

# ***Evolving Pedagogical Approaches in Piano Education: A Historical Pedagogical Perspective on Student Piano Performance, with Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes as An Example***

**Junwen Su\***

e-mail: [junwennsu@tua.edu.ph](mailto:junwennsu@tua.edu.ph)

*College of Arts, Sciences and Education, Trinity University of Asia Cathedral Heights, 275 E. Rodriguez Sr., Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines 1102 NCR.*

**Abstract:** Piano pedagogy has historically evolved from rigid technical drills to expressive, student-centered approaches, influenced by cultural, ideological, and institutional contexts. This study explores how Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes exemplify the intersection of pedagogy, performance, and ideology in Soviet and global traditions. This research examines the historical development of piano pedagogy, analyzes Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes within Soviet educational frameworks, and identifies key pedagogical shifts across historical periods shaping performance practices and institutional approaches. A qualitative Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted using the PRISMA framework. One hundred studies were screened across databases, including, Elsevier, SpringerLink, JSTOR, WOS, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate. Eighteen articles met the inclusion criteria and were thematically analyzed to address the research objectives. The study identifies historical shifts toward expressive, student-centered pedagogy and reveals Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes as unique repertoire, uniting technical fluency with ideological functions, thereby illustrating how Soviet works simultaneously embodied pedagogy, artistry, and cultural-political values. Piano pedagogy has expanded beyond technical mastery into reflective, ideological, and cultural domains. Historically informed approaches, exemplified by Kabalevsky, remain vital for integrating tradition, creativity, and professional training in contemporary piano education.

**Keywords:** Pedagogical, Piano Performance, Piano Education, Kabalevsky's, Preludes.

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## **1. Introduction**

The evolution of piano pedagogy has been deeply intertwined with historical, cultural, and ideological shifts in education, particularly throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. Traditional methods, once heavily centered on mechanical technique and repetition, have gradually given way to approaches emphasizing musical perception, interpretation, and cultural contextualization. This transformation reflects a broader reevaluation of what it means to educate a pianist, shifting from training a technician to nurturing an expressive and critical artist (Li, 2024).

Subsequently, empirical analysis of editions of the piano scores has shown the materialization of the contrasting orientations of contemporary pedagogy in the transformations of the notations. Sun (2025) pointed out that editorial commentary in publications of the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) on the piano is biased in favour of the idea of expressive, ergonomic playing, and more so recent publications. Such tendencies introduce the hint of a new orientation in which hard technical demands are to yield to a pedagogically more student-focused demand, in which the marking of different tunes in the piano is considered in a new light as non-didactic, but as a byproduct of generic pedagogic ideologies.

This transformation has been observed in the education of gifted children, with interpretive perception taking center stage. The arts and process components of the music should be internalized to facilitate the realization of actual performance literacy (especially in young people), especially where they must perform in an enriched repertoire (Anishchenko, 2023). Perception is the fundamental component of the musical thought of her work, and not an incidental byproduct of mastery of technique.

History and regional factors have also affected pedagogical directions in the teaching of piano. Depicting the role of the regional schools in general, and the post-Soviet schools in particular, Ostroverkh et al. (2022) explain how the cultural identity that was created in the region and the imported institution framework to establish regional schools combined. These environments would tend to value ideological conformity over the adaptability of teaching, and had an impact on repertoire and the pedagogies of state music academies.

The ideological element of the piano styles may be implemented demonstratively in this kind of production, such as a disintegration of a piano concerto by Ming (2022). Moreover, throws light on the composers of the 20th century who abandoned conservative methods of composition and pursued nationalistic or ideological values, redefining the performer within new aesthetics. This coincides with a shift in pedagogic literature that has seen the understanding of pedagogy not as an act of technical obedience, but as acts of creativity, improvisation, and storytelling by educators.

More recent techniques now also include the use of computer-based tools and data-driven assessment techniques. Li (2024) conducts a visual bibliometric analysis and finds that a growing focus on so-called emotional intelligence, awareness of style, and interdisciplinary integration characterizes modern discourse on piano performance. These notions reflect an approach to pedagogy that no longer regards the sameness of procedure but rather its variability and flexibility.

Even broader historical studies, such as that by Nadirova and Aliyeva (2024), illustrate how instrument evolution has always intersected with human learning systems, reinforcing the notion that changes in musical tools, such as the prepared piano or digital keyboard, inevitably reshape teaching philosophies and student experience.

### *1.1. Research Problem*

Despite the diversification of piano pedagogy in the 21st century, integrating historical approaches into modern educational frameworks remains problematic. Many traditional pedagogical strategies, such as those embedded in early 20th-century repertoire like Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes, struggle to resonate with student-centered, interpretive, and technologically infused methods now dominant in music education. Zhang and Daoruang (2025) found that while innovative piano teaching models enhance expression and engagement, they often lack integration with the historical repertoire valued in

classical curricula. Similarly, Svyrydenko (2023) warns that foundational insights from early piano traditions are increasingly overlooked, despite their continued relevance for developing interpretive depth and performance culture.

### *1.2. Research Objectives*

- To examine the historical development of pedagogical approaches in piano education and their influence on student performance practices
- To analyze how Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes reflect and respond to specific pedagogical and ideological frameworks in 20th-century Soviet music education
- To identify and interpret key trends and shifts in piano teaching methods and educational ideologies across different historical periods

A teacher may concentrate on the continuity of performance requirements of the modern and historical performance of a composition, such as 24 Preludes by Kabalevsky, to gain insight into the pedagogical experience involving the composition itself. Integrating traditional repertoire with current student and interpretive approaches should enhance the ability to command the technique and express oneself effectively among students (Özer, 2022; Yang, 2024). According to Zou, On and Sapaso (2024), addressing the pan-cultural aspects of learning piano based on the cultural setting is necessary and crucial to not only become technically qualified but also a culturally and emotionally intelligent person. Similarly, Yi (2024) brings to our attention that this practical interpretation of performance is not confined to knowledge of historical, methodological, and stylistic conditions. However, it also presupposes a more comprehensive understanding of the study of piano teaching. This research addresses these demands by attempting to understand how historical-informed instruction can be relevant and transformative in contemporary music education.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. Historical Development of Pedagogical Approaches in Piano Education and their Influence on Student Performance Practices*

The most significant contemporary trends in pedagogy have been the shift towards musical expressiveness and the avoidance of technical repetition. Han (2021) believes that expressive capacity should be trained actively and the relationship between techniques and interpretation should be paid attention to when learning piano in universities. It also identifies the students' awareness of music analysis and the proportion of technical mastery and musical communication as significant results of effective instruction. The availability of more online materials and tools of analysis have also affected pedagogy. On the same way, Li (2022) shows that knowledge graphs synthesis will be useful with the assistance of cross-media data analysis to map the learning repertoire, the methods of learning, and the learning patterns of students. The novel method reflects the historical trends at codifying the pedagogy of piano lessons; nonetheless, it offers educators the chance to respond within the curriculum to the emerging learning and performance needs in a dynamic way.

Individualized teaching is also an initial pedagogical answer to the varied needs of learners. According to Liashenko et al. (2024), individual methods of learning piano do not only ensure the possibility of gaining technical benefits, but also becoming a self-realized

artist and an object of the process of self-construction of the processes of learning. They conclude that individualization is not just a side effect of broader historical pedagogical trends but does much good work in performance preparedness by enabling students to structure their training according to their strengths and artistic aspirations. On a large scale, the teaching of class piano has changed significantly. Morrison (2024) presents the literature review of a class piano and demonstrates how it has evolved with time, becoming less utilitarian (aimed at fostering musical literacy on the whole) and more creativity-oriented and motivation-centered. This shift highlights the significant role that the philosophy of pedagogy plays in shaping both group and individual learning and performance outcomes.

Lastly, wider cultural and mental understandings are also utilized in piano pedagogy. Nikulina (2022) mentions that one has to seek the balance between theoretical and empirical knowledge, and it has been proven that, in the history tradition, the role of theoretical consideration was not as valued as teaching performance. Similarly, Novosiadla (2023) specifically focuses on the psychophysiological sphere of playing piano, in which the neglect of motor and anatomic factors hindered the development of playing in the past. The two articles also argue that the practice training has supported the cognitive, physiological, and reflective realms obtained as a by-product of the invention of the piano pedagogy, so that they are now being incorporated into the current performances.

## *2.2. Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes Reflect and Respond to Specific Pedagogical and Ideological Frameworks in 20th-century Soviet Music Education*

Jiang (2020) emphasizes that Kabalevsky was a composer and a teacher simultaneously, particularly struggling to create music that would not only allow children to master their technical skills but also profoundly benefit their overall education. This opinion pays considerable attention to the 24 Preludes, following the Soviet pedagogical program, according to which music is a moralizing or socializing force. Jiang (2020) works were accessible and educational, and therefore acted as an ideological tool and a work of art.

Comparative methods contribute to illuminating the ideological elements of Soviet music. Kumamoto (2020) repackages Soviet music, such as Rakovian piano music, as a form of bricolage, an assembly of convenience, nationalism, and fashion compromise. Using this model in relation to Kabalevsky, it is possible to comment on how, in his 24 Preludes, he responded to the wavering ideological need of the people between personal and occupational, which was the major theme of the Soviet pedagogy. The tradition and ideological innovation may be envisioned as an imaginary visualizing concept of ideological innovation of Piano Sonata No. 3 Kabalevsky, as stated by Yang (2024). Yang (2024), without necessarily focusing on the 24 Preludes, concludes that the language of composition created by Kabalevsky was essentially a blend of classic elements and Soviet style requirements. Moreover, there are two-fold aspects of informing the pupils how to play, besides how they ought to pass a model representation of a sound world of the Soviets.

In the context of pedagogic accessibility as a general Soviet project, Özer (2022) situates the works of Kabalevsky, in general, and Op. 27, in particular, within a framework of children's music. The 24 Preludes were also didactic, but, as it were, on a heightened level of the art, yet, being a prelude, they required proficiency in the technique and a sublimation of expressiveness according to the canons of Soviet aesthetics of emotional candor and optimism. Those pieces, therefore, fill the void between teaching art and

high art. Certain greater traditions of Ukrainian and Soviet piano can be useful outside of Soviet speak. Lastovetska-Solanska et al. (2024) consider the preservation of Ukrainian piano music traditions and how pedagogical frameworks helped to sustain national identity and socialist beliefs of realism. This places the works of Kabalevsky within a framework of regional and political ideology that linked art to political utility.

Lastly, Kulish (2023) compares and contrasts egrige pedagogy and Soviet models as the paradigm of such teachers was the A. Silotis' model, because the Western concept of individualism is the antithesis of ideologically based pedagogy, such as that of Kabalevsky. This comparison refers to the fact that the 24 Preludes of Kabalevsky could not be comprehended also in the non-Soviet atmosphere of study and catechism (where learning repertoire was developed in the spirit of technicism and the power of singleness of the cultural image).

### *2.3. Key Trends and Shifts in Piano Teaching Methods and Educational Ideologies Across Different Historical Periods*

Teaching Piano Pedagogy: A Guidebook to Training Effective Teachers shows that piano pedagogy as a formal discipline is institutionalized, as stated by Hodgkinson (2021). The passage sheds light on the change of pedagogy in English from a system of apprenticeship founded on conservatoire practices to a system of academic training of teachers. Such institutionalization is a significant shift in ideologies, of course, as the teaching is no longer the science of dispensing the skill, but the profession. Eker (2022) presents his model ZeneZen, a unique pedagogical instrument that claims loyalty to the overarching and all-encompassing development in place of mechanical reproduction. Unlike traditional teacher-centered systems, ZeneZen is an aural, visual, and kinesthetic system that, in nature, violates more traditional conceptualizations of rote learning and technical practice. These pedagogies, as such, are a recourse to philosophy of agency and establish expressiveness in students.

Lo (2024) states that what is done with Hong Kong institutions is another example of what might be shortened in order to become a location-specific methodology: the different ways in which undergraduate performers should be taught vary by school. An illustration of that dislocation of the terms of globalization in which pedagogy has suffered a transformation more of the streams of the Western conservative conservatoire traditions, and still more lately, of increased requirements to be more versatile and able to read. This means that there is a tendency to think that the pedagogy is being reconstituted not just by history, but also by cultural diversity and pressures of institutions. Ma (2025) takes this development yet further by theorizing about piano teaching within a Universalist framework. The usefulness that he displays in combining technical education with philosophical considerations introduces his own form of pedagogy, where abilities are not the single most important points that guarantee cognitive and creative flourishing. Such an orientation refers to the shift of long-term ideology, to the teaching of utilitarianism, and the realization of artistry and individual expression.

More radical reforms encompass promoting compositional schooling in primary schools in South Africa. Wynne (2025) discusses how pedagogy can respond to larger education reform agendas, transforming the teaching of the piano as creative composition with increased emphasis on problem solving and innovation (rather than a reproduction of theoretical repertoire). This paradigm shift is a radical redefinition of the intended purpose of piano education. Although the contribution of Lu (2022) has now been retracted, its

expression of the influence of multicultural and ecological factors on pedagogy proves that the approach to pedagogy is increasingly vulnerable to non-musical ideological problems. Piano pedagogy, in other words, is a rising area of cultural assimilation and educational experimentation and is the widely shared concern of society.

#### *2.4. Literature Gap*

The reviewed literature highlights substantial progress in understanding the evolution of piano pedagogy, the ideological underpinnings of Soviet-era repertoire, and emerging contemporary teaching paradigms. However, several critical gaps remain. First, while many studies address the historical development of teaching methods (Han, 2021; Morrison, 2024), few explicitly link these pedagogical shifts to measurable outcomes in student performance, leaving the practical impact of historical approaches underexplored. Second, research on Kabalevsky primarily examines children's works (Jiang, 2020; Özer, 2022) or broader Soviet ideology (Kumamoto, 2020), but a detailed pedagogical analysis of the 24 Preludes as both advanced technical studies and ideological artifacts remains scarce. Third, contemporary scholarship emphasizes innovation in pedagogy, such as creative or compositional models (Eker, 2022; Wynne, 2025), yet limited attention is given to how these trends integrate with or diverge from historical frameworks. Finally, cross-cultural comparisons, particularly between Soviet pedagogical traditions and global practices, are underdeveloped, leaving opportunities for nuanced historical and ideological synthesis.

#### *2.5. Theoretical Framework*

This study draws primarily on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and Constructivist Learning Theory, both of which illuminate the interplay between historical context, pedagogy, and student development in piano education.

#### *2.6. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory*

Vygotsky's framework emphasizes the centrality of social interaction and cultural mediation in the learning process. Applied to piano pedagogy, it highlights how broader ideological and cultural forces shape instructional methods, repertoire, and the dynamics between teachers and students. For instance, group piano instruction grounded in cooperative strategies reflects Vygotsky's principle of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners advance through guided interaction before achieving independent mastery (Xiaowei & Noordin, 2024). Similarly, the ideological orientation of Soviet pedagogy exemplifies how cultural narratives shape not only what is taught but also how students internalize performance values (Kentesh, 2024).

#### *2.7. Constructivist Learning Theory*

Complementing this, Constructivist Learning Theory, developed by Piaget and expanded by Bruner, situates the learner as an active constructor of knowledge. Within piano pedagogy, constructivism explains the shift from rote imitation to approaches that emphasize creativity, interpretation, and problem solving. Recent studies show that innovative teaching models incorporating reflective analysis and experiential practice foster deeper performance skills, aligning with constructivist ideals of discovery and scaffolding (Zhang & Daoruang, 2025). Constructivism also emphasizes the importance of student-centered methods, enabling learners to reinterpret historical repertoire in ways that connect technical development with personal artistry (Zhai, 2020).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Methods and Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, utilizing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), to address the three stated objectives. The SLR method was selected because it allowed for the integration of historical, pedagogical, and ideological perspectives on piano education. Following standard protocols, the review process included a systematic screening of studies, the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria, and an assessment of the quality of the selected data. The approach ensured that only rigorously relevant publications contributed to the analysis.

#### 3.2. Data Collection Methods

##### 3.2.1. Searching Techniques

Relevant literature was identified using keywords linked to the research objectives. Search strings combined terms such as “piano pedagogy,” “historical piano teaching methods,” “Kabalevsky 24 Preludes,” “Soviet music education ideology,” and “trends in piano pedagogy.”

#### 3.3. Databases

Searches targeted major academic databases, including Elsevier, SpringerLink, JSTOR, Web of Science (WOS), Google Scholar, and ResearchGate. These databases were selected for their extensive coverage of peer-reviewed publications in the fields of musicology, pedagogy, and education.

#### 3.4. Boolean Operators

Advanced search strategies were applied using Boolean operators:

- AND was used to combine key concepts (e.g., piano pedagogy AND ideology).
- OR expanded the scope by including synonyms (e.g., teaching methods OR instructional strategies).
- NOT excluded irrelevant material (e.g., piano pedagogy NOT electronic keyboards).

#### 3.5. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

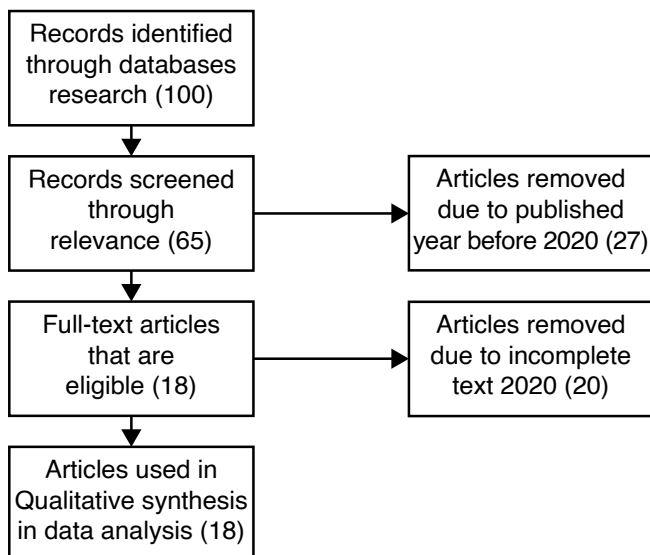
A structured framework guided the selection of sources in Table 1:

**Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.**

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publications	2020–2025, peer-reviewed journals, dissertations	Articles before 2020, non-academic
Research Type	Qualitative, historical, pedagogical studies	Purely technical/engineering studies
Language	English, Russian and Chinese	Non-English like Indonesian and Malaysian
Focus	Piano pedagogy, historical development, ideology	Non-piano or irrelevant focus

#### 3.6. Selection of Papers through the PRISMA Framework

In line with the PRISMA framework, 100 papers were initially identified. Titles, abstracts, and full texts were screened against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. After re-reading and evaluation, 18 papers were deemed directly aligned with the objectives (Figure 1). Purposive sampling ensured that the final set reflected the historical and pedagogical dimensions of piano education, with Kabalevsky's works considered as a focal case.

**Figure 1: PRISMA Flowchart.**

### 3.7. Data Analysis Methods

A thematic analysis approach was applied to synthesize the findings in Table 2.

**Table 2: Data Analysis Methods.**

Step	Description
Familiarization	Repeated reading of selected papers to identify preliminary patterns.
Coding	Assigning codes to segments relevant to pedagogy, ideology, or performance.
Theme Development	Grouping codes into broader themes (e.g., <i>historical shifts, ideology</i> ).
Review and Refinement	Themes refined for clarity, avoiding overlap.
Interpretation	Themes are critically analyzed in relation to the research objectives.

### 3.8. Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to academic ethical standards. Only publicly available, peer-reviewed articles were included to respect intellectual property. Accurate citation and referencing ensured proper acknowledgment of prior scholarship. No human participants were involved; thus, institutional ethical clearance was not required. Transparency in data screening and analysis minimized bias and reinforced the validity of the findings.

## 4. Results

The results of this study present the findings of the systematic literature review, organized around the three research objectives. Using thematic analysis, the selected studies were examined to identify recurring patterns, historical developments, and ideological influences in the field of piano pedagogy. The themes in Table 3 highlight how pedagogical practices evolved, how Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes reflected Soviet frameworks, and how broader educational ideologies shaped teaching methods across different historical periods.

**Table 3: Theme Extracted.**

Main Themes	Sub-Themes	Focus of Analysis
Evolution of Pedagogy	Shift from technical drills to expressive teaching	How pedagogical philosophies have shaped performance outcomes across time
	Integration of theory and performance	
Individualization	Role of the class piano in group learning	Influence of individualized learning on student growth
	Student-centered approaches	
	Personalization of repertoire	
Cognitive & Physiological Dimensions	Impact on skill development	Expansion of pedagogy into reflective and cognitive domains
	Psychophysiological aspects	
	Learning strategies	
Ideological Functions of Music	Motor/ergonomic considerations	How the <i>24 Preludes</i> embodied ideological values
	Soviet socialist realism	
	Music as a moral/socializing force	
Pedagogical Role of Repertoire	Art as political utility	Educational purpose of Kabalevsky's works
	Accessibility for learners	
	Technical fluency and expressiveness	
Comparative Pedagogy	Bridging didactic and artistic roles	Contextualizing Kabalevsky within broader pedagogical traditions
	Soviet vs Western models	
	Role of émigré musicians (e.g., Siloti)	
Institutionalization of Pedagogy	Influence of regional schools	Pedagogy as a discipline
	Conservatoire/apprenticeship to academic programs	
	Professionalization of teacher training	
Creative & Student-Centered Approaches	Constructivist and holistic teaching	New ideologies emphasizing creativity and autonomy
	Composition-based learning	
	Globalized pedagogical practices	
Interdisciplinary & Cultural Shifts	Multicultural and ecological approaches	Broader cultural and ideological influences shaping pedagogy
	Integration with global education reforms	
	Universalist philosophies of teaching	

**Theme 1: Evolution of Pedagogy**

**Table 4: Evolution of Pedagogy.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Fan (2024)	To develop an evolutionary model for piano performance teaching in higher education using knowledge graph analysis to improve both technical and expressive outcomes.	Knowledge graph construction, graph representation learning, and link prediction techniques applied in pedagogical experiments with college piano majors.	Students reported over 60% satisfaction with the new model; average piano performance scores improved by 25.2 points, especially in integrating theory and performance skills.	The evolutionary model offers a scalable, data-driven framework for enhancing piano pedagogy by shifting the focus from drills to expressive, integrated learning.
Wang and Jia (2023)	To explore the historical evolution of piano technique and its impact on modern Chinese piano development in education, performance, and composition.	Literature review and theoretical exploration of historical, cultural, and educational sources on Chinese piano pedagogy and performance traditions.	Identified how Western traditions influenced Chinese piano pedagogy, highlighting a shift from mechanical technical drills to expressive and interpretive methods.	Continuous refinement of piano technique theory is crucial for modern pedagogy, as it fosters innovation while preserving cultural heritage and enhancing student outcomes.

The two studies collectively demonstrate a clear pedagogical shift from rigid, drill-based instruction toward integrated, expressive learning in piano education. Fan (2024) evidences this through a data-driven teaching model that improved both performance and student satisfaction, while Wang and Jia (2023) contextualize the trend historically within Chinese pedagogy. Both studies affirm that evolving piano techniques and methods promote creativity, cultural relevance, and enhanced performance outcomes in contemporary educational contexts (Table 4).

## Theme 2: Individualization

**Table 5: Individualization.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Liashenko et al. (2024)	To evaluate how an individual's approach influences the development of pianists' performance skills in higher education.	Mixed qualitative methods, including monitoring of student training, surveys of young performers, and comparative analysis of performance outcomes.	Individualized instruction enhanced both technical proficiency and artistic self-expression, allowing students to align their development with personal strengths and creative goals.	Individual approaches in piano pedagogy are effective in cultivating well-rounded performers, fostering technical mastery while supporting individuality and artistic growth.
Semko et al. (2024)	To investigate the impact of individualized teaching methods on the development of interpretive and technical skills among musicians-instrumentalists.	Theoretical analysis, observation, and comparative evaluation using skill-level and quality coefficients, supported by Mann-Whitney statistical testing.	Personalized teaching fostered improvements in interpretation, improvisation, and technical execution, enabling students to develop distinct artistic identities.	Individualized pedagogy strengthens both technical skills and artistic individuality, making it a crucial approach for modern instrumental training.

Both studies affirm that individualized pedagogy enhances student growth by striking a balance between technical mastery and artistic identity. Liashenko et al. (2024) highlight its role in aligning training with personal strengths, while Semko et al. (2024) show measurable gains in interpretation and improvisation. Together, they demonstrate that student-centered, personalized approaches are essential for modern piano education (Table 5).

## Theme 3: Cognitive & Physiological Dimensions

**Table 6: Cognitive & Physiological Dimensions.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Olszewska et al. (2024)	To investigate functional brain reorganization in novice pianists during the first six months of piano training.	A longitudinal fMRI study of 24 novice pianists assessed at 1, 6, 13, and 26 weeks of training while performing increasingly complex tasks.	Training produced changes in auditory, motor, and cognitive networks. As proficiency increased, reliance on higher-order cognitive control decreased, while motor efficiency improved.	Piano learning fosters neuroplasticity, gradually shifting performance from effortful cognitive processing to optimized sensorimotor integration.
Turner et al. (2022)	To examine trunk and right-hand coordination in pianists, considering motor learning strategies, ergonomics, and performer anthropometry.	A motion capture system tracked trunk and hand movements in three pianists of varying skill and anthropometric characteristics while they performed Beethoven's <i>Appassionata</i> .	Skill level influenced trunk use; less experienced/smaller pianists relied more on trunk movement to compensate for reach, while experts optimized ergonomic efficiency.	Piano performance is a whole-body skill that requires pedagogy to integrate biomechanics, ergonomics, and motor strategies, thereby enhancing performance and preventing injury.

Both studies highlight the significance of cognitive and physiological factors in piano pedagogy. Olszewska et al. (2024) show how piano training drives neuroplasticity, shifting performance from cognitive control to efficient sensorimotor integration. Turner et al. (2022) demonstrate that motor coordination and ergonomics shape technique and prevent strain. Together, they reveal that piano education must integrate brain, body, and learning strategies for effective skill development (Table 6).

## Theme 4: Ideological Functions of Music

**Table 7: Ideological Functions of Music.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Kumamoto (2020)	To re-evaluate Soviet socialist realist music through the piano works of Nikolai Rakov, examining how art functioned as both ideology and artistry.	Hermeneutical analysis of Rakov's works (Variations, Concert Etudes, Four Preludes) using Lévi-Strauss's concept of <i>bricolage</i> .	Found that Rakov's music, though outwardly simple, carried layers of ideological accessibility and artistic nuance, fulfilling state expectations while offering personal expression.	Soviet composers balanced political utility with individual creativity, showing socialist realism as a complex framework rather than mere propaganda.
Tooke (2020)	To analyze how Prokofiev's late symphonies illustrate the contradictions of socialist realist aesthetics in Stalinist cultural policy.	Archival research and critical review of Soviet music criticism and state responses to Prokofiev's 5th, 6th, and 7th symphonies.	Showed that Soviet critics forced abstract instrumental works into ideological interpretations, with official approval often conflicting with artistic evaluation.	Demonstrated that Soviet music was trapped between creative ambition and ideological conformity, with socialist realism shaping both composition and reception.

Both studies emphasize how socialist realism shaped Soviet music as both art and ideology. Kumamoto (2020) shows how Rakov's works balanced accessibility with creative nuance, while Tooke (2020) reveals how Prokofiev's symphonies were reinterpreted through ideological lenses. Together, they illustrate music's dual role as political utility and artistic expression, contextualizing Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes within Soviet cultural policy (Table 7).

## Theme 5: Pedagogical Role of Repertoire

**Table 8: Pedagogical Role of Repertoire.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Özer (2022)	To evaluate Kabalevsky's piano works for children, focusing on <i>Thirty Pieces for Kids Op. 27</i> as a model of accessible and pedagogically valuable repertoire.	Qualitative study using document analysis of Kabalevsky's children's piano albums, with emphasis on technical, expressive, and educational functions.	Op. 27 was shown to balance technical fluency, accessibility, and expressive learning, supporting both basic pianistic skills and artistic growth.	Kabalevsky's works exemplify repertoire that bridges didactic instruction and artistic purpose, making them highly effective for piano pedagogy.
McFeetors (2024)	To explore how Grieg's <i>Lyrical Pieces Op. 12</i> serve as pedagogical tools for intermediate students, blending technical development with expressive interpretation.	Historical-contextual analysis and pedagogical evaluation of repertoire, identifying technical and stylistic learning outcomes.	Grieg's works provided accessible yet challenging repertoire, enhancing technique (touch, rhythm, ornamentation) while fostering cultural and expressive awareness.	Effective repertoire simultaneously develops technical proficiency and interpretive skills, reinforcing its role as a bridge between instruction and artistry.

Both studies highlight how pedagogical repertoire bridges technical training and artistic growth. Özer (2022) shows that Kabalevsky's Op. 27 balances accessibility with expressive learning, while McFeetors (2024) demonstrates that Grieg's Lyrical Pieces enhance technique while nurturing interpretation. Together, they affirm that carefully selected repertoire fosters fluency, creativity, and musical identity, serving dual didactic and artistic purposes in piano pedagogy (Table 8).

## Theme 6: Comparative Pedagogy

**Table 9: Comparative Pedagogy.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Kulish (2023)	To investigate A. Siloti's pedagogical and concert activity in the USA, and its influence on comparative piano pedagogy between Soviet and Western traditions.	Historical-documentary analysis of Siloti's émigré career, archival records, and pedagogical work at Juilliard.	Siloti introduced Western pedagogical models emphasizing individuality and artistry, which contrasted with Soviet collectivist, ideology-driven teaching methods.	Siloti's émigré activity illustrates how cross-cultural pedagogy shaped global piano traditions, highlighting divergences from Soviet frameworks.
Lysenko et al. (2020)	To analyze the professional and conceptual principles of pianists' education at the M. Hlinka Dnipropetrovsk Academy of Music within historical and pedagogical contexts.	Historical-pedagogical research using institutional archives and comparative analysis of teaching traditions.	The Academy integrated Western conservatory traditions (Vienna, Leipzig, Paris) with Soviet pedagogical frameworks, creating a hybrid regional model.	Regional schools reveal how Soviet pedagogy coexisted with and adapted Western influences, contextualizing Soviet piano education within broader traditions.

Both studies reveal how comparative contexts shaped piano pedagogy beyond Soviet borders. Kulish (2023) highlights Siloti's émigré influence, where Western approaches emphasized individuality over ideology. Lysenko et al. (2020) show how the Dnipropetrovsk Academy blended Soviet frameworks with European conservatory traditions. Together, they illustrate that Kabalevsky's pedagogy must be situated within cross-cultural and regional pedagogical exchanges (Table 9).

## Theme 7: Institutionalization of Pedagogy

**Table 10: Institutionalization of Pedagogy.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Hodgkinson (2021)	To review Crappell's <i>Teaching Piano Pedagogy</i> and evaluate its contribution to the professionalization of piano teacher training.	Critical review of Crappell's text, contextualized within U.S. graduate pedagogy programs and international perspectives.	The book highlights the transition from apprenticeship to academic pedagogy courses, providing structured curricula and comprehensive resources for teacher preparation.	Piano pedagogy has become institutionalized as a formal discipline, with professionalized training essential for future educators.
Shaw (2023)	To examine how English conservatoires prepare students for the music education workforce and identify institutional gaps in pedagogy training.	Mixed methods: interviews with conservatoire academics and questionnaires from Music Education Hub leaders (n=66).	Revealed a mismatch between institutional training and employer expectations, with inconsistent pedagogical provision across conservatoires.	Greater alignment between institutions and industry is needed to strengthen pedagogy as a professional, academic field.

Hodgkinson (2021) underscores how piano pedagogy has shifted from apprenticeship to structured academic training, marking its institutionalization as a discipline. Shaw (2023) reveals gaps between conservatoire programs and workforce expectations, highlighting the need for stronger alignment. Together, these studies confirm that pedagogy's professionalization depends on both formalized curricula and responsiveness to industry needs in music education (Table 10).

## Theme 8: Creative & Student-Centered Approaches

**Table 11: Creative & Student-Centered Approaches.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Zheng and Leung (2021)	To explore how piano teachers in China cultivate creativity and autonomy in students' piano performance.	Multiple-case study with three piano majors; 14 lessons observed using video recordings, self-reflection, and semi-structured interviews.	Teachers foster creativity by encouraging imagination, linking learning to students' experiences, and allowing autonomy in musical expression beyond classical genres.	Constructivist, student-centered approaches enhance creativity in performance; diversifying pedagogy beyond traditional models is essential for globalized education.
Wynne (2025)	To develop a compositional and play-based framework for piano pedagogy in South African primary schools.	Design-based research over 12 months with 9 students; iterative teaching cycles involving composition, collaboration, and play-based learning.	Students composed their own music, demonstrated agency, and engaged more deeply with creative processes while meeting curriculum benchmarks.	Composition-driven, holistic pedagogy effectively fosters autonomy and creativity; adaptable to broader educational contexts beyond South Africa.

Both studies emphasise the value of constructivist, student-centered pedagogy in piano education. Zheng and Leung (2021) highlight creativity through autonomy and cross-genre exploration, while Wynne (2025) demonstrates composition-based, play-driven learning in South Africa. Together, they show that holistic and globalised approaches enhance learners' creativity, agency, and adaptability, moving beyond rigid traditional models (Table 11).

## Theme 9: Interdisciplinary & Cultural Shifts

**Table 12: Interdisciplinary & Cultural Shifts.**

Authors	Objectives	Methods	Findings	Conclusion
Li (2023)	To examine how multicultural perspectives are reshaping Chinese music education and its adaptation to global reforms.	Qualitative review and analysis of current practices in Chinese music institutions, framed within multicultural theory.	Identified tensions between traditional Western-based models and localized, multicultural approaches. Highlighted need for reforms integrating global cultural values.	Music education must evolve beyond Eurocentric models to reflect multicultural realities, promoting inclusivity and alignment with global educational reforms.
Mellizo (2023)	To conceptualize music education as a form of global education fostering citizenship and cultural awareness.	Autoethnographic reflection drawing on professional practice and curriculum analysis.	Showed that music education can build empathy, global citizenship, and universalist philosophies when framed as intercultural practice.	Music education should intentionally cultivate global competence and cultural empathy, positioning pedagogy as a driver of universalist, holistic education.

Both Li (2023) and Mellizo (2023) emphasize how music education must adapt to cultural and ideological shifts. Li (2023) highlights the tension between Eurocentric and multicultural reforms in China, while Mellizo (2023) positions pedagogy as global education, fostering empathy and citizenship. Together, they illustrate how universalist and intercultural approaches reshape pedagogy toward inclusivity, creativity, and global relevance (Table 12).

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Interpretation of the Findings

The findings highlight a significant historical trajectory in piano pedagogy, showing a

shift from rigid technical drills to more expressive, student-centered approaches. Studies confirm that while technical fluency remains essential, performance is increasingly framed as an interplay of cognitive, cultural, and expressive dimensions (Han, 2021; Liashenko et al., 2024). In this light, Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes emerge as a critical example of repertoire that not only cultivated pianistic technique but also embodied the ideological imperatives of Soviet socialist realism, reinforcing music's role as a socializing and moral force (Jiang, 2020; Kumamoto, 2020).

Comparative analyses reveal that such repertoire, though ideologically bound, reflected broader global debates over pedagogy, contrasting Soviet collectivist models with Western and émigré traditions that emphasized individuality and artistic autonomy (Kulish, 2023; Lysenko et al., 2020). At the institutional level, the professionalization of pedagogy through conservatoires and academic programs further illustrates the discipline's evolution into structured scholarship (Hodgkinson, 2021; Shaw, 2023). Collectively, these themes suggest that pedagogy has expanded beyond skill acquisition to include cultural, ideological, and reflective domains shaping both teacher training and student performance.

## 5.2. Comparison with the Previous Studies

The findings of this study reinforce and extend prior research on the historical development of piano pedagogy, its ideological functions, and its institutional transformations. Historically, studies such as Han (2021) and Morrison (2024) have documented the move from technique-focused instruction toward expressiveness and creativity. The current review corroborates these conclusions but advances them by situating the pedagogical shift within a broader ideological and cultural framework, particularly in relation to Soviet music education. Whereas earlier studies often treated expressiveness as a purely artistic or psychological concern, the present findings emphasize how it was also a vehicle for transmitting cultural and political values, as seen in Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes.

The focus on Kabalevsky aligns with Jiang (2020) and Özer (2022), who considered his contributions to children's repertoire and pedagogical accessibility. This research, however, is unique in that it examines the 24 Preludes as a multipurpose repertoire that surpassed instruction at the beginner level, serving as both high-level pedagogical studies and a tool in propaganda. Some past research has been inclined to separate the didactic and relatively less ambitious aspects of Kabalevsky's compositions. In contrast, the current results show the continuity between the two categories, and in fact, pedagogy and ideology could not be separated in the work. Similarly, Kumamoto (2020) states that the Soviet music being bricolage in that it was made of art and ideology, which this paper extends the thesis of this paper to the Preludes.

Comparative pedagogy (Kulish, 2023) is one of the few to address the teaching model of the emigrant musicians themselves, including Silotti, who taught in the West and was influenced by the West, compared to the collectivist Soviets. Lysenko et al. (2020) also regarded the hybrid regionalism of the tradition of Soviet pedagogy and the conservative traditions of the European conservatoires. These opinions resonate with the current findings, but extend even further to suggest how an individual could be brought to study the repertoire of Kabalevsky in the framework of this extended comparative grid. This paralleling stress constructs the rhetoric that Soviet paradigms, despite the inflexibility of their ideologies, were exposed to exterior strain, no matter how such responses could be repackaged to fit the state discourses.

On the cognitive/physiological level, Novosiadla (2023) and Olszewska et al. (2024) focused on the psychophysiological nature of the piano method, i.e., neuroplasticity, and motor perfection during the training. Those recent findings support these suggestions and add to the problems of pedagogy, indicating that even the scientific discovery of the further evolution of pedagogy to the reflective and cognitive sphere was a change in philosophy. Previous studies often isolated neuroscience and ergonomics from pedagogy, but this review underscores their convergence, suggesting that effective teaching now depends on integrating brain, body, and cultural learning strategies.

Hodgkinson (2021) and Shaw (2023), who documented the shift from apprenticeship models to structured academic curricula, have previously explored institutionalization of pedagogy. The findings of this study confirm these observations but also identify gaps in alignment between institutional training and professional practice. By incorporating thematic evidence from globalized and interdisciplinary approaches (Lo, 2024; Mellizo, 2023), the current research demonstrates that institutionalization is not a uniform process but one marked by disparities between conservatoire traditions, academic programs, and workforce expectations.

While much of the literature emphasizes the shift from technical drills to expressiveness, framing this as a universal advancement risks oversimplification. Studies note that conservatoires often retained strong technical traditions, treating virtuosity as a cultural benchmark even as new expressive models emerged (Han, 2021; Morrison, 2024). This suggests that pedagogical change was not linear but a negotiated process shaped by institutional priorities and historical contexts.

Similarly, Soviet ideology in music education should not be viewed as wholly deterministic. Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes reveal tensions between socialist realist expectations and individual artistic expression. Scholars argue that repertoire often embodied both state-imposed didacticism and subtle artistic resistance, complicating the dichotomy between conformity and creativity (Kumamoto, 2020; Tooke, 2020). This underscores that pedagogy in Soviet contexts functioned as a space of negotiation, where ideology and artistry coexisted in complex and sometimes contradictory ways.

Finally, in considering creativity and student-centered approaches, earlier contributions by Zheng and Leung (2021) and Wynne (2025) highlighted constructivist methods, emphasizing autonomy and composition. The current findings align closely with these studies but extend them by linking constructivist practice to historical repertoire, including Kabalevsky's Preludes. While past research framed creativity primarily as a modern innovation, this study suggests that even ideologically constrained works like Kabalevsky's contained creative pedagogical potential, serving as both technical and expressive platforms.

### *5.3. Theoretical Implications*

The results of the current study prove that the Sociocultural Theory, which Vygotsky elaborated, is relevant to the explanation of the mediating effect of ideological, cultural, and institutional situations on the history of piano pedagogy. A relatively simple method through which such a learning and socializing effect of repertoire could be realized might be the 24 Preludes by Kabalevsky, because it is more congruent with the vision that Vygotsky had formed about the role of learning in a cultural context and also learned as mediated form and mediated intercourse (Kentesh, 2024; Xiaowei &

Noordin, 2024). In the same manner, class piano and group instruction development are the scaffolding behaviors of the Zone of Proximal Development as well, wherein, similar to the former, peers and teachers can encourage students to learn and acquire the skills step by step.

Constructive Learning Theory could help us get an idea of how rote-based practices become creative and student-centered. These practices of repertoire customization, composition-based instruction, and whole-person approaches align with the constructivist concepts of discovery and scaffolding, where students create the classroom to generate knowledge, rather than deliver it to students (Zhang & Daoruang, 2025; Zheng & Leung, 2021). These considerations suggest that the historical aware pedagogy not only is supposed to be centered on the teaching technique, but should also involve interpretation autonomy and mental acting, including culture, ideology, and learning experience.

## 6. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that piano pedagogy has evolved through specific historical, cultural, and institutional transformations. The movement from drill-based traditions to expressive, student-centered approaches reflects not a general cultural shift, but concrete changes in teaching philosophies, curricula, and institutional practices. Kabalevsky's 24 Preludes exemplify how repertoire functioned simultaneously as pedagogical material and as an ideological tool within Soviet socialist realism. Comparative analysis revealed the contrast between Soviet collectivist frameworks and Western models emphasizing individual creativity, highlighting the hybrid pedagogical traditions that emerged in regional and émigré contexts. Moreover, the professionalization of pedagogy into structured academic programs underscores its recognition as a distinct discipline, linking performance training with broader educational and cultural agendas.

### 6.1. Limitations of the Study

This study was constrained by reliance on secondary data through a systematic literature review, which limited access to first-hand evidence of teaching practices and performance outcomes. The dataset remained relatively small, which may have reduced the representativeness of the findings. Although English, Russian, and Chinese works were included, broader linguistic and cultural perspectives were underrepresented. Finally, the absence of methodological triangulation restricted the ability to cross-validate results across diverse qualitative and quantitative approaches.

### 6.2. Future Work

Future studies should adopt mixed-method designs, combining SLR with empirical data collection from students and teachers to validate historical insights in practice. Expanding the dataset to include non-English sources would address cultural and regional gaps. Incorporating methodological triangulation, through interviews, performance analysis, and experimental approaches, would enrich understanding. Comparative, cross-cultural projects integrating digital tools and archival analysis are recommended to capture evolving intersections between pedagogy, ideology, and repertoire in global piano education.

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