

CLASSICAL OR POPULAR MUSIC? MUSICAL PREFERENCES OF ELEMENTARY MUSIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Summary

Students in elementary music school are exposed to classical music during their education through instrument and solfège classes. Considering that musical preferences are influenced by factors related to the listener, the music itself, and the context of listening, the question arises as to the impact of music education on the acceptance of classical music in comparison to popular music. The aim of this study was to examine the preferences of elementary music school students regarding classical and popular music. The research included 74 students from first to fifth grade, aged 9 to 14. The survey consisted of two parts: in the first part, students provided information about their gender, grade, instrument, listening habits, and the role of music in their lives. In the second part, they listened to 36 excerpts of popular and classical music and rated them based on familiarity, liking, and likelihood of listening again in the future. Most students listen to music for at least half an hour each day. A total of 89% stated that music gives them special pleasure, and 82% that it plays an important role in their lives. The results show a stronger preference for popular music, better familiarity with that genre, and a higher likelihood of choosing to listen to it again. No statistically significant gender differences were found. Students attribute high value to popular music, which raises the question of how to design music education that would have a greater influence on the formation of preferences in favor of classical music.

Keywords: musical preferences, classical music, popular music, music school

Introduction

One of the central aims of music education is not solely the development of knowledge and skills related to musical literacy or the enhancement of musicality, but rather the aesthetic education of students, achieved through solfège and instrumental instruction by familiarizing them with high-quality music, predominantly from the classical repertoire. Therefore, the goal of elementary music education is not exclusively educational. It is closely tied to broader aesthetic objectives, namely, the cultivation an aesthetic sensibility in students (Prosvetni glasnik, 5/2019).

Through parallel instruction in solfège and instrumental classes, students are exposed to classical compositions. In solfège lessons, students engage with musical content indirectly through music listening activities, while instrumental instruction facilitates a direct and experiential encounter with music in the role of a performer. Considering the combined impact of both approaches, it may be assumed that, by the end of elementary music education, students have not only become musically literate but have also developed an appreciation for and affinity toward classical music. Drawing on concepts from the psychology of music, this context of appreciation aligns with the concept of musical preference. Accordingly, it may be argued that one of the core educational objectives of attending music school is to foster the development of positive musical preferences toward classical music.

Various studies have confirmed that the formation of musical preferences is influenced by numerous variables related to the listener, the music itself, and the context in which the music is experienced (Hargreaves et al., 2005). In particular, empirical research has demonstrated that the formation of musical preferences is affected by a range of factors, such as gender (Abeles & Chung, 1996; Colley, 2008; Cremades-Andreu et al., 2024; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovic, 2009; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovic, 2015; Habe et al., 2018; North & Hargreaves, 2007; North & Hargreaves, 2008; Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003; Szabó et al., 2024), age (Bonneville-Roussy et al., 2013; North & Hargreaves, 2007; Lonsdale & North, 2011; Schäfer & Sedlmeier, 2010), personal traits (Dobrota & Reić Ercegovic, 2016; Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003; Rentfrow and McDonald, 2010), cognitive (Koelsch et al., 2003) and affective responses to music (Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2012; Greasley & Lamont, 2011), and different social and cultural contexts (Delsing et al., 2008; Greasley et al., 2013). All variables influencing the development of musical preferences can, according to the Reciprocal Feedback Model (RFM) and the Revised Reciprocal Feedback Model, be categorized into three primary categories: person (listener, composer, performer, improviser), 2) music and 3) listening situation (RFM, Hargreaves, 2012; Hargreaves et al., 2005; North & Hargreaves, 2008; Hargreaves et al., 2016; Schubert et al., 2014). This model identifies three interconnected components that exert mutual, bidirectional influences. Music includes elements like genres, styles, and complexity, while listening contexts cover immediate situations and broader social or cultural settings. Listener traits, such as age, gender, personality, and musical knowledge, also play a critical role. Although the revised RFM model was adapted into a music processing framework, incorporating both production and perception with imagination at its core, the key influential variables – the music, the listener, and the listening situations and contexts remained unchanged (Hargreaves, 2012; Hargreaves et al., 2016; Schubert et al., 2014).

Through the framework of the RFM, the formation of musical preferences under the influence of specialized music education can be conceptualized as follows. Music education can be more broadly understood through the category of situation/context in which a particular type of music is addressed, specifically classical music. The level of complexity may vary and change depending on the student's grade level. Over time, the

student (listener category) gradually gains increasing experience in the domain of classical music through solfège and instrumental instruction, with the assumption that the degree of familiarity will qualitatively evolve in favor of classical music. The listener, alongside other individual difference variables, perceives musical content through the filter of their personal musical knowledge acquired during elementary music education. It is expected that all three categories will exert a positive influence on the overall musical response across the physiological, cognitive, and affective levels, ultimately fostering enhanced musical preferences for classical music over time. Some empirical studies have demonstrated a strong connection between musical preferences and musical education (Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2009; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2014; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2017; Gregory, 1994; Habe et al., 2018), enhancing openness to a broader range of musical genres, both within and across styles (Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2014; Gregory, 1994; Hargreaves et al., 1995)

Research Aim and Research Questions

The aim of the empirical research is to examine the musical preferences of elementary music school students with regard to classical and popular music. Based on the theoretical framework of the RFM (Hargreaves et al., 2005; North & Hargreaves, 2008; Schubert et al., 2014), the study investigates the interaction between listener-related variables – specifically gender and formal music education – and music-related variables, particularly familiarity. In addition to these established components, the research incorporates two further dimensions: the degree of liking and the likelihood of future self-initiated listening.

Guided by the research aim, the study formulated the following research questions: 1) How frequently do students engage in music listening?; 2) What is the level of enjoyment experienced during music listening?; 3) To what extent do students attribute value and importance to music in their lives? 4) Is popular music more familiar to students than classical music? 5) Are students' musical preferences stronger for popular music than for classical music? 6) Is the desire to engage in future listening higher for popular music than for classical music?

Methodology

Sample

A total of 74 students from the elementary music school “Petar Konjović” in Sombor participated in the study, comprising 47 female students (63.5%) and 27 male students (36.5%).

The distribution of participants according to their formal music education and corresponding age is shown in Table 1. The sample included students aged 9 to 13 who had completed the first, second, fourth, or fifth grade of elementary music school.

Table 1. Participants' formal music education and age.

Music education / Age	f	%
completed the first grade of elementary music school / 9 years old	22	29.7%
completed the second grade of elementary music school / 10 years old	13	17.6%
completed the fourth grade of elementary music school / 12 years old	32	43.2%
completed the fifth grade of elementary music school / 13 years old	7	9.5%
Total	74	100%

The distribution of participants according to their primary instrument of study reveals notable variation across instrumental focus areas (Table 2). Among the 74 students, the majority studied piano or guitar, with smaller numbers across other instruments.

Table 2. Participants' main instrument.

Main instrument	F	%
Piano	32	43.2%
Violin	7	9.5%
Guitar	16	21.6%
Clarinet	3	4.1%
Accordion	5	6.8%
Tambura	1	1.4%
Flute	7	9.5%
Cello	2	2.7%
no answer given	1	1.4%
Total	74	100%

Instruments and Procedure

To meet the aims of the study, a range of compositions representative of classical music was carefully selected. The selection of classical music excerpts was guided by the recommendations outlined in the curriculum. In contrast, the selection of popular music was based on chart rankings, with each example having at some point reached the number one position on recognized international charts, such as the Billboard Hot 100 or the UK Singles Chart. Based on the assumption that students are exposed to a broad repertoire throughout their education in elementary music school, the selection encompassed six historical musical periods: (1) the Middle Ages, (2) the Renaissance, (3) the

Baroque, (4) Classicism, (5) Romanticism, and (6) Impressionism and 20th-century music. The inclusion of this broad stylistic spectrum is firmly grounded in the pedagogical and methodological practices commonly implemented in elementary music schools. As a contrast to the classical repertoire, the selection of popular music was curated to span six decades – (1) 1960's, (2) 1970's, (3) 1980's, (4) 1990's, (5) 2000's, and (6) 2010's music – enabling a comparative exploration of students' familiarity, preferences, and engagement across divergent musical styles. Consequently, a total of twelve categories were created. Three musical excerpts were selected for each of the twelve categories, with the aim of providing a representative illustration of the respective genre or style, resulting in a total of 36 excerpts. From each of the 36 musical excerpts, a short audio segment was extracted in a manner that aimed to capture the most representative qualities of the original work. In the case of classical music, the selected material consisted of periodic structures or shorter section, on the condition that their average duration did not exceed thirty-five seconds. For the popular music examples, the selection encompassed refrains, either independently or in conjunction with the preceding phrase that signals and prepares their entrance. All musical segments were then arranged to minimize perceptual repetition and subsequently prepared for presentation to the study participants. A complete list of the musical excerpts, including their corresponding segments and the order in which they were presented, is provided in the Appendix.

The first section of the questionnaire, developed specifically for the purposes of this study, was designed to collect basic demographic and contextual information related to participants' musical background and listening habits. It included four items: 1) gender identification; 2) formal music education, assessed through a question regarding the current grade the student is attending in elementary music school; 3) the instrument the student plays; and 4) frequency of music listening, measured by asking participants to estimate how often they listen to music, whether attentively or as background activity, with response categories ranging from daily listening for several hours to rarely or almost never. This section aimed to contextualize participants' responses in the subsequent evaluative portion of the study by accounting for factors such as gender, level of formal music education, and habitual engagement with music.

In the second part of the questionnaire, participants were presented with a listening evaluation form for each musical excerpt, structured around three key dimensions: familiarity, preference, and the likelihood of future listening. Each item was rated using a 7-point Likert-type scale with bipolar verbal anchors. Familiarity was assessed through the item: "The piece I just listened to is familiar to me / unfamiliar, I think I haven't heard it before", allowing participants to indicate the extent to which they recognized the excerpt. Preference was measured with the statement: "I like the piece I just listened to / I don't like the piece I just listened to", capturing the participant's subjective enjoyment. Future listening intention was evaluated via the prompt: "I can imagine wanting to listen to this piece again someday / It is hard for me to imagine ever wanting to listen to this piece again", reflecting anticipated willingness to reengage with the music. Responses were marked on a continuum, visually represented by seven unnumbered, equidistant

circles, with both ends of the continuum labeled by one of the answer alternatives. The scale was designed to allow for nuanced assessments of participants’ attitudes, with additional space provided beneath each item for optional written comments.

The study was conducted in June 2024 at the elementary music school “Petar Konjović” in Sombor, during scheduled solfège classes, and was approved by the school principal. Prior to participation, the purpose and nature of the study were clearly explained to the students, with an emphasis on the voluntary and anonymous nature of their involvement. The research employed a questionnaire originally developed for a related study conducted in 2023 (Živković & Stevanović. 2025). Participants first completed the section of the questionnaire addressing their music listening habits and educational background. Following this, they listened to a musical excerpt and responded to items concerning the piece they had just heard. This procedure was repeated for each of the 36 musical excerpts included in the study.

Results

The frequency with which participants engage in music listening varies considerably, as shown in Table 3. Among the 74 students, the largest proportion – 17 students (23.0%) – reported listening to music almost every day for one to two hours, followed closely by 16 students (21.6%) who reported listening almost every day for approximately half an hour, and 15 students (20.3%) who listened daily for several hours. These three categories combined indicate that 64.9% of the sample listens to music on a near-daily basis.

Table 3. Frequency of listening to music.

How often they listen to music	f	%
every day, several hours a day	15	20.3%
about every day, one or two hours a day	17	23.0%
about every day, but about half an hour a day	16	21.6%
about every other day	8	10.8%
several times a week	8	10.8%
maybe once a week	3	4.1%
less than once a week	2	2.7%
almost never	4	5.4%
no answer given	1	1.4%
Total	74	100%

The extent of participants’ enjoyment while listening to music was assessed using a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating no enjoyment and 7 denoting a high level of plea-

sure and engagement. The distribution (Table 4) reveals a strong tendency toward high levels of musical enjoyment. Out of 74 students, the majority – 45 students (60.8%) – selected 7, indicating that listening to music gives them special pleasure and enjoyment. An additional 21 students (28.4%) chose 6, reinforcing the predominance of positive attitudes toward music listening. No participants selected 3, suggesting a limited presence of neutral attitudes.

The mean score ($M = 6.31$) and standard deviation ($SD = 1.27$) of participants' responses further support the conclusion that the participants, on average, experience a high degree of enjoyment when listening to music, with relatively low variability in responses. These findings highlight music's emotionally rewarding role in students' lives and may have implications for both the motivational and affective dimensions of music education.

Table 4. Enjoyment in listening to music.

Listening to music is something	f	%
1 – I neither enjoy nor find any pleasure in.	1	1.4%
2	3	4.1%
3	0	0%
4	1	1.4%
5	3	4.1%
6	21	28.4%
7 – that gives me special pleasure and enjoyment.	45	60.8%
Total	74	100%
	$M = 6.31$	$SD = 1.27$

Participants' perceptions of the personal significance of music were evaluated using a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating that music holds no personal importance or interest, and 7 reflecting that music possesses exceptional significance and occupies a special place in one's life. The response distribution (Table 5) reveals a pronounced inclination toward high levels of perceived significance. Of the 74 students surveyed, 30 (40.5%) assigned the highest possible rating, while an additional 31 (41.9%) selected a score of 6, together accounting for over 80% of the total sample. The mean response was 6.05, with a standard deviation of 1.22, suggesting a strong consensus regarding the personal importance of music and relatively low variability among responses. These findings affirm the prominent role music occupies in the lives of elementary music school students, both as a meaningful personal experience and as a potential foundation for continued musical engagement and learning.

Table 5. Significance of music.

For me personally, music	F	%
1 – has no significance, it's not important to me and doesn't interest me.	1	1.4%
2	2	2.7%
3	1	1.4%
4	1	1.4%
5	8	10.8%
6	31	41.9%
7 – has special significance and a special place in my life.	30	40.5%
Total	74	100%
	M = 6.05	SD = 1.22

Table 6 presents the participants' self-assessment of the variety of music they listen to. The results show that a significant proportion of students perceive their musical preferences as highly diverse: 36.5% rated the variety of their music listening at the highest point (7 – very varied and different from one another). Additionally, 17.6% selected 6, indicating a relatively high degree of variety.

Table 6. Variety of music listened to.

Music I listen to and musical scores I like are	F	%
1 – mostly quite similar with one another.	3	4.1%
2	8	10.8%
3	9	12.2%
4	9	12.2%
5	5	6.8%
6	13	17.6%
7 – very varied and different from one another.	27	36.5%
Ukupno	74	100%
	M = 5.05	SD = 1.98

Answers the participants gave to questions regarding how familiar they were with a musical score, how much they liked the musical score, and how likely they were to wish to listen to the score again sometime, were averaged across all the scores that belonged to classical music, and the same was done for those that belonged to popular music. Table 7 shows the results of repeated measures ANOVAs that tested whether the classical music differed from the popular music with regards to how familiar participants were with them, how much they liked them, and how likely the participants were to wish to listen to them again. Those participants that didn't provide answers for all 36 music scores were left out of the relevant analysis.

In all three categories, popular music received significantly higher mean scores than classical music, with all differences reaching statistical significance at the $p < 0.001$ level. With respect to familiarity, the mean score for popular music was 5.87 (SD = 0.88), compared to 4.34 (SD = 0.94) for classical music. A large effect size (71.1% of variance) indicates that students were substantially more familiar with popular music excerpts. With regard to the liking dimension, popular music was rated more favorably ($M = 5.38$, $SD = 1.26$) than classical music ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.21$). A moderate effect size (32.6% of variance) suggests a clear preference for popular music among the participants. Similarly, the desire to hear the musical excerpt again was more pronounced for popular music ($M = 5.03$, $SD = 1.38$) than for classical music ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 1.57$), with a large effect size of 49.8% of variance.

Table 7. Familiarity with the musical score, liking it, and wishing to hear it again.

Scale	N	Music category	M	SD	Td	dfe	pd	η^2
How familiar is the musical score ^a	67	classical music	4.34	.94	-12.737	66	< 0.001	0.711
		popular music	5.87	.88				
Liking the musical score ^b	69	classical music	4.64	1.21	-5.740	68	< 0.001	0.326
		popular music	5.38	1.26				
Wishing to hear the score again ^c	70	classical music	3.80	1.57	-8.277	69	< 0.001	0.498
		popular music	5.03	1.38				

^a 1 – It's not familiar, I don't think I've heard it before; 7 – I know it from before

^b 1 – I don't like it; 7 – I like it

^c 1 – It's hard for me to imagine ever wishing to listen to this score; 7 – I can imagine wishing to listen to this score sometime

^d Based on repeated measures ANOVA

The results show that participants were much more familiar with the popular music scores, they liked those music scores more and reported being much more likely to wish to listen to those scores again. As Table 7 shows, the effects sizes for these differences are all quite large, ranging from 32.6% to 71.1% of shared variance. Additionally, the data

shows no gender differences when it comes to familiarity with musical scores, liking them, and wishing to listen to them again, when it comes to either classical or popular music.

Discussion

In this research we aimed to examine musical preferences towards classical and popular music for students, who are acquiring special musical education. A prevailing view, substantiated by research, suggests a potential association between musical education and an elevated preference for classical music (Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2009; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2014; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2017; Gregory, 1994; Habe et al., 2018). Therefore, the primary objective of this study was to investigate the musical preferences of music school students with regard to classical and popular music. In addition, the research sought to provide an overview of students' general listening habits by examining the frequency of their music consumption, the extent to which listening to music serves as a source of personal satisfaction and enjoyment, and the overall significance of music in their everyday lives.

The research findings reveal that music occupies a significant place in students' lives, as evidenced by the majority of participants maintaining a regular and consistent music listening habit. Nearly two-thirds of students listen to music daily, suggesting that music is an integral part of their everyday lives, thereby reinforcing previous research findings (Gentile et al., 2003; Ising et al., 1995; McFerran et al., 2015; Miranda, 2015; Rentfrow, 2012; Roberts et al., 2009; Tarrant et al., 2000; Zillmann & Gan, 1997; Živković & Stevanović, 2025). The fact that music listening is a highly prevalent activity in the everyday lives of music school students potentially indicates a greater likelihood that students develop stronger preferences for popular musical styles rooted in everyday culture. This interpretation is further supported by the notion that repeated listening is more likely to influence familiarity with and liking of various musical genres.

With regard to the enjoyment of music listening, the findings underscore the central role that music plays in the lives of students, suggesting that listening to music is not merely a background activity, but a highly valued and emotionally significant experience for the majority, thereby confirming the findings of previous studies (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003; Rentfrow, 2012; Fricke et al., 2019). The absence of neutral responses (rating 3) and the low frequency of negative evaluations indicate a positive attitude toward the activity of music listening among the participants. The predominant selection of the highest response categories (6 and 7) indicates a consistent pattern of active engagement with music, which may serve as an intrinsic motivator for further musical involvement, whether through formal education or informal listening practices. A positive attitude toward music listening may serve as a favorable indicator in educational practice, as it suggests that students are more likely to be open to new musical experiences compared to those who are less inclined to listen to music, even when a particular genre does not fall within their circle of preferences. This openness may, in turn, enhance students' motivation, promote positive learning outcomes, and foster a more meaningful relation-

ship with music in the classroom. Even though the results showed a high rate of musical preference across different genres, future research on the relationship between specialized music education and musical preferences should take into account the significant decline in open-earedness toward classical music with increasing age (Busch et al., 2016; Gembris & Schellberg, 2003; Hargreaves, 1982; Hargreaves et al., 1995; Kopiez & Lehmann, 2008; LeBlanc, 1991; North & Hargreaves, 1995).

The research results confirm that the enjoyment of music listening is further accompanied by the significance that music holds in the lives of the participants. The results indicate that music holds substantial personal meaning for the vast majority of students, with over 80% assigning the highest two ratings on the scale. This strong affective valuation suggests that music is an integral part of students' personal identity, which is not surprising given that one of the factors influencing the development of stylistic sensitivity is the social context, within which specific musical styles are perceived and evaluated (Hargreaves et al., 2003). This finding confirms previous research indicating that music facilitates the formation of both individual and collective musical identities. (Kopiez & Lehmann, 2008; Tarrant et al., 2002), with popular music in particular playing a significant sociocultural role in the lives of children (Bosacki et al., 2006; Campbell, 2010; Clements & Campbell, 2006; Davis, 2005; Woody, 2007).

The study revealed a consistent and statistically significant preference for popular music over classical music across all measured dimensions—familiarity, liking, and intention to re-listen. The high mean scores and large effect sizes related to familiarity suggest that students are more frequently exposed to popular music in their everyday environments, exerting a pervasive influence on their musical preferences despite their enrollment in specialized music education programs. This familiarity appears to correlate strongly with students' reported enjoyment and their willingness to engage with the popular music again, supporting previous findings on the role of exposure in shaping musical preference. Our research indicates that, even among these students, there is still a stronger preference for another type of music, which contrasts with previous studies (Dobrota & Ćurković, 2006; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2009; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2014; Dobrota & Reić Ercegovac, 2017; Gregory, 1994; Habe et al., 2018; Hargreaves et al., 1995), although their preference for classical music may nevertheless remain higher compared to the general population that was not included in this study.

While this investigation yielded valuable insights, several limitations warrant consideration. The first limitation pertains to sampling. The sample included exclusively students from several solfège classes, which consequently restricted the findings to providing only a limited insight into the state of musical preferences among elementary music school students within the city of Sombor. Although it is assumed that similar results could be confirmed in future research, it is recommended that subsequent studies expand the sample to encompass a broader population within the same school, as well as students from other music schools. Such an approach would enable a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon, both at the local and regional levels. Furthermore, the study indicated a predominance of female participants. This imbalance

should be acknowledged, particularly when interpreting results concerning variables such as preference, familiarity, or engagement with classical and popular music, given that previous research has shown that females generally appreciate a wider range of musical styles compared to males (Hargreaves, 1987; Kopiez & Lehmann, 2008), and that they tend to exhibit stronger preferences for „softer” musical styles, among which classical music is included (Hargreaves & North, 2010; North & Hargreaves, 2007; North & Hargreaves, 2008; Rentfrow & Gosling, 2003; Reić Ercegovac & Dobrota, 2011). Therefore, future research may benefit from a more balanced sample to explore potential gender-based differences with greater statistical reliability.

The findings suggest that students may have less exposure, both through performance and listening, to classical composers and musical works primarily written for orchestral settings. This can be further supported by the school curriculum, according to which students who play non-orchestral instruments (such as piano and guitar, which are significantly represented in the research sample) attend choir classes instead of orchestra classes. Consequently, their experiential contact with classical music differs to some extent from that of students who, already at the elementary music school level, begin performing selected orchestral works, as is the practice in many elementary music schools in Serbia. Therefore, future research may benefit from exploring how the choice of instrument correlates with stylistic preferences, listening frequency, and openness to diverse musical genres, particularly in the context of music education's role in shaping long-term musical identity and taste.

An additional limitation concerns the study's relatively short duration. Longitudinal research designs could provide more comprehensive insights into the development of musical preferences throughout all stages of elementary music education, from the first year to graduation at the age of 14. In this way, it would be possible to systematically monitor the developmental trajectory of musical preferences toward classical music over the years, in relation with solfège and instrument classes. Furthermore, incorporating broader cultural background and socioeconomic status into the research could potentially clarify the reasons behind children's lower preferences for classical music.

Conclusion

The preference for popular music, as indicated by significantly higher mean ratings in both liking and desire to hear the excerpt again, raises important considerations for music education. Despite receiving a formal music training through which students become musically literate and are introduced to the classical repertoire in solfège and instrumental classes, students show a clear and measurable orientation toward popular music. This divergence may reflect the broader cultural context in which students are embedded, highlighting the need for pedagogical approaches that bridge the gap between institutional content and students' personal musical realities.

One of the unresolved questions remains why students who spend at least six years in elementary music schools, despite receiving substantial musical education, do not

develop positive musical preferences toward classical music. It is well established that a wide range of factors influence musical preferences. Nevertheless, we argue that, within the context of the influence of music education on the formation of musical preferences, the underlying causes lie deeper, and we aim to highlight several possible explanations. One underlying cause is that solfège instruction, according to the official curriculum, is predominantly focused on the areas of melody, rhythm, music theory, and dictation, which is understandable given that the primary function of solfège is to ensure the musical literacy of students. Although the curriculum includes the activity of listening to music within solfège classes, in practice, it is almost impossible to devote time to this activity during every lesson. The extensive material that must be covered demands considerable time, often leaving insufficient time at the end of the lesson for listening to and analyzing a musical work. In order for musical listening to be purposeful, it must be active and accompanied by carefully designed activities, which further requires additional time within the lesson framework. On the other hand, although examples from instrumental literature are incorporated in solfège instruction, their application is often limited, as not every composition can be adapted for vocal performance at a young age. In this context, opportunities for students to become familiar with classical music literature through vocal practice are further reduced. These considerations suggest that the examination of the influence of music education on the formation of positive musical preferences toward classical music should be disaggregated into individual components, such as the influence of solfège instruction and that of instrumental instruction. Significant attention should be directed toward the question of how the methodological approach to implementing music listening activities within solfège lessons may potentially influence students' familiarity with classical music and the formation of positive musical preferences toward it.

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КЛАСИЧНА ИЛИ ПОПУЛАРНА МУЗИКА?: МУЗИЧКЕ ПРЕФЕРЕНЦИЈЕ УЧЕНИКА НИЖЕ МУЗИЧКЕ ШКОЛЕ

Ученици ниже музичке школе током школовања су изложени класичној музици кроз наставу инструмента и солфеђа. С обзиром на утицај различитих фактора на формирање музичких преференција, поставља се питање утицаја музичког образовања на прихватање класичне у односу на популарну музику. Циљ истраживања био је да се утврде музичке преференције према класичној и популарној музици. Испитане су музичке преференције 74 ученика првог до петог разреда ниже музичке школе, узраста од 9 до 14 година. Испитаници су попунили упитник који је у првом делу обухватао податке о учесталости слушања и значају музике у њиховом животу. Потом су слушали 36 одломака и одговарали на питања о познатости примера, степену свиђања и вероватноћи будућег самоиницијативног слушања. Већина ученика свакодневно слуша музику; 89% је истакло да им музика пружа велико задовољство, а 82% да има посебан значај. Резултати показују већу преференцију ка популарној музици, те се поставља питање како наставу прилагодити ради јачања интересовања за класичну музику.

Кључне речи: музичке преференције, класична музика, популарна музика, музичка школа

Appendix 1

Soundtrack name	Track	Time	Duration
Medieval			
Gregorian Chant: <i>Dies Irae</i>	1	00:00 – 00:28	28s
<i>Kyrie Eleison</i>	3	00:00 – 00:37	37s
Adam de la Halle: <i>Robin et Marion</i>	5	00:00 – 00:30	30s
Renaissance			
Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina: <i>Missa Papae Marcelli, Credo</i>	7	00:00 – 00:34	34s
Josquin Des Prez: <i>El Grillo</i>	9	00:00 – 00:35	35s
Lorenzo da Firenze: <i>A poste messe</i>	11	00:00 – 00:40	40s
Baroque			
Antonio Vivaldi: <i>The Four Seasons, Spring, op. 8 RV 269, 1. Allegro</i>	13	00:00 – 00:33	33s
Johann Sebastian Bach: <i>The Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major, BWV 1049, 1. Allegro</i>	15	00:00 – 01:04	64s

Classicism	George Frideric Handel: <i>Messiah</i> HWV 56, Halleluja 56	17	00:00 – 01:13	73s
	Joseph Haydn: <i>Symphony No. 48, C Major, Hob.I:48 „Maria Theresia”: I. Allegro</i>	19	00:00 – 00:47	47s
	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: <i>Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (String Serenade No. 13, G-major) KV 525, I. Allegro</i>	21	00:00 – 00:48	48s
	Ludwig van Beethoven: <i>Bagatelle No. 25, Für Elise</i>	23	00:00 – 00:39	39s
Romanticism	Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky: <i>The Nutcracker, Dance Of The Reed Pipes</i>	25	00:00 – 00:55	55s
	Saint Saens: <i>Le Carnaval des animaux, XIII. Le Cygne</i>	27	00:00 – 00:52	52s
	Edvard Grieg: <i>Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46: I. Morning Mood</i>	29	00:00 – 01:22	82s
Impressionism and the 20 th century music	Sergei Prokofiev: <i>Cinderella-Suite Nr. 1, Op. 107: IV. Fairy Godmother and Fairy Winter, Dance of the knights</i>	31	00:00 – 00:43	43s
	Claude Debussy: <i>Préludes, Book 1, VIII La Fille aux cheveux de lin (Très calme et doucement expressif)</i>	33	00:00 – 01:07	67s
	Darius Milhaud: <i>Le Bœuf sur le toit</i>	35	00:00 – 01:15	75s
1960s	Roy Orbison: <i>Oh, Pretty Woman</i>	32	00:00 – 00:39	39s
	Dean Martin: <i>Everybody loves somebody</i>	34	00:00 – 00:56	56s
	Frankie Valli and the 4 Seasons: <i>Can't take my eyes of you</i>	36	01:19 – 02:07	48s

1970s

Boney M. – Rasputin	26	01:18 – 01:50	32s
ABBA – <i>Gimme, Gimme, Gimme</i>	28	00:56 – 01:42	46s
Earth, Wind and Fire: <i>September</i>	30	00:34 – 01:05	31s

1980s

Rick Astley: <i>Never Gonna Give You Up</i>	20	00:31 – 01:00	29s
Whitney Houston: <i>I Wanna Dance with Somebody</i>	22	01:27 – 02:02	35s
Culture Club: <i>Karma Chameleon</i>	24	00:22 – 01:04	42s

1990s

Cher: <i>Believe</i>	14	00:43 – 01:27	44s
Mariah Carey: <i>Emotions</i>	16	01:58 – 02:39	41s
MC Hammer: <i>Can't touch this</i>	18	00:00 – 00:40	40s

2000s

Coldplay: <i>Viva la vida</i>	8	02:19 – 03:13	54s
Simply red: <i>Sunrise</i>	10	00:58 – 01:38	40s
Beyonce: <i>Single Ladies</i>	12	00:00 – 01:01	61s

2010s

Luis Fonsi ft. Daddy Yankee: <i>Despacito</i>	2	01:23 – 02:06	43s
BTS: <i>Dynamite</i>	4	00:49 – 01:22	33s
Adele: <i>Rolling in the deep</i>	6	00:41 – 01:17	36s