# Guided Practices of Musical (Re) Creation in Higher Education. Sound as a Creative Element.

**Albano García Sánchez**
Universidad de Córdoba
agsanchez@uco.es

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**Guided Practices of Musical (Re)Creation in Higher Education. Sound as a Creative Element.**

32

RESUMEN

Durante el curso 2021/2022, el alumnado de la Mención de Educación Musical del Grado en Educación Primaria que oferta la Universidad de Córdoba puso en práctica un proceso de transformación guiada de un material melódico preexistente que previamente había seleccionado en base a sus recorridos musicales. Este proceso de transformación se secuenció en tres niveles: "Forma y texto", "Ritmo" y "Armonía". El segundo de ellos, centrado en el aspecto rítmico, fue a su vez organizado en dos pasos: uno consistente en la exploración de las posibilidades sonoras de los instrumentos de pequeña percusión, del cuerpo, de la voz, así como de cualquier cotidiáfono que se considerase oportuno, y otro en la creación del acompañamiento rítmico propiamente dicho. Durante el tiempo dedicado a la manipulación del material sonoro se debía atender a aspectos tímbricos, de concertación, técnicos o relativos a la emisión del sonido, mientras que para el diseño se debían tener en cuenta también una serie de procedimientos compositivos sencillos, además de fijarse en cuestiones como la monotonía, la forma, el carácter o la técnica del instrumento. El último nivel tenía que ver con el diseño de un acompañamiento armónico para ser interpretado con instrumentos de placas. En esta ocasión se debía pensar en la técnica, la organización de los sonidos, el tipo de motivo rítmico y melódico, el ritmo armónico, la capacidad de establecer el carácter general, así como en su función en relación con el ritmo y la melodía. Durante su desarrollo, el alumnado tuvo que cumplimentar una serie de cuestionarios individuales al objeto de conocer cómo articula ideas en torno a la percepción del sonido para detectar posibles carencias y establecer propuestas de mejora. El análisis de los datos obtenidos revela la necesidad de continuar implementando actividades que favorezcan el desarrollo y perfeccionamiento de su educación auditiva con el fin de capacitarlo para pensar en sonido.

ABSTRACT

During the 2021/2022 academic year, students majoring in Music Education on the Degree in Primary Education at the University of Córdoba undertook a guided transformation process for pre-existing melodic material that they had previously selected based on their musical journeys. This transformation process was sequenced into three levels: "Form and text", "Rhythm" and "Harmony". The second was organised into two steps: one explored the audio possibilities of small percussion instruments, the body, the voice, and any instruments made from everyday objects; the other consisted of creating rhythmical accompaniment. During the time dedicated to manipulating the audio material, they had to pay attention to timbre, agreement, technique and output of sound. For the design, they also had to consider a series of simple compositional procedures, as well as pay attention to issues such as instrumental monotony, form, character and technique. The final level was to do with designing a harmonic accompaniment to be interpreted on instruments with bars. On this occasion, considerations included technique, organisation of sounds, type of rhythmic and melodic motif, harmonic rhythm, capacity to establish general character, and function in relation to rhythm and melody. During their development, students had to complete a series of individual questionnaires with a view to understanding how they articulate ideas around the perception of sound to detect possible shortcomings and establish suggested improvements. Subsequent data analysis reveals the need to continue to implement activities that encourage the development and perfection of their auditory education in order to train them to think about sound.

## Introduction

The optional module *Collective Musical Expression. Educational Intervention Methods* is worth 6 ECTS credits and is taught during the first term of the final year on the Degree in Primary Education, but it is compulsory for those majoring in Music Education in the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, University of Córdoba. During the 2021/2022 academic year, a guided process of musical (re)creation was launched in this subject. The purpose was for the students to develop a series of musical skills related to strengthening their professional profile as specialist music teachers. The use of composition approaches in primary classrooms will depend on future teachers' familiarity with this type of experience (Dogani, 2004; Ódena & Welch, 2012), hence the need to offer tools in higher education for developing skills required for practising the profession.

If the general purpose of compulsory education is to foster students' knowledge of the world around them and offer them the necessary tools to improve it, musical education cannot be oblivious to this. According to Aróstegui (2012), creative capacity is developed through composition, which trains people to be capable of intervening in and transforming the society in which they live critically and consciously, thus contributing to more egalitarian development with less concentration of power and control. For this reason, it is critical to redirect the "aesthetic" and "mechanistic" sense (technical-performative or reading-writing) that this discipline has traditionally enjoyed and transform the classroom into a space for practice (Elliot, 1997; Small, 1998). In this case, it is about turning it into a place for "musical (re)creation", identifying "composition" and "performance" as two sides of the same coin – an approach shared by many of the existing musical practices at present – and understanding "composition" as any type of action related to invention or creation, including improvisation and musical arrangement (Giráldez, 2007). The process of "musical (re)creation" that was implemented fits into this precise epistemological framework.

The proposed educational activities, although offering students a certain degree of autonomy in decision-making in order to activate their musical thinking (Aróstegui, 2012), were carried out in a scheduled manner. As established by Tafuri (2007), certain determinism is required to create. Manipulating materials and searching for different possibilities of sound organisation must be based on knowledge of a series of basic rules or procedures, even if then put into practice intuitively from the perception that something sounds "good", according to what one can understand as "pleasant" or "unpleasant" (Aróstegui, 2012). Even though, as Ódena (2014) establishes, there is a danger of the process becoming mechanical with this type of task – that is, solutions are sought regardless of their musicality – it is necessary to equip students with a series of conceptual tools and technical resources, especially if we take into account that there is a significant number of students who have neither musical training in (Berrón, 2021) nor experience of performance and/or compositional practices.

The starting point was the selection of pre-existing melodic material. This was totally borrowed from urban popular music because the students were able to draw from their own musical journeys (Green, 2002; Flores, 2008; Biamonte, 2010). As Lines states, "music brings to education a particular qualitative experience that combines the expression of sound of human origin with social and communicative relevance" (2009, p. 13). From there, a series of joint transformation processes followed. The main reason for the group format (Ódena, 2014; Ocaña, Montes & Reyes, 2020) is that it facilitates knowledge acquisition through discovery, exploration, dialogue and reflection. Let's not forget that the processes of collective composition allow a culture of conversation and transgression (Lapidaky, De Groot & Stagkos, 2012), promoting learning through interaction (Burnard, 2004; Miell, Littleton & Rojas-Drummond, 2008; Sawyer, 2008; Burnard, 2013; Sawyer, 2014; Ocaña-Fernandez & Reyes-Lopez, 2018; Ocaña-Fernandez, 2020). In addition, when cooperative work dynamics are fostered, social, emotional and intellectual maturity is developed thanks to the need for shared responsibilities.

The students' judgements, or their understanding of making music – their musical thinking – is what I am interested in assessing. As teachers, we must understand their perspective on musical ideas (Ódena, 2005). That is why the general aim was to learn the degree of development of students' sound awareness to detect possible weaknesses relating to their sound education and establish proposals for improvement. To achieve this, I established the following objectives:

- Learn what the students' previous musical ideas are when making decisions to select from the pre-existing melodic material.
- Understand what aspects of sound are considered when evaluating the end results after completing the "Rhythm" and "Harmony" levels of the collective transformation process phase with the selected pre-existing melodic material.
- Establish the relationship between students' training and/or experience in interpretive practices and/or composition and how they articulate judgements about sound.

## Methodological strategies

The research was designed qualitatively because some authors believe it is the most appropriate way to delve into the reality of education (Maykut & Morehouse, 1999; Sadín, 2003). I deemed case studies (Stake, 1998; Flick, 2004; Simons, 2011) to be the appropriate method of achieving the proposed objectives, given that I am interested in how the respondents think about sound, and because I have no intention of generalising the results.

When planning and developing the pedagogical activities, the guided collaborative processes for musical (re)creation were organised into three phases: first, students had to select pre-existing melodic material from their own musical journeys, following a series of instructions provided by the teacher; second, they had to carry out a series of formal,

Journal of Sound, Silence, Image and Technology | Number 5 | December 2022
Guided Practices of Musical (Re)Creation in Higher Education. Sound as a Creative Element.

35

rhythmic and harmonic transformation processes; finally, they had to arrange and record the repertoire (García, 2022), hosting it on a YouTube channel created ad hoc. Likewise, after completing each of the three phases, the groups uploaded the audio files and the resulting parts to a folder stored online.

| Phase | Process | Date |
|---|---|---|
| Phase 1 | **Starting point. Search for pre-existing melodic material and justification of its relevance.** | Until 20/09/2021 |
| | Organisation in groups of 3 or 4 people. | 24/09/2021 |
| | Individual selection of three melodies from among the proposals by colleagues and justification of their relevance. | Until 04/10/2021 |
| | Collective review of the appropriateness of the selected melodic material based on the teacher's instructions. | 4/10/2021 |
| Phase 2 | **Collective transformation processes.** | Until 16/11/2021 |
| | Level 1. Form and text. | Until 16/10/2021 |
| | - Design of materials. | |
| | Level 2. Rhythm. | Until 01/11/2021 |
| | - Exploration of sound possibilities and analysis.<br>- Design of materials. | |
| | Level 3. Harmony. | Until 16/11/2021 |
| | - Design of materials. | |
| Phase 3 | **Arrangement and recording.** | Hasta el 20/12/2021 |
| | Explanation and distribution of materials. | 18/11/2021 |
| | Individual study. | 25/11/2021 |
| | Joint rehearsals. | 4 sessions |
| | 1st recording session. | 16/12/2021 |
| | 2nd recording session. | 20/12/2021 |

Table 1. Sequencing and timing of the three phases of pedagogical activities.

When selecting pre-existing melodic material, a series of guidelines provided by the teacher had to be followed: materials should be pleasant, interesting and easy for primary students to learn. In addition, they should have vocal meaning (neither very fast nor very slow sounds), the movement of the melody should be undulatory (lacking sudden changes in pitch articulation), linear interval movements should be prevalent, primarily natural sounds should be used, and the materials had to be adaptable to children's vocal ranges[1]. Lastly, to facilitate their accompaniment on instruments with bars, care should also be taken to ensure that the key had few accidentals (C Major, D Major, F Major and their relative minors) or that, if not, it could be transposed to one of these keys without affecting the pitch to which it had to adapt. In any case, if the selected melodic material did not meet any of these guidelines, the students could make as many modifications as they considered appropriate.

1  According to the Franco-Belgian acoustic index, primary students' vocal range is approximately a 9th and ranges from C3 (in some cases from A2) to D4 (in some cases to F4).

Once the melodic material had been decided, the second phase of educational activities began, consisting of implementing a process of collective transformation that would be articulated in three different levels: "Form and text", "Rhythm" and "Harmony". In the first, students had to think about the structure, ensuring that it had, as a minimum: an introduction presenting the key, tempo and beat; two verses and two interspersed repetitions of the refrain; and a coda to help reinforce the feeling of ending. In addition, the introduction and coda should be connected with the pre-existing melodic material through the use of one of the more meaningful motifs from the verse or refrain in order to maintain the general character and formal consistency. The text had to be original and the theme had to generate interest, convey positive values, not use language that was too simple or excessively metaphorical, be organised in verses that rhymed, and not be hard to memorise.

The next level consisted of designing a rhythmic accompaniment. The students had previously explored the sound capabilities of various small percussion instruments, the body and the voice, as well as of any everyday objects that might be considered interesting. During the process, they had to consider the following aspects: the evolution of the intensity of sound over time (attack, sustained sound and decline); whether the timbre created interest, was pleasant and was full; whether the agreement allowed a melodic and harmonic balance of sound; and finally technically whether they were able to reproduce the required rhythm. From there, and bearing in mind a series of basic concepts ("motor rhythm", "rhythmic ostinato", "polyrhythm" and "timbral discrimination"), they had to design a rhythmic accompaniment that would contribute variety and interest to the selected melodic material, help to reinforce the formal aspects (cadential significance and differentiation of the parts), establish the general character, and not be difficult to learn.

The last level was dedicated to the creation of a harmonic accompaniment to be played on instruments with bars (chimes, xylophones and metallophones). In addition to not being difficult to memorise, being compatible with the instruments' sound and technical capabilities, and primarily using triads in root position, other proposed guidelines included that the harmonic accompaniment should have a simple rhythmic design that does not exceed two beats, be devoid of melodic meaning, have a consistent harmonic rhythm, help to establish the general character, and support the melody.

During the 2021/2022 academic year, 23 students were enrolled in the module *Collective Musical Expression. Educational Intervention Methods.* 60 hours of face-to-face teaching were delivered between September and December – four hours per week, divided into two 90-minute large-group sessions and one 60-minute medium-group session. Of those enrolled, 20 also studied the rest of the subjects necessary to major in Music Education (87%). Although the group was homogeneous in terms of age (91.3% of the students were between 21 and 23 years old) and gender (56.5% were women and 43.5% were men), there was significant variance in terms of prior musical studies – a constant in recent years (García & García, 2021).

| Previous musical training | Nº. of students | % |
|---|---|---|
| The only musical studies I have completed were music classes in primary and secondary school. | 8 | 34,8 |
| I have not studied at music schools or conservatories, but I have self-taught musical knowledge. | 3 | 13,1 |
| I have studied at music schools or conservatories for fewer years than an Elementary Degree in Music. | 1 | 4,3 |
| I have studied at music schools or conservatories equivalent to an Elementary Degree in Music. | 2 | 8,7 |
| I have studied at music schools or conservatories equivalent to a Professional Degree in Music. | 8 | 34,8 |
| I have studied at music schools or conservatories equivalent to a Higher Degree in Music. | 1 | 4,3 |

Table 2. Previous musical training of students enrolled in the module *Collective Musical Expression. Educational Intervention Methods* during the 2021/2022 academic year.

Just over half of the students stated that they knew how to read sheet music fluently and had knowledge of music theory. Approximately a third said they could do it with difficulty and only had a grasp of some basic concepts, and the rest claimed to have had no training in this regard. Approximately 40% of the class declared having mastered singing technique or that of an instrument, another 40% admitted having only basic skills and the rest admitted not having any. Regarding their experience of performance activities, half mentioned being or having been part of a vocal and/or instrumental group ('rociero' choir, orchestra, chamber group, music band, choir, carnival ensemble, rock group or jazz group) while the other half claimed to have no experience of this. Finally, regarding participation in music creation practices, only a quarter mentioned having some experience (harmony exercises for the conservatory, composition of songs for rock bands, composition of processional marches or song arrangements).

I used the following methods for data collection:

- Individual questionnaires. At the beginning of the course, I shared a questionnaire with the students to collect information related to their training and knowledge of musical instruments, mastery of the technique to play an instrument and experience of performance and/or compositional practices[2]. After completing the last two levels of the collective transformation process ("Rhythm" and "Harmony"), they were asked to complete two additional questionnaires, one for each level, with the following open-ended questions: "What would you highlight as most interesting? What did you enjoy the most? What do you think could be improved? Take into consideration the guidelines that the teacher had previously established."

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2  Someone is understood to have musical training if they have studied at least the equivalent of an Elementary Degree in Music; and someone is understood to have experience of performance and/or compositional practices if they have been part of an instrumental and/or choral group and have at some point in their life created music for some sort of ensemble.

Journal of Sound, Silence, Image and Technology | Number 5 | December 2022
**Guided Practices of Musical (Re)Creation in Higher Education. Sound as a Creative Element.**

38

- Documents. Once the pre-existing melodic material had been selected (Phase 1), each student had to write a text justifying its relevance. For this, they had to keep in mind the proposed guidelines. All audio and text files were hosted in the cloud so that other students could consult them. After that, they wrote another text justifying the three pre-existing melodic materials that were the best fit with the teacher's guidelines.

To analyse the data, I started from the guidelines proposed by the teacher, both for the selection of pre-existing melodic material (Phase 1) and for the creation of the rhythmic and harmonic accompaniment carried out during the collective transformation process (Phase 2). An open category system was designed (Table 3) because both the questionnaires and the supporting documents allowed for new categories to emerge inductively from the respondents' statements in such a way that the initial proposal could be modified or completed to prevent the system from becoming mechanical (Simons, 2011).

| Phase/Level | Block | Category |
|---|---|---|
| Selection of melodic material | Vocal meaning | Figures |
| | | Movement |
| | | Articulation |
| | | Intervals |
| | Tessitura | Alterations |
| | | Range |
| | | Key |
| Rhythm | Exploration | Output |
| | | Timbral aspects |
| | | Coordination aspects |
| | | Technical aspects |
| | Basic concepts | Motor rhythm |
| | | *Ostinato* |
| | | Polyrhythm |
| | | Timbral discrimination |
| | Design | Monotony |
| | | Form |
| | | Character |
| | | Technique |
| Harmony | Design | Technique |
| | | Organisation |
| | | Rhythmic/melodic design |
| | | Harmonic rhythm |
| | | Character |
| | | Function |

Table 3. Categories elaborated from the teacher's guidelines.

## Results

Analysing the two documents written by the students after they selected the pre-existing melodic material (Phase 1) shows the following: of the 23 students enrolled in the module, 20 completed the document justifying their choice (86.96%) and 16 completed the one about the three proposals from among those suggested by other students (69.16%). There were seven categories (taken from the guidelines proposed by the teacher) organised into two blocks to describe the sound aspect: "Vocal meaning" ("Figures", "Movement", "Articulation", "Intervals", "Alterations") and "Tessitura" ("Range" and "Key"). Of all the people who delivered at least one of the two documents (86.96%), four did not comment on the categories (20%). Of the rest, eight did not comment on the "Vocal meaning" (40%) and nine on the "Register" (45%). Of those who did (80%), none used four or more categories to defend their justification and only four used two or three categories (20%). Seven supported one category and one wrote very generally (40%). Although a few delved into the content, none included information that would allow the inclusion of new categories or the modification of existing ones.

Analysing the responses to the individual questionnaires after completion of the "Rhythm" level of Phase 2 shows the following results: Of all the students enrolled, 11 completed the form (47.83%), nine of whom made some comment regarding the musical aspect of the rhythmic design (81.82%). For this, there were 12 categories divided into three blocks: "Exploration" ("Output", "Timbral aspects", "Coordination aspects" and "Technical aspects"), "Basic concepts" ("Motor rhythm", "Ostinato", "Polyrhythm" and "Timbral discrimination") and "Design" ("Monotony", "Form", "Character" and "Technique"). From the first block (the nine people), none used three or more categories, two made use of two, five used one and two wrote in a general way. As for the second block, no-one used three or more categories, one used two (9.09%) and two used one (18.18%). As in the previous block, two people wrote in a general way (18.18%). Regarding the last block, five used three or four (45.45%), two used one or two (18.18%), one wrote generally (9.09%) and another did not comment (9.09%). As before, although a few delved into the content, no-one provided information that would allow the inclusion of new categories or the modification of those already established.

Ten students (43.48%) completed the individual questionnaires after finishing the "Harmony" level of Phase 2. There were six categories for answering the questions: "Technique", "Organisation", "Rhythmic and melodic design", "Harmonic rhythm", "Character" and "Function". Of the 10 people, three used four or more categories (30%), six used one or two (60%) and one wrote in a general way (10%). This time no-one delved into the content, so they could not generate new categories or adapt existing ones.

Finally, of the 23 students enrolled, 12 stated that they had training in and/or experience of performance and/or compositional practices (52.15%). If we look at the relationship between students' training and/or previous experience and how they think about sound, seven of the 16 people who commented on the sound aspect of the selected pre-existing

melodic material had no training and/or previous experience (43.75%). If we look at the two blocks of categories ("Vocal meaning" and "Voice register"), five of the 12 that commented on some aspect related to the former had neither knowledge nor training (41.67%), and of the 11 that responded regarding the latter, three had neither knowledge nor training (27.27%). All the people who delved into some of the aspects of sound to justify the selection of pre-existing melodic material had prior training and/or experience (44.44%). As before, all the people who delved into the sound aspect after the rhythmic design also had training and/or previous experience. Lastly, of the 10 people who filled out the form after the harmonic design, six had neither training nor experience (60%). On this occasion, no-one delved into the sound aspect.

**Discussion**

The guided practice of musical (re)creation that the students worked through was divided into three levels of collective transformation ("Form and text", "Rhythm" and "Harmony") to provide evidence that could be assessed individually through the completion of a questionnaire in accordance with a series of guidelines previously established by the teacher. The groups presented the end results to their classmates after completing each of the activities of the collective transformation process. It was the creation of these spaces that led the students to rate the results very favourably:

> "For me, the most interesting thing about the product was exactly that. Hearing how the final audio sounded was very rewarding."

> "The most interesting thing about this work was how we went about creating it in layers, obtaining an amazing result."

> "I find it interesting how apparently simple rhythms can contribute so much to the melody working together."

The freedom enjoyed during the selection of pre-existing melodic material (Phase 1) is also striking. As already mentioned, the students borrowed everything from popular urban music. It makes sense, since everyone passively consumes this type of music and, in some cases, even protagonises it as performers in various practices. This shows the deep degree of inculturation that has largely been developed thanks to the mass media, especially the consumption of music streamed from online multimedia services that can easily be managed with a smartphone. This repertoire is part of their "customs", their "sociocultural practices" and their idea of "traditional music" (Shuker, 2001).

In the same way, analysing the individual questionnaires revealed to us other aspects of the educational activities that the students wanted to highlight as very positive: the degree

of involvement of each of the members of the group throughout the process (Burnard, 2013; Wiggins & Espeland, 2012; Beineke, 2017); the good atmosphere that was generated among colleagues when presenting the end results; the satisfaction of being able to rehearse what they had created with the whole class; and, finally, how much fun they had with the implementation, resulting in a highly rewarding musical experience (Rusinek, 2005; García & García, 2021).

On the other hand, if we focus on assessing students' musical ideas when selecting the melodic material (Phase 1), there was a generalised trend towards the use of aesthetic arguments, such as "pretty", "pleasant", "popular", "lively" or "sweet", or methodological ones, such as "easy to memorise", "catchy", "motivating" or "generating curiosity and interest". Most did not include comments on the musical features or, if they did, they only made use of one of the categories that had been proposed, literally reproducing the ideas expressed in the document. Only a few went into more depth with their arguments:

> "Although it may seem that there is a great difference in height between the verse and the refrain, with the verse perhaps being low for them, they will sing it an octave above, leaving that bass in the background, in order to achieve a sense of fullness."

> "The mixture of both is very interesting to me, as they have the same or a very similar rhythm and they share a key – G Major. However, a modulating mix can also be done, with the first melody in F sharp then rising a semitone in the chorus to place the second melody in G Major."

I have been able to draw similar questions from analysing the individual questionnaires completed after the "Rhythm" and "Harmony" levels of the collective transformation process of the pre-existing melodic material (Phase 2), with the exception that on this occasion more than half of the class just did not respond. As in Phase 1, only a few supported their arguments in more than one category and most literally re-presented the concepts that appeared in the documents that were provided to them with the guidelines. Very few delved into some aspect related to sound after completing the rhythmic design:

> "I found it interesting to try the instruments to see if they worked with the melody because I usually work mentally instead of improvising with the instruments themselves. This method contributes more richness and colleagues can make more contributions."

> "They mix well with each other and manage to evoke oriental music a bit thanks to the bedbugs."

> "The superimposition of the different ostinatos works and the generating rhythmic pattern provides information about the tempo, the beat and the ternary subdivision. In fact, what we were

Journal of Sound, Silence, Image and Technology | Number 5 | December 2022
**Guided Practices of Musical (Re)Creation in Higher Education. Sound as a Creative Element.**

42

> looking for with rhythm was precisely this aspect, which marked that subdivision allowing the piece to walk."

> "There is discrimination of timbres because each instrument, although coinciding in softness, has different timbres in terms of dryness and height of sound."

There is a direct relationship between training and/or previous musical experience and how students think about sound. This is because all the people who showed some degree of development of sound awareness had stated in the initial questionnaire that they had studied music and/or had significant experience of performance and/or compositional practices. According to Aróstegui (2012), in both performance activities and creation ones, each person's prior musical experience determines their ability to think about sound, which conditions the complexity or simplicity of the end result; musical knowledge has a decisive influence on their ability to substantiate what they have previously experienced. However, it is not a *sine qua non*, because in this case a significant number of people who had acknowledged having training and/or previous experience either literally reproduced the categories proposed by the teacher or simply did not complete the questionnaires.

In any case, this study has revealed student deficiencies regarding the degree of development of sound awareness. In fact, that's how they manifested during the whole process:

> "The knowledge that we all have when carrying out said activity could be improved since most of us have barely studied music, but this makes us show up with enthusiasm, eager to learn about it."

In this sense, the questionnaire that they completed on the first day of class reflects that half of the students had not previously had contact with this discipline beyond what was studied in regulated education and the compulsory 1st-year subject on the Degree in Primary Education. I must add that the new syllabus has condensed all the content into the first term of the final year (4th), in addition to significantly reducing the number of credits earmarked for training compared to the previous plan (Berrón, 2021), which makes it difficult to integrate the necessary skills to practise the profession. This also justifies the fact that most of the students focused more on explaining what could be done with the end results of the transformation process of the melodic material than on describing the characteristics of its sound organisation: "could be played with different instruments", "the body could be used as an instrument", "it would be useful for inventing lyrics", "simple rhythms could be incorporated" or "it could be actively participated in", are just some of the examples.

Journal of Sound, Silence, Image and Technology | Number 5 | December 2022
**Guided Practices of Musical (Re)Creation in Higher Education. Sound as a Creative Element.**

43

## Conclusions

During the first term of the 2021/2022 academic year, a series of guided musical (re)creation processes were carried out with students enrolled in the module *Collective Music Expression. Educational Intervention Methods*, which is compulsory for those majoring in Music Education on the Degree in Primary Education at the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, University of Córdoba. The starting point was a free search for pre-existing melodic material based on a series of guidelines previously established by the teacher. From then on, a series of collective and guided transformations were spread over three levels: "Form and text", "Rhythm" and "Harmony".

Throughout the educational activities, students had to justify the relevance of what was selected, arranged or created to reveal the degree of development of their sound awareness. However, as the process progressed, more and more students stopped completing the questionnaires. In addition, most of those who did limited themselves to mechanically reproducing the words proposed in the documents with the guidelines that the teacher had previously explained in class. My data analysis shows that the absence of training and/or previous musical experience was a decisive factor in this. Perhaps the issue could be alleviated somewhat if extracurricular activities around vocal and/or instrumental expression were offered for elective credits between the first year, when the module *Primary Music Education* is compulsory for all students enrolled in the Degree in Primary Education, and the last year, when majoring in Music Education.

This study also shows that a lack of musical knowledge or experience is not the only possible cause because more than half of those who admitted not lacking said knowledge or experience behaved in the same way. Nevertheless, the reason for this is unknown; it could be due to having learned by rote while studying at music conservatories, or due to the time it takes to write well-founded arguments, to mention just a couple of possible reasons. The data collection methods I used did not enable me to find the answer to this question, so future research should assess the use of other methods, such as semi-structured or unstructured interviews, or discussion groups, among other options.

In any case, this is an initial exploratory approach to the characteristics of future primary music teachers' sound education and it has enabled us to confirm the need to strengthen both the implementation of sound manipulation processes for different materials and the development of auditory education. It is about providing students with the tools, resources and necessary experiences to improve their ability to think about sound, thereby preventing guided processes of musical (re)creation from becoming mechanical.

Journal of Sound, Silence, Image and Technology | Number 5 | December 2022

**Guided Practices of Musical (Re)Creation in Higher Education. Sound as a Creative Element.**

44

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