



# Assessing creativity to boost the inclusion in musical education adult

La formación musical sobre  
el futuro maestro: ámbitos y  
contexto diferentes en  
España

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## Abstract

Educational inclusion seems to be linked to pupils with special educational needs, but there are other realities that promote educational exclusion, architectural or administrative barriers, it is here where the musical education of adults suffer a kind of educational exclusion. Creativity is a process of development of the expression of new ideas aimed to solve problems or meet needs, enhance creativity is therefore encourage attitudes contrary to passivity and conformism to activate the divergent thinking, in order to seek solutions to problems such as the educational exclusion. For this reason our research has been directed to assess creativity in order to strengthen it in those students who need it, by checking whether there are gender differences and to reflect on our teaching practice. We used the CREA (creativity tool to measure) to apply to 17 students and although no difference was found between both sexes, the level of creativity was very low, so it was determined to take educational measures not only for students but also for teaching practice.

## Keywords

Attitude · Teaching · Learning · Motivation

## Introduction

*In times of crisis, only creativity is more useful than training.*

*Albert Einstein*

Talk of exclusion in education, sometimes surprising in developed countries, but the fact is that not in all countries adults have easy access to education. Still, adopting attitudes are resigned because not understand whose the reasons why are marginalized access to the official teachings of the musical way. In Spain, many music schools that offer music education for adults without any adaptation in their programming and methodologies, using them as if they were children. Although various studies and scientific papers show that adult learning requires special attention to their profiles, characteristics, needs and interests, we are far from the desired standards. This work aims to make a contribution in this regard.

Guildford (1950, in Alsina et al 2009) pioneered research on creative processes, after several studies with its partners, proposed a list of skills present in creative people, the most relevant: fluidity, sensitivity, originality, flexibility, elaboration and redefinition. He also noted the relationship between the convergent and divergent thinking in the creative process. In the same vein, Carreras et al. (2006) added to this list of skills initiative, concentration, individualism and imagination as important qualities of creative people.

The aforementioned features certainly allow a person to face many forms of problems, activities or objectives, so your attitude changes from passive to active, from conformity to the vindictive attitude that will allow them to be people with critical attitude towards the situations that arise in life. Thus, a creative person can adapt better to changes in both personal, family and work.

In general, we can think that a person who is related to art, is a person already creative, but reality shows that it is not always true this case, so we decided to find out what the real competence of our students about creativity and thus improve their learning by increasing motivation and enhancing the critical, active and participato-

ry attitude. Therefore, this would be the main objective of our research we will detail throughout this article.

## Creativity

For new educational approaches, creativity is key, taking creative learning a prominent place within the educational space in the European context, because creativity provides the basis for innovation, one of the pillars of social and economic development (Alsina et al., 2009). Meanwhile Thorne (2008) refers to innovation from the creation, giving creativity the category of emotional quality, adding that creative people, when they are inspired, they have great energy; often they use their senses and act through multiple intelligences.

Creativity in music has been linked to the composition, but as Tafuri says (in Diaz and Riaño, 2007) this is not the only field where the musician can develop their creativity, as well as improvisation, analysis and music criticism are alternatives to consider, considering that creativity is an act or process of making something new, some organizational base still needed.

Alsina (2006) tells us that the creativity of the teaching profession has fewer studies student creativity, which highlights the need to be further research aimed at developing creative teaching practice. This author adds that when it comes to music and arts in general, it is understood that creativity is present, but as the author says, and we add to their opinion, creativity in the music class, can be developed from very diverse and varied prospects.

In addition, Malbrán (2009) is of the view that the creativity of teachers has been less analysed. This author quotes the words of Csikszentmihalyi (1998): Creativity achieved its peak in the third decade of life with which this age would coincide with the performance of teachers of music and the experience of some years of practicing the profession, but research shows that the teachers use a song to work one content (for example).



Play and creativity come together in some way and in this sense, Alsina et al. (2009) comment that can develop creative learning through play. The game is not only a resource in early childhood education, it can also be used for adult education by offering the possibility of disinhibition, breaking schemes and relativizing which can mean success or failure.

### Factors that can brake creativity

According Bernabeu and Goldstein (2009) to develop the creativity we have two important factors: on the one hand the fantasy and on the other hand play behavior. However, we must consider aspects that hinder the development of creative ability, as we can see in the figure below:

- Lack of freedom.
- Excess of criticism and self-criticism.
- Fear of ridicule.
- Stereotypical ideas.
- Blocking the expression of emotions. ideas or feelings.
- Lack of empathy.
- Distrust.
- Lack of authenticity.
- Disrespect.

**Fig. 1:** Aspects that hinder the development of creative ability  
**Source:** Bernabeu and Goldstein (2009)

These authors believe that the environment plays an important role in the development of creative ability and these creative environments in turn benefit the feelings of confidence. The classroom, the stage or the auditorium thus become spaces that can generate creativity, as well as stop it, because it will depend on the relationship established with students with that environment.

Following this, teachers must take into account as the factors that enhance creativity as the factors that restrict creativity to make educational and pedagogical actions.

How brake creativity	How enhancing creativity?
Waiting for a reward	The task as a challenge
Competitiveness	Freedom and autonomy
Monitoring	Way
The time limits	Teamwork
The expectation of an assessment	Mood in monitoring
	Kink in the classroom

**Fig. 2:** Factors that can slow or enhance creativity  
**Source:** Cerrillo and Delgado (2010)

### Creative thinking

Creative thinking involves many qualities or at least it recognizes for Diaz (2003) who draws up a proposed schedule to evaluate the creative aspect with four qualities, which in your opinion would be the easiest to recognize and we can see in the figure below:

<b>Fluency</b>	Fluency. Quantitatively, it refers to the amount of ideas and answers on an issue or problem.
<b>Flexibility</b>	Diversity of responses within the same theme
<b>Originality</b>	Qualitative assessment goes to the unpublished.
<b>Organization and manipulation</b>	It refers to shape ideas, structure, linking or link, integrating the various elements

**Fig. 3:** Qualities creative thinking  
**Source:** Díaz (2003)

Currently they have increased research on creativity by the need to provide quick solutions to current problems. Creativity needs freedom and a flexible environment, against a rigid education (Martinez-Otero, 2007).

The following figure shows a Decalogue to develop creativity:

- Working with logical method and effort.
- Stimulate critical thinking skills.
- Cultivating curiosity and exploration.
- Promoting thought heterogeneizante
- Promote the activities and tasks that heuristics are exercised.
- Develop sensitivity.
- To encourage the discovery of new meanings to objects.
- Generate a climate suitable for research work.
- Avoid mechanization and dogmatism in teaching to seek autonomy of the learner.

**Fig. 4:** Decálogo para el desarrollo de la creatividad  
**Source:** Martínez-Otero (2007)

Lamata (2005) understands creativity as an attitude applicable to any situation in life, becoming a tool that we can use in our work, depending on the attitude of the person, how to perceive, think or act. Can be learned mechanisms to develop creativity applying them in areas you want.

In the integral formation about adult learners in musical language, creativity is a fundamental element, being an important challenge for both students and for teachers, because the activities that have to show imagination, acting freely without guidelines are not easy, since the adult prefers to follow guidelines or standards to guide their learning.

The worst threat we find against creativity, according Titone (1986), is the nonconformism and this nonconformism is manifested in this adult students, reacting to activities involving show them to their peers, stifling creativity certainly have; because as Gardner (2008) says, creation is part of the structure of the world and creator works following unfamiliar ways, but enjoys it. Thus, in opinion of Perez Lindo et al. (2004) troubleshooting and learning as well as fluidity and flexibility features are included in creative thinking.

In this sense, when an adult plays, is viewed with rejection, considering for the rest as immature, (Bernabeu and Goldstein, 2009), although creative people, according to these authors, often achieve a significant level of intelligence, besides being original and imaginative, be open to new experiences, self-confident and motivated internally, highlighting the ability to think logically.

This means that the play and creativity seem to be a perfect team when it comes to children, but on the adult learner play means, in general, is a wasting time, because assumed that a mature and sane person should not play, despite to have shown that the game can be a significant strategy in the teaching-learning process. De Bono (2008) says, to develop the ability and the mental habits of creative thinking, the use and practice of creativity are the best way. In the opinion of this author, anyone can learn, acquire and use creative and in the case of music ability, it is not showing by existing sounds, therefore required in addition to the expression, creativity.

The musical language learning for adults develops mostly as a group, promoting social practices and in this sense, social processes develop a role in the creativity (Amabile, 1996, en Pérez Lindo et al. 2004). But it will be necessary to train teachers first so that creativity becomes part of education in a real sense (De La Torre, 1997 en Pérez Lindo et al. 2004). We tend to teach as we were taught, hence the need to improve our training proposal, to establish in the future good teaching practices.

## Creativity to prevent educational exclusion

The Spanish Ministry of Education proposes the following principles should be based on inclusive education:

- The school must educate in base of Human Rights and, so, organize and operate in accordance with democratic values and principles.
- All members of the community collaborate to facilitate personal and professional growth and personal development, at the same time that development and cohesion among peers and other community members.
- Equity and excellence for all students, and it recognize their right to share a common educational environment in which everyone is valued equally.
- The educational services aimed at improving learning for all students, have to be tailored to individual characteristics.
- The educational need is when the educational offer does not meet the individual needs. Consequently, the inclusion involves identifying and minimizing the difficulties of learning and participation and maximize the resources educational attention in both processes.

UNESCO (2005) defines inclusive education as a process aimed at responding to the diversity of students increasing their participation and decreasing exclusion. Inclusive education is linked to the presence, participation and achievement of all students, especially those who for various reasons are excluded or at risk of being marginalized, creating a major push to promote progress on the EFA agenda (education for All).

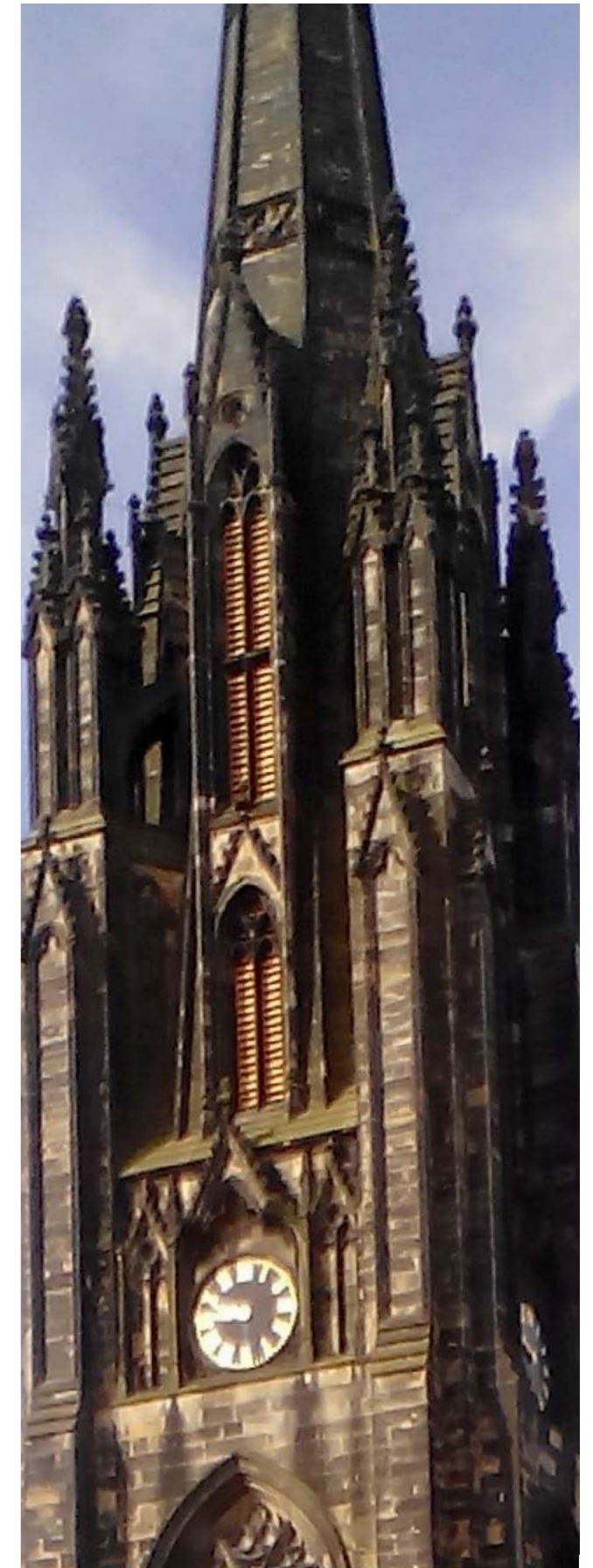
As Marchesi (2000) says, inequality also affects other areas such as the family or the education system, although generally is related to the class or social level, is not always that way. Educational systems have some aspects that incur the inequality in education, such as music education for adults in Spain, which omits the adult students education in terms of their context created for them.

Currently in Spain, music education programs for adults it not have been designed for this kind of student, neither in context nor in teaching programs, using method-

ologies designed more for children than to adolescents. The general criteria for admission of students in Spanish music conservatories serve principles of equality, merit and ability, so you might think that adults would be able to access the entrance tests with the same opportunities as any other student, but the reality is that the age is a factor is relevant to access the official music education. In Spain, if an adult wants to learn musical education, must first pass by the educational inspectorate that only in exceptional cases resolved positively and allows the adult pursue musical studies officers, without regard to their characteristics about age.

So, what relationship is it established between creativity and avoid educational exclusion? Attending to the above information, a person with a low level of creativity is a conformist person who will accept his position and condition even though it may seem unfair, without seeking other ways or alternatives to change their situation towards improvement, which translates into a passive waiting for others to interfere for him

The assessment of creativity allow us to know the student from his willingness to seek solutions to problems, using the



convergent and divergent thinking and knowing your attitude in case you want to change your current situation, whether at work, in the family, entertainment, or music school.

So, a creative student will be a competent person to solve problems and also to socialize at work and leisure environments and family, overcoming obstacles and offering different alternatives that including possible exclusions within the education system, as is the case that occupies us.

We therefore consider evaluation of creativity is essential to development of the personality of the adult learner and the consequent change of profile, always from the motivation and interests.

### **Can assess creativity?**

The first studies of creativity are aimed to the concept, designing instruments for measuring the correlation between creative thinking and intelligence, preparing the first test of creativity. Between 1970 and 1980 will present different activities to develop creativity. (Artola, 2004). According to the previous author, assess creativity remains a complicated issue. Also in this line, tell us Elisondo and Donolo (2012), that creativity is the ability or potential of people who can be assessed through tools developed for this purpose.

Torrance (Thorne, 2008), a great promoter of scientific studies of creativity, to whom we owe one of the reference methods for measuring creativity, gave the following definition of it:

*the process that turns someone sensitive to the problems, shortcomings, deficiencies and gaps, to be aware that something is wrong and leads him to make theory and hypothesis about possible resolution, to evaluate and verify these hypotheses, correcting if necessary, and finally report the result.*

Educational institutions often use tests or diagnostic test to provide data about creativity. Authors such as Guilford (think that creativity is within the overall learning) and Torrance (your tests can be used in all levels of education), are examples of such tests (Alsina et al. 2009).

Intuition is often the element that the teacher guide to whether a student is or is not creative, but today there are tools that help us measure creativity more reliably, although it is a hard activity evaluate. On the one hand, in creative behaviour participate attitudinal and motivational elements, so that the evaluation of creativity may be contaminated largely than other performance testing.

Creativity cannot be expressed in mathematical terms; it cannot be measured or weighed, although there are techniques used to assess the degree of creativity (Valero, 2003). The psychologist needs to establish a criterion for creativity, especially if your goal is to establish procedures for measurement (Hargreaves, 1998).

One can say that professionals have reached a consensus that creativity is a complicated reality and its evaluation is also complex, affirming that the evaluation may pose a threat deteriorating creativity when assessed without knowledge of the students, however helps them if they are informed of the criteria that will be evaluated (Laime, 2005).

### **Objectives of our research**

Our research has the general objective of evaluating the degree of creativity of a group of students, adult students of musical language in a music school, to establish improvements in that subject, if necessary. To do this we have set the following specific operational objectives:

1. Assess the creativity in students about musical language.
2. Establish whether there are significant differences in creativity as genres.
3. Reflecting on our educational practice regarding the enhancement of creativity in students.



## Research design. Methodology

The instrument used to measure or assess the creativity of adults of musical language was the CREA (Carlini et al., 2006) that works as a unit of measure cognitive creativity. The measure used in this test is given by the ability of the person to develop questions from a graphic document. This test is aimed at assessing individual creativity cognitively through a questionnaire, in which they have to make the most of questions after viewing a photo (Martinez-Otero, 2007).

CREA has found a measure of creativity in cognitive variability manifesting through questions. It is an efficient way of interlocking theoretical context and evaluation proposal so singular and unified measure. This test potentially offers an alternative that allows knowing relevant aspects of creativity, to forecast the creative capacity of students. CREA and identify more as a cognitive measure creative intelligence or creative ability and creativity itself (Corbalan and Limiñana, 2010).

The results were analysed using the SPSS-16.

## Sample

The sample consisted of 17 students of the subject of musical language, namely 7 men and 10 women, of different levels in terms of music and also about their ages, professions, educational level and social status, because what was intended was to measure creativity in adult subjects who were starting their artistic training.

The tests were carried out under the same conditions to all, regardless of age or cognitive abilities, establishing performance time, proposing the test to be performed with the same situational conditions.

The test was carried out on a voluntary basis and providing to participants all necessary information, in both its preparation and the purposes for which it was made. Participants signed consent informed and facilitated the dissemination of results. All students of the course wanted to participate in the investigation.

## Results and conclusions

Overall score in the CREA group questionnaire was 21.41. This low score shows a limited capacity for creative production. In the CREA, a low score means little chance for finding problems and consequently for imaginative solutions or alternatives.

Poor performance can result from cognitive limitations or be caused by variables related to motivation or emotional hindering cognitive development and implementation processes. It could also be an expression of style avoidant coping. No were found significant differences between men and women.

Its main cognitive skills are in the field of convergent resolution of problems, responding better to contexts that do not require a pattern of making proposals or imaginative work, with general tendency to adaptation difficulties and critical reflection.

From the results and their implications and with all the information provided above, we believe that is necessary an improvement proposal aimed at strengthening creativity in adults for the subject of Music language. Applying these actions not only to students but also to teachers and through activities that promote free and creative participation both individually and in group, knowing that creativity will increase if are followed appropriate guidelines.

As example is proposed a list of activities such as:

- Develop different bodily rhythms to play on a musical, individual and group piece.
- In a musical piece extract a principal theme and a secondary theme to be expressed bodily between two groups of students.
- Choose contents of musical language and practice from different body rhythmic exercises proposal by students.
- Rhythmic and melodic reading using voice and body simultaneously, melodies proposed by the students.

These activities also aimed to encourage students' creativity, are made taking into account the diversity of the classroom (in the adult music class we find different cognitive, cultural and socioeconomic levels, and significant differences of age) and strengthening attitudes to counter conformism and passivity not only in the field of music class but in their personal and professional lives.

Subsequently, the CREA questionnaire can be implemented again in order to assess whether there has been enhancing creativity in class after a few months, to see if the actions have been efficient and able to design a program to serve as a model or example for future groups of students. The activities that are valued by the students significant, will become part of the educational program as a sign of the involvement of students in their learning, this program also will be specific to adult students music, thereby enhancing the educational inclusion of them.

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