


Application of Block Notation Through Color Marking on the Piano of Grade Initial Students at Prodigy Music Academy

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Article Details	ABSTRACT
<p>Article History</p> <p>Received mm dd, yyyy Revised mm dd, yyyy Accepted mm dd, yyyy</p>	<p>Prodigy <i>Music Academy</i> is a music course institution that provides guitar, bass guitar, piano, drums, vocal, and violin courses. The problem in this study is the difficulty of students distinguishing piano keys, so a color marking method is needed for initial-grade students. This study aims to analyze the color marking method and the results of student achievement in color marking at Prodigy <i>Music Academy</i>. The method applied in the research is descriptive qualitative through observation techniques, interviews, questionnaires, documentation, and descriptive data presentation. This research resulted in the application of the color method on the piano. The tools used were <i>sticky notes</i> and colored pens. The colors used are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and purple. In terms of student achievement, the teacher provides summative and diagnostic evaluations. Questionnaires were distributed via <i>Google form</i> to 10 parents of students, with the results of parents giving positive assessments to students so that it was found that students were achieved in the color marking method.</p>
<p>Keywords</p> <p>Application Beam Notation Color Marking Prodigy Music Academy</p>	
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1. INTRODUCTION

Music has an important role that cannot be separated from human life. Music education is a lesson in great demand by people of all ages. According to (Rupiyono, 1999), music education is believed to be one of the media that can be used to educate and develop children's character. Music is believed to have a powerful force to help people improve their ability to learn, think, stabilize emotions, and balance a person's mentality (Wulandari, 2014). Music learning can stimulate the development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor competencies in students, especially in early childhood students (Rohim & Rahayu, 2022). Music education aims to help develop each student's ability to have a musical experience. Music teaching is a lesson in understanding the meaning of music and the musical elements of a song or composition in a musical experience for children (Kuncoro, Tabita et al., 2022).

Music education that can help children learn music is a music course. The piano is an instrument that can provide experience in learning music for children. The piano is a popular and *basic* instrument used in music learning. According to (Amalia et al., 2017), The side effects of learning music can help improve children's intelligence, not only musical intelligence but also language intelligence, mathematical intelligence, and emotional, kinetic, and visual intelligence. Knowing music can broaden knowledge and views while learning about other things outside music. According to (Aruja et al., 2016), The introduction to music will foster a sense of appreciation for the value of art. In addition, music can also balance the right brain and left brain. One of the important roles of music for children is to balance the development of the left and right brain. In general, the human left brain develops very rapidly. This happens because almost all education systems today are oriented towards the left brain, which analyzes everything systematically and logically. As a result, children

are directed to believe that everything cannot be touched, seen, or accepted logically (Purba & Ance Juliet, 2021). The awareness and readiness factor of the learner subject plays an important role in the success and failure of a music learning process (Christinus & Pasaribu, 2022). The advantage of the piano is that it is an instrument *that* has a wide *range* reaching 7 octaves. Other instruments do not have as wide a range as the piano; therefore, the piano can perform expressive songs with a wide range of low to high notes (Benhard, 2007). However, it is not easy to introduce piano to children aged 4-8 years because they are still not quick to understand number notes and block notes. Children's different memory requires a variety of approaches in teaching piano to children because children at that age are in the preoperational stage, it is explained by (Marinda, 2020) argues that children at this age present the world with words and images. These words and images indicate the existence of symbolic thinking and go beyond the relationship of sensory information and physical action. In the preoperational stage, children more easily capture information through symbols.

Music does not only contain tone, rhythm, melody, harmony, or dynamics. However, complete unity is needed to produce perfect playing techniques (Aurellia & Priatna, 2024). Learning materials given to children aged 4-8 years for the initial grade must be specially designed. Colored notation can be used to show the different pitches of the piano keys. For example, higher notes can be indicated with a bright color, while lower notes use a darker color. Using colored notation can also help musicians memorize and play complex music more easily (Aisyah & Sinaga, 2023).

Learning must be designed with something interesting because children like to learn visually. This is because children tend toward centration; they focus on the most interesting features and ignore other features (Marinda, 2020). According to (Sari & Syafi'i, 2021), recognizing colors is essential to children's brain development. However, educators and parents often ignore the ability to recognize colors because early color recognition can stimulate vision and recognize and express colors in the environment, such as mentioning the color of green leaves, red apples, and others.

Of the several characters of children, each child has a different learning style. This can occur due to differences in character, environment, and each child's ability (Aurora et al., 2022). According to researchers, color marking media is an effective way to teach children aged 4-8 years because the visual media children like is color. According to (Manik, 2024) and Kusrianto (2007), color is a very sharp element that touches the sensitivity of vision to stimulate a person's feelings, attention, and interest. Color is also one of the complementary images and is one of the visual elements. In piano learning, providing more interesting variations for children aged 4-8 years can be applied by giving colour markings to the piano keys, so that children prefer piano learning that is fun and not boring. Color functions as an aesthetic element and is crucial in increasing children's focus and attention to the material presented (Resa Respati, 2024). Boredom in learning is assumed by the tedious learning process resulting in children's concentration that exceeds the limit. One of the ways to improve children's memory is to introduce the concept of color, which is the basic form, so that children are more sensitive in remembering an object which can also increase creativity in children.

The many problems in piano learning require teachers to be more active and creative. It certainly demands the quality of teachers in innovating in learning piano to children. Based on the preliminary study, the researcher found the problem that children are challenged to understand and memorize block notation correctly; therefore, an effective learning strategy is needed to provide maximum learning.

2. METHOD

This research applies descriptive qualitative research methods because, in this study, the data is generated as descriptions of phenomena that occur in the field based on the formulation of existing problems. According to (Sugiyono, 2012), qualitative research methods are research methods based on the postpositivism philosophy used to research natural object conditions where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are done by triangulation (combined), data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization. According to the opinion of (Moleong, 2019), the data collected in qualitative research are in the form of words, pictures, and not numbers. The data in this study are descriptive in the form of written and oral data from sources and direct observation, which aims to describe the application of beam notation through colour marking on the piano of grade initial students at Prodigy *Music Academy*

This research was conducted at *Prodigy Music Academy*, located at Jl. Taman Pinang Indah No.17 Blok AA4, Kwadengan Barat, Lemahputro, Kec. Sidoarjo, Sidoarjo Regency. This research was conducted from November 2023 to October 2024. There are 2 (two) data sources in this study, namely primary and secondary. Primary data sources in this study are Athiyah Yumna Hafizhah, S.Sn., the piano teacher at *Prodigy Music Academy*, and Lilis Hidayati Ruchmana, S.Pd., M.Pd. as the owner of *Prodigy Music Academy*. Furthermore, data were collected using direct observation techniques, structured interviews, questionnaires, and documentation.

After the data was collected, it was analyzed by data reduction. In this study, the researcher sorted out which data were important and which were not important concerning the application of beam notation through color marking on the piano of grade initial students at *Prodigy Music Academy*. After the data is sorted out, it is presented as a scientific paper report compiled by the researcher. Next is the conclusion drawn. This research aims to identify the important points in the research results related to the Application of Block Notation through Colour Marking on the Piano of Grade Initial Students at *Prodigy Music Academy*.

3. RESULT Results

The color marking method on the piano is applied to children aged 4-6 years/kindergarten. This method is an alternative method to help children concentrate on memorizing notes on the piano. The color marking method is a bridge that is not used continuously because children are more interested in learning with colors, and concentration increases. For its application on the piano keys, colors are given using *sticky notes* and colored ballpoint pens by matching them with the child's fingers, namely fingers 1,2,3,4,5. For example, note C uses red; on the finger, one / thumb is also given red using a red ballpoint pen. All fingers are given a color matching the notes on the piano, which is like matching the colors on the fingers and piano keys. In this way, the child will be able to distinguish the position of the fingers when playing notes on the piano. The seven colors used are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and purple, and they are applied consistently at every meeting; the colors must be the same.

Prodigy teachers, such as Athiyah Yumna Hafizhah, S.Sn., the piano teacher at *Prodigy Music Academy*, apply the color marking method. Mrs. Yumna, as the Prodigy teacher, measured the students' achievement by evaluating the students who applied the color method. The evaluations include summative and diagnostic evaluations. The summative evaluation applied by Ibu Yumna once a month aims to help the students learn piano at Prodigy with the color marking method to give the children progress in learning to play the notes on the piano. This summative evaluation is carried out by assessing students' mastery of understanding notes with the color marking method and the skill of playing notes on the piano. When both aspects of mastery and skill have been successful, the child has learned the color marking method on the piano. Next is the diagnostic evaluation. Mrs Yumna carries out a diagnostic evaluation before starting the learning material. With this diagnostic evaluation, it is better to know the problems in children and find solutions so that children can overcome the problems that exist in themselves. In piano learning, children who have problems memorizing piano notes because they cannot read, especially those aged 4-6, can apply the color marking method to lure students interested in learning piano. This evaluation provides an assessment of each student's progress. It provides direction from the problems experienced by the child to learn the color marking method at *Prodigy Music Academy*.

The achievement of learning requires data validity using written data. Researchers used a questionnaire/questionnaire technique. The questionnaire was given to 10 parents/guardians using Google Forms, and 4 question indicators were given with an answer assessment index: A, B, C, D, E. The question indicators are Development, Influence, Interest, and Effectiveness. From the four index questions given, the parents gave an upbeat assessment. With this, the students learned by applying the color marking method on the piano.

Discussion

The discussion in this research focuses on two problem formulations, namely, the application of the color marking method on the piano to the learning of block notation for students of the initial grade at *Prodigy Music*

Academy and the results of learning achievement after the application of the color marking method on the piano to the learning of block notation for students of the initial grade at Prodigy *Music Academy*.

Color Marking Method

In learning block notation in Prodigy on piano for children aged 4-6, piano learning applies the color method by using colored *sticky notes* and colored pens as markers to accelerate the improvement of children's comprehension in piano learning. Sir Issac Newton experimented by discovering the color spectrum. The experiment is to blow up a glass prism in a dark room. After the light is broken by the prism, forming an array of red, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and purple light of the seven colors, Newton argues that these colors are arranged by the same ratio as the diatonic scale (Aisyah & Sinaga, 2023) in Kuo & Chuang, 2023.

Music Pedagogy

Pedagogy is a teacher's skill in teaching students. Teachers are required to provide appropriate methods so that students achieve learning targets. According to the author, Teaching strategy is the teacher's action in implementing the learning plan by using several teaching variables, namely objectives, materials, methods, tools, and evaluation, so that students achieve the goals to be set. Learning at Prodigy uses three international curriculum references: ABRSM, LCM, and Rockschool. Not only that, but the teachers at Prodigy also use many other alternative methods to overcome student problems. As in the case of this research, children aged 4-6 years old need a special method in learning block notation on the piano because their concentration level is not fast enough to understand and memorize notes on the piano; therefore, the color marking method is used as an alternative method of learning for children aged 4-6 years old.

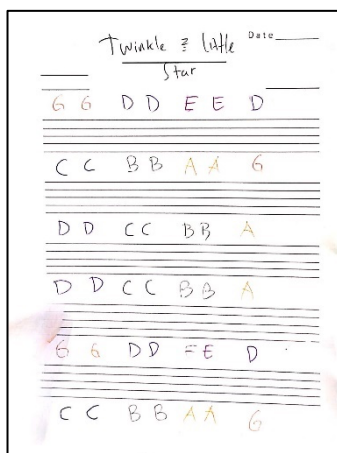
Process of Applying Colour Marking Method to Piano

The color method is used for approximately 4-8 meetings for about 1-2 months. This method is used to start learning in children who need this method because children are less interested in white and black piano colors. With the use of colors, children are more interested and simple. Visually, it looks different and is most easily absorbed for the first time.



Figure 1: The process of applying the color marking method to a student named Hanin, 5 years old.

Figure 1. applies the color marking application process to a 5-year-old student named Hanin. Hanin has been learning piano for about 3 months. The student is playing a song called Twinkle-Twinkle Little Star. In the color marking process, using the help of *sticky notes* attached to the piano keys, students are told to read the letters written with colorful pens and fingers given the color that matches the color on the piano keys. Hence, students match the colors in the book and piano keys.



The notes of the song Twinkle-Twinkle Little Star

Figure 2. is the twinkle-twinkle little star song note, applied to a student named Hanin, who learns using the color marking. The following is an explanation of the colors and fingers used in the Twinkle-twinkle Little Star song:

1. C as blue color, first finger of the right hand (thumb)

Blue *sticky notes* are attached to the piano keys of the 4th octave C note. The first finger of the right hand is also colored blue according to the color of the notes in the song Twinkle Little Star and the piano keys.

2. D as purple color, second finger of the right hand (index)

The purple *sticky notes* are attached to the piano keys of the 4th octave D note, and the second finger of the right hand is also colored purple according to the notes in the song Twinkle Little Star and the piano keys.

3. E as nilla color, third finger of the right hand (middle)

The nilla-colored *sticky notes* are attached to the piano keys of the 4th octave E note. The third finger of the right hand is also given the nilla color according to the note color in the song twinkle-twinkle little Star and the piano keys.

4. G is orange in color, finger 4 of the left hand (sweet)

The orange *sticky notes* are attached to the piano keys of the 3rd octave G note. The fourth finger of the left hand is also given an orange following the color of the notes in the song Twinkle-twinkle Little Star and the piano keys.

5. An as yellow, finger 3 of the left hand (center)

Yellow *sticky notes* are attached to the piano keys of the 3rd octave. A note, the left hand's third finger, is also yellow to match the color of the notes in the song Twinkle-twinkle Little Star and the piano keys.

6. B as green color, second finger of left hand (index)

Green *sticky notes* are attached to the piano keys of the 3rd octave B note. The second finger of the left hand is also colored green to match the color of the notes in the song Twinkle-twinkle Little Star and the piano keys.

From the description of the colors in the song twinkle-twinkle little Star, there are six colors used, namely: blue, purple, nilla, orange, yellow, and green. The hand dance is: the right hand uses fingers 1,2,3 while the left uses fingers 2,3,4. With the color marking method, the student named Hanin was helped to play the song Twinkle-twinkle Little Star.

The color marking method applied by Mrs. Yumna, the piano teacher of Prodigy, can help the children memorize the notes and fingerings on the piano. This method is also an alternative method to give the children

a memory; when they no longer use the color method, the students still have a memory of the piano playing. The color marking method is also simple in its application, and the tools used are easy to obtain. The color marking method attracts children's attention in learning because children are more interested in colorful piano keys.

Summative Evaluation

In piano learning at Prodigy, evaluation is applied to children whose characters are difficult to memorize the two black keys, finally given a color marking method for children aged 4-6 years. The aspects assessed relate to the results of the child's progress, which includes knowledge, skills, attitudes, and mastery of the teaching materials that have been presented (Achadah, 2019). According to Mrs. Yumna, color marking

The color marking method is quite influential at the beginning of learning. By using the color method, the children think that learning piano is easy and fun, and after upgrading to the following method, they will feel that they can do it. The summative evaluation helps students learn better in learning piano in Prodigy. The color marking method gives children progress in learning to play notes on the piano.

In the color marking method applied by Ibu Yumna, Ibu Yumna conducts this summative evaluation once a month by assessing students regarding the mastery of understanding notes with the color marking method and the skill of playing notes on the piano when both aspects of mastery and skill have been successful. Then, the child learned the color marking method on the piano.

Diagnostic Evaluation

Diagnostic evaluation serves to find out what problems the child is experiencing. The aspects assessed are learning outcomes, the background of the child's life, family circumstances, environment, and others (Achadah, 2019). In piano learning at Prodigy, Mrs. Yumna conducts this evaluation on the adjustment of the child's character as a search for which method is suitable to be applied to piano learning, for example, if there is a child who is not interested in colors and the method does not work must find another way according to the child's character. Mrs Yumna carries out a diagnostic evaluation before starting the learning material. With this diagnostic evaluation, it is better to know the problems in children and find solutions so that children can overcome the problems that exist in themselves. In piano learning, children who have problems memorizing piano notes because they cannot read, especially those aged 4-6, can apply the color marking method to lure students interested in learning piano.

Student Achievement Questionnaire in Applying the Colour Marking Method

Questionnaires were distributed to 10 parents/guardians on 30 October 2024 using *Google Form* media.

No.	Name: example (parent of....)	Age?	1. How did your child progress in one semester while taking lessons at Prodigy <i>Music Academy</i> ?	2. Does the color marking method positively affect your child's memory?	3. Are children more interested in learning piano using the color marking method?	4. Do parents think the color tagging method is effective in learning?
1.	Caleb	5 years	Very good	Very good	Very good	Good
2.	Fahrani	5 years	Very good	Good	Very good	Very good
3.	Rachel	5 years	Very good	Very good	Very good	Good
4.	Flint	5 years	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good
5.	ORION	6 Years	Good	Very good	Very good	Very good
6.	Claresta	6 years	Very good	Good	Very good	Very good
7.	GIBRAN	6 Years	Very good	Very good	Good	Very good
8.	GISELLE	6 Years	Very good	Very good	Very good	Good
9.	Hanin	5 years	Very good	Good	Very good	Very good
10.	Hyra	4 years	Very good	Very good	Good	Very good

Figure 3. A questionnaire table shows students' achievements in applying the color marking method.

The average age of children who apply the color marking method is 4-6. The following is a description of the data from the questionnaire results from parents regarding student achievement in applying the color marking method to the piano.

1. Child development during one semester at Prodigy *Music Academy*.

Based on the Index 1 questionnaire data, eight parents answered very well, and two parents answered well. This explains that eight children developed very well, while two children developed well when learning piano with the color marking method. Thus, it has been proven that children develop very well when the color marking method is applied to the piano.

2. The effect of color marking method on children's memory.

Based on the index two questionnaire data, seven parents answered very well, and three parents answered well. This explains that seven children have a perfect effect on children's memory, while three children have a good effect. Thus, the color marking method has significantly affected children's memory.

3. Children's interest in learning piano using the color marking method.

Based on the Index 3 questionnaire data, eight parents answered very well, and two parents answered well. This explains that eight children are very interested in learning piano using the color marking method, while two children are interested in the color marking method. Thus, it is proven that the color marking method makes children more interested in learning piano.

4. Effectiveness of applying the color marking method on the piano in a lesson.

Based on the Index 4 questionnaire data, seven parents answered very well, and three parents answered well. This explains that seven children are very effective in being given the color marking method, while

three children are effective with the color marking method. Thus, it is proven that the color marking method is effective in learning, especially for children aged 4-6 years.

The four index statements that have been explained prove that children are helped in applying the color marking method to piano for children aged 4-6 years, and students achieve their learning targets. According to Panggabean, A. J. 2022, the provision of appropriate methods is so that students achieve learning targets; thus, children are achieved in learning piano by using the color marking method.

4. CONCLUSION

This color marking method was applied for 4-8 meetings / about 1-2 months as a learning start because it attracted the attention of children more interested in seeing colorful piano keys in piano learning. The application of the color method with synchronization matches the color of the colorful piano keys with the colored finger so that the child easily knows the finger's position. There are seven colors used, namely: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, nila, and purple. The tools used are *sticky notes* and colorful pens. *Sticky notes* are attached to the piano keys, and the finger is given a color that matches the color on the piano keys while reading the letters written with the same colored ballpoint pen. The color marking method is applied consistently at each meeting with the aim that after the color is removed and a new method is applied, students will still memorize the position of the fingers and notes on the piano. Providing the color method facilitates children's learning in memorizing and playing notes on the piano.



Summative evaluation is applied once a month by assessing students related to aspects of mastery of note understanding and piano playing skills. In contrast, a diagnostic evaluation is applied to children who have difficulty distinguishing two black keys on the piano, so the color marking method is applied. The questionnaire results proved that the students succeeded in the learning targets: development, influence, interest, and effectiveness. Parents gave an upbeat assessment by answering a Google form questionnaire distributed to 10 parents/guardians regarding student achievement results when applying the color marking method. Thus, the students learned using the color marking method on the piano.

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