

Emotional Preferences in the Context of Repertoire and Self-Concept of Musical Performers

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Abstract: From the viewpoint of metaindividual world theory [1] the emotional preferences were studied in the context of the repertoire and the self-concept of musical performers. Emotional preferences were examined in several aspects. First, the short-term and long-term emotional preferences were specified and distinguished. Second, the emotional preferences were assessed in connection with the musical (repertoire) preferences. Third, the emotional preferences were investigated in connection with the self-concept considered as plural self. Using ANOVA/MANOVA it was found that the short-term and long-term emotional preferences interact with the musical preferences with respect to "Fear" and "Object direction". In addition, the short-term and long-term emotional preferences interacted with both musical preferences and subselves on the variables "Sadness", "Anger" and "Self-direction." These interactions were explained in the context that emotional preferences exist as the emotional meanings and emotional images related to different systems of metaindividual world. Regarding to time prospects, the emotional indicators were seen as signals of discrepancies between the short and long-term emotional preferences of musical performers.

Key words: Emotional preferences • Repertoire (musical) preferences • Plural self • Emotional meanings and Emotional images

INTRODUCTION

The problem of individual choices and preferences is an important problem of modern psychology as it opens the door to the world of the causes of human behavior and allows to make predictions about them. Of course, the predictors of behavior are not confined to the choice and preference only. However, the study of choices and preferences makes it possible to understand a lot and to explain how a person behaves in interpersonal relationships and the world of objects [2-5]. The problem of preferences is also studied in relation to the music [6-9].

Meanwhile, the problem of emotional preferences (EP) in relation to musical performers rather than their perception of music, remains least studied. This work continues a series of research of emotional preferences in musical performance, choreography and theatrical performances conducted under the guidance of Dorfman [10-15].

The subject of this article is EP in the repertoire and self-concept of musical performers. EP and self-concept are considered in terms of the metaindividual world theory [16, 17].

Basic Concepts: In this study, the basic concepts are as follows: EP, metaindividual world and plural self.

Emotional Preferences

General Consideration: Preference is not only the choice of objects, but also a criterion which generate choices. The criterion condition conceives of a category that combines the preferred objects in one group. The criterion of preference holds a certain stability and permanence during a relatively long life span. Conversely, the preferred objects change and vary in the boundaries of a category to which they refer. Variation of the preferred objects taken together with the relative stability of their criteria is in some ways a new look at preferences as a subject of research interest.

Perhaps, the preferences of objects can be relied on their features and functions. For example, preferences of music can be related to its genre or stylistic properties, expressive power or harmony of musical instruments. But some proper psychological criteria of preference can also be emphasized. In interpersonal relationships it is motives on the basis of which a person enters into an emotional contact with the members of group (sympathy) and ignores its other members (antipathy), so-called the

motivational nucleus of choice [18]. A research of implicit level of self-concept is based on administering cards with a schematic person's face with different emotional expressions [19]. *Prima facie*, there may be motor, sensory, perceptive, intelligent, imaginative and other criteria of preference.

This paper raises the question about the *emotional* preferences. It refers to emotional origin as a criterion leading to preference of musical pieces. The emotional criterion would serve a common umbrella under which various musical pieces come upon a unified group. The emotional criterion would be stable whereas concrete musical pieces vary. Still, preferred musical pieces would be internally consistent with their emotional criterion. The latter is a latent generalized choice with a certain emotional invariance. Emotional preferences (EP), therefore, can be captured as the invariance of a latent emotional criterion combined with variability (to some extent) of preferred musical pieces. Besides, the EP can be viewed as a latent factor and their appearance in the musical repertoire as the observed variables. More generally, EP may be seen as the interaction of two trends. One trend is conservation. It is found in the emotional criterion. Another trend is change. It is expressed in a number of preferred musical pieces with similar emotional properties. Essentially, these trends are not in confrontation. Rather, they complement each other.

This context is a ground of our approach to the EP. They are treated as both the latent emotional criteria and their observed manifestations in preferred musical pieces.

Long-Term and Short-Term Emotional Preferences:

EP can be interpreted as indicators of the desired states, the bridge from the actual to the potential. Therefore EP is both personal meaning, a special kind of intrinsic motives and different kinds of self-concept [20]. EP also ensures coherence and continuity of the present and the future, create a perspective that unfolds over time. This may be a distant prospect ("long-term") and a close ("short-term") one. Respectively, the "long" and "short" EP come to the focus of our research interest. Long-term EP correspond to preferred musical pieces of a performer in his or her remote not enough certain perspective. Moreover it would seem that long-term EP relate to the ideal self of musical performers. Conversely, short EP would refer to preferred musical pieces of a performer in his or her range between the present to the nearest future. Contrary to the long-term EP, the short EP would be distorted by restrictions such as technical complications

of musical pieces, a readiness, or a personal experience [21]. Thus a performer deals with the present and his or her short EP and the real self would be close to each other.

Metaindividual World and Plural Self: The question whether a person has a unitary self or multiple selves has gone in centuries but it is still controversy nowadays. Leaving aside this debate, we simply mark our adherence to those scholars who consider self as plural and composed of subselves [22-25]. As to our view, we develop the plural self construct in the framework of the metaindividual world theory [24-27].

Allow us to say a little bit about the metaindividual world theory in order to clear up the plural self construct as we develop it. The metaindividual world theory comes from the simple fact that the person exists in itself and at the same time in society, culture, social groups and interpersonal relationships. So there is a world of personality; it is composed of people, things, objects, ideas, tasks, issues, in general, of all the things that somehow affect and concern a personality. The term "meta" does not lead one to the area of reflection and epistemology, like "meta-poetry (poetry about poetry), meta-painting (painting, describing the language of painting), meta-theater (theater, analyzing the language of the theater), etc. [28]. With regard to metaindividual world the term "meta" means a person's ability to be confident and to go beyond the boundaries of his body in the world, its physical isolation and fragmentation with the world and the mental unity with it.

In terms of polysystemic approach [29], personality exists as a relatively autonomous and independent system and at the same time as a subsystem of larger systems interacting with it. The duality of qualitative certainty arising on this basis is a central feature of personality. There are two basic systems of relations in metaindividual world. One comes from the personality to the world and another from the world to personality. These basic systems of relations serve sources of two different qualities of personality. It is an independent system in respect with one kind of relations and a dependent subsystem of larger systems in respect with other kind of relations.

The above mentioned leads to the discovery of four relatively independent areas of metaindividual world. Dorfman [30] outlined these areas as "Authorship" and "Possession" (basic relations from the personality to the world), "Acceptance" and "Reference" (basic relations from the world to the personality). Each area is relatively

independent quality unit of meta-individual world. Each unit incorporates various individual properties and indicates their common qualities, overlapping thereby differences between individual properties.

Authorship has characteristics of self-determination (goal-setting and self-causing) of personality. *Possession* is an area in which the surrounding people, things, objects and ideas (including problems and tasks) become the property (mental, material, energy, information and resources) of personality. It keeps them in its possession. *Acceptance* is the area with characteristics of understanding and acceptance of meaningful people and things as they exist by themselves regardless to the person. He or she refers to them as having own opinions, habits and purposes. *Reference* is the area where adherence and commitments of the personality to other people, things and ideas take place. Imitation and conformity with norms, values, rules and views of other people, playing the roles prescribed by others, non-identity of yourself and focus on the identification with the environment are the main characteristics of this area of meta-individual world. The empirical evidences in favor of the discrimination of the four areas of the meta-individual world are found (Dorfman, Zubakin, 2008).

Kihlstrom, Marchese-Foster and Klein [32] defined self-concept as a mental representation of the personal characteristics by a human. Still, the self-concept can be understood in terms of meta-individual approach. A mental representation of meta-individual world and its areas is then considered. So the plural self appears.

Like the meta-individual world is subdivided into four areas, the plural self falls into four sub-selves. First is the Authored sub-self. It mentally represents the area of Authorship in meta-individual world. The second is Embodied sub-self. It mentally represents the area of Possession in meta-individual world. The third is Mutated sub-self. It mentally represents the area of Acceptance in meta-individual world. The fourth is Related sub-self. It mentally represents the area of Reference in meta-individual world.

Empirical findings based on explanatory and confirmatory factor analyses evidence that above mentioned sub-selves can be discriminated [32]. Besides, the sub-selves and the areas of meta-individual world are related [33].

The Problem and Research Hypotheses: A number of empirical studies have shown that the phenomenon of EP exists in musical performance. Moreover, EP split into short and long-term. EP affect the musical (repertoire) preferences, on the one hand, they are related to the plural self of performers, on the other [34-37]. However, the

issue of short- and long-term interactions of EP in both the musical repertoire and plural self of performers remains little studied. In particular, it is not enough clear whether short and long-term EP embrace the preferred musical repertoire and the plural self and if so, under what conditions it is possible. These research questions were examined in the current study.

Two Research Hypotheses Have Been Tested:

- With regard to some variables, short and long-term EP interact with the musical preferences rather than with sub-selves of musical performers.
- On to other variables, short-term and long-term EP interact both with the musical preferences and sub-selves of musical performers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants: The sample consisted of 103 participants recruited from Perm State Institute of Arts and Culture and Perm colleges specializing in musical performance (32 men and 71 women). The age ranged from 17 to 22, $M = 19.77$, $SD = 1.51$. The participants received no reward or compensation for participating in the experiment.

Procedure: The study consisted of two parts. In the first part the participants ranged preferred musical pieces they include or would include in their repertoire. Then they fixed emotional properties of preferred musical pieces. In the second part the questionnaires were administered to the participants. In both parts the participants completed tasks in a number of group sessions.

Questionnaires

Plural Self Questionnaire: Sub-selves were measured by the Plural self questionnaire [38] based on the concept of plural self [39]. The scales of the questionnaire were designed to measure sub-selves such as Authored, Embodied, Mutated and Related. The higher their values were, the more they were expressed. The questionnaire consisted of 34 points, including 2 points as the lie scale. Each sub-self scale consisted of 8 points. The respondents expressed the degree of agreement with each item on the six-point scale ranging from -3 ("strongly disagree") to 3 ("strongly agree"). Then, the answers were converted into values from 1 to 6. The Plural self questionnaire was successfully tested on its reliability, construct and convergent validity [40].

Questionnaire "Emotional Canvas": The questionnaire "Emotional *canvas*" [41] makes it possible to measure modality, activity, stress and direction as EP parameters. They take the shape of unipolar scales. The modality consisted of 4 scales such as joy, sadness, fear and anger. In the activity two scales were distinguished as activity and passivity. Similarly, in the stress there were two scales: stress and relaxation. And the same for the direction scales; object direction (from self to music) and self-direction (from music to self). As a result, 10 scales were used. The participants evaluated performing music on each scale between 0 to 100.

Short and Long-Term EP: To assess the short-term EP the participants were asked to select and rank the 10 pieces of music that are currently included in their repertoire from most preferred to the least preferred. Then they were asked to evaluate how they performed each of these pieces using the questionnaire "Emotional *canvas*."

To assess the long-term EP the participants were asked to choose and rank 10 pieces of music that they would include in their repertoire if they had "unlimited" technical opportunities and physical abilities. The musical pieces were ranged from the most preferred to the least preferred. Then the participants were asked to evaluate how they would like to perform each of the selected musical pieces using the questionnaire "Emotional *canvas*."

To the proper EP (short and long-term ones taken separately) the following technique was applied.

Two kinds of ranks were constructed. The first one is ranking the preferred musical pieces (a reference range). The second rank is composed of emotional evaluations of preferred musical pieces. The emotional evaluations, in turn, were partitioned into 10 parameters according to the questionnaire "Emotional *canvas*" ("emotional range series"). Indicators of EP were significant correlations of "emotional range series" with a reference range. So 10 appropriate and independent indicators of EP were created and used.

In the current experiment, 5 preferred musical pieces were only taken into account. They were uneven (the first, third, fifth, seventh and ninth) piece of preferred music. Accordingly, a common layout was 10 (EP's indicators) x 5 (preferred musical pieces).

Analysis of Data: Extreme values ("outliers") were excluded from each variable. They were defined as falling outside the range $X \pm 2.0$ SD. Then, each variable was tested for normal distribution (test of Kolmogorov -

Smirnov, D-max statistics). All variables were normally distributed ($p > .05$).

A series of 2-way ANOVA/MANOVA was conducted. The first hypothesis (see above) was tested by 2 x 5 (repeated measures factors, fixed effects, regression approach, the type III SS and polynomial contrast). The first within-subject factor was the long-term EP and the second repeated measures factor short-term EP. Each factor included emotional evaluations of each 5 preferred musical pieces (levels). 2 x 5 interactions were assessed on each 10 emotional variables (joy, sadness, fear, anger, etc.) separately.

A series of 3-way ANOVA/MANOVA (mixed design, fixed effects, regression approach, type III SS and polynomial contrast) was conducted. The second hypothesis (see above) was tested by 3 x 2 x 5. First between-groups factor was a subself with 3 levels, one subself for one series of ANOVA/MANOVA. Second within-subject factor was the long-term EP and the third repeated measures factor was the short-term EP. Each of second and third factors included emotional evaluations of 5 preferred musical pieces (levels). 3 x 2 x 5 interactions were assessed on each of 10 emotional variables.

RESULTS

The short- and long-term EP interacted with musical preferences and did not interact with subselves. Such interactions have been set on "fear" (Rao R (4,67) = 3.61, $p < .01$; F (4,280) = 5.81 $p < .001$) and "Object direction" (Rao R (4,73) = 2.07, $p < .09$; F (76,304) = 2.28, $p < .05$).

Moreover, it was found that some short- and long-term EP interact both with the musical preferences and subselves. The Authored subself, short and long-term EP interacted on "sadness" (Rao R (8,120) = 2.95, $p < .05$; F (63,252) = 2.87, $p < .01$). Similarly, the Authored subself, short- and long-term EP interacted on "anger" (Rao R (8,134) = 2.42, $p < .01$; F (70,280) = 2.62, $p < .01$). The Related subself, short- and long-term EP interacted on "self-direction" in trend (Rao R (8,174) = 1.90, $p < .06$; F (90,360) = 1.84, $p < .06$).

DISCUSSION

Both hypotheses have received empirical support. The first hypothesis consisted in that the short and long-term EP interact with the musical preferences and do not that with subselves. It was supported on the variables "Fear" and "Object direction." The second hypothesis stressed that the short and long-term EP interact both with musical preferences and subselves. It was supported

in that the Authored subself, short- and long-term EP interacted on sadness and anger. The Related subself, short- and long-term EP interacted on self-direction.

How one can explain the data obtained? Let's make a few assumptions regarding to the above empirical findings.

- Dorfman [42] suggested three aspects of emotional representations. (1) One aspect refers to the emotional meanings. They are cognitions in which emotogenic features of music are mentally represented. (2) Another aspect is emotional images. They are mental representations of personal experiences. (3) Third aspect is the flow of consciousness. It appears as thoughts that are drawn from the emotional meanings and emotional images.

From this perspective, one can suggest two opportunities. One is when EP interact with the musical preferences and do not that with subselves. Then it occurs due to EP shift to the pole of emotional meanings. Another opportunity is when the EP interact with both the musical preferences and subselves. This would indicate EP embrace emotional meanings and emotional images. Whereas emotional meanings as pointed out above refer to the emotogenic field of musical performances, emotional images can be referred to the area of "vital", extra-musical representations. They are routed in personal experiences and their manifestations are detected in consciousness.

Departing from the metaindividual world theory [43], one can assume that EP are characterized by duality. Emotional meanings refer to the basic system of relations "from the world to the personality (the world of music prevails). In turn, emotional images refer to the basic system of relations "from personality to the world" (personal experiences predominate).

- Some variables of EP can be mentally located across emotional meanings and emotional images. Besides, one variables of EP can belong to emotional meanings and another variables of EP to emotional images. This further would lead to suggest that the variables "Fear" and "Object direction" come from emotional meanings. However the variables "Sadness", "Anger" and "Self-direction" come from both emotional meanings and emotional images.
- Now we would focus on the short- and long-term EP. Their interaction can be explained by the theory of self-discrepancies of Higgins [44, 45]. The fact is that

short EP can be attributed to the area of the real self and long-term to the area of an ideal self. But according to Higgins, along with the increase in discrepancy between the real and the ideal self the negative emotions increase and positive emotions, vice versa, decrease. In this line, one would pay attention to the variables "Sadness", "Anger" and "Self-direction" as having negative connotations. These results can be interpreted so that the emotional indicators (which are negative) signal about the discrepancy between the short and long-term EP of musical performers.

- The short and long-term EP interacted with the plural self taking into account its subselves. The Authored subself related to sadness and anger and the Related subself to self-direction. What is a nature of these subselves through which they interacted with the short- and long-term EP? We leave this question open for future research.

CONCLUSION

Based on the metaindividual world theory the interaction of EP with both the musical (repertoire) preference and plural self of musical performers were studied. EP were found in several aspects. First, EP were assessed in connection with the musical preferences. Second, the EP were examined in connection with both the musical preferences and plural self. Third, the short- and long-term EP were distinguished and their interaction were investigated, as well.

Two research hypotheses have been tested. First, with regard to some variables, the short- and long-term EP interact with the musical preferences rather than with subselves of musical performers. Second, on to other variables, the short- and long-term EP interact both with the musical preferences and subselves of musical performers. The first hypothesis was supported on variables "Fear" and "Object direction". The second hypothesis was supported in that the Authored subself, short- and long-term EP interacted on sadness and anger. The Related subself, short- and long-term EP interacted on self-direction.

Explanations of data obtained were based on two ideas. (1) Emotional representations consist of emotional meanings, emotional images and the flow of consciousness. It appears that thoughts are drawn from the emotional meanings and emotional images. (2) From the metaindividual world theory, the EP would be seen as characterized by duality. Emotional meanings refer to the basic system of relations "from the world to the

personality (the world of music prevails). In turn, emotional images refer to the basic system of relations "from personality to the world" (personal experiences predominate).

From this perspective, two opportunities were discovered. One is when EP interact with the musical preferences and do not that with subselves. It occurs due to EP shift to the pole of emotional meanings. Another opportunity is when the EP interact with both the musical preferences and subselves. This would indicate EP embrace emotional meanings and emotional images. Given this, fear and object direction would belong to emotional meanings and sadness, anger and self-direction to both emotional meanings and emotional images.

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