

SOCIAL INFLUENCES AND DEVELOPMENT OF MUSICAL PREFERENCES - ATTITUDES OF FUTURE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract: *In modern school teachers are the main actuators and initiators in the process of learning, upbringing and development of pupils. The paper considers how future teachers perceive the social impacts on their musical preferences. The research part brings the results of the empirical research conducted with 78 students of the Faculty of Education in Užice, Serbia. Students' opinions on social factors that influenced the development of their musical preferences, changes and influences on them during their growing up was examined. The results show that students' musical preferences changed over time in relation to different social influences.*

Keywords: *social influences; students - future teachers; musical preferences; school; family.*

1. Introduction

Music is present in the lives of all the people. It affects the various aspects of their lives. Particularly significant is its impact on the lives of young people, and it can be said that its social role is very important. Some studies speak of how much music permeates social life, signifies and shapes the identity of both individuals and collectives (according to van der Hoeven, et al, 2016: 45). In her study (De Nora, 2000), Tia De Nora observes music as "technology as itself" and demonstrates how individuals build their own identity using music in important life events and relationships with others. She also states that music follows a large number of activities in everyday life. Groups use music to create their own identity. According to the authors of the Birmingham School, social groups, or, as they call them "subcultures", take, transform, and develop certain trends and characteristics of wider, ruling culture, creating their own culture. Through practice, their culture is reproduced and transmitted. But this practice takes place only in the given field of possibilities and constraints (Hall & Jefferson, 2003: 11). Subcultures have their own position in society and their vocabulary (both visual and verbal) is obvious (Hebdige, 2002: 93-94). By clear form and structure they are separated from the wider culture, through certain activities, adopted values, the application of certain material objects and territorial spaces. Through dressing, activities, leisure and lifestyle, listening to a particular type of music, they can project a different cultural response or "solution" to the problems posed by material and social class and experience (Hall & Jefferson, 2003: 14). It is exactly the music, since its field of activity is broad, which plays a significant role here. Individuals can certify belonging to one group by selecting specific artists or music genres. Thus, the music is, as Roy and Dowd (2010) say, "the technology of the collective," because people are connected with those who share similar aesthetic perception, expressive forms and cultural practices. It should be noted that researches carried out recently (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2006; Selfhout, Branje, ter Bogt, & Meeus, 2009; Boer et al., 2011) show that adults use music to shape the impressions on others in situations where meet some people. On the other hand, young people and

adolescents tend to form more stable friendships with peers who share the same musical preferences.

North and Hargreaves (2008) summarized the social function of music in three dimensions: 1) as a means of social communication, used to convey ideas, thoughts, ideologies and feelings; 2) as a commercial product designed to satisfy and manipulate the habits of cultural-music consumption and increase the profit of music industry; and 3) as an educational resource within the school curriculum.

Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1984) in his works, among other things, also dealt with the question of musical taste. According to him, taste is a matter of class and cultural diversities that correspond to what is culturally acceptable or, as he says, good taste (according to Allen, 2002; Holt, 1997). Bourdieu ties the taste to cultural capital that represents a kind of tissue that builds social distinctions, and connects social and cultural hierarchy. Namely, through the cultural model that governs society, a set of cultural and verbal dispositions is mobilized, a habitus that is close to the habitus of the dominant social classes, and it is recognized as legitimate, autonomous and distanced from class distinctions, while its own culture is considered illegitimate (Bourdieu, 1984: 101-102). Taste (manifest preference) is a practical affirmation of the inevitable differences. Since every taste is perceived as natural, it presupposes the rejection of others as unnatural (Bourdieu, 1984: 56). Thus, the class affiliation of individuals is reflected in their taste. In that sense, we can talk about musical taste as a manifestation of musical capital (as a part of cultural capital), which represents knowledge and abilities related to the totality of musical knowledge and creativity, as well as the competence for understanding different musical genres, recognizing various music tracks, and, in the last instance, possession of cultural capital. Taste is not an attribute, it is not property (of thing or individual), it is an activity. It should be performed an activity to listen to music or evaluate an object. Tastes are not given and determined, nor are their objects. An individual should make they appear together, by constant experimentation, which is adapting progressively (Hennion, 2007: 101). Speaking of musical taste, one concept of traditional music, that is a combination of urban and rural folklore, will produce a completely different experience within the audience coming from the same cultural community (e.g. emigrants) and others who did not grow up in that musical environment (Bužarovski, 2016 : 33).

Earlier studies by North and Hargreaves (1999) to this day were the only one to deal with the idea that musical tastes of people relate to their "self-concept". Starting from that idea, Lonsdale and North conclude that people are even expected to use musical taste as a means of representation, which provides information about their desirable characteristics and identity. They think that this symbolic role directly implies how the musical taste of the individual develops (Lonsdale & North, 2016: 308). In this sense, the musical taste is assumed to function symbolically, as a local "badge" of identity and belonging to a group (see Frith, 1983; North & Hargreaves, 1999). Another function of musical taste is related to this. Instead of connecting individuals, groups or cultures, musical taste can emphasize social division, as groups can use a particular type of music to separate themselves from others (van der Hoeven, et al, 2016: 46). This view of musical taste is precisely the hypothesis of the Birmingham School.

Speaking of musical tastes, Finnäs (1989) concluded that there are several causative factors that can affect the music preferences: e.g. specific characteristics of music (tempo, rhythm, silence, etc.), knowledge and listening which is repeated, the affective experience of the listener while listening to music, as well as various social influences. The results of the researches carried out in the last decade (North & Hargreaves, 2007; Bonneville-Roussy, Rentfrow, Xu & Potter, 2013; Greenberg et al., 2016) show that two factors are of utmost importance for the formation of musical taste: 1) individual characteristics of the listener, such as his age, sex, education, values and personality traits; and 2) the socio-psychological

context in which the music is being listened, which relates to how and how much the social environment affects the individual. The results of the study conducted by Bonneville-Roussy and Rust (2017) confirm that social influences, and especially mutual relations towards conformism, are important for the adoption of different musical tastes, as adults change over the years (Bonneville-Roussy & Rust, 2017: 2). Schäfer and associates (Schäfer, 2016; Schäfer et al., 2016) emphasized that social cohesion is an important source for creating musical tastes. In their researches, the positive and negative feedback of the social environment successfully modified the strength of the musical taste of adults in an experimental environment.

When we talk about changes in musical taste, a series of qualitative researches on the development of musical taste has provided convincing evidence that musical tastes change over the years (Greasley & Lamont, 2006; Greasley, Lamont & Sloboda, 2013; Lamont & Webb, 2010). Lamont and Webb (2010) have proven that musical taste changes almost daily. Using interviews, Greasley and Lamont (2006) found discontinuity of the taste influenced by daily social interactions. In addition, qualitative interviews emphasize that adult musical preferences are constantly evolving both in the short term and over decades, and appear to be under the influence of social changes (Greasley et al., 2013).

In modern school, teachers are the main actuators and initiators for the modernization of the educational process. They are leaders in the process of learning, upbringing and development of pupils. They are educators, organizers and innovators. They need to possess knowledge, abilities and skills in order to maintain quality of work and constantly to improve it. They are expected to enrich the teaching process with new methods, means, strategies of work, taking into account the individuality, interests and opportunities of pupils, as well as the needs of the society (Selaković and Ivanović, 2017: 198). When it comes to teaching music culture, it is necessary that the teacher responds with success to the tasks that are in front of him, and the precondition is possession of the entire spectrum of knowledge that defines his competence for teaching (Sudzilovski and Ivanović, 2016: 436). According to Milan Matijević, today the teachers are needed who can create new and original pedagogical situations, respecting the scientific knowledge and competences they mastered during their studies, which will optimally satisfy the developmental needs of children who grow up in a new media-technological environment (Matijević, 2007: 307). This is especially important if we are talking about contemporary tendencies to integrate popular music into the teaching process and to take into account the informal and non-formal knowledge and earlier musical experiences of pupils (Cremades et al., 2010: 123), since young people from birth are everyday exposed to a multitude of different musical stimuli, such as music that, for example, their parents are listening, or it is available on radio and television, video games and the Internet (Folkestad, 2006: 144). The fact is that individuals are more motivated and more enthusiastic about solving tasks they find pleasant and in which they enjoy. Therefore, understanding pupils' musical tastes may be to help teachers to gain their attention (Teo, 2003). Also, knowledge of pupils' tastes and knowledge about music can be useful in determining which teaching programs, teaching strategies, contents, and materials will be used. This is important because the multidimensional character of the music teaching and learning process needs to be seen within a wider context, not just in formal learning situations. Non-formal education outside the school environment contributes to the adoption of formal musical knowledge.

2. Methodology of research

Having in mind the stated above, the aim of the research was to determine how future teachers perceive the social impacts on their musical taste. With this research, we tried to answer the question of whether students are aware of the factors that influence the formation

of one's own musical tastes, whether as future teachers can help their pupils, to make them interested in formal education, to support them in creation of their knowledge, attitudes and future choices.

From the defined aim, the following tasks of the research emerged:

- a) to examine students' opinions on changes in their own musical tastes during their growing up;
- b) to examine students' opinions on social influences that are crucial for creating musical taste earlier and now;
- c) to examine students' opinions on the positioning of their own musical tastes in the prevailing cultural milieu.

From the defined tasks, the following hypothesis of the research emerged:

- a) students' musical tastes had been changing during their growing up;
- b) family, peers and school, as well as mass-media have an influence for creating musical tastes earlier and now;
- c) students' musical tastes fit in the prevailing cultural milieu.

The research was conducted on a sample of 78 respondents - students of the third and fourth year of bachelor academic studies at the department for teachers at the Faculty of Education in Užice, University of Kragujevac, Serbia.

Respondents completed a questionnaire designed for research, which is related to their opinions about their own musical tastes earlier and now, as well as the factors and influences responsible for their formation. The questionnaire contained questions that included the three-tier scale of Likert-type courts and the tasks of a two-member election. In the analysis and interpretation of the obtained research results, a descriptive method was applied. The results of the research were analysed in terms of gender, year of study and dealing with music (Table 1).

Table 1. Structure of the research sample

Gender		Year of study		Dealing with music	
male	14 (17,95%)	third	23 (29,49%)	no	60 (76,92%)
female	64 (82,05%)	fourth	55 (70,51%)	amateur	9 (11,55%)
Total:	78 (100,00%)	Total:	78 (100,00%)	the member of choir	7 (8,97%)
				member of folklore section	2 (2,56%)
				Total	78 100,00%)

3. Results of research and discussion

Music is a kind of communication in which the meaning hidden in the text is received by people from different socio-cultural settings (Marc, 2013), precisely because of its immediacy of activity and accessibility. Text medium is the closest to people. However, how people will evaluate the "verbal messages" of music depends on their, as van der Heven and associates say, cultural capital and the local context in which music is consumed (van der Hoeven, et al, 2016: 44). According to Larkey, genres provide a musical and cultural context,

a frame for the social and cultural positioning of both textual messages and moods and attitudes that are found in the text (Larkey, 2010: 16-17).

The results of the research were that the musical taste of students changed during the upbringing of students - 60 or 76.92% of the students answered affirmatively. There are no significant differences and deviations if we compare students' responses by gender, year of studies and whether they are currently engaged in music (Table 2).

Table 2. Students' answers whether their musical taste was changed over the years, by gender

Geder	yes	no	Total:
male	11 (14,10%)	3 (3,85%)	14 (17,95%)
female	49 (62,82%)	15 (19,23%)	64 (82,05%)
Total:	60 (76,92%)	18 (23,08%)	78 (100,00%)

The question related to the effects of the social environment on the formation of musical tastes during the upbringing and at the present moment was significant for us, having in mind that a large number of foreign studies with this issue were realized. Namely, many authors have written about the influence of the social environment, social groups and interpersonal relations within them, as well as the influence of the culture formed within given groups on the formation of musical preferences, especially in childhood and adolescence (Arnett, 1995; Crozier, 1997; Gilliver, Carter, Macoun, Rosen, & Williams, 2012; North & Hargreaves, 2000, 2008; North, Tarrant, & Hargreaves, 2004; Selfhout, Reading, and Bogt, & Meeus, 2009; Tarrant, Ter Bogt, Mulder, Raaijmakers, & Nic Gabhainn, 2010).

Evidence of the family's influence on the formation of musical preferences in childhood and adolescence has shown that family members, including parents, brothers and sisters, are moderately important (Boer & Abubakar, 2014; Davidson, Howe, Moore, & Sloboda, 1996; Finnäs, 1989; Russell, 1997; Ter Bogt, Delsing, van Zalk, Christenson & Meeus, 2011). The results of our research confirm the given theses - 48 or 61.54% of the students answered that the family had a significant influence on the formation of their musical tastes during their growing up (Table 3). However, on the question of whether the family continues to have an influence on the formation of their musical tastes, as many as 73 or 93.59% of the students answered negatively, which again confirms the thesis that, after adolescence, the influence of parents on musical taste is not of greater significance (Bonneville-Roussy and Rust, 2017: 6).

Table 3. Students' attitudes about social influences on the formation of musical taste

Social influences	Earlier		Now	
	yes	no	yes	no
parents	48 (61,54%)	30 (38,46%)	5 (6,41%)	73 (93,59%)
school	36 (46,15%)	42 (53,85%)	4 (5,13%)	74 (94,87%)
society - peers	53 (67,97%)	28 (32,03%)	22 (29,49%)	55 (70,51%)
mass-media	31 (39,72%)	47 (60,28%)	33 (42,31%)	45 (57,69%)

The results related to the influence of peers on the formation of musical tastes are interesting - 53 or 67.97% of students answered that earlier peers had a great influence on the formation of their musical taste, which is expected because social comparison is an important component of childhood and adolescence musical preferences, i.e. young people try to avoid music that is not popular, so they search for popular music to connect with peers. Important number of students, 55 or 70.51% of them claim that today peers have no influence on the formation of their musical tastes, which can coincide with the results of Lynn & Snyder's research (2001) that says, contrary to the tendency to conform and follow others in childhood and adolescence, some adults tend to be unique and tend to avoid behaviors that are considered normative.

Contrary to expectations, the majority of students responded that mass-media did not have a major influence on the formation of their musical tastes earlier (47 or 60.28%), but that even now they do not affect their musical tastes (45 or 57.69% of students). Such results are unexpected, given that today, more than ever, mass-media and technologies have contributed to the high availability and supply of musical products.

On the question related to the influence of the school on the development of musical tastes earlier approximately the same number of students answered affirmatively and negatively - 36 or 46.15% of students said that the school had an influence on the formation of their musical tastes, and 42 or 53.85% said that it didn't have an influence on the formation of their musical tastes. As for the current moment, as many as 74 or 94.87% of students said that the academic environment has no influence on the formation of musical tastes. This can be interpreted by assuming that students have already formed personalities with formed attitudes, values, behavior and musical tastes. Such respondents' responses are interesting if we take into account Bourdieu's theory, according to which academic capital is guaranteed a product of the combined effect of cultural transfer of family and cultural transfer of school (whose efficiency depends on the amount of cultural capital directly inherited from family) (Bourdieu, 1984: 23).

When asked if their musical taste fits into the prevailing cultural milieu (Table 4), which implies the music that prevails in the media at the moment, only less number of students responded negatively (10 or 12.82% of them). This confirms the hypothesis that it is important for students to fit into the social environment, that is, to accept certain influences in their own choices. Studies where respondents were children and adolescents (Finnäs, 1989; North & Hargreaves, 1999) dealt with a given issue. The results showed that it is more likely that they will modify their favorite music selection if they know that this choice does not appeal to peers, as they want to be in line with the preferences of those peers. Conformism can lead adolescents to adopt different musical preferences to avoid negative social consequences.

Table 4. Students' whether their musical taste fits into the prevailing cultural milieu, by gender

Gender	yes	I am not sure	no	Total:
male	7 (8,97%)	5 (6,41%)	2 (2,56%)	14 (17,95%)
female	25 (32,05%)	31 (39,74%)	8 (10,26%)	64 (82,05%)
Total:	32 (41,03%)	36 (46,15%)	10 (12,82%)	78 (100,00%)

It is noticed that a slightly higher number of students (36 or 46.15%) answered that they are not sure if their musical tastes fit in the prevailing cultural milieu, of those who answered yes (32 or 41.03%). Such a result could be interpreted by fact that different music is

listened in their family environment, in peer groups with whom they spend time at home, in their places and in the group of students they study together.

In the answers to all the questions, there was no statistical significance in relation to the gender, year of the study of the respondents and whether they are dealing with music.

4. Conclusion

Teachers are role models, examples of social values and they have very important role in the development of children's preferences. Their role, as well as the role of parents, is very important in the development of musical preferences of pupils. The results of this research have shown that students - future teachers are aware of development of their musical preferences and tastes during their growing up as well as which role their parents and peers had in that process. Also, they are aware of the role of school, where they will have a key role. Results indicate that school can have a great impact on development of musical taste, but its impact is less by time, as the influences of society and mass-media is stronger as the time is passing. This research may encourage future teachers to think about the role of the school and their place in a process that is very important in a particular time - the process of personality formation.

The potential of music to express the identity and values of people and to connect them is closely related to the power of taste. Several authors (Hargreaves et al., 2005; North & Hargreaves, 2008b; Schubert, Hargreaves, & North, 2014) suggest that the listener, the situation and the context in which the music is listened as well as the music itself are significant and influential variables for any reaction to music (according to Bonneville-Roussy et al., 2017: 370). Bearing in mind everything that has been said about the social role of music, musical tastes, teachers as a key roles in the process of upbringing and education, as well as the results of our research, we can conclude that it is very important, from elementary school education, to direct individuals to develop according to their needs. The teacher is the one who should exploit the potentials of music as a medium close to students, to transfer knowledge, values, to enable them to use their possibilities and esthetically educate them. This is only possible if the teacher is aware of his own knowledge, possibilities, abilities, and if we are talking about music, his own attitudes, tastes, he can respect the choices of others, but he remains unique.

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