How to teach creation? Music teacher's pedagogical preferences and actions in Secondary Education

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Abstract: Musical creation is becoming an increasingly recurrent topic in music research, given the multiple benefits it brings to the psycho-educational level of pupils. However, studies analysing its dynamisation in schools are in the minority. The main objective of this study is to identify the pedagogical approach of 14 secondary school teachers in Galicia (Spain) regarding improvisation, composition and arrangement, using a narrative-biographical approach in order to search for conditioning factors in their praxis. To this end, the data collection is based on individual semi-structured in-depth interviews, the content of which is codified through a double individual and comparative process carried out with the software ATLAS.Ti (version 23). The lack of significant references to music-making during initial teacher training favours imitative and reproductive models, aligned with the pre-eminence of the Western academic repertoire in music teaching. In contrast, those teachers who are self-taught, who have formative experiences of collaborative approaches, or who maintain a creative musical life, seek to open up spaces and diversify their teaching in terms of musical creation. We conclude that it is necessary to recognise the challenges of contemporary education as a prelude to proposing training measures that lead to the training of teachers in the enrichment of their pedagogical proposal, with a view to educational models that foster the genuine creative development of the student.
Keywords: secondary education; teacher training; musical creation; music education; teacher narratives; teaching-learning process.

Sumario: 1. Introduction. 2. The Galician context. 3. Methodology. 4. Results. 5. Discussion and conclusions. 6. Bibliographic references.

1. Introduction

Contemporary political-educational implications for the promotion of critical and autonomous thinking in students, imaginative entrepreneurship for the generation of opportunities and citizenship development require teaching-learning processes in line with musical didactics. Musical creation offers a direct involvement in the development of creative thinking (Arriaga *et al.*, 2022; Beineke, 2017; Kanellopoulos, 2012; Kladder & Lee, 2019; Kokotsaki, 2011; Lage-Gómez *et al.*, 2023; Odena, 2013; Urrutia & Díaz, 2013) and the promotion of participatory moments with transformative social potential (Fernández-Jiménez & Jorquera-Jaramillo, 2017; Hogenes *et al.*, 2016; Lage-Gómez & Cremades-Andreu, 2020; Oriol López, 2009).

The National Association for Music Education (2017) defines "musical creation" as a set of processes related to improvisation, composition and arrangement of pre-existing musical pieces. In this sense, improvisation is conceptualised as a flexible and spontaneous creative practice that emerges during the performance itself (Burnard, 2012; Hemsy de Gainza, 1983), while musical composition usually implies a recourse to a means of fixing ideas, as a form of creation "in deferred time" (Rusinek, 2005; Webster, 1992). Nevertheless, in musical practice the terminological boundaries are diluted, as in the case of those improvisations that act as a first approach in the outline of a composition (Hogenes *et al.*, 2014), or the approach of improvisations

guided by a predefined and conscious programme of action in the manner of a composition, as in the case of Soundpainting technique (Thompson, 2009). Even the expansion of the creative possibilities inherent in the field of experimental music in the contemporary repertoire requires a reformulation of the terminology itself, as processes based on the exploration and reflection of sound (Veloso, 2012).

It is uncommon for music teachers to identify themselves as "creators", "improvisers" or "composers" (Bautista *et al.*, 2018). The formation of a teacher's professional identity involves the influence of the working environment (Bullough & Baughman, 1995; Hargreaves, 1998), one's own perceived social expectations (Beijaard *et al.*, 2004), as well as the values and role models acquired during their studies (Duling, 2000; Korthagen, 2004). Isbell (2008) emphasises the effects of primary and secondary socialisation on academic teacher training: this includes the idealisation of teaching, the acquisition of "role-specific behaviours and vocabularies" and, in short, the consolidation of a priority identification "as performers first and teachers second" (p. 164), in line with authors as Bouij (2004) and Hargreaves *et al.* (2007).

This corresponds to the predominant technical focus of academic music teacher training, mostly towards self-improvement as performers through highly individualised and repetition-based teaching-learning processes (Bautista, 2020; Birnie, 2014; Murillo & Tejada, 2022), to the detriment of providing spaces for students' creative expression (Arriaga *et al.*, 2022; Ibarmia-Urruzola & Arriaga-Sanz, 2019; West, 2019). Devaney (2023) points out that composition teaching models tend to be limited to the stylistic-grammatical imitation of a selection of referential authors or "pastiche composing". West (2019), for his part, highlights how institutional music education is sometimes directed against students' own creative endeavours, often justified by the stratification between interpretive and compositional itineraries in curriculum.

Consequently, music educators form various regions acknowledge their greather proficiency in the areas of interpretation and listening to music rather than composing (Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; Carrillo & Vilar, 2016; Castro-Alonso & Chao-Fernández, 2024; Clinton, 1962), while simultaneously normalising the lag in its professional significance (Baird, 1958; Carrillo & Vilar, 2016; Castro-Alonso & Chao-Fernández, 2024; Clinton, 1962; Taebel, 1980). In this sense, Randles & Muhonen (2015) emphasise that the lack of competence to create music undermines the teacher's own credibility when it comes to incorporating it into the classroom: "in order for teachers to feel comfortable introducing students to music composition, they should first learn to create music themselves, thus establishing a creative identity for themselves" (p. 63). For their part, Birnie (2014) and Odena & Welch (2012) point out that it is precisely those teachers who are less familiar with musical creativity who allow for less intentionality in its dynamisation, as well as less effectiveness, expecting it to emerge of its own without any guidance on their part.

Teachers' own horizons of possibility could also be conditioned by the type of "sound conditioning" that prevails in the pedagogical strategies of their training, rooted mainly in the superiority of the Western erudite repertoire as a "dominant rationality" (Costa *et al.*, 2018; Murillo & Tejada, 2022). In this context, a saga of English pedagogues laid the foundations for a new pedagogy in secondary education, based on the democratisation of access to musical creation for non-musicians through works such as *Experimental Music in Schools* by Brian Dennis (1970), *New Sounds in Class* by George Self (1967) or *Sound and Structure* by John Paynter (1972). In this pedagogical revolution, the Canadian Murray Schafer (1965) and, later, François Delalande (1995) delved into the possibilities of the soundscape and the sensorial and free exploration of the environment and the objects, in the manner of *musique concrète*.

The present study analyses the casuistry of secondary education music teachers in Galicia (Spain) through the narrative-biographical approach (Kelchetermans & Ballet, 2002). This is followed by a synthesis of the state of the issue in this socio-educational and political context.

2. The Galician Context

Access to the teaching profession in secondary education in Spain requires a pedagogical qualification in the form of the current 60 ECTS credits Master's Degree. Aróstegui & Fernández-Jiménez (2023) point to the predominant disciplinary focus of the qualification rather than the development of pedagogical skills. On the other hand, Blanco García & Peñalba Acitores (2020) highlight the lack of methodologies for musical creation and sound exploration in the curriculum of the degree.

Research concerning the praxis of music teachers in secondary education in Galicia is a minority. Regarding their training conditioning, Domínguez-Lloria & Pino-Juste (2021) mention the priority bias in the training of those teachers coming from conservatories in this territory, in view of the emphasis of the curriculum on continuous training as performers, the study of music theory, analysis and historiography.

The Spanish State provides a common curriculum guideline, which is specified by the educational administrations of each Autonomous Community based on their territorial reality. The analysis of the curricula of the Autonomous Community of Galicia from the perspective of creation enables the conclusion that:

– Musical improvisation has been included in the curriculum since 1993, with an approach based on the syntax of musical language in the Western tradition (Decreto 78/1993). Improvisation remains present in subsequent regulations (Decreto 133/2007; Decreto 86/2015), although the level of procedural detail in its description is decreasing.
– Musical composition was originally conceived from songwriting (Decreto 78/1993) and later received its definitive consolidation through the statement "individual or group composition of songs and instrumental pieces for different ensembles, based on the combination of elements and resources presented in the context of the different activities carried out in the classroom" (Decreto 133/2007, p. 12092).

– Arranging was not included in the curriculum until 2007 and was mainly conceived as the elaboration of accompaniments to pre-existing melodies (Decreto 133/2007). The subsequent Decreto 86/2015 was a step backwards in terms of the procedural details provided.

Spanish educational music research has a growing number of studies that support the psychoeducational benefits of musical creation, providing theoretically and empirically grounded resources and experiences (Cremades-Andreu & Lage-Gómez, 2023; Gértrudix Barrio & Gértrudix Barrio, 2014; Lage-Gómez & Cremades-Andreu, 2020; Murillo *et al.*, 2019; Oriol, 2004; Yelo Cano, 2018, among others). However, studies on the diagnosis of teaching practice in secondary education are less frequent and are usually carried out at other levels of education (Arriaga *et al.*, 2022). Nevertheless, there is a consensus that musical creation is one of the least widespread practices in the classroom (Oriol López, 2009), under the hegemonic presence of theoretical teaching (Vernia-Carrasco, 2020) or performance and listening (Urrutia & Díaz, 2013). Among the possible causes, Alonso & Vicente (2019) point to the younger school tradition of music education in Spain, which favors the adoption of methodological approaches from other predominantly expository fields.

Notwithstanding the challenges encountered, the provision of curricular support for music creation - in its three dimensions - has been in place for over three decades. This justifies the identification of certain indicators of how secondary music teachers construct the didactic experience based on their beliefs related to musical learning (Burnard, 2005), around the following research questions (RQ):

1. How do teachers implement the curriculum proposals related to musical creation in their classrooms?
2. How do teachers' educational backgrounds influence the incorporation of musical creation in secondary music education?
3. What characteristics or formative experiences distinguish teachers who actively incorporate musical creation in their classrooms?

The aim of these RQ is to identify the factors that contribute to a richer and more detailed dynamisation of musical creation as a teaching strategy. The research will not assess the professional quality of individual teachers; it will be carried out by and for teachers in order to gain an informed understanding of their needs and concerns.

3. Methodology

The narrative-biographical perspective is appropriate for studying "teachers' career experiences and, in particular, to the meaning these experiences have for the teacher" (Kelchetermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 106). In this case, individual in-depth interviews are chosen to allow a prospective study of the teacher's own training based on his or her memories, thus allowing an understanding of the meanings of everyday practices through the interpretation of the narratives obtained (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007).

3.1. Instrument

The semi-structured interview enables identification of pre-defined aspects of interest, whilst permitting inductive emergence of information, offering greater flexibility (Kvale, 2011). This approach facilitates comparative analysis of the responses gathered. In this case, we first explore the biographical-academic component of each interviewee's memories as a music student. The exploration of each teacher's pedagogical approach is carried out through a concatenation of questions ranging from the general to the specific: firstly, the frequency with which musical creation is proposed and, secondly, the procedural description of the type of proposals recognised, following a checklist based on the categories of curriculum analysis. Finally, the identification of possible limiting factors to the presence of musical creation in secondary education is requested, through questions related to its presence in the curriculum or the level of specificity in terms of teacher expectations.

3.2. Participation

The process of selecting informants prioritises the participation of active teachers who promote "enriching and/or creative practices" in the classroom, regardless of their professional experience. Their identification envisages sampling by reference chain (Flick, 2015), combined with recruitment based on internet advertisements (Robinson, 2014), in both cases with prior personal contact to resolve possible fraudulent identity claims (Hamilton & Bowers, 2006).

The final sample includes 8 secondary school teachers who identify their gender as "male" (M) and 6 as "female" (F), aged between 26 and 57 ($\bar{x}$ = 42.9) and with a professional career in their sector of between 1 and 28 years ($\bar{x}$ = 14.7). Alphanumeric codes are established to identify each informant according to gender, age and higher musical qualification. Interpretation (In) is consolidated as the most common option in the academic profile of participation (64.3%), followed by Musicology (Mu) with 42.9% and Pedagogy (Pe) with 35.7%. Only one teacher has a specific degree in Composition (Co). The sample also includes one teacher with exclusively self-taught musical training (St), developed outside institutional channels. All participants have the minimum pedagogical accreditation required to carry out their profession in Spain.

3.3. Data collection and data processing

The interviews are preceded by a personal contact in which each informant is asked to fill in an individual form to situate their academic and professional profile, providing a "preliminary robo-foto of the respondent" (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 109). The interviews were conducted through an empathetic, sensitive

and respectful positioning on the part of the interviewer (Flick, 2004), seeking greater reciprocity with the interviewee and adapting to their preferences in terms of the medium/place, date and language (Spanish or Galician). Once consent has been given, all interviews are recorded using a professional digital audio recorder to facilitate their subsequent transcription.

The process of encoding the transcribed content consists of fragmenting the text, assigning words or short phrases that symbolically evoke the essence of a piece of information (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2009), for subsequent organisation and reduction in a report. This process is computer-assisted using the software ATLAS.ti, version 23. The interpretative analysis of content involves two distinct phases (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002):

– The individual case-by-case or "vertical analysis" (Miles & Huberman, 1994), which considers the idiosyncrasies of each teacher independently. Successive revisions of the material made it possible to establish 3 levels of concreteness in the coding (categories, subcategories and codes), in all cases including codes of both a descriptive and interpretative nature.

– Comparative analysis or "cross-case analysis" (Miles & Huberman, 1994), in which common patterns of responses are sought according to the characteristics of each informant.

Table 1 shows the categories of analysis obtained in line with the research questions.

Table 1 Categories for coding the content of the interviews

CATEGORIES	EXPLANATION
Proposals	Classifies the nature of the didactic proposals for musical creation recognised by the teacher.
Training memories	Includes reflections on the state of musical creation in teacher education.
Pedagogical preparation	Refers to the degree of familiarity with or specific knowledge of musical creation pedagogies.
Pedagogical importance	Includes the relevance that the teacher gives to musical creation during the teaching process.
Curriculum interpretation	Includes the analysis of the status of musical creation in the curriculum, as a possible conditioning factor.

Table of own elaboration.

All the quotations in the report are translations from the original Spanish and/or Galician language.

3.4. Research ethics and credibility

This research protects the right to confidentiality and autonomy of its participants, who are informed of the purpose and nature of their participation, while offering the possibility to withdraw from the investigation at any time without prejudice. Data relating to the educational institutions or educational projects has been omitted. The right of each interviewee to access, rectify, suppress or limit the data provided is also foreseen. In this case, the transcripts are validated by the informants themselves and the researchers additionally reached out to specific interviewees during their analysis to clarify their statements.

In accordance with the criteria of validity and reliability, the authors of this research have a systematic breakdown of the data of each interview (dates, modalities, means and places) and of the units resulting from the coding process, subject to external verification. The construction of the instrument was supervised by an international committee consisting of an expert in qualitative research methods and two experts in music education. The qualitative analysis was reviewed by an expert in educational psychology and an expert in qualitative research methods.

4. Results

4.1. Meaning of music creation in the classroom: teachers' proposals

Table 2 summarises the informants' concrete proposals for the didactic inclusion of improvisation, composition and arranging, together with the frequency of their participation, including some representative quotes.

The participating teachers prioritise musical improvisation with their secondary school students (71.4%), to a greater extent through the group invention of rhythms by imitation (42.9%), either as an introductory dynamic and/or in the conceptual assimilation of musical figures and measures. Rhythmic-melodic improvisations adopt more directive quality, conditioned by a selection of notes from among the possibilities inherent in a scale or chords. In this sense, teachers like M50-In recognises the comfort of this type of approach for the teachers, given the convenience of its management, while the dynamisation of more open-ended suggestions is often seen as an extension "for pupils who are either highly able or who have developed musical skills" (M41-In). Alternatively, younger teachers also refer to some less traditional suggestions, such as the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), verbal improvisations based on the rhyming combination of words on a hip-hop base (F30-In; F36-In/Mu; M41-In) or the sonorisation of graphic notations using sound objects and vocal, body and instrumental textures, trying not to do "anything recognisable harmonically or melodically" (M41-In).

Table 2 Table of frequencies of proposals for musical creation promoted by teachers

SUBCAT.	FREQ.	PERC.	CODES	FREQ.	PERC.	EXAMPLE QUOTATIONS
Improvisation	10	71.4%	Imitative rhythmic	6	42.9%	I use improvisation mainly as a warm-up (...) establishing a simple basic rhythm (...) it is done by imitation (...) each one proposes a different rhythm, and the others must imitate in response (M26-In/Mu)
			Rhythmic-melodic on tonal scale	3	21.4%	Starting from very simple notes with the tonic/dominant (...) from there to be creative with passing notes that allow the student to make very simple melodies (M54-In/Pe)
			Rhythmic-melodic on pentatonic scale	3	21.4%	We often play blues with a pentatonic scale (...) I try to get them to improvise with the flute (M41-In)
			Verbal (rhymes on hip-hop base)	3	21.4%	We do rap battles, but with reference to music, so (...) "you are Salieri, I am Mozart", and then they must look for information about each other (F36-In/Mu)
			Rhythmic-melodic on tonal chords	2	14.3%	I explain what a major chord is and ask them to invent a melody on the notes of a major chord to understand the relationship between arpeggio, chord, harmony (M50-In)
			Experimentation on non-conventional notation	2	14.3%	Improvisation is more suitable for experimental languages, scores with unconventional notation, with cartoons and on sounds (...) vocal textures and instrumental ones (M41-In)
			Rhythmic-melodic on modal scale	1	7.1%	I start the whole first trimester with pentatonic scales; 2nd and 3rd trimester, modal scales (M34-Pe)
Composition	9	64.3%	By tracks and/or loops (ICT)	5	35.7%	They had to have a bass first (...) a percussion and then a melody (...) I told them how to add [audio tracks] within the possibilities that the program [Soundtrap] gives them (F30-In)
			Soundtrack (ICT)	2	14.3%	I usually give them a 20-second video fragment, a video that can be interpreted in many ways without sound. Then I ask them to select (...) two very different soundtracks (M49-Mu)
			Harmonisation of a bass (ICT)	2	14.3%	All the rules of basic harmony, melodic creation, intervallic, cadences... we always apply them to Musescore (...) first, then on a given bass playing the harmony (F40-In/Pe)
			Harmonisation of a melody (ICT)	1	7.1%	I ask them to record this melody with the sound of the piano in GarageBand. Then I ask them to add their own percussion and finally I tell them to put (...) one or two chords in each bar (M49-Mu)
			Composition of a melody (ICT)	1	7.1%	In Tony-b Machine application, in the case of the harmony, we didn't get involved (...) we just concentrated on the melodic elaboration (...) from that C major base (M26-In/Mu)
			Electroacoustic: musique concrète and synthesis (ICT)	1	7.1%	We go for a sound walk, I have them install a little program to record on their mobile phone (...) and they make their sound composition using two or three types of sound from each, from geophonies, biophonies, etc. (...) I teach them how to use Audacity and Soundgrain, which is a program [in which] you do sound synthesis (M41-In)
			Minimalist idiomatic	1	7.1%	We are going to take a fragment of Peter Gregson's Recomposition of the Cello Suites and recompose it together using minimalist techniques (M34-Pe)

SUBCAT.	FREQ.	PERC.	CODES	FREQ.	PERC.	EXAMPLE QUOTATIONS
Arranging	7	50.0%	Accompaniment by rhythmic bass variation	2	14.3%	I explain to them: "look at the bass, look at the basic idea of the bass and what you can do" (...) Then they listen to the rhythm of the piano on the marimba and then they do a rhythmic improvisation (F49-Mu)
			Accompaniment by rhythms	2	14.3%	I taught them some typical Galician songs and now they make their own (...) I teach them the song, then I tell them that they must make their own rhythm in groups (F36-In/Mu)
			Accompaniment by harmonic filling	1	7.1%	They do an adaptation of an existing song, which is Hey, Soul Sister (...) We do it with chords: it's in C major, they know the chords (F36-In/Mu)
			Cover of a song	1	7.1%	
			Rhythmic, harmonic, and textural accompaniment	1	7.1%	They learned the theme of the Romance of Lieutenant Kijé by Prokofiev (...) then we played it and (...) then each group created an accompaniment (...) using ostinatos and chords (M34-Pe)

Table of own elaboration.

The "acoustic" priority of improvisation does not find its correlate in the processes of musical composition, hegemonically mediated by ICT. This casuistry is justified by some teachers as a behaviour maintained after the health restrictions resulting from COVID (M49-Mu). The proposals follow two main approaches: the overlap of audio tracks and loops, using tools like Garage Band or Incredibox (M26-In/Mu; F30-In; M34-In), and the harmonisation of a bass line "according to the rules of basic harmony" (F40-In/Pe) with editors as MuseScore.

Lastly, musical arrangements are less common among the participants (50.0%), and they are mainly based on the performance of accompaniments. Some of their approaches include rhythmic variations of a given bass line (F49-Mu; M54-In/Pe), the performance of percussive accompaniments to songs (F36-In/Mu; F40-In/Pe) or the development of "harmonic fillings" (F47-In/Pe/Co/Mu; F49-Mu). At a higher level of development, M34-Pe and F36-In/Mu make more holistic suggestions by adapting pre-existing works, allowing students to develop skills of analysis and musical adaptation through deconstruction and reconstruction.

4.2. Conditioning of the training profile in the pedagogical approach to creation

Regarding their educational backgrounds, the participating teachers unanimously emphasised the lack of opportunities for musical creation in their conservatoire training processes. In this sense, composition is subordinated to the completion of theoretical and practical exercises "on paper" in subjects such as Harmony or Analysis, through exercises in which one "is still bound to a style, to rules" (F36-In/Mu). They also recognise certain isolated dynamics in subjects such as Repentization, Transport and Accompaniment, performing simple arrangements or improvisations under the condition of a given scale, whereas in optional subjects such as Jazz or Folk, the performance of improvisations in a combo is more common.

Teachers admit the strong hieratic component of the methodology present in their initial training: "we enter the conservatoire, and we already start studying intervals (...) I have never seen music and movement, nor improvisation" (F49-Mu). There are even testimonies concerning a limitation on the part of the teaching staff in the face of the students' creative attempts: "one day I came to the Piano lesson, happy with my score (...) and the only answer the teacher gave me was the Gs should be sharp" (M34-Pe).

The lack of roots in the experience of meaningful processes in the creation of applied music is shared by the self-taught teacher in the sample, who points out that his creative competence comes from his experience of playing in groups, not from courses at conservatoire (M57-St). In the field of Musicology, the participants conclude that theory is the primary focus, without any involvement of instrumental or vocal practice (F36-In/Mu; H49-Mu; F49-Mu; F53-Pe/Mu), even less from a creative point of view.

Discursive differences have been observed in relation to the primary musical instrument employed during teacher training, with regard to the extent of its integration into creative aspects of the training programme. In this sense, M50-In recognises certain technical shortcomings as a violinist: "I am not a pianist and I play very little piano, so it is very difficult for me to make compositions for my students or to make arrangements". In contrast, teacher F40-In/Pe admits a greater proximity to improvisation as an Organ/Harpsichord student, while also conceding that "musical creation certainly (...) is not done in the conservatoire".

This is not only a matter of proposing specific activities in classroom, but also of the degree of self-perceived creative competence: "in the end, what you develop well is what you are good at and where you have more examples" (F36-In/Mu). The teachers' greater familiarity with reproductive musical habits finds a parallel in their pedagogical approach: "Interpretation (...) that's what I spend most of my time on (...) is totally the rock star" (F40-In/Pe). All teachers recognise that instrumental and/or vocal performance dominates musical practice in school planning, while in some cases confirming a lesser interest in proposals of musical creation:

– "Even when I do an activity like the one we're talking about now [creation], I don't take it any further the way I approach the subject of Music" (M34-In).
– "If you mean do I spend time with them on improvisation, on those things: no, I spend more time on performance" (F49-Mu).

– "Making up a song, improvising something… I haven't done much of that" (M57-St).

In many cases, these proposals are limited to isolated exercises carried out as extracurricular tasks, with little impact and satisfaction for the students and teachers involved:

– "They had to work on it at home because we didn't have computers there (…) I would have liked to work on it more (…) I would have insisted more on listening to them live (…) so that I could correct them" (F30-In).
– "It was a one-off task, of course, so they didn't really get feedback that they could reuse later in a task with the same characteristics" (F53-Pe/Mu).

One of the main reasons given by teachers to explain the reduced presence of musical creation in their teaching is directly related to its interpretation in the curriculum, as evidenced in certain grades, such as the third year of compulsory secondary education (3rd ESO):

– "The 3° ESO curriculum is [literally] History of Music, which has to be taught" (M54-In/Pe).
– "In 3° ESO, things get more complicated in terms of practice, because the curriculum is very extensive: it is the whole History of Music (…) to be taught in 2 hours a week" (F47-In/Pe/Co/Mu).

In this sense, the meanings that teachers attach to curricular proposals condition what they consider possible or not possible in their classrooms. Those informants who attach less importance to musical creation in their programmes also consider its presence in the curriculum to be inadequate or unrealistic, as the following statements show:

– "I think that what [curriculum] proposes is fine in a world where students already come with a certain base (…) it seems to me that it is unrealistic and that it can be a bit frustrating for some teachers" (F30-In).
– "The people who organise the curriculum (…) are not aware of the reality of the classroom, that pupils are not all the same, that pupils do not have the same abilities (…) It is totally unrealistic and idealistic" (F47-In/Pe/Co/Co/Mu).
– "If we were to stick to what the law says, the system would be completely sunk because we would spend all day (…) trying to bring into the classroom concepts that I understand are pedagogically important but are very abstract and difficult to implement" (M50-In).
– "The curriculum says a lot of things, whether you can teach it in the classroom is another thing" (M57-St).

In line with this critical tone, these teachers also refer to the low level of procedural detail in the curriculum: "I don't think it's clear at all" (M34-In), "I don't think it's detailed enough" (F53-Pe/Mu) or "I think it's rather vague" (M54-In/Pe). However, they also recognise that a hypothetical lack of musical creation in the curriculum does not *per se* limit its presence in the classroom, given their degree of autonomy: "we have it in our own hands what we do with curriculum (…) if you don't do it, it's because you don't want to" (F49-Mu).

4.3. Venturing into new territories: identifying professional profiles prone to creation

The sample of this study also included teachers who are particularly passionate about creation and/or demonstrated engagement in alternative and unconventional musical proposals within the domain of academic music education. It could be said that these are professionals who, in various ways, have overcome the recognised limitations of their own training:

– M34-Pe, with a pedagogical specialisation at the Orff Institute (Salzburg) and specific self-taught knowledge of the work of Murray Schafer.
– F36-In/Mu, with training experience in England in participatory observation of collaborative music-making processes in secondary school classrooms.
– M41-In, with an active musical life as an experimental sound artist and specific self-taught knowledge of the work of Murray Schafer and François Delalande.
– M49-Mu, with an active musical life as a composer and arranger.

As can be seen in Table 3, a more effusive commitment to musical creation is perceived in the argumentation of these participants. The provision of specific references in their trajectories crystallises in certain types of unique proposals in the sample, based on an adaptive and flexible understanding of the open proposals of the curriculum.

Table 3 Pedagogical approach and interpretation of the curriculum in the creation-prone profiles (quotations)

TEACHER	FREQUENCY IN THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH	DIFFERENTIAL PROPOSALS	CURRICULUM INTERPERTATION
M34-Pe	I think that interpretation would predominate, but interpretation is also accompanied by creativity, in example, deciding on the form of the pieces, improvising…	Rhythmic-melodic improvisation on modal scale Minimalist idiomatic composition Rhythmic, harmonic, and textural accompaniment in arrangements	I think the curriculum is not bad at the level of creation, because it tells you "Yes, you have to improvise, you have to compose, you have to create things"
F36-In/ Mu	We devoted 15/20 minutes of each lesson to this [creation projects]	Accompaniment by harmonic filling in arrangements Cover of a song	The presence, I think it's… I don't know off the top of my head, but maybe 7-8 contents in the first block [of contents]. In principle they should be there, if they are close enough

TEACHER	FREQUENCY IN THE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH	DIFFERENTIAL PROPOSALS	CURRICULUM INTERPERTATION
M41-In	Without forgetting the typical musical practice of the flute and the Orff instruments, I focus a lot on sound objects according to the techniques of Pierre Schaeffer and the language of François Delalande	Electroacoustic: musique concrète and synthesis (ICT)	The content of the 2nd course (...) is very broad, the creation block is a "savage": if you want to do all that, you don't have time to do it!
M49-Mu	I always carry out several activities which become projects of creation	Harmonisation of a melody (ICT) in songwritting	I see that there are many elements to draw on, learning standards and objectives in which the subject of creation is present (...) I think that its presence is more than enough

Table of own elaboration.

These teachers therefore consider that the presence of creation in the curriculum is sufficient, without explicitly mentioning a lack of understanding in its enunciation. In any case, M41-In stresses that the nature of the curricular proposals in the Galician proposal takes on a markedly "classical accent", lacking a greater and better alignment with the post-active pedagogies of the 1960s onwards, based specifically on the didactics of composition: "they are too focused on the classical language of music, on the language of harmony, on the language of melody, emphasising that at the level of the pedagogy of musical creation and contemporary music (...) it is very unspecific, there is a deficit".

5. Discussion and conclusions

The use of a narrative-biographical methodological approach, through in-depth interviews, has made it possible to explore in detail the type of proposals that prevail in the classroom of a selection of working professionals. In the context of qualitative research, therefore, the criterion of reliability does not refer to the statistical replicability of the findings, but to their coherence and reliability within the relevance of the phenomenon studied (Kvale, 2011).

The results enable to conclude how the ideals or values underlying teachers' training processes intervene in the pedagogical approach in the classroom, in line with Korthagen's (2004) levels of teacher influence. Likewise, as a correlate of this model, the type of competence assumed - in this case for musical creation methodologies - has a direct impact on the type of proposals promoted and their recurrence. However, the availability of specific experiences or pedagogical knowledge have been a determining factor in the type of responses obtained, providing continuity with the background studies consulted (Odena & Welch, 2007).

In this case, teachers who are interested in the didactics of musical creation, either through pedagogical references acquired in collaborative training experiences, or who have an active musical life in terms of creativity recognise: 1) a greater recurrence of musical creation in the pedagogical approach, encouraging the implementation of longitudinal projects with a greater involvement of the teacher in the management of the creative processes; and 2) a more favourable view of the sufficiency and feasibility of musical creation in the curricular approach. In addition, the proposals of teachers with a specific interest in the work of pedagogues as Murray Schafer or Delalande report a greater diversification, mainly from the idiomatic resources of contemporary repertoires as a key factor in the expansion of creative possibilities in the secondary school classroom (Riaño *et al.*, 2021). These results are in line with a previous study conducted by Urrutia & Díaz (2013), who concluded that secondary music teachers who are more familiar with contemporary music are those who devote more time to composition and improvisation in the classroom.

The absence of specific references in the pedagogical mobilisation of musical creation in the teachers' background leads to a contrasting type of response among them: 1) a lesser recurrence of musical creation in the approach to the subject, often reduced to sporadic exercises with an admittedly unsatisfactory assessment of the creative processes; 2) a greater simplicity in the type of proposals promoted, mainly with a higher emphasis on imitative rhythmic improvisation or rhythmic variation of given bass or melodic lines; and 3) a greater conviction of the scarce viability of the musical creation proposals included in the curriculum, as well as a confused perception of them, both in terms of their presence and their comprehensibility. The conditioning of this type of response may have originated from the perpetuation of certain models of behaviour, professional roles and pedagogical preconceptions experienced as students (Bouij, 2004; Isbell, 2008), implicitly recognising the superiority of the Western academic repertoire as the main mode of musical learning (Arriaga-Sanz, 2019; Arriaga *et al.*, 2022; Bautista, 2020; Birnie, 2014; Costa *et al.*, 2018; Ibarmia-Urruzola & Murillo & Tejada, 2022). This can be noted in the increased recurrence of musical interpretation, together with the prevalence of imitative and reproductive teaching processes among teachers (Arriaga *et al.*, 2022; Beineke, 2017; Vernia-Carrasco, 2020).

The traditionalist bias of the proposals for musical creation included in the successive curriculum of Galicia, together with the specifically insufficient procedural information presented, could contribute to the disorientation of those teachers who are less familiar with the didactic of musical creation, or who feel that they do not have sufficient means to carry it out satisfactorily (Shouldice, 2014). This is combined with certain inertia in interpreting the meaning of the legislative text, an aspect that is exemplified by the teachers' transgenerational conviction to hegemonise historiographical teaching in 3° ESO. There are some variations in the types of answers given according to professional experience: teachers with a longer professional (20

years or more) tend to be more directly aligned with Decree 78/1993, through an almost exclusive involvement of rhythmic and/or melodic improvisation; they also tend to prioritise musical interpretation over creation, in line with the results obtained by Leong (1999) or Langley (2018). On the other hand, younger and/or less experienced teachers claim to be more committed to promoting creativity-oriented activities, as in the case of the study by Zbainos & Anastasopoulou (2012); in turn, their proposals are more inclined to a recurrent use of ICT (Martos Sánchez *et al.*, 2015; Valiente, 2014) and sound exploration. No major differences were found regarding the rest of the variables considered, a sign of the homogenisation of the type of responses offered.

As the main limitations of this study, it should be noted that the evaluation of participation in relation to the validity of the curriculum do not include references to the current legislation (Decree 156/2022) due to the time of data collection. It needs to be updated in accordance with the new requirements and needs of the teaching staff, given the renewed presence of musical creation in post-compulsory secondary education subjects. As future lines of work, further investigation is needed in the search for conditioning factors in the pedagogical approach of music teachers, both from the meaning they give to the concept of musical creativity (Kladder & Lee, 2019; Kokotsaki, 2011) and from the identification of limiting aspects inherent to the educational environment (Korthagen, 2004). These findings could also be extended, enabling an inferential recognition of the reality perceived by teachers in a statistical way.

International research highlights the indispensable value of pedagogical training to naturalise the processes of musical creation in the classroom (Beineke, 2017; Kokotsaki, 2011; Kokotsaki & Newton, 2015; Zbainos & Anastasopoulou, 2012). This is particularly necessary in Spain, given the scarce rooting of music-making and sound exploration methodologies in the curricula of the current Master's Degree in Teacher Training in Secondary Education (Blanco García & Peñalba Acitores, 2020). In order to propose appropriate responses to initial and in-service teacher training, it is essential that these measures are aligned with the challenges faced by teachers and pupils at this stage of education. We believe that this will lead to a more accessible, proactive, motivating and participatory approach to music education in schools, towards a model in which the development of the individual's creative thinking is at the heart of the educational purpose.

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