specific practical skills in addition to reading music.

According to M.Fenmen, deciphering is divided into two groups. The first is the

deciphering form in which each note of the deciphered work is carefully and slowly handled. The second one is draft deciphering, in which attention is paid to the character and expression of the deciphered piece rather than paying attention to playing it at a speed close to the tempo of the deciphered piece and without any mistakes (Fenmen, 1991,p.31).

The well-known teacher, F.D. Bryanskaya, turned to creating a methodology for improving sight-reading on the piano. Together with L. Efimova and S. Lyakhovitskaya, he prepared a two-part "Guide to Reading Sheet Music". According to F. Bryanskaya, the foundations of sight-reading skills should be laid at the first stage of training young musicians (Bryanskaya, 2005).

When it is accepted that deciphering basically consists of 3 dimensions, it is possible to say that every factor affecting these dimensions, either positively or negatively, will create differences in deciphering performance. Within the scope of the study, the factors that may affect the dimensions of deciphering were determined, and a classification was made. Factors related to learning, Factors related to reading, and Factors for Vocalisation (Öztuthan & Akbulut, 2019).

M. Nevra Küpana expressed an interesting point of view in "Systematic Guide for Teaching Deciphering on the Piano". In the book, in the preparation of the programme for teaching sight-reading on the piano, a ten-week subject selection was made;

Concepts and Principles of Deciphering in Piano,

- Use of the keyboard and interval studies,
- Harmony Studies,
- Rhythm Studies,
- Technical Studies,
- Musical Studies,
- Musical Structure Studies,
- Solo Work Studies,
- Concepts and Principles of Parity,
- Accompanied Work Studies.

Hoffmann (1961) likens music reading to book reading, asserting that this skill is a "prediction" process that develops in tandem with general musical training. Rapid and intensive reading practice, despite minor errors, enhances the eye's ability to "grasp" the whole, thereby facilitating the reading of technical details (p. 82).

Çiftçibaşı and Şaktanlı expressed the samepoint of view in their study. According tothem, the general aim of speed reading techniques is to increase the number of words read by the person and not to decrease the level of comprehension. In this context, it is thought that some techniques that improve text reading can also be helpful in the deciphering process (2017, p.42).

According to B. Özer, reading and playing notes correctly, the alphabet of music that has

gained the characteristics of a universal language is similar to reading texts in a language (2010).

C. Brown stated that "sight reading" frightens most students because sight reading a page of music, even at the beginner level, is a more complex process than reading a book page and requires serious work (1996, p.14).

A crucial element of the sight-reading technique is the accelerated perception of the note text. Y.V. Druskin states that the speed of playing the notes of a passage occurs faster than the ability to see and grasp all the notes. Even at a moderate tempo, playing speed makes it impossible to see all the notes (1960, p.5).

Based on this information, students should develop their note-reading skills, as well as their technical and musical skills. A musician whose deciphering skills are developed will be able to solve the note-reading stage in a shorter time, allowing him/her to spend time on different repertoires.

The requirements for reading a music page correctly and converting symbols into sound and the five skills that must be acquired in this regard can be listed as follows:

a- Note knowledge
b- Instrument knowledge
c- Adequate technical knowledge
d- Ability to comprehend presentation examples
e- Memorisation skills (Brown, 1996, p. 37).

Kamaeva and Kamaev (2006) categorize common errors in score reading as a lack of basic knowledge in notation and rhythm, coupled with the oversight of key, dynamic, and agogic signs. They argue that proficient sight-reading necessitates a high level of concentration to process multiple layers of information—notes, rhythm, dynamics, and agogics—simultaneously and synchronously (p. 95).

Advanced sight-reading skills are based on the ability to visually and aurally predict subsequent measures and plan movements accordingly. Boissier (1964) attributes Franz Liszt's sight-reading ability not to "supernatural" powers, but to the disciplined practice of four hours a day during his childhood. Training the eye and hand on various chords, modulations, and harmonic patterns allows for the musical text to be analyzed at a glance and read fluently (Boissier, 1964, p.158).

To facilitate score reading, young pianists must build a repertoire of typical musical patterns in their visual, auditory, and motor memory. This foundation enables the holistic perception of multi-layered piano textures through instantaneous analysis and synthesis. Ultimately, developing such a complex reading skill requires deliberate and directed pedagogical influence.

In the study titled "Development of an Attitude Scale Towards Sight-Reading in Instrumental Music Education" by Kılınçer and Toptaş (2017), they developed an attitude

scale towards sight-reading in instrumental music education. This attitude scale was administered to 270 students studying in the Music Education departments. This scale, developed to measure the attitudes of students studying in music education departments towards sight-reading in instrumental training, is expected to provide objective data to relevant parties for the positive development of students' attitudes.

In this study, a method has been developed to enhance the transcription skill in piano education. To assess the feasibility of the study, practical lessons were conducted with

students. This study goes beyond national and international works in the literature that only emphasize the importance of transcription training, by presenting a methodological proposal supported by works and demonstrating students' development with this systematic method. While focusing on the student's music text, the process of sight-reading was observed, and the issues that arose were addressed. The emphasis was on how to achieve fluent and high-quality sight-reading, and most importantly, the techniques for teaching sight-reading to beginner musicians were highlighted.

Using the study in the educational process will expand the possibilities of instilling a taste for music, renewing the knowledge base, and familiarising the student with the music literature in sight-reading. Developing sight-reading skills can be considered an integral part of sight-reading teaching methodology.

Comments

In the 20th century, the mandate for memorized performances and the rise of recording technology marginalized the pedagogical importance of sight-reading. Samuil Feinberg

argues that attempting to memorize a piece from the outset hinders the development of reading skills. He contends that sight-reading should not be treated as a separate subject but integrated as an essential component of piano education, enabling students to achieve fluency in playing from notation (Boissier, 1964, p. 160).

Deciphering allows students to create a repertoire, comprehend the work more deeply, and develop technique, style and interpretation. With this skill, students' attention to the work increases, and they can decipher works not in their repertoire. More importantly, it forms an important basis for students to perceive music without needing help, evolve into autonomous musicians, and make music throughout their lives (Çimen, 2001, p.43).

In this section, a methodology for specialising in transcription will be proposed. One-third of the time allocated for each lesson in the specialisation can be devoted to sight-reading. Music terms used in piano works should be taught to the student in the first lessons. Then, the student should be informed about dynamic signs. When reading the transcription, it is necessary to fulfill the specified dynamic descriptions immediately. Also, the teacher should make sure that the students learn the notes in the G and F key

correctly. In the first weeks of the training, it is important to have the students who do

not know how to read notes do exercises in both G and F clef to master both keys. In this study, the researcher applied the suggestions to Kayseri Fine Arts High School 10th- grade students and observed the development processes of their sight-reading skills.

In order to contribute to the observation of the development of students' sight-reading skills in piano education, the "individual evaluation scale" and "student evaluation

scale" prepared by the measurement and evaluation expert and the committee formed for the action research were applied. The "Student Evaluation Scale" was applied by an academician and researcher specialising in piano education. The pre-test and post-test scales were administered to the students in the 1st week before the training, and the post-test was administered at the end of the lesson in the 10th week.

Week 1

In the first week, an introductory activity was carried out with 10 students in the piano lesson. At the beginning of the lesson, resources about the terms used in piano education were distributed. One of the important steps to play the piece on the piano in accordance with its purpose is to know the terms for loudness and speed. Therefore, it is necessary to learn them from the first lesson for education to reach its purpose. In the first lesson, information was given about the importance of sight-reading skills and their contribution to instrument and music education. Then, the first lesson prepared for the deciphering skill was started with the exercises for the right hand, i.e. the left key, written by the researcher by taking the students to the workshop individually.

Firstly, each student was given time to analyse the piece. Then, they were asked to start

deciphering at a slow tempo. In the first lesson, it was observed that the students had difficulty in reading notes and finding registers. Therefore, it was planned to prepare a resource to teach octaves on the piano instrument.

While the students were playing the left key monophonic exercises for the right hand, they were informed that saying the names of the notes aloud would accelerate the teaching and make it permanent. It was aimed to teach piano octaves with exercises related to the first octave (Figure 1), second octave (Figure 2), small octave (Figure 3), and large octave (Figure 4). Since the students had difficulty saying the note names, they were advised to do a lot of solfege.

Student 2: I had difficulty with the notes with additional lines in the key of G, but I started to solve them as I practised. I realised the importance of finger numbers.
Student 5: I learnt the names of the registers on the piano.
Student 8: Reading aloud while playing the key of G will improve my note knowledge. I will use thismethod.

Figure 1
First Octave Exercise

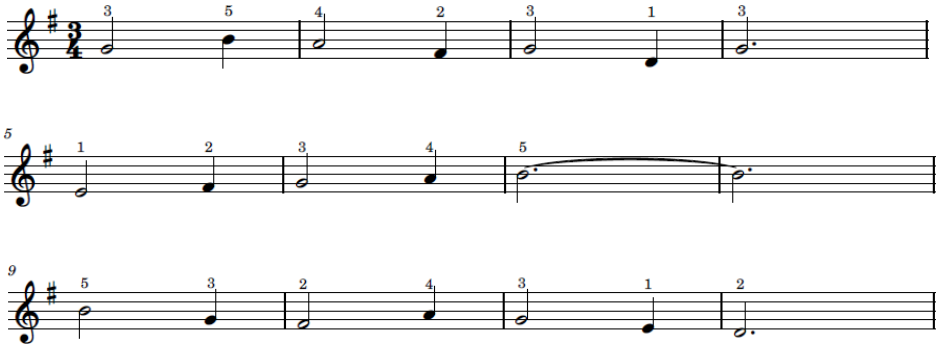


Figure 2
Second Octave Exercise

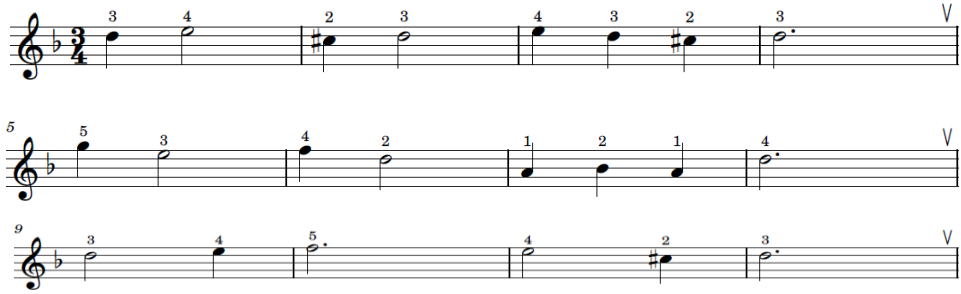
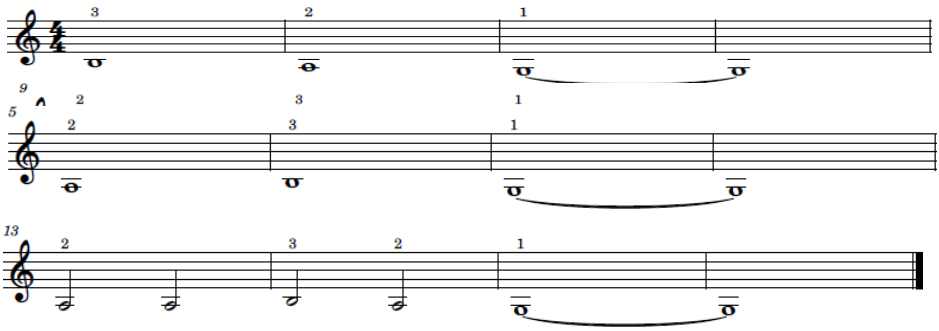


Figure 3
Exercise on Small Octave



Week 2

In the second week, the resource prepared for the use of the register, which they had difficulty with in the first week, was presented, and the octaves on the piano were shown to each student one by one. After the octaves and their names were explained to the students, they were reinforced by asking questions. The first lesson introduced the G

(treble) clef, followed by left-hand exercises in the F (bass) clef during the second week. To facilitate reading and keyboard orientation, the first (Figure 4), small (Figure 5), and great (Figure 6) octaves in the F clef were studied to identify their respective positions on the piano. Since it was a monophonic tune, the method of the first lesson was also applied in this lesson. While the students were deciphering the key of F in their left hand, they also tried to vocalise the notes aloud. They had more difficulty reading the key of F than the key of G. Students receiving music education are more accustomed to the left key, but the development of reading the key of F, which is important for the foundation of piano education, is late. In order to support 10th grade students in learning the key of F, which will strengthen their piano lessons and deciphering skills, students were given a Solfege assignment on the key of F to read within a week.

The students were informed that the first octave is used both in the key of F up to the three-lined G note and in the key of G. Thus, it was ensured that the students realised that this octave is used in both keys.

Figure 4

First Octave Exercise The Key of F

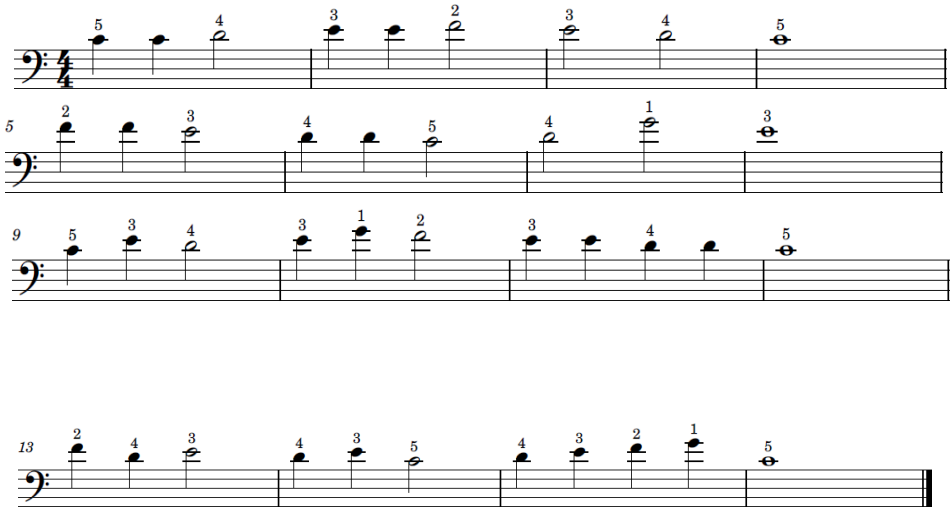
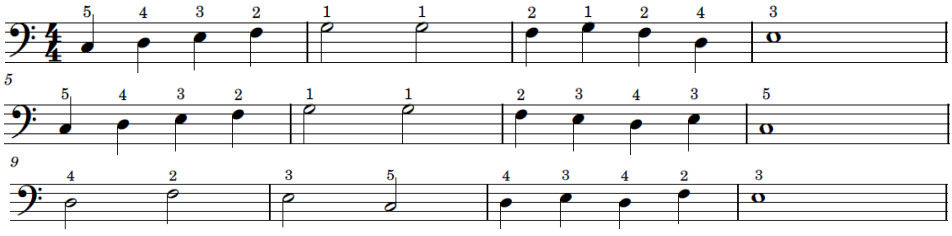


Figure 5

Exercise on the Small Octave in the Key of F



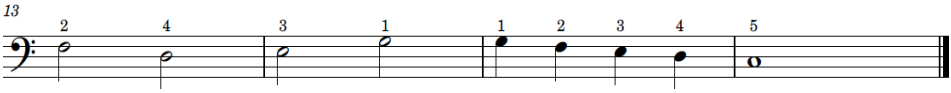
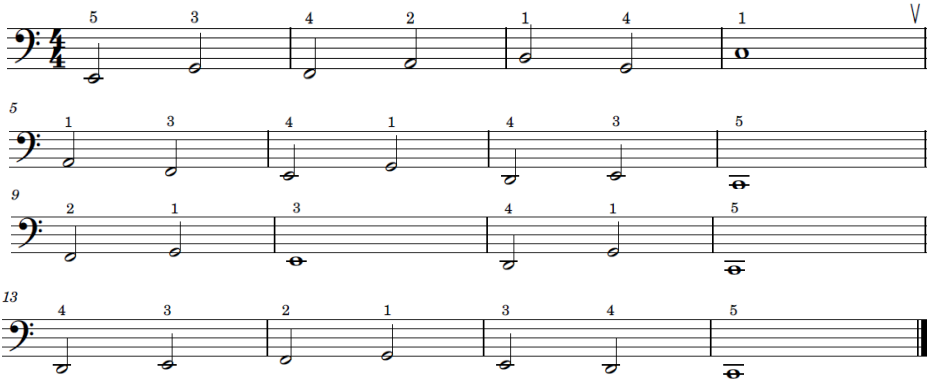


Figure 6

Exercise on the Great Octave in the Key of F



Student 4: I have great difficulty reading the key of F and playing it on the piano, but practising according to registers this way was very useful for me.
Student 1: My reading in the key of F is weaker than in the key of G. Therefore, playing the piano is difficult. But it will be useful for me to practise according to octaves.
In order to achieve full mastery in both keys, the student should be given sight-reading exercises in both keys at the next stage of training. First, a more complex right hand and then exercises that transfer the level of complexity to the left hand can be given.

Week 3

In the third week, the students were first told to decipher a slow-tempo piece with a single sharp modifier sign and a piece in which the right hand is dominant. In playing with both hands together, firstly, exercises were prepared on the works in which the right hand was actively progressing. The first exercise is an 8-measure exercise written by the researcher (Figure 7). In this exercise, the melody is in the right hand, and the accompanying notes are in the left hand. The students were given information about the importance of focusing on both hands simultaneously. Students were asked to decipher the pieces one by one at a slow tempo. During the practice phase, it was observed that some students had difficulty reading the notes in the key of F and perceiving the ligature marks. The students were reminded of the ligature signs again, and sample applications were made to play the extension ligature in right-hand and left-hand synchronisation. Then, the students were asked to play the etude again. This time, it was observed that the students could comprehend and apply the ties even at a slow tempo.

The other piece of the third week was D. Türk's "Song" in G Major. The students were firstly warned to pay attention to the tone of the piece, and it was emphasised that the

change in which note the modifying sign will cause a change should be considered from the beginning and deciphered accordingly throughout the piece. The students were made to practice by explaining the meanings of the loudness terms here. In this piece, they were asked to comply with the notes and the terms "p" and "crescendo, decrescendo". The students who focused on the notes first had difficulty applying the loudness terms. However, then they were able to apply the loudness terms. They were not expected to apply the loudness terms for the first time. The aim was to create awareness of the need to recognise these signs while deciphering.

While the right hand is more fluent in Türk's selected work, the accompaniment of the left hand is important for the student to apply the deciphering training from simple to difficult. Therefore, in the next week, the piece in which the notes in the left hand are more active was chosen.

Figure 7
Work written by researcher "The Game"

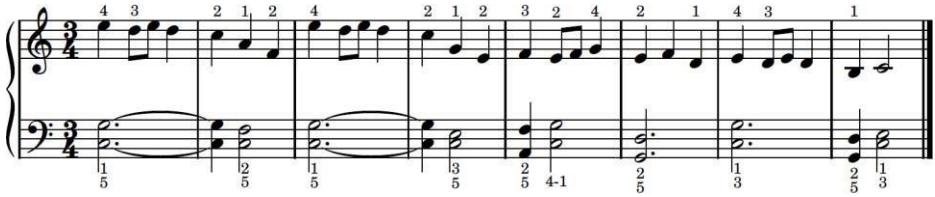
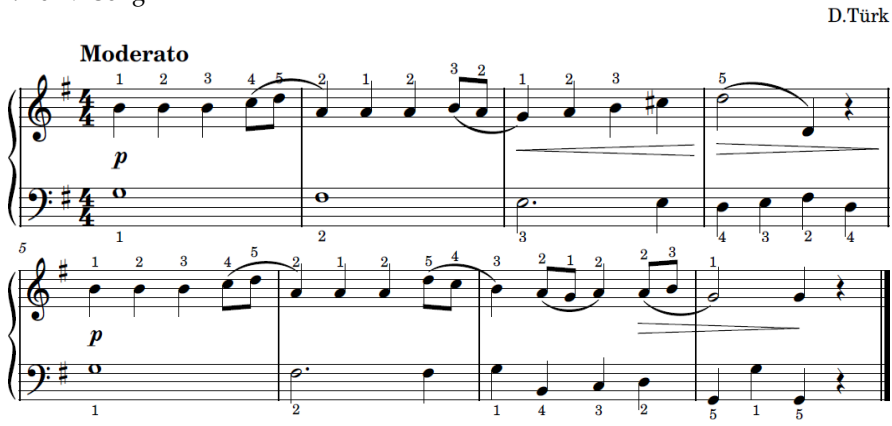


Figure 8
D. Türk "Song"



Student 10: I learnt that the notes in my left hand should be played more piano. When I concentrated on the melody in my right hand, I realised that I could do it.

Week 4

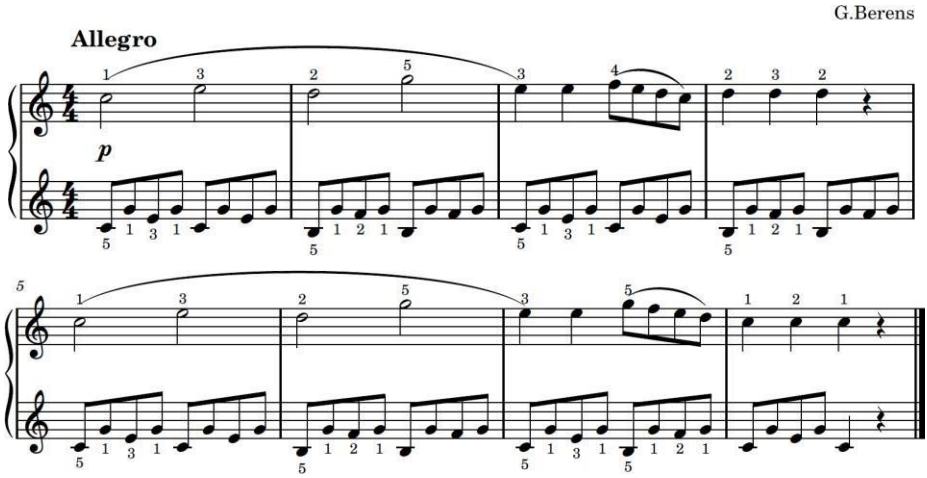
G. Berens' etude was chosen as the left-hand study for the fourth week. In this etude, a legato technique in the left hand was mentioned, and the students were made to practise

note reading and technical knowledge in deciphering skills. The students were told about the sentence ties in the piece. The melody in the left hand was played on the piano, and

the students were informed that this accompaniment model was defined as Alberti Bass and emerged in the classical period (Figure 9).

At the next stage, it is also necessary to introduce the student to the technique for both the right and left hand, starting from double notes and moving smoothly to more complex chord technique.

Figure 9
G. Berens Etude Op: 70 No:23 Book II



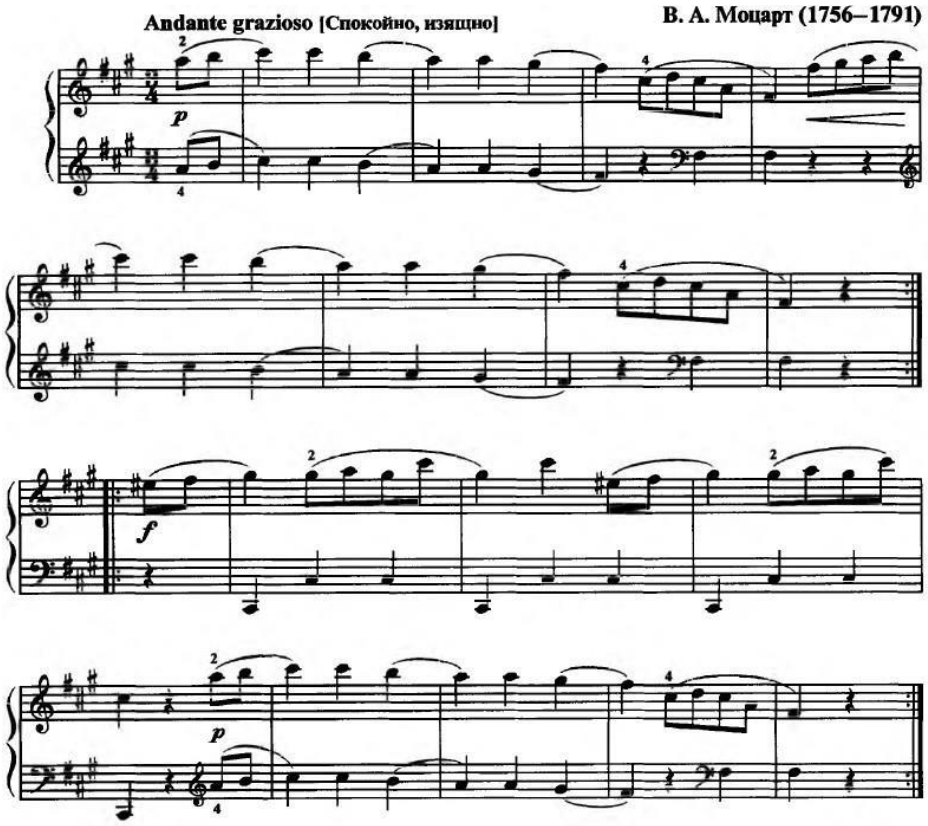
Student 4: I saw that my left hand was very clumsy, but as I practised, I realised that my left hand was more active.

Week 5

In the fifth week, Mozart's "Menuet" in the key of F# minor with 3 sharps was chosen for deciphering in order to enable students to decipher in different tones. The important point to be considered in the piece, which is also an example of unison work, is that the same melody is played with different finger numbers in the right and left hand. Here, even if the student hears the same melody in different hands, he should play it simultaneously and perform it with different finger numbers.

The students had difficulty applying the sharps to the piece while deciphering. The researcher constantly indicated the modifier signs. It was seen that the students applied the modifier signs more easily, whereas unison sounds dominated the piece (Figure 10). Ensuring the synchronisation of the piece in the right and left hand was challenging for some students.

Figure 10
Mozart Menuet



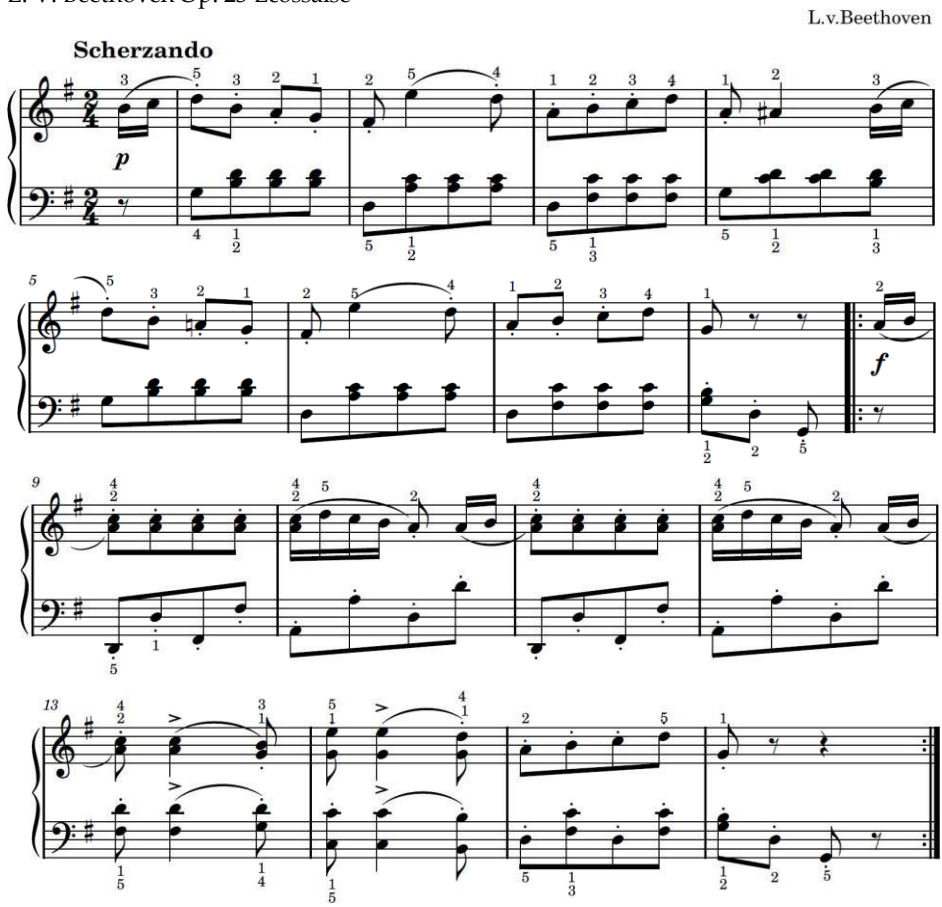
Student 5: When I first saw the piece, I thought it was easy because it had the same sounds. But I could not play the notes at the same time. The melody in my right hand was heard from the front.
Student 2: I always forgot the modifier signs in the piece. The teacher reminded me.
Week 6

Within the determined activity plan framework, Beethoven's piece, in which there are binary intervals in the left hand, was chosen for deciphering skill training this week. It was stated at the beginning of the study that the students would be expected to play the double intervals in the left hand in a synchronised way, with the correct scale and note in this piece in which the melody is in the right hand and the accompaniment in the left hand (Figure 11). Necessary explanations about the staccato and legatos in the piece were also made, and an introduction to the performance technique was made, which will be included in the following weeks.

In the first part of the piece, it is emphasised that the double intervals are in the left hand and the second part in the right hand.

Figure 11

L. V. Beethoven Op: 23 Ecossaise



Student 2. There was a synchronisation problem while playing the double intervals in the piece. But I realised that I could overcome it with finger exercises.
Student5. While transcribing the piece, I realised the importance of paying attention not only to the notes but also to the musicality and connections.

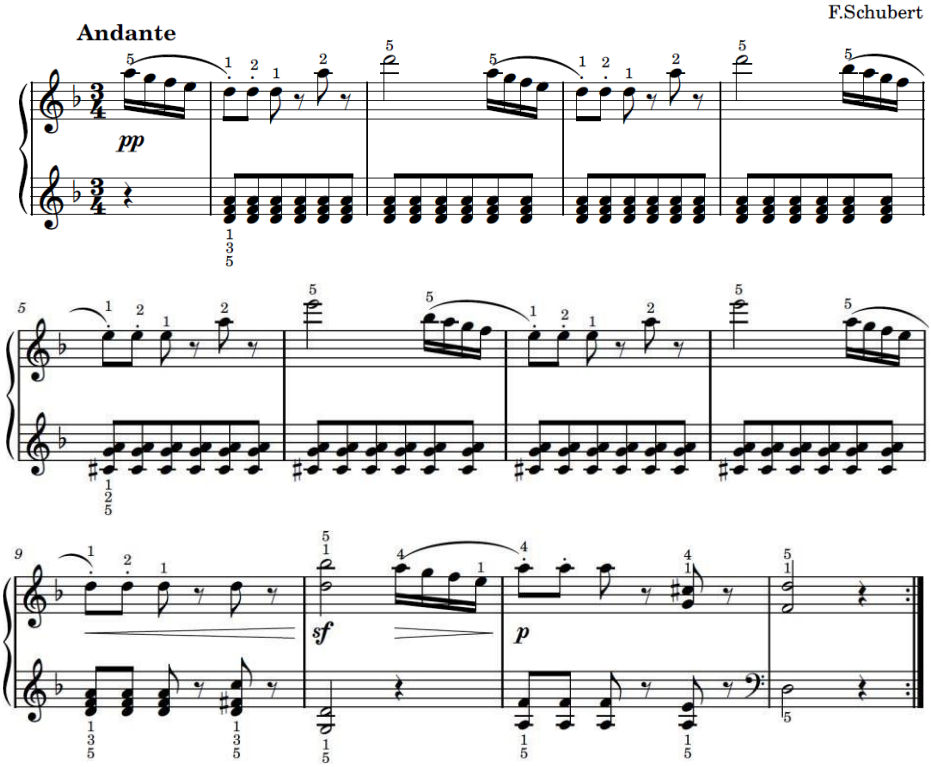
Week 7

Two-voice applications with intervals in the left hand were emphasised in the sixth week. The seventh week aimed to strengthen the fingers by choosing a repertoire for 3- voice chords in the left hand. Here, it was reminded that the 3-voice chords should be played at the same time, and care should be taken not to announce any sound before or after the other.

It was observed that the students did not have finger control while playing the tonic and dominant chords in the left hand and could not announce the chords at the same time

due to their weak finger performances. Upon this, necessary feedback and warnings were given to the students. It was observed that they corrected this in the following measures, and they noticed this change themselves.

Figure 12
Schubert D minor Menuet 3-Part Study



Student 9: In the first few scales, I could not press the sounds in my left hand at the same time. Then I paid attention and played them at the same time. I used to think that only playing the note correctly was important on the piano. But in this lesson I learnt that it is also important to press the chords at the same time.

In the piece, legato and staccato techniques were also emphasised, and all the elements accompanying the melody that the composer wanted to be heard should be paid attention to in deciphering. The students easily applied this technique only in their right hand (Figure 12, Measure 1-2).

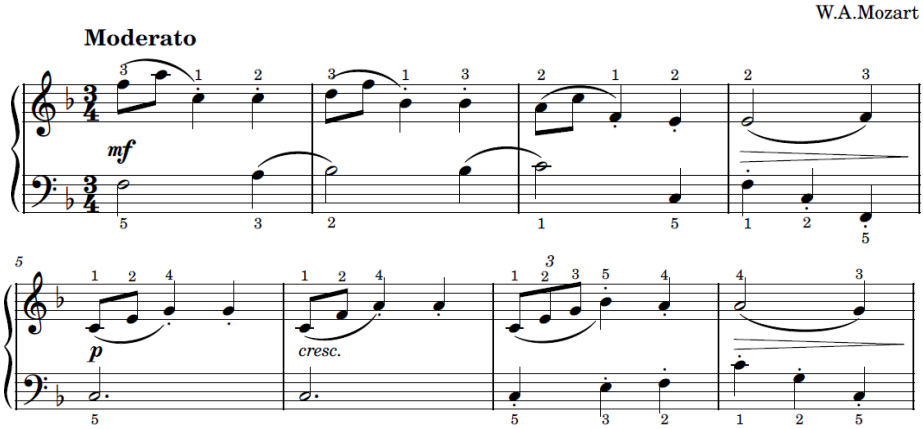
As a result of the correct assimilation of the exercises presented in the first stage, the student can be given small pieces of decipherment, the level of difficulty for both hands being approximately the same. Thus, the teaching will be reinforced.

Week 8

After seven weeks of practice in the key of F, right hand and left hand, a repertoire

covering the techniques in piano performance was selected in the eighth week. The chosen piece was Mozart's Minuet. In this Minuet, legato and staccato techniques are at the forefront. The researcher first showed these techniques to the students practically. In the eighth week, these techniques, briefly practised in the seventh week, were performed with a piece that stands out as a characteristic feature of the musical work. In this piece by Mozart, both legato and staccato techniques exist in every scale. Another characteristic of the piece is that it allows the right and left hands to apply different techniques. The students practice different techniques in two hands at the same time; staccato in the right hand and legato in the left hand (Figure 13, measures 1-2) or legato in the right hand and staccato in the left hand (Figure 13, measures 7-15) had a positive effect on their deciphering skills. Although the students had difficulty applying the techniques by reading the notes in the first measures, they got used to them in the middle of the piece and deciphered them easily.

Figure 13
*M*ozart Menuet



Student 5: I had heard the names of the techniques, but I had never applied them. I had difficulty at first, both in note reading and technique. Then I started to solve it, it was not difficult.

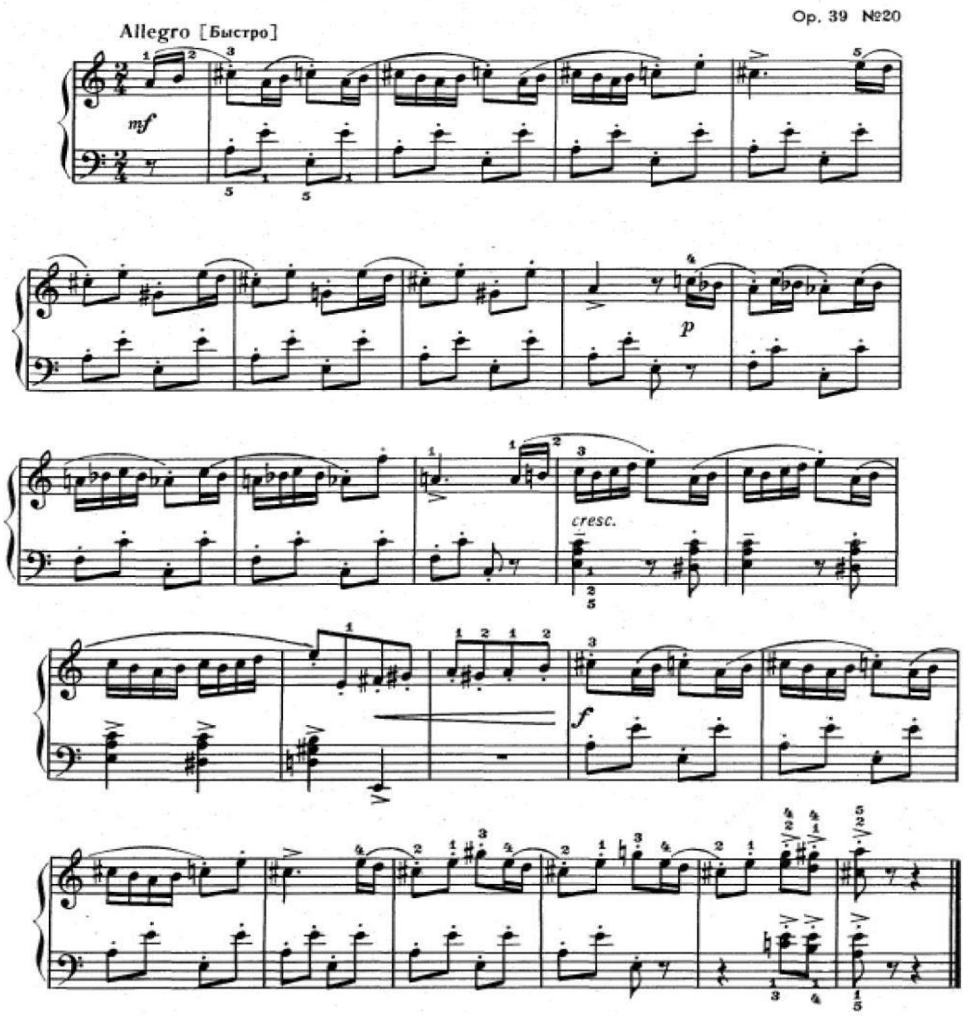
Student 7: It was difficult at first to apply two different techniques at the same time. Then I thought of both hands independently and started to play. I realised that playing with this technique sounds more beautiful.

Week 9

After eight weeks of training, in the ninth week, D. Kabalevsky's "Clowns" Op. 39 No: 20, which technically includes staccato, legato, dynamics, and modifying signs in the piece, was chosen for deciphering training (Figure 14). The aim was to consolidate and apply what had been learnt for eight weeks. It was stated that all the techniques in the piece reflect the performance characteristics of the piece. It was stated that the dynamics of the accent marks mf, p, crescendo, and forte should be applied, respectively. Attention was

drawn to the performance of triads and modifier signs in the piece. At the end of the ninth week, it was clearly understood that the students made significant progress in both note reading and technical development in their piano sight-reading training by playing this piece in accordance with the characteristic features of the music. The positive effects of these trainings on the students were reflected in their daily forms. Although the tempo is allegro, it can be played calmly in the deciphering stage, but then the tempo should be as desired.

Figure 14
D. Kabalevsky "Clowns"



Student 1: In the first week of the training, I could not do much in the lessons. But as the weeks progressed, I realised that the lessons added a lot to me. I see that I can do the transcription more easily.

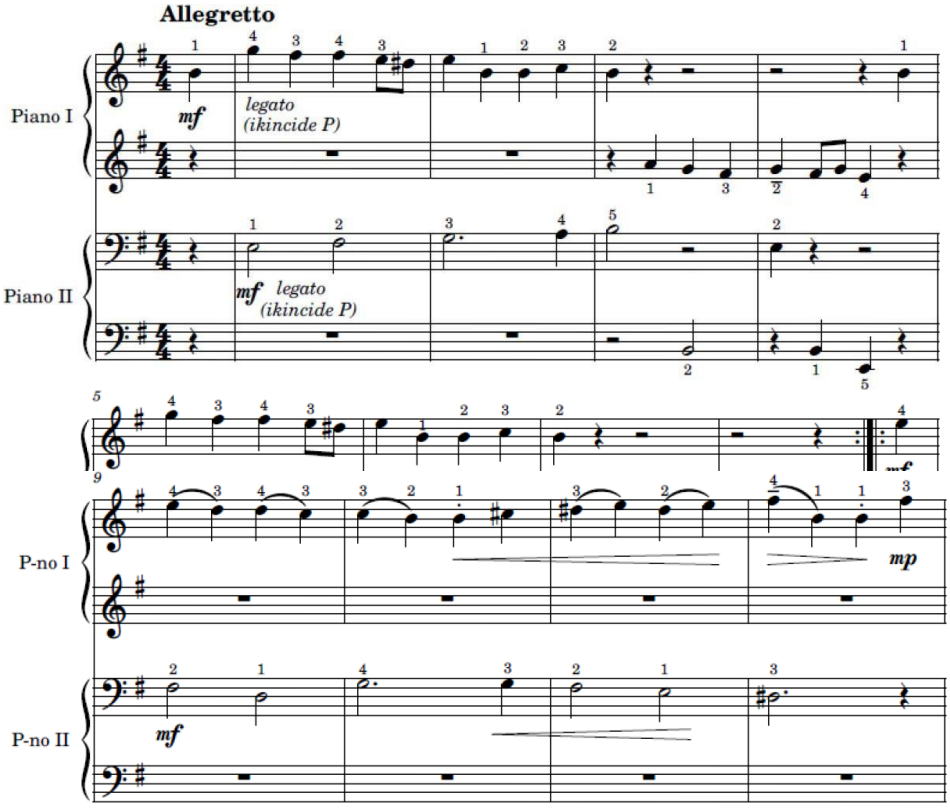
Student 4: I did the piano techniques very well this week. I am very happy that I can decipher now.

Week 10

After all the work shown above, deciphering can be done with the student with both a 4-hand duet on one instrument and an ensemble work on two pianos. It is very useful to decipher piano duets' first and second parts in lessons with the student. Duetting allows students to maximise their attention. When the student tries to play a particular tempo with the teacher, even if he/she has difficulty with two hands, he/she has to continue with at least one hand. Thus, the student's attention, who achieves what seems impossible when reading alone, is strengthened.

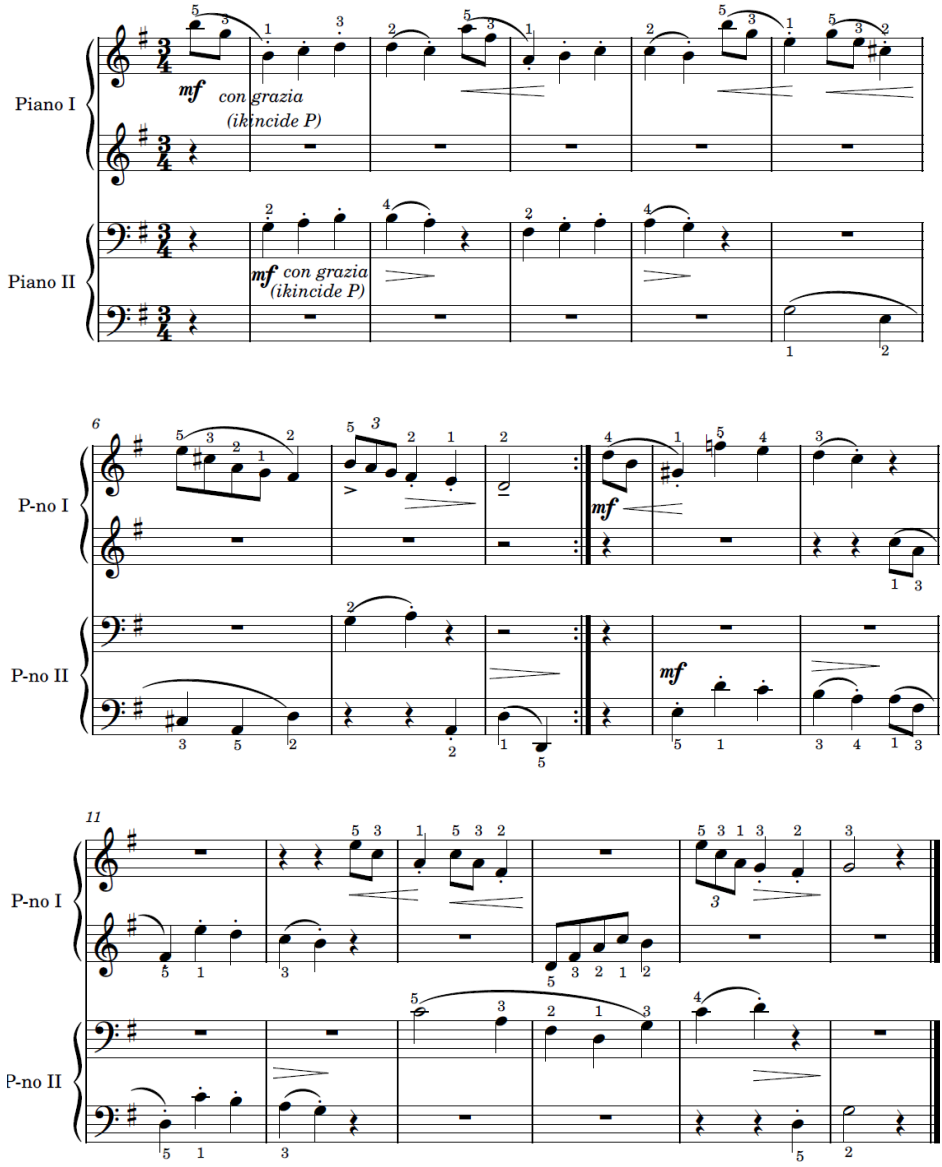
Firstly, the duet transcription started with Graupner's "Burre" (Figure 15). Here, the students were warned both to pay attention to their own scores and to play harmoniously by listening to the score performed by the researcher. Thus, it was ensured that the student thought about what he/she should focus on while performing a duet. Here, the aim was for the student to learn to perform his/her own part and listen to the other part to play harmoniously.

Figure 15
C. Graupner "Burre"



After the students were introduced to duet in deciphering training with Graupner's piece, they continued their training with W.A. Mozart's duet (Figure 16). The synchronisation problem they had difficulty with in the first piece was not seen in this piece. This shows that the training progressed positively.

Figure 16
Mozart Menuet



For the first time, duets should be performed at as slow a tempo as possible. When

repeating, the tempo should be close to the nature of the work. Pianists should focus their attention on the sound of the second part and work on hearing the whole duet more consciously. Nevertheless, since our aim is not to learn duets but to decipher them, it is unnecessary to play them more than two or three times (Batagova & Orlova, 1975,,350).

In the later stages of learning and mastering decipherment, the student should be taught to skim musical signs. This is because these signs, unlike alphabetic characters, are placed horizontally and vertically, which can pose an additional difficulty. The basis of instrument training is teaching the student to read notes quickly and easily, just like a book. At this stage, as a teaching material for sight-reading in the lesson, pupils with average musical ability can be presented with musical works for the previous, lower grade. With more advanced children, works from the school year's curriculum can be used.

Considering the year of study, the student is given a choice of 2-3 easy sight-reading pieces. After the first acquaintance with the piece, the teacher may suggest that the student play the piece at least twice. The first performance should be for a deeper acquaintance with the piece, and the second performance should be played at the required speed and "clean". The pieces should not be too difficult; they should be understandable in the first performance, and the student should enjoy the piece after the second performance.

The teacher should prepare a transcription reading plan for each lesson. Firstly, together with the student:

- Determine the piece's tone, and pay attention to the modifying signs in the key.
- Analysing the rhythmic features of the piece and counting the rhythm by clapping.

Working on developing a rhythmic sense with the student should start in the first lessons. The student should be told that rhythm is the pulse of music, one of the main components of music. The melodic order of the pieces given in the first years of training should be pretty straightforward. The teacher should enable the student to feel the rhythmic structure of the pieces and reproduce any rhythmic grouping and passage separately. The teacher should teach different scales (2/4, 3/4, 4/4), showing their differences and commonalities. At an early stage of training, the essential components of rhythm should be taught. These are a dotted rhythm (punctuation), triad (triol), syncopation, introduction, etc.

- A preliminary analysis of the structure of the work should be made. The piece should be divided into phrases and sentences, as these are essential elements of sight-reading. Analysing the piece helps the young pianist understand the musical material and hear and imagine the nature of the music before playing it on the instrument.
- The development of the melodic line should be analysed. The direction of movement, the presence of jumps, and the movement of chords should be observed.

Finger numbers should be considered. One of the transcription's critical skills is choosing the most appropriate finger numbers. The speed and sharpness of note reading depend

on this. After a solid mastery of the finger movements, new tasks can be assigned to the student. The best finger numbering technique is the one that allows you to most accurately convey this music and most accurately evoke its meaning (Neuhaus, 1967,202).

According to Maykapar (1938), in order for a piece to be performed in the desired character, dynamic markings and accents must be strictly adhered to during the transcription. Playing the piece with the indicated dynamics (forte/piano) from the very first reading makes the music instantly recognizable. Quickly adapting to these markings not only adds technical accuracy to the note-reading process but also brings meaning and artistic depth (Maykapar, 1938).

The transition to more challenging parts should not occur before the previous difficulty level is fully stabilised. This transition should be gradual and almost imperceptible. For a student to play with two hands simultaneously, you can choose pieces where the part for one of the hands is not difficult. If the melody is simple and often repeated, it will be easy to accompany.

Unfortunately, there is not always enough time to listen to all lesson material. In this case, the teacher, as a homework assignment, can give the student to independently write down the fingerings of the piece and determine the texture of the piece (arpeggios, scale passages, chords, etc.). In addition, it is very important to increase the piece's speed and work on dynamics.

Pre-Test Post-Test Evaluations

In order to understand how efficient the training was for the students and to see the study's validity, pre-tests and post-tests were applied to those who received the training. The 7-question measurement tool applied at the beginning and end of the training was used to see the positive effect of the training given to the students in the process (Table 1). The questions were prepared with the opinions of field experts. In the questions, codes that are important for sight-reading skills in piano education were created, and care was taken to prepare questions on topics that would be useful for analysing the development of students.

1. The pre-test and post-test results of the question asking the students to pay attention to the piece's tone before deciphering were analysed. At the end of the research, it was seen that the rate of paying attention to the tone of the piece increased. This showed that the students paid attention to the tone of the piece, which is the first thing to be paid attention to in the deciphering training in performance, in order to be able to apply the modifying signs, if any, throughout the piece ($p=0.001$).
2. The variable use of the G and F keys in piano performance is important for students to read the notes correctly during deciphering training. When the pre-test and post-test results of the question about the students' looking at the keys before starting deciphering were analysed, and there was an increase in the rate of paying attention to the keys ($p=0.022$).

3. In music education, notes should be read according tothe keys. Note that names should not be forgotten; they also change when the key changes. When the pre-test and post- test data about the difficulty in reading the left key while deciphering in piano performance were analysed, it was concluded that the students could read the left key much more efficiently than the first week. Since the root of the question was difficulty, it should be interpreted that the average decreased; that is, they had less difficulty (p=0.0051).

4. The piano instrument is played with two hands and mostly in two different keys. The students were asked to read the key of G in the previous question. Here, the aim was to draw attention to their mastery of the key of F. The results of the analyses showed that the difficulty in reading the key of F while deciphering decreased in the post-test (p=0.104).

5. In the question about the students' difficulty in analysing weighing patterns, it was concluded that the students first had difficulty perceiving the weighing patterns, but at the end of the study, they improved in this regard (p=0.032).

6. In the question about finding the registers in the piano instrument during deciphering, it can be said that the students had difficulty at first, but then they could find the registers more easily (p=0.006).

7. It was observed that the students had difficulty applying the dynamic signs in the works as a result of the pre-test, but expressed that they could apply them as a result of the research (p=0.022).

Table 1
Individual Evaluation Scale for Improving Piano Education Sight-Reading Skill Data of The Measurement Tool Applied to the Students

	Pre-Test	**Final Test**	
	Mean ss.	**Mean ss.**	**P**
1. Before starting the transcription, I paid attention to the tone of the piece.	2.6±0.84	4.9±0.31	0.001
2. I looked at the keys before starting the transcription.	4.1±1.10	4.9.±0.31	0.022
3. I have difficulty in reading the left key while deciphering.	2.9±1.20	1.6±1.07	0.051
4. I have difficulty in reading the key of F while deciphering.	3.4±1.10	2.2±1.55	0.104
5. I have difficulty in analysing weighing patterns while transcribing.	3±0.67	1.9±1.20	0.032
6. I have difficulty in finding registers while decoding.	3.3±1.15	1.7±0.82	0.006
7. I can apply dynamic signs while deciphering.	2.4±1.07	4.1±1.28	0.022

Conclusion

Sight-reading skills are closely linked to the student's overall musical and pianistic development. The positive results of sight-reading skills begin precisely from a pianist's initial training. The ability to freely decipher notes positively influences the final result of a young musician's upbringing throughout the entire educational process. Several conditions and factors can be listed for the successful development of transcription skills:

- Regular and systematic sight-reading exercises,
- Deciphering repertoire selected according to the level of readiness and ability,
- Theoretical preparation.

Teachers should provide the necessary guidance for students to develop their sight-reading skills, support students in developing a good taste in music, expand their repertoire, and instill a love of music.

For the student to develop deciphering reading skills, it is recommended that the student work according to the following parameters:

- Mental reading skills and analysis of the music text,
- The ability to play music text without taking eyes off,
- The ability to perceive the configuration of a melodic pattern (chordal, intermittent, etc.),
- The ability to emphasise the main details in the performance without going into details,
- The ability to bring melodic phrases to logical conclusions,

It is recommended that the ability to play the music text correctly at the specified tempo, the integrity of the performance, and the ability to vocalise according to dynamic signs be developed.

Developing and improving deciphering skills also develops several skills, such as hearing, rhythm, attention and memory.

The teacher's task is to help the student to continue the learning process curiously and creatively. It also contributes to developing the student's independent thinking throughout the study. The ability to read notes quickly and freely in decipherment provides ample opportunities for young musicians to familiarise themselves with the

rich musical literature. As a result of the knowledge acquired in the classroom, each student needs to learn new things and plunge into the magical world of music. For a young musician in the initial stages of learning, it is vital to develop the ability to read

the text of the score because this skill reduces the preparation time for lessons. It also makes it possible to freely and accurately read a foreign text without prior preparation during independent study. It should be noted that the development of this skill is complex and may take place differently for each student. This depends on the student's musical abilities, psychophysical characteristics, etc.

Finally, when getting acquainted with a work, the ability to decipher can give a more complete knowledge of the work. In deciphering, the mastery of intelligence, the ability to concentrate attention, fast motor reaction, and inner hearing develop. Work on the formation of the ability to decipher reading should begin at the first stage of education and continue throughout the entire education period. Free and fluent sight-reading is one of the essential elements of modern music education. It is also a critical condition for the student's comprehensive development and the basis of his future independence. For this reason, sight-reading skills should begin in the first steps of learning to play the piano and continue throughout the years of study.

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Benzerlik Taraması	Yapıldı – Ithenticate
Etik Bildirim	itobiad@itobiad.com
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Finansman	Bu araştırmayı desteklemek için dış fon kullanılmamıştır.
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