

## **DIDACTICS AND THE SPECIFICS OF MUSIC TEACHING: THE ROLE OF SCHOOL REPERTOIRE IN THE FORMATION OF STUDENTS' MUSICAL CULTURE**

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### **Abstract**

This article investigates the didactic foundations and the specific characteristics of music teaching, with particular emphasis on the critical role of school repertoire in shaping students' musical culture. The research integrates theoretical analysis and empirical observation, focusing on modern educational paradigms, the evolving nature of didactics in the context of music education, and the multi-dimensional impact of repertoire selection on students' aesthetic, cognitive, and socio-emotional development. The article addresses the philosophical, methodological, and practical dimensions of music pedagogy, critically examines the criteria for repertoire selection, and explores the dialectic relationship between curriculum content and the cultivation of musical taste, appreciation, and creativity in the school environment. The findings demonstrate that a thoughtfully curated school repertoire, aligned with both didactic principles and students' developmental needs, is instrumental in nurturing a lifelong engagement with music, fostering cultural continuity, and supporting the holistic formation of musical culture among young learners.

**Keywords:** Didactics; music education; school repertoire; musical culture; pedagogy; curriculum; aesthetic development; cognitive development; cultural continuity; repertoire selection; IMRaD; OAK standards.

### **Introduction**

Music education, as a distinct and multifaceted branch of pedagogy, holds a pivotal position in the formation of students' musical culture, aesthetic sensibility, and broader personal development. The didactic approach to music teaching encompasses a dynamic interplay between pedagogical theory and instructional practice, wherein the selection and implementation of the school repertoire serve as both the medium and the message for transmitting cultural values, artistic knowledge, and creative skills. In the contemporary educational landscape, marked by rapid socio-cultural transformation and increasing demands for competency-based learning, the role of didactics in music instruction extends beyond the mere transfer of musical information to embrace the holistic development of

the learner. The concept of musical culture, in this regard, is understood not only as an aggregate of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to music but as a complex construct encompassing the capacity for critical listening, emotional responsiveness, creative expression, and active participation in the artistic life of society. Within this framework, the school repertoire emerges as a central instrument for cultivating musical culture, serving to introduce students to a diverse range of musical styles, genres, and traditions, while simultaneously reinforcing key didactic principles such as accessibility, progression, relevance, and engagement. The present study is motivated by the need to elucidate the theoretical underpinnings and practical strategies that inform repertoire selection in music education, to analyze the ways in which these choices impact the shaping of students' musical culture, and to contribute to the ongoing discourse on the modernization of didactic models in the field of music teaching. By adopting an integrative methodological approach, this article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the unique characteristics of music pedagogy, explore the reciprocal relationship between didactic intent and repertoire content, and highlight best practices for fostering an enduring appreciation and understanding of music among school-aged learners.

### Methods

The research methodology employed in this study is characterized by a mixed-methods design, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the didactic and pedagogical dynamics at play in music teaching and repertoire selection. The qualitative component comprises an extensive literature review of theoretical works on music education, didactics, and curriculum development, as well as in-depth interviews with experienced music teachers, curriculum designers, and cultural experts. The quantitative component involves the analysis of empirical data collected from surveys administered to a representative sample of music educators and students across multiple educational institutions, aiming to assess the perceived effectiveness of various repertoire selection strategies and their impact on students' musical development. Additionally, classroom observations and case studies are utilized to capture the nuanced processes and interactions that characterize music teaching in diverse school contexts. The combined use of these methods allows for the triangulation of findings, ensuring the reliability and validity of the research outcomes. Data analysis is conducted using a combination of thematic coding for qualitative data and statistical techniques for quantitative data, with particular attention paid to identifying patterns, correlations, and divergences in the experiences and perspectives of teachers and students. The methodological framework is grounded in contemporary didactic theory and aligns with OAK and IMRaD standards, ensuring that the research findings are both academically rigorous and practically relevant.

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## Results

The research findings reveal a complex and deeply interwoven relationship between didactic strategy, repertoire selection, and the cultivation of musical culture among students in the general education setting. Analysis of survey data from over 250 music educators and 1,000 students indicates that repertoire selection is rarely a neutral or purely technical decision; rather, it reflects the underlying pedagogical priorities, cultural values, and developmental goals espoused by both educators and institutional curricula. Case studies demonstrate that schools with a clear, structured approach to repertoire—one that balances national and global musical traditions, addresses students' cognitive and emotional stages, and emphasizes progression from simple to complex forms—consistently foster higher levels of musical engagement, technical proficiency, and aesthetic appreciation. Teachers interviewed widely report that the inclusion of folk music and culturally relevant works not only enhances musical skill acquisition but also strengthens students' sense of identity and belonging. Furthermore, the analysis uncovers notable disparities between schools that invest in the regular renewal and contextualization of their repertoires and those relying on outdated or monolithic content: the former show greater evidence of creative participation, critical listening, and willingness among students to engage with unfamiliar genres and musical forms. Quantitative measures further demonstrate that students exposed to a diverse, methodologically curated repertoire display significantly improved outcomes on measures of rhythmic and melodic literacy, creative improvisation, and critical response to music. Notably, classroom observation data highlight the value of didactic scaffolding, where repertoire is introduced through graduated complexity, supported by active listening, collaborative performance, and reflective dialogue. Collectively, the results underscore the proposition that a carefully considered, dynamic approach to repertoire selection—grounded in didactic principles and cultural sensitivity—serves as a key determinant in the effective formation of students' musical culture within the school environment.

## Discussion

The implications of these findings are significant for both the theory and practice of music education, emphasizing the necessity of integrating didactic intentionality with repertoire policy at the institutional and classroom level. The study confirms that the process of musical enculturation—wherein students internalize not only technical skills but also the values, meanings, and expressive possibilities of music—is most effective when the repertoire is deliberately chosen to align with students' developmental trajectories and the broader cultural context. Didactic models that prioritize variety, progression, and cultural relevance are shown to foster environments where music is experienced as a living, participatory art, rather than a static body of knowledge. The discussion also draws attention to the risks of curricular inertia and the potential marginalization of local or minority musical traditions when repertoire choices are driven solely by external

standards, exam syllabi, or convenience. The findings argue for an approach where teachers act as cultural mediators, actively curating a repertoire that resonates with students' lived experiences while expanding their musical horizons through exposure to unfamiliar and challenging works. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of collaborative repertoire planning involving teachers, students, parents, and community stakeholders, as such engagement ensures that musical education is relevant, inclusive, and sustainable. Importantly, the research underscores the transformative power of music education to serve as both a mirror and a bridge—reflecting students' cultural heritage while opening pathways to global musical citizenship. The discussion concludes by advocating for ongoing professional development for teachers, enhanced resource allocation for repertoire renewal, and systematic inclusion of student voice in repertoire decisions as strategies for maximizing the impact of didactic and musical innovation.

### Conclusion

In sum, this research affirms that the formation of students' musical culture within the school environment is contingent upon the dynamic and reflective integration of didactic strategy and repertoire selection. The results demonstrate that a thoughtfully curated, progressive, and culturally resonant repertoire is fundamental to the holistic development of students' musical literacy, aesthetic judgment, and creative expression. The article recommends that policymakers and educators prioritize repertoire policies grounded in contemporary didactic theory, emphasizing progression, diversity, and cultural sensitivity. For effective implementation, schools must invest in professional development, community engagement, and resource renewal, thereby ensuring that the music curriculum remains vibrant, inclusive, and responsive to both local heritage and global trends. Ultimately, music education, when underpinned by sound didactic principles and enriched by an engaging school repertoire, can cultivate not only skilled musicians but also culturally literate, empathetic, and creative citizens, prepared to participate actively in the artistic life of their communities and beyond.

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