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# Concert repertoire as a precondition for performance competence formation of music educator

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## Abstract

This article examines teaching, pedagogical and concert repertoire as a precondition for performance competence formation of music educator, as well as defines the repertoire aims, tasks, and selection criteria via the method of comparing the role of suggestion and explanation in the process of music's education. As a result, repertoire plays an important role in acquiring technical skills and competence by singers or instrumentalists and in forming the performing culture of the future music educator. In conclusion, the repertoire is the most important comprehensive component of musical and performing training.

**Keywords:** Pedagogy, repertoire, musician, performance, competence.

## El repertorio de conciertos como condición previa para la formación de la competencia en la actuación del educador musical

### Resumen

Este artículo examina el repertorio pedagógico, pedagógico y de conciertos como una condición previa para la formación en la competencia de rendimiento del educador musical, y define los objetivos, las tareas y los criterios de selección del repertorio a través del método de comparación del papel de la sugerencia y la explicación en el proceso de la educación musical. . Como resultado, el repertorio juega un papel importante en la adquisición de habilidades técnicas y la competencia de cantantes o instrumentistas y en la formación de la cultura escénica del futuro educador musical. En conclusión, el repertorio es el componente integral más importante de la formación musical y de interpretación.

**Palabras clave:** pedagogía, repertorio, músico, performance, competencia.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Musical performance is a complex and multifaceted concept consisting of numerous components. This, on the one hand, is a craft, and on the other - a product of high spiritual strength, in which all spheres of human psychological activity find their expression. Musical education and training have a special place in the formation of creative self-actualizing personality, its cognitive abilities, as the music reflects the fullness of human nature in all its harmonic integrity: emotional and rational, sensual and intellectual. Many musicians and teachers

expressed the idea that music reveals itself to everyone, it activates the formation of the creative orientation of an individual, its cognitive independence. When teaching any subject in a music college, it is necessary to use methods and means that contribute to the creative self-realization of an individual, as the future music educator cannot take place as a professional, if s/he deals with work in a routine manner and without creativity.

The result of music educator's self-realization should be the formed need for continuous self-development and self-improvement, motivation for creativity and divergent thinking (Kreknin, 2012). Musical pedagogy faces two main tasks: musical and aesthetic education of students and formation of professional and technical skills necessary for further successful implementation in the field of musical performance. These two tasks are inextricably linked, and the deeper the musical and pedagogical process goes, the stronger and more fruitful this connection becomes. Only a student with the sum of professional skills can implement his/her artistic views during the performance of a work. However, professional and technical skills cannot be acquired in isolation from the artistic and educational tasks facing the aspiring musician, because the technical side in the works of musical art is inseparable from the artistic and figurative structure of music (Natanson, 1963). It is obvious that these two tasks should be reflected in the repertoire chosen for a student. The artistic side of pedagogical works should be combined with their instructive usefulness and expediency (Kameneva, 2017). It is necessary that from the very beginning students learn to perceive each component of the

musical language not as something steady, but as a dynamic, naturally developing element, without this stage an organic understanding of modern music is impossible (Kopchevsky, 1981). The qualification characteristic of a music teacher assumes that a specialist has a broad cultural worldview, psychological and pedagogical skills, a large amount of musical and theoretical knowledge, skills in the performing and methodical field, developed general, pedagogical and musical abilities, readiness to carry out musical and pedagogical activities.

## **2. CHOICE OF REPERTOIRE IN THE PROCESS OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING**

The choice of repertoire in the process of professional training of the future music educator depends entirely on the set of competencies that a student must develop during the educational program acquisition. Just as each discipline enriches students with new knowledge and brings them closer to the top of the mastery, each musical composition gives the future teachers the necessary performance skills in their professional activity, develops creative potential, and contributes to the practical implementation of competencies. “Only a thoroughly and accurately selected repertoire, both in artistic and technical terms contributes to the creative growth of musical group, to the improvement of their performing skills” (Mokhonko, 2014: 15). Certainly, the level of performance competence of a music teacher of a secondary school cannot be as high as that of a musician-performer, the ability to comprehend the image of

a musical work created by a composer, to interpret it creatively in the process of performance, to bring it to the consciousness of students is of primary importance for music teacher (Karnaukhova, 2009). One of the components and at the same time indicators of the musician performing culture is an ability of artistic interpretation of music texts (Komurdzhy, 2017). Musical education training of a professional of creative level is impossible without actualization of the interpretation phenomenon as a musical-pedagogical phenomenon and, accordingly, the formation in the educational process of a complex professional and personal quality of a student-musician - the interpretation culture (Kornoukhov, 2015). The process of musical education, development and training comes from the artistic and meaningful, emotional and expressive meaning of the music itself (Nurgayanova, 2010).

Ideally, each instrumental or vocal musical piece aims at the practical consolidation of the theoretical information, so that the formed competencies become an integral quality of a student's personality. If that is the case, the educational repertoire expands and enriches the concert repertoire, contributing to the successful performance, cultural and educational work of a music teacher, and at the same time becomes a teaching material, which is used by graduates in their educational activities. The great importance of the repertoire in the professional training of the future music educator is beyond any doubt, and numerous works on this topic clearly illustrate this. Repertoire plays an important role in acquiring technical skills and competence by singers or instrumentalists and in forming the performing culture of the future music educator, because the

performing competence is closely connected with the general musical culture and artistic and aesthetic principles of art, which are learned and mastered during the acquisition of the educational repertoire. The performing competence of a music teacher refers to the set of certain qualities (features) of an individual with a high level of professional readiness for instrumental and performing activities and on its basis for effective interaction with students in the educational process. In addition, the process of forming the competence of a teacher during his/her professional training is considered as a consistent transformation of the student's educational activity into the professional activity of a specialist and it is believed that this process is primarily associated with the formation of students' readiness to solve professional problems (Lashkul, 2008).

Furthermore,

The features of musical and performing activity of a music educator are in its pedagogical nature, which involves: focus on a young audience, the desire to capture the children's interest in music on the basis of their own music-making, involvement of students in joint performing activities, awakening their creativity, imagination, associative thinking, etc. (Shamaeva, 2014).

Hence, there is a need for teaching a diverse repertoire, which will become a tool of professional activity of a music educator. The main requirement of the current level of learning culture is its intensification. In other words, learning goal must be achieved in minimum time and effort expenses, but with greater and better results.

First of all, it is necessary to closely link the theoretical material with the practical mastering of a tool: student should receive only the information needed to master the tool at this stage. This will lead to a solid digestion of theoretical information, acquisition of knowledge; the practical orientation of knowledge will contribute to the early formation of skills and their transition to performing skills (Bidyak, 2014). Repertoire, i.e. a set of consciously selected musical compositions mastered by musician-performer, depending on the stage of mastering the performing competence, the level of technical complexity and purpose, it is advisable to divide into teaching, pedagogical and concert repertoire. These terms are differentiated: teaching repertoire is a set of works mastered by the students in the class of instrument playing; pedagogical repertoire consists of compositions used by musicians in the process of teaching children; concert repertoire includes pieces from the concert program of a musician-performer, reflecting his/her style of interpretation and unique sound image of performance, as well as forming the basis of the artistic and creative activities. One and the same musical work can be studied first as an exercise on the development of technology or performance features, then it can be included in the repertoire of a concert performer and at the same time used in the pedagogical work. After all, “working on the repertoire, a music teacher must have a certain set of special knowledge and skills” (Ogorodova et al., 2014: 14). A typical phenomenon was the failure to comply with the didactic principle of accessibility, in particular, the so-called overstatement of the repertoire. It should be emphasized that the violation of the principle of accessibility during training leads to the most serious



consequences that are difficult and sometimes impossible to fix. The problem is that the principle of accessibility is recognized only in word. In practice, the program is often overstated. The causes of this phenomenon are different, and eliminate them is not as easy as it seems at first glance. There are five main reasons to analyze:

- Formal attitude to the lesson plans, drawing up plans without taking into account the individual characteristics of a student. Sometimes this is due to the fact that the teacher does not know the methods of drawing up individual plans or did not study the training material;
- Incorrect assessment of the complexity of a work. Often the teacher pays attention only to the technical difficulties of musical work, disregarding the complexity of the main thing – the content.
- Deliberate complication of the program due to a kind of pedagogical ambition. When discussing exam results, teachers prone to external effects, often say: My student played a complex program, so s/he is worthy of the highest grade - not realizing that such arguments reveal ignorance of the basic principles of selection of educational material and performance evaluation criteria. It is also believed that one work that exceeds the capabilities of a student must be included in the program for the student's growth. Thus, the repertoire includes not only a

complex musical work, but also that, which is beyond student's capacity at this stage, which as a result turns out to be unstudied. But the problem is not only in that: as a rule, by the time of the exam the whole program is unstudied. It should be noted that the overstated program is more likely to affect the most capable students.

- The students' desire to play certain works that do not suit their abilities, and the malleability of teachers, which is motivated by the assumption that students will quickly learn the work that they like, that they will train more and achieve more. Such arguments, of course, are not without reason, but if the students' abilities are completely incommensurable with the difficulties of a certain piece, then they will not be able to overcome them.
- The musical helplessness of a teacher, the inability to work on the musical content of a musical work. Bidyak writes the following in his Training materials of pedagogy:

Practice shows that the musical content of the work is more challenging for some teachers than the technical difficulties. Every teacher sometimes has nothing to say to the students, if a piece is technically simple and students overcame technical difficulties. In an effort to cover up the pedagogical helplessness, the teacher tends to overstate the program, making it a kind of self-defense tool (2014: 22).

The division of repertoire into teaching and concert repertoire is due not only to acquisition stages. As noted by Kuftyreva,

The choice of repertoire for concert performance should correspond to the vocal and technical capabilities of a particular moment of the learning process and vocal development, whereas teaching repertoire is a repertoire of high complexity that can be performed only in class with close attention and observation of a teacher (2013: 23).

Teaching repertoire, being the most important in the life of a professional musician, is worth considering. Its goals and objectives are broad in scope. Through the comprehension and practical development of the teaching repertoire the following important stages take place:

- Formation of performance competence as a result of choice, interpretation and concert performance;
  
- Development (cultivation) of artistic taste;

One of the important, fundamental factors that contributes to the formation of artistic taste [...], is a repertoire, which includes a wide range of music styles, genres and forms from different time periods. Through music, the group members get acquainted with the best samples of folk music, sacred music, learn to understand and perform the works of classical and modern composers (Mokhonko, 2014: 14).

- Presentation of the genre and stylistic features of musical works. There are different approaches of acquaintance with different styles, but it is doubtless that the gap in the repertoire at one stage of professional training can unfavorably affect the formation of the artist's sense of style as such (Ivanov, 2010).
  
- Teaching the basics of the music theory and history and the accumulation of knowledge;
  
- Familiarization with different styles and trends, the main stages of artistic development;
  
- Formation of musical and theoretical knowledge, practical skills and performers' worldview;
  
- Development of new and elaboration of previously acquired performing skills;
  
- Expansion of cultural horizon, which is designed to “most effectively and multilaterally develop an artistic taste” (Ogorodova et al., 2014: 18);
  
- Enrichment of the musician performing experience;
  
- Familiarization with the different styles and trends in art; “the consistent work on different pieces allows discovering typical features of the genre of each piece, and the usual understanding

about their diversity is enriched when comparing two contrasting works” (Mokhonko, 2014: 14).

- Identification of interpretation features of different styles, specifics of musical works performance of different styles, genres and forms, patterns of development of music from antiquity to the present day;

- Development of emotional sensitivity and responsiveness to the music, the accumulation of aesthetic experiences;

- Training in the verbal interpretation of music;

- Activation of creative initiative, strengthening of cognitive interest and motivation of performers through more technical and artistic tasks;

- Cultivation of such personal qualities as communication, purposefulness, artistry, self-confidence, willpower, self-control;

- Identification of the originality of the musical language, genre characteristics and unique compositional style of each musical work;

- Active perception of music and emotional response to it,

- Development of artistic and aesthetic orientation of creative activity of the musician and his own individual performance style;
  
- Educational impact and intellectual and spiritual richness, the importance of which increases due to a drop in the cultural level of today's youth and the growing need to “teach to be musically savvy and to distinguish between high genuine art and cheap imitation” (Ogorodova et al., 2014: 17).

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

As for the teaching or instructional repertoire, it serves as a means of teaching the performing arts and is rarely used as solo works for performance on the stage. However, the importance of teachers turning to instructive works in the initial period of training of music and performing arts is obvious: even the most complex concert repertoire cannot correspond to the level of musical perception and technical development of the child in these years. Etude literature, designed to develop motor skills of students, is also necessary. Children benefit from art designed specifically for children, whether in the field of literature, painting or music: children's development requires works of art in which artistic tasks are inseparable from the circle of children's interests, the specifics of children's psychology and worldview. In relation to music pedagogy, it can be said that only compositions with these qualities can provide children (not only of an

early age, but also of a later age) with the development of various skills in music and performing arts. Such works will help to prepare students for the perception and development of modern concert repertoire, including music of our days (Kameneva, 2017).

The work on the repertoire should contribute to the development of the necessary musical and performing abilities and skills, provide a comprehensive musical and artistic education of a student, the full-fledged formation of technical means, as well as contribute to the formation of his musical thinking and creative worldview, the awakening of musical and aesthetic taste. Therefore, it is often necessary to choose the right piece, concert or etude, taking into account a number of circumstances and factors of the development of a particular student (Ivanova, 2014). The existing gap between the artistic aspect and instructional usefulness of the teaching repertoire can be caused by the following circumstances (Nurullina et al, 2018). Works that are attractive in images and musical language are often inappropriate in pedagogical terms, if they are full of undue textural difficulties, lead to clamping, and overstrain of individual parts of the motor apparatus of the child. Conversely, on the ground of technical usefulness, anti-artistic works can penetrate the pedagogical repertoire. Sometimes it is not the artistic or instructive aspect of the work that is objectionable, but the nature of their combination. Works, which figurative structure is designed for one development stage of a student, and the technical aspect can be implemented only at another, later stage, are almost inapplicable. This disproportion is peculiar for the

works with names reflecting the interests of early childhood, but which are extremely complex in technical terms (Kameneva, 2017).

To make a comparison, the goals and objectives of the concert repertoire differ: it should reflect the high artistic taste of a professional, rich worldview of the future music educator, extensive knowledge of the best works of world musical culture. As noted by Mokhonko (2014), the concert repertoire “performs ideological, artistic and educational functions, which are inextricably linked” (Mokhonko, 2014: 15). Cultivation of artistic taste is the process of familiarizing a person to the musical culture of society, the field of aesthetic education. Aesthetic development of a person is manifested, first of all, in the artistic taste, which determines the nature of the relationship of the aesthetic subject with the socio-cultural environment, contributes to the self-realization of a person in the artistic activity. The researchers emphasize the relative independence, autonomy of a person and the interdependence of the processes of formation of a comprehensively developed personality and the formation of individual artistic taste. It should be said about the great responsibility that rests on the shoulders of a teacher. Education is impossible without a deep psychological analysis of a student as a person, taking into account his unique personality. An experienced teacher takes into account not only the musical tasks when choosing pieces, but also the features of the character, intelligence, artistry, temperament and inclinations. These things as the mirror reflect student’s spiritual organization and innermost desires. For example, if a languid and slow child is offered an emotional and moving piece, one can hardly expect proper success



in the exam. But, it is important to play these musical works in a class, and play calmer ones at the concert. And vice versa: active and excitable child should be recommended more restrained, philosophical works.

The concert repertoire represents artistic and aesthetic attitudes and creative endeavors of musical performer, at the same time serves as a means of further worldview and skill improvement, and has a great educational impact on the audience.

According to the repertoire, one can to a certain extent accurately judge the creative representative of a music group, its aesthetic and moral positions, performing capabilities. Skillfully chosen highly-artistic repertoire provides the creative life of the group, increases its educational function (Mokhonko, 2014: 15).

The goals and objectives of the teaching repertoire determine the principles of its selection. In contemporary musical-pedagogical education, there is a problem of repertoire policy, revealing the contradictions between performing capabilities of music students and the process of their implementation (Shamaeva, 2014), as well as “between the accumulated over centuries the Golden Reserve of world music culture and the lack of need of today's youth to communicate with high art” (Ogorodova et al., 2014: 13). Repertoire policy in relation to each individual student musician should follow a number of fundamental principles and conditions, which contribute to the effective formation of the performing competence of the specialist:

1. Musical compositions should be aimed at improving the level of professional competencies formation, improving the technical skills as the basis of performing training of the music teacher and at the same time contribute to the development of individual abilities – musicality, artistic taste, creative potential, internal freedom and artistry of a performer. Although determining the repertoire policy in relation to a particular student, teachers do not always take into account the musical and performing abilities of students, their individual characteristics of reliability in a concert performance (Shamaeva, 2014).

2. The musical pieces should correspond to the future musical-pedagogical and cultural-educational activity of a student, because musical education is a model of practice, and the effectiveness of each discipline depends on the degree of its compliance with the activities in the real world (Pereverzeva & Smirnov, 2017). That is why the educational repertoire should contribute to the development of musical-performing activity of students and depend on the specific tasks set by a teacher to students at this stage of its development;

3. When choosing a repertoire program, it is necessary to take into account age, national-cultural, individual characteristics, interests, pastimes, ambitions and needs, as well as the musical and creative potential of a student, both in terms of its preparation and the possibility of its implementation in a concert performance (Shamaeva, 2014). Furthermore, the choice of

musical works for children largely depends on the degree their attention span, emotional excitement, degree of thinking and speech development, imagination, etc., as well as interests, requests, needs, ideals. Thus, at the initial stage of training, the short musical pieces of classical composers are preferred, characterized by an adequate degree of complexity, a variety of images and emotional experiences, stylistic and genre diversity. At the same time, modern pop or jazz music will be interesting and exciting for the younger generation, so it should be included in the teaching repertoire of teenagers.

There are numerous selection criteria for teaching repertoire due to the fact that “the choice of repertoire is probably the most difficult moment in teaching” (Fadeeva-Moskaleva, 2016: 15). The main selection criteria are the following:

- Focus on the development of performing competence;
- Consideration of the existing musical experience, level of knowledge and skills in the field of music and performing arts;
- Accessibility and pedagogical value;
- Relevance and importance of works for the intellectual, spiritual, moral, artistic and aesthetic development of the students and the growth of their technical skills;

- Balanced repertoire, the ratio of complexity level and real technical and creative capabilities of the student;
- Focus on solving certain artistic and pedagogical problems;
- Defined sequence of selections (the transition from simple homophonic and short-form pieces to the polyphonic genres and long-forms pieces);
- Gradual complication of the material (from light processing of folk melodies to virtuoso concert compositions) in accordance with the musical development of a student and the improvement of his technical skills;
- Long-term vision of the pedagogical process as a consistent system;
- Meeting the diverse spiritual needs of a student;
- Compliance of the content of musical work with the inner world of a student, as well as “the age, mental and spiritual maturity of a child” (Fadeeva-Moskaleva, 2016: 14).
- Variety in technical requirements, means of expression, content, genres and forms;

- Focus on comprehensive disclosure of technical, ideological, moral, artistic and aesthetic aspects of the work;
- High artistic and aesthetic qualities of a work;
- Ideological content and spirituality of a works;
- Educational function;
- Evaluation-critical approach to the choice of works, focus on the result;
- Coverage of different styles and trends – classics (from baroque to modern period), folk and modern foreign and domestic music, including pop and jazz compositions, multicultural orientation in the choice of musical pieces;

In trying to define and formulate the principles of educational material selection, apparently, the progressiveness of the repertoire should be called one of the first. If a student is given only the works corresponding to his abilities, it is unlikely that this will contribute to the development of all elements of his/her performing personality. At the same time, if a professionally immature student is given an obviously difficult work, which is much higher in the degree of complexity than previously performed works, then, although this corresponds to the principle of progressiveness, the student can play

this piece poorly, and then there will be no benefit - rather harm. Therefore, choosing a particular musical work taking into account the principle of progressiveness, it should be considered, first of all, to which extent it exceeds the current capabilities of a student and what can be achieved in the process of working on it. It is important to predict in advance whether or not a student will be able to accumulate the necessary skills in the course of work on this piece and whether or not these skills will be sufficient to perform it quite freely, without unnecessary mental and physical efforts and bringing to the listener the author's idea, the nature of the work and its content (Ivanova, 2014).

Teacher plays an important role in the formation, preservation and accumulation of the students' repertoire. If a teacher is aware of the importance of this task set in front of him, then this process will be controlled. Without the help of a teacher, students, especially beginners, cannot cope. An important feature of the aging period is the fact that primary school age contains a significant potential for the mental development of children (Kopylova, 2013). It is noteworthy that the selection criteria of pedagogical repertoire are close to those of teaching repertoire, but they are followed not by higher institution teacher, systematically selecting works for the training a student musician, but by the graduate, who has mastered the necessary performing competencies and is ready to conduct professional activities. As noted by Shamaeva:

The pedagogical repertoire is one of the important factors in the formation of performing culture. The professional level of the

graduate depends on how purposefully and meaningfully it will be built and studied during the training period. The study of highly artistic samples of musical art, including analysis and meticulous processing of the smallest components of music notation, live performance, creates a performance culture of the future music teacher, develops his musical and creative abilities, influences on the competency development (2014: 22).

Mokhonko emphasizes:

The task of the repertoire is to steadily develop and improve the musical-figurative thinking of the musical group, their creative activity, as well as to enrich the intonational listening experience, public musical memory. This is possible through the updating and expansion of musical material (2014: 17).

That is why it is necessary to expand the range of study of highly artistic samples of musical art, interpreting musical works in accordance with a certain cultural tradition. The repertoire of a music teacher that was chosen correctly is the most important precondition for the formation of performing skills of culture and art institutes students. Correct choice means that aimed at the result and professional activity of the graduate. The structure of professional activity of the music teacher [...] includes pedagogical and musical performing component, in this case performance is a crucial component of his pedagogical culture. But it is not only about that. In the light of modern, student-centered and competency-based musical-pedagogical education, a teacher needs to be open to the demands of modern children and youth, and to consider expanding the scope of their cognitive interests. Musical works learnt during the lessons “should have a beneficial effect on the emotional projection of

participants' personality, form them as self-sufficient moral and spiritual personality" (Mokhonko, 2014: 18). The students will learn and perform the favorite piece not only having great pleasure, but also demonstrating a higher technical and aesthetic level. Only through individual selection of teaching, concert and pedagogical repertoire, it is possible to form the performing skills of a music educator at a high level.

Music educators recommend a constant updating of repertoire. The distribution of works in terms of the degree of their complexity, according to the course of study, as well as the level of competence of the students themselves is especially difficult. After all, there is often a problem of students entering the higher education institutions without any music education, or having a low musical literacy level. Distributing repertoire according to the degree of complexity and difficulties it is necessary to consider not only technical, but also content problems of works. For example, when compiling a program for the junior student it would be inappropriate to include long-form work with a high complexity in technical terms and in artistic and figurative content. Due to the age and the level of musical competence, it is unlikely that students will master such program. The complexity, accessibility and artistic value of the works should correspond to the interests and abilities of students and at the same time stimulate their musical development, form their vocal and choral culture. Therefore, the first condition for working on a musical piece is the promotion of students' conscious attitude to the selected musical material. The second condition is a gradual and consistent complication of the



repertoire, depending on the goals and objectives that are set in the process of training.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Hence, the repertoire is the most important comprehensive component of musical and performing training. This is evidenced by a large number of studies devoted to this problem. E. L. Kuftyreva emphasizes that:

For the proper development of the extended range voice, the fundamental factor at different stages of development is the choice of repertoire, including the parallel study of musical works written for different types of female voices [...] with the division of repertoire into teaching and concert (2013: 10).

In the framework of recent changes in the system of higher education related to the competence-based and practice-oriented approach to the professional training of specialists, including music educators, the choice of repertoire should also have a competence-based orientation and ideally be aimed at the formation of all necessary competencies at its highest level. The repertoire is enriched with the development of skills and is complicated simultaneously with the increase in the level of performing skills of the musician. This is both a tool in the process of professional training of a music educator and a mediator between the object and the subject of educator's performing and pedagogical activity.

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