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Comparison of beliefs about teaching and learning of emotional expression in music performance between Spanish and English HE students of music.

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Abstract

Despite an increase of research on emotional expression in music and its teaching and learning, little is known about the beliefs and conceptualisations that students hold regarding musical expression, and how these beliefs differ depending on educational context of the students. To address this gap, a comparison was made between a sample of 79 UK and 117 Spanish HE students of music, who were asked to indicate their beliefs about expressivity, most useful instructional methods to develop expressive performance, and factors that influence expressiveness and its teaching and learning. Results indicated agreement, but also several significant differences across student cohorts. UK students endorsed the idea more strongly that musical context (i.e. piece and instrument) influences expressivity and the choice of teaching strategy, while Spanish students linked expressivity more strongly to particular music-emotional characteristics. Both groups considered using technical explanation as the better method for teaching expressivity, whilst modelling was considered the worst. On the other hand, they agreed that the choice of the teaching approach should depend on the age of the student with modelling being preferred for younger age groups, and technique for adults only. These results highlight differences in the understanding of musical expressivity that parallel academic debates on emotional vs. stylistic expressiveness.

Word Count: 201

Introduction

Communication of emotion is an important part of an expressive musical intention, whether this includes the communication of basic emotions (e.g., Gabrielsson & Juslin, 2003), the variation of emotional tension, or the intention to evoke emotions through aesthetic means (Doğantan-Dack, 2014). Research has shown that the ability to express emotions and affect can be deliberately fostered at any level of learning (Juslin, Karlsson, Lindström, Friberg, & Schoonderwaldt, 2006; Meissner, 2017; Meissner & Timmers, 2018). With increasing understanding of ways in which professional musicians express emotions through the concrete manipulation of musical elements, approaches to the teaching and learning of expressive performance can become more deliberate and explicit (see also Timmers & Sadakata, 2014; Meissner, 2018). However, applications of research to teaching situations can only be successfully done in the context of a good understanding of current practices, including the beliefs and concepts that students (and their teachers) hold with respect to expressive music performance, and the teaching and learning thereof (see e.g. Brenner & Strand, 2013). Evidence indicates for example that the belief is common that emotional expressivity cannot be directly trained (Lindström, Bresin, Juslin, & Williamon, 2003), despite empirical evidence against that idea (Broomhead, 2006; Juslin & Persson, 2002; Williamon, 2014).

Indeed, studying pupil's perceptions, conceptions or beliefs about the teaching and learning of music has been identified as one of the main issues that need to be addressed in research on music learning (Casas-Mas, Pozo, & Montero, 2014; Hallam, 2010), and by extension the learning of emotional expressivity. In a previous related work, we analysed conceptions about emotional expressivity and its teaching-learning in a sample of Spanish HE piano students and teachers (Bonastre, Muñoz, & Timmers, 2016). We found three factors associated with emotional expression differentiating participants who

saw expression as something that can and needs to be worked on (*expressive technique*), as age and skill dependent *emotional expression*, and as something that emerges by itself (*self-learning of expressivity*). Teachers had higher scores than students for the second factor: age and skill dependent emotional expression. The other beliefs were held by teachers and students to similar degrees. A question raised in that work was to what extent differences in the curricular structure affect the consideration of expressivity and the ways of teaching it, and how cultural context affects conceptions about emotional expression in music. That is, whether there are differences between countries, cultures or educational systems.

To our knowledge, no studies have directly compared the conceptualisation of emotional expressivity across different cultures or educational systems. Previous research has compared e.g. the frequency of occurrence of certain emotions in response to music across cultures (Juslin, Barradas, Ovsiannikow, Limmo, & Thompson, 2016), processes of emotion induction and emotion expression across cultures (Juslin et al., 2016; Laukka, Eerola, Thungujam, Yamasaki, & Beller, 2013), and variations in the understanding of musical expressiveness across cultures (Fabian, Timmers & Schubert, 2014). Furthermore, ethnological accounts of teaching practices provide insight into the extensive variation in approaches to the teaching and learning of musical expression. Our aim is to investigate variations in beliefs and conceptualisations about the teaching and learning of emotional expression in performance in two educational contexts that are quite similar, but nevertheless differ to a degree in music-educational heritage. This will enhance insights into ways in which local cultures may influence conceptions held by pupils in higher education.

The two countries to be compared in the present study, England and Spain, share a similar background and educational frame in relation to music, with many historical

mutual influences. Some differences, however, can be expected related to differences in musical educative legislation and curricula, and the specific consideration of expressivity in them. Furthermore, teaching of expression may depend on local culture, influencing the conceptions and beliefs of teachers about its relevance and the best ways of training and developing it (Karlsson & Juslin, 2008). As pointed out by López-Íñiguez, Pozo and de Dios (2013), in Spain, a prevailing focus is on the transmission of musical knowledge and technical skills, instead of the constructive facilitation of reflection and metaknowledge in students as increasingly independent learners (Torrado & Pozo, 2008). In England, curricula of music seem to be more explicitly based on constructivist principles. Nevertheless, it was observed that in practice behaviorist strategies are more usually employed, negatively affecting teaching results (Garnett, 2013). That is, instrumental performance is usually treated as the goal instead of the means, missing the important goals of developing creativity, communication of emotions and feelings, as well as meanings personally constructed (Bautista & Pérez-Echevarría, 2008).

Differences in teaching of expressivity in music are partially a consequence of the specific legislative frames for each country. As argued in Bonastre (2015), a development towards constructivist approaches to learning should in tandem see an increase in the explicit consideration of emotional and expressive aspects of performance. In the case of Spain, there have been many changes during the past 30 years, and the last general national law (LOMCE) implies a marked decrease in the consideration of expression and emotion in its explicit goals and assessment criteria. In England, recent versions of the National Curriculum[1] do draw attention to expressivity and emotion in several subjects, including self-expression and it remarks the importance of music education, particularly at Secondary level (Key Stages 3 and 4). Similarly, emotional and expressive aspects of

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum

music performance are emphasised in the document published in 2012 'The importance of music: a National Plan for music education'[2]. Bonastre (2015) further concludes that music education is less constrained in England with a greater variety of opportunities for musical development. The question is whether and how these differences may be reflected in different ideas about emotional expression and the teaching and learning of it.

Continuing our previous line of research, we expect that differences in conceptualisations and beliefs can be captured using the following dimensions (see also Bonastre, et al. 2016; and Bonastre, 2015). Firstly, despite evidence indicating that emotional expressivity in performance can effectively be learned and taught (e.g., Meissner & Timmers, 2018), studies have shown that emotional expression is often considered as an innate talent that is present to various degrees (Chaffin & Lemieux, 2004; Williamon, 2014). Other conceptions about expressivity include the idea that 2) expression in music is just or mainly a matter of technique (Karlsson & Juslin, 2008), 3) musical elements (tempo, timbre, etc.) are associated in specific ways or not with the production of specific emotional outcomes (see Juslin & Timmers, 2010 for a review of the evidence); 4) different stylistic periods are associated with different expressive elements, and a specific piece should be stylistically expressed (see e.g. Daynes, 2010 and Schubert & Fabian, 2014); 5) the age of the student affects the way of expressively studying a piece and the language for expressive terms should be adapted (e.g. Tan et al., 2010 discuss this question); 6) playing by memory affects the expression achieved (Chaffin, Logan, & Begosh, 2009, provide evidence for the validity of that idea); 7) the moment in which expressivity is considered when preparing a piece affects the

[2] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180973/DFE-00086-2011.pdf.

preparation (Van Zijl & Sloboda, 2010 present evidence for this and discuss its meaning); 8) the expression of musical emotions is measurable or not (see for a review on this Crickmore, 2017 or Juslin, 2013); and 9) emotional expressivity is explicitly considered in Educative regulations and classroom syllabi (as investigated in Bonastre 2015). These dimensions are here presented as statements or beliefs that music students (and teachers) may hold to varying degrees. The rationale for this specific list of statements is explained in our previous work (Bonastre et al., 2016).

Regarding ways for improving expressivity, according to Juslin et al. (2006) the traditional approach has involved four basic teaching strategies: a) performance modelling; b) use of metaphors or images; c) focusing students on their own emotions; and d) providing musical instructions and comments in order to change aspects of the sound for improving expressivity, that is, focusing on technical adaptations. Each of these methods has advantages and limitations (see Juslin et al., 2006), and some empirical evidence is available that suggests that all strategies may be successfully employed to improve expressivity, despite differences in the consistency and size of the observed changes (Woody, 2006). Furthermore, there is evidence indicating that the main instructional strategy in the music classroom is verbal instruction by the teacher (Young, Burwell, & Pickup, 2003). Taking a more constructionist approach, Meissner (2018) encouraged fellow music teachers' to adopt a dialogic teaching approach to enhance expressive performance and awareness of it in pupils. She found that dialogue about emotional character and expressive devices successfully contributed to improved expressive performance compared to a control teaching strategy (Meissner & Timmers, 2018). What specific teaching strategy is employed seems related to teachers' beliefs regarding the nature of musical expressivity (Laukka, 2004), implying that to change educational practices, conceptions and beliefs will need to be addressed as well.

As pointed out above, the main goal of this work was to compare the beliefs and conceptions of English and Spanish students of advanced courses of music about emotional expressivity, including adequate ways of teaching it and factors that influence expressive ability and expressive manner. Besides, it aimed to begin to explore how educational contexts and systems may be associated with such conceptions. The main hypothesis of the work is that there will be an association, and that the reported variety of attitudes/perceptions is not random.

Method

Sample

The sample was composed of 196 students of advanced courses of music, 117 from Spain and 79 from the UK. Sampling was developed through incidental recruitment in centers for music education, specifically the Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid, in Spain*;* and the Department of Music of the University of Sheffield*,* and the School of Music of the University of Leeds. Volunteer teachers were asked to hand out the questionnaires indicating that students' participation was voluntary. Completed questionnaires were collected anonymously in a provided envelope.

The mean age of the total sample was 20.70 (SD=3.66, range: 18-49), with 50% women (mean of age=20.67, SD= 3.27, range: 18-35) and 50% men (mean of age=20.73, SD= 4.03; range: 18-49). Over 90% of the sample was in the range of 18-24 years old. There were no systematic differences in age between the samples from both countries (Spain, mean=21.0, SD=3.3; UK, mean=20.2, SD=4.1; $t(193)=1.54$, $p=.125$). Likewise, according to gender, percentage of females in Spain (49.6%) and in the UK (50.6%) did not significantly differ ($z=0.15$, $p=.884$).

The Spanish sample consisted of students of instrumental performance (N=102, 88%), composition (N=8), conducting (N=3), music pedagogy (N=2), and musicology

(N=1). 91% of the sample was in the first two years of higher education and studied piano (N=27), guitar (N=13), a string (N=29), brass (N=21), or woodwind instrument (N=16), or accordion (N=1). The English sample consisted of students of instrumental performance (N=37, 46.8%), composition (N=21), psychology of music (N=8), musicology (N=2), voice (N=1), ethnomusicology (N=1), and maths and music (N=1). The other 8 students, had not yet decided their specialization. 88.5% of the students were in the first two years of higher education. Between those in instrumental specializations, there was a wide distribution of type of instruments, with piano as the more frequent (N=7, 18.9%).

Questionnaire

- Conceptions about teaching-learning of expressivity: A previously developed questionnaire was used that captures conceptions about teaching-learning of emotional expression in music (Bonastre et al., 2016). It was derived from a first version composed of 20 questions, which was completed and evaluated by five professors and 10 students, in order to optimise content validity. The final version included 13 Likert-type items with four response categories indicating the degree of agreement with each statement, ranging from '1' for 'Not at all' to '4' for 'Very much'. Specific items and dimensions are presented in Table 1 (see further Bonastre et al., 2016).

- Models for teaching expressivity: Again, a previously developed questionnaire was used, which was validated in a Spanish sample of music students and teachers (Bonastre, 2009). It consists of four blocks of five questions following a vignette with an example of a class situation in which a teacher tries to improve the expressivity of the student (the four vignettes are presented in Appendix 1). The five questions assess participants' experience and evaluation of appropriateness of the exemplified teaching

method (see Table 3). Total scores for all of 20 questions ranged from 5 to 20. This structure has been tested through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses and demonstrated good fit and adequate psychometric properties (Bonastre, 2009). Each situation was created to represent four ways of teaching expressivity: modelling (in which the teacher acts as a model considering that the student will learn through imitation); use of metaphors or images (for instance, 'make colour changes' or 'now water is rapidly flowing'); focusing on the own emotions (providing directives about how to feel while playing, assuming that the emotions that are activated will be directly transferred to sound properties which would imply emotional expression); and technical instruction (providing musical instructions and comments in order to change aspects of the sound for improving expressivity).

- Evaluation of factors influencing the best way to teach expressivity: Five questions were added asking for evaluations of the extent to which they think that different factors affect the choice of the more adequate model to improve expressivity. Concretely, using 4 points Likert scales (from 1, 'not at all', to 4 'very much'), they were asked about the possible relevance of age, musical piece, composer, instrument, and musical style.

- Finally, several questions were included regarding what participants consider the more and the less adequate model for teaching expressivity according to four groups of age: early childhood (until 6 years old), childhood (6-12 years old), adolescence (12-18 years old), and adulthood (more than 18 years old).

Results

Missing data

Ten of the 33 main variables considered in this study (items regarding conceptions about expressivity and ways of teaching expressivity) included between 1 and 3 missing data points. Visual inspection and distributional analyses indicated that these missing data were not systematic and could be attributed to random misses. For these cases, we applied listwise deletion to account for the missing data. Robust statistics and correction for multiple comparisons and familywise type I errors were applied, in any case, in order to minimize potential effects of variation in DFs in contrasts close to significance thresholds. In a further three items, there were 9, 14, and 17 cases missed (respectively items 10, 9, and 1 of the scale of conceptions about expressivity). Thorough observation of these data indicated that they also could be assumed as missing at random. We decided to replace these missing values with the mean of each variable in its group, keeping in mind the risk of a small reduction in variance for these items.

Conceptions about expressivity

The assumption of normality that underlies the analyses for comparisons in the 13 items regarding conceptions about expressivity was assessed using the Shapiro-Francia test (Shapiro & Francia, 1992): only Item 5 ('Addressing expressivity since the beginning of the study of a piece makes the understanding of that piece more difficult.') presented a significant z statistic ($p = .028$), indicating significant departure from normality. Thus, normality was assumed overall and T-tests were used for comparisons between countries.

Comparison of responses between the two countries showed statistically significant differences in 6 out of 13 items (see rows highlighted in bold in Table 1). In two instances, Spanish students had higher scores than UK students. These concerned the items 'The tempo of a piece is associated with a concrete expressive character' and 'It is important to know explicitly how emotions are associated with musical elements.'. In the

other four items, UK students had higher scores than Spanish students. These included 'Expressivity is a matter of technique', 'It is sufficiently clear in the Educative Regulations', 'It is explicitly considered in syllabus of music classes', and 'When starting to memorize a piece I think in expressive elements in a second step'. Effect sizes for the differences (right column of Table 1) were in general medium.

Table 1. Mean scores for Spanish, UK, and Grand Total, significance level of the difference between the Spanish and UK scores, and associated effect size of responses to items about conceptions of expressivity. Scores are sorted according to the mean total score.

Items	Spain	UK	Total	*p*	*g*
	Mean *(SD)*	Mean *(SD)*	Mean*(SD)*		
Depending on the age of the learner a different language has to be used to talk about expressivity	3.34 (0.90)	3.18 (0.83)	3.22 (0.91)	0.55	0.09
Expressivity is subjective and cannot be fixed or measured.	3.03 (0.83)	3.04 (0.97)	2.96 (0.90)	0.349	0.14
Music expressivity is something that you develop during your life, mainly through the interaction with others	2.91 (0.83)	3.04 (0.81)	2.94 (0.83)	0.166	0.21
It is important to know explicitly how emotions are associated with musical elements.	**3.09 (0.78)**	**2.54 (0.83)**	**2.88 (0.83)**	**<.001**	**0.73**
The tempo of a piece is associated with a concrete expressive character.	**2.46 (0.97)**	**2.04 (0.81)**	**2.32 (0.94)**	**<.001**	**0.51**
Music expressivity is mainly an innate capacity.	2.29 (0.90)	2.27 (0.83)	2.29 (0.86)	0.793	0.03
When starting to memorize a piece I think in expressive elements in a second step.	**2.22 (1.10)**	**2.53 (0.86)**	**2.27 (1.01)**	**0.004**	**0.43**
It is not possible to establish general rules linking musical elements with specific emotions.	2.31 (1.10)	2.24 (0.91)	2.26 (1.00)	0.843	0.03
Music expressivity is explicitly considered in the usual syllabus of music classes.	**1.73 (0.75)**	**2.01 (0.73)**	**1.82 (0.74)**	**0.003**	**0.44**

Items	Spain	UK	Total	*p*	*g*
	Mean *(SD)*	**Mean *(SD)***	**Mean*(SD)***		
Given the historical development of tonalities, there is not a clear relationship between tonal modes and specific emotions.	1.76 (0.94)	1.95 (0.75)	1.81 (0.86)	0.063	0.27
Music expressivity is basically a matter of technique.	**1.59 (0.69)**	**2.00 (0.83)**	**1.75 (0.78)**	**<.001**	**0.56**
Addressing expressivity since the beginning of the study of a piece makes the understanding of that piece more difficult.	1.71 (0.90)	1.54 (0.75)	1.63 (0.86)	0.215	0.19
Factors related to music expressivity are sufficiently clear in the Educative Regulations.	**1.42 (0.52)**	**1.82 (0.69)**	**1.54 (0.62)**	**<.001**	**0.76**

- Degrees of freedom for mean comparisons: N-2.

Values in bold indicates statistical significant differences at .05 level.

Ways of teaching expressivity

The assumption of normality in order to perform parametric tests for comparison of means could be maintained for all items according to the lack of significance in the Shapiro-Francia test.

First, statistical comparisons between the responses of the two groups for the 20 items related to the four models indicated significant differences in 4 out of 20 items (see figures in bold in Table 2). This concerned two items of the modelling example, one item of the metaphors example, and one item of the emotions example. However, when adjusting the *p* level for multiple comparisons (p=.05/20=.0025), only item 2 in modelling presented significant differences ('Had you to give classes; do you think that you would do it that way?'), with a higher score for English students. When comparing the total score for each model (note that item 1 of each model was not included, as it potentially reflects a situation independent of the student opinion), there were no significant differences, and

only a trend to a difference in the case of modelling (p=.075) with a small effect size (g=0.26; 95% CI: -0.03, 0.55). These results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean scores of responses by Spanish and English students and the significance level of the difference between the means to evaluative questions related to different models of teaching and learning of musical expressivity.

Items	Modelling			Metaphors			Emotions			Technique		
	Spain	**UK**	***p***	**Spain**	**UK**	***p***	**Spain**	**UK**	***p***	**Spain**	**UK**	***p***
Have you ever been in a situation like that?	3.06 (0.83)*	3.35 (0.77)	**.013**	2.86 (0.93)	2.90 (1.17)	.814	2.86 (0.93)	2.90 (1.17)	.929	2.68 (0.96)	2.67 (1.03)	.418
Had you to give classes; do you think that you would do it that way?	2.19 (0.90)	2.61 (0.76)	**.001**	2.81 (0.82)	2.76 (0.99)	.687	2.81 (0.82)	2.76 (0.99)	.377	2.71 (0.93)	2.59 (0.82)	.964
Do you think that this method is right?	2.38 (0.97)	2.58 (0.79)	.135	3.03 (0.75)	2.89 (0.78)	.186	3.03 (0.75)	2.89 (0.78)	**.030**	2.82 (0.86)	2.56 (0.78)	.671
Do you think that the student will correctly learn?	2.27 (0.88)	2.45 (0.78)	.143	2.92 (0.71)	2.70 (0.82)	**.041**	2.92 (0.71)	2.70 (0.82)	.313	2.67 (0.88)	2.54 (0.75)	.562
Do you think that this is the best way for improving music expressivity?	1.96 (0.84)	1.97 (0.77)	.883	2.78 (0.79)	2.72 (0.92)	.648	2.78 (0.79)	2.72 (0.92)	.476	2.51 (0.83)	2.59 (0.81)	.948
TOTAL score**	8.80 (3,26)	9.59 (2.59)	.075	11.55 (2.65)	11.06 (3.14)	.247	10.76 (3.25)	10.29 (2.93)	.303	12.13 (2.70)	12.17 (2.94)	.926

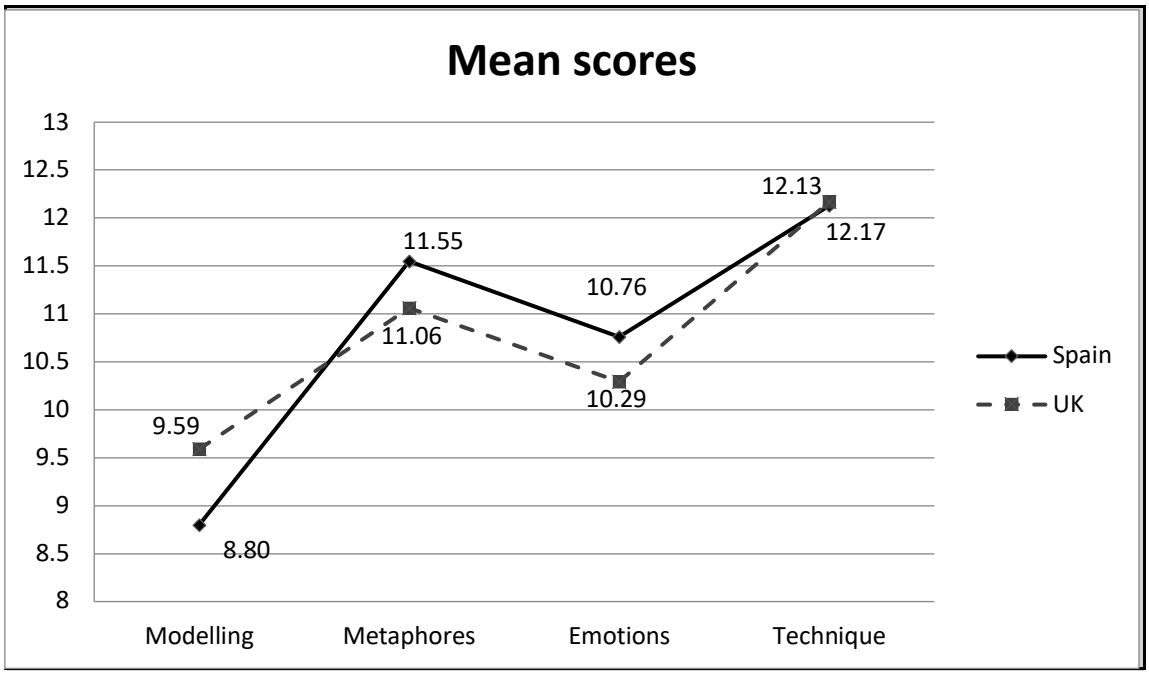
*Values are means, values between brackets are Standard Deviations.

**In the total score for each model the item 1 (have you ever been in a situation like that?) was not included as it is not clearly reflecting any type of attitude or belief of the students responding to the questionnaire

P values in bold indicates statistical significance at .05 chance level corrected for multiple comparisons.

With regards to within-group comparisons for the total scores (see Figure 1), separately for each country, for Spanish students, scores for the model based on technique were significantly higher to those of modelling (t(113)=9.03; p<.001), use of own emotions, (t(112)=4.31; p<.001), and metaphors or images (t(114)=2.50; p=.014). Next, scores for metaphors were higher to those of modelling (t(115)=6.24; p<.001) and emotions (t(113)=2.87; p=.005). Finally, scores for the model based on the use of the own emotions were higher to those of modelling (t(112)=3.30; p=.001).

Figure 1. Mean total score for each teaching model for Spanish and UK students.



Within-group comparisons for UK students indicated that scores in technique were higher than scores of modelling (t(76)=4.64; p<.001), metaphors (t(76)=2.52; p=.014) and use of own emotions (t(76)=4.51; p<.001). Next, scores of metaphors were higher than those of emotions (t(78)=2.16; p=.034), but not significantly different from scores of modelling (t(77)=1.66; p=.100). There were also no differences between scores

in modelling and emotions (t(77)=0.06; p=.950). These results are graphically illustrated in Figure 1 and show that the rank order of the mean scores for each model are the same for the two groups. However the difference between the scores was stronger for the Spanish students than the UK students, who did not value modelling as negatively, relatively speaking, as the Spanish students did.

Factors influencing ways of teaching expressivity

When asked to indicate the influence of various factors on the teaching of expressivity, English students had significantly higher scores in three of the five listed factors, as shown in Table 3. Specifically, they gave higher scores to the possible effect of the musical piece, the composer, and the musical style, suggesting that for the UK students, expressivity is more contextually dependent.

Table 3. Mean scores of responses of Spanish and English students, significance level of the difference between these means and associated effect size for factors that may influence the approach of teaching musical expressivity.

Items	Spain	UK	Total	*p*	*g*
	Mean *(SD)*	Mean *(SD)*	Mean *(SD)*		
Age	3.03 (0.86)	3.15 (0.93)	3.11 (0.92)	.336	0.13
Musical piece	3.03 (0.85)	3.46 (0.71)	3.00 (0.83)	**<.001**	**0.54**
Composer	2.69 (0.91)	2.51 (0.90)	2.80 (0.93)	.175	0.20
Instrument	2.22 (1.05)	2.77 (0.95)	2.69 (1.04)	**<.001**	**0.54**
Musical style	2.90 (0.96)	3.32 (0.83)	3.05 (0.94)	**.002**	**0.46**

*Test (Degrees of freedom): Snedecor's *F* (2, N-2).

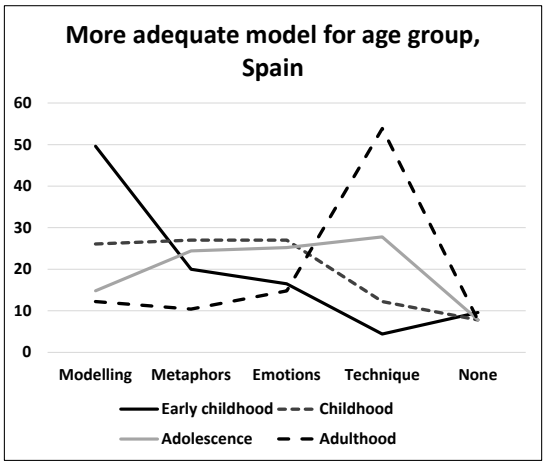
Ways of teaching expressivity according to the age group of the pupil

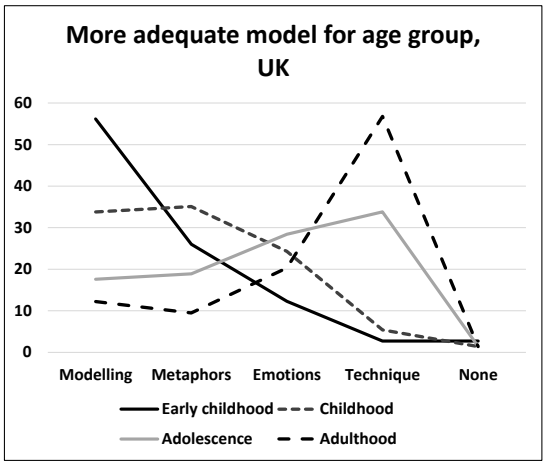
Finally, we analysed what model of teaching expressivity each group considered more or less adequate to be used as a function of the age group of the person to be taught

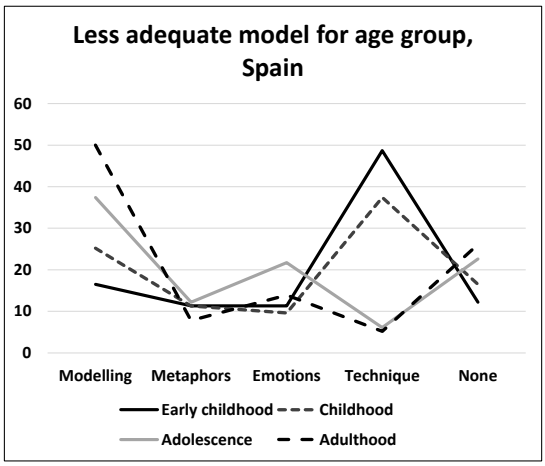
(see Figure 2 for an overview of responses). Among Spanish students, the great majority indicated that a particular model was more adequate for that age, including 90.4% of participants for early childhood (<6 years old) and 92.2% for other age groups, whereas 0.9% of participants considered that all of them would be adequate for adults. Similarly, in the English sample, 89.9% of the sample considered a particular model to be more adequate than the rest for early childhood, and 92.4%, for the other age groups.

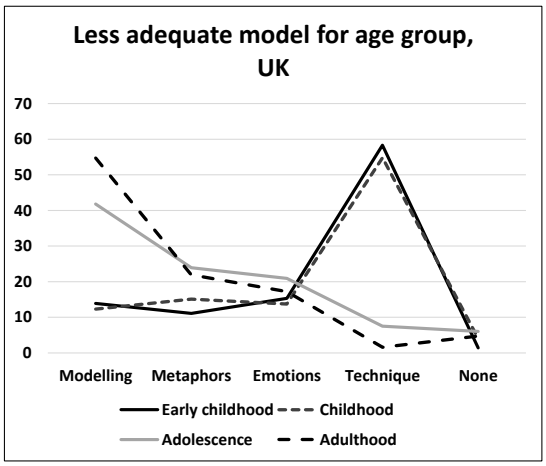
For early childhood, modelling was selected as the more adequate way of teaching expressivity by a majority in both samples (54.8%, Spain; 57.7%, UK), while technique was selected as the less adequate model by a majority (55.4%, 59.2%). For childhood (6-12 years old), Spanish participants chose above all metaphors and emotion, and the English group chose primarily the use of metaphor. Both groups indicated technique as the worse model for this age. Regarding adolescence, both groups indicated technique as the more adequate model, and modelling as the worse model. For adulthood, technique was selected for both groups as the better model, with a large difference in relation to the other models. Modelling was clearly selected as the worse model for this age group. Comparisons between groups in all these percentages showed that there were only statistically significant differences between countries with respect to the worse model for teaching expressivity in childhood (p=.008; *Cramer's V*=.271), adolescence (p=.027; *Cramer's V*=.246), and adulthood (p=.001; *Cramer's V*=.323). There were no differences, or even a trend to significance, for the best considered model in any age group. The results are summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Proportion of participants choosing a particular model or none of the models as the more adequate model (top) or the less adequate model (bottom) for four different age groups (different lines).









Discussion and Conclusion

As one of the few existing studies investigating conceptions about the learning and teaching of emotional expressivity in performance among HE students, the first contribution of this study is to enhance insight into this area of research, irrespective of the country of residence of the students. Indeed, a number of beliefs were shared among the two groups. The highest scoring statements for both groups related to age developments and the statement that expressivity is subjective and cannot be fixed or measured, indicating that these beliefs were strongly held. Statements related to the innate capacity of musical expressivity and the ability to establish rules linking musical elements with emotions received inter-mediate scores, indicating partial but not full agreement with these. Extrapolating these scores, we can say that while expressivity is not fixed, there may be regularities that can be developed despite influences of innate capabilities. Focussing on expressivity from the beginning of study was not seen as complicating learning, and music expressivity was not considered as very explicit in music syllabi. These disagreeing statements indicate implicit appeal for a clearer teaching strategy for this aspect of performance.

Further similarities between the two groups included the rank order of the appropriateness of different ways of teaching expressivity with a preference for 'Technique' followed by 'Metaphors' and 'Emotions' and finally 'Modelling'. This rank order changed when different age groups of pupils were considered: a reverse order was found for (early) childhood with modelling being most often chosen as the more adequate model followed by metaphors and emotions, and finally technique, which was chosen least often as adequate and most often chosen as the less adequate model. The evaluation of 'Technique' as the more appropriate teaching approach for adults seems to be in

contradiction with the low rating that the statement received ‘expressivity is a matter of technique’. This discrepancy may be related to a different notion of what a focus on technique entails. The teaching model for technique referred to creating differences in the sound and the performance of the music. However, participants may have thought about other aspects of technique such as breathing, fingering, posture, bowing, when indicating their disagreement with the statement about expressivity as a matter of technique. It may also point to some limitation of awareness that differences in sound production may indeed contribute to expressive performances. Technique is important but not sufficient to create an expressive performance.

Another seemingly contrasting result relates to the evaluation and frequency of modelling as a teaching method: Participants indicated to have encountered it relatively frequently, which is in line with empirical data on the relative frequency of this method (Juslin et al., 2006). They also evaluated modelling as the least appropriate method for teaching expressivity, which is in line with the argument that restricted forms of imitation imply the acquisition of superficial skills not easily generalizable to new situations (Tait, 1992), and that the effectiveness of modelling can be limited by the difficulty of extracting the relevant information from a presented performance (Lehmann & Ericsson, 1998). Other studies did find that modelling can be a useful strategy in music learning, depending on the type of modelling and how it is applied (e.g., Haston, 2007). This contradiction between indicated frequency and usefulness disappears if we consider that modelling was considered as an appropriate method for younger learners, although the same issues play a role for younger learners of identifying the relevant information and generalising across performances. Furthermore, less familiarity with technique as a teaching method was indicated, which may be related to this being a method that they may have encountered less frequently as it is considered less appropriate for younger learners. In other words,

these seeming contradictions may be resolved when the age of learners is taking into account.

Secondly, our findings provide insight into differences in beliefs that students hold in different educational contexts, indicating ways in which local culture and educational structure and legislation may impact such beliefs. Differences in the evaluations of the statements about musical expressivity indicated a stronger agreement among Spanish students with the need to understand the relationship between tempo and expressive character, and between musical elements and emotions. UK students on the other hand showed stronger agreement with statements about expressivity being a matter of technique, and being a second step of the memorization process. They also agreed more that expressivity was adequately considered in Educative regulations, although the overall ratings for these three items were in general low. These differences can be related to differences observed between the two groups in their evaluations of the influence of different factors on the way expressivity is taught. In particular, the UK students believed more strongly that manner of teaching was influenced by the musical context, including the musical piece, the instrument and the musical style. It seems that Spanish students link expressivity more strongly to emotion and specific musical elements such as tempo, while UK students link expressivity relatively more to musical interpretation and the specific performance of musical pieces. When evaluating the usefulness or success of different teaching methods, UK students were relatively more positive about Modelling, while Spanish students were more positive about the use of Metaphors and Emotions, although the latter group differences were not significant after correction for multiple testing.

These differences may be related to the differences in educational system that we observed, or they may more specifically relate to beliefs held within local musical

practices. It was observed that the UK educational system seems to put stronger emphasis on constructivist approaches to teaching and learning of music and to treat emotional and expressive aspects of musical learning more explicitly (Bonastre, 2015). It is not immediately clear how this difference in educational system relates to the observed differences in beliefs about expressivity and suitable teaching approaches. We may speculate that offering interpretation of the score and consideration of the context and style of a musical piece may be a way of involving the students in the shaping of an expressive interpretation, speculatively aligning the beliefs held more strongly in UK students with a more explicit and constructivist approach to teaching expressiveness. Furthermore, we may interpret the use of metaphors and emotions as alluding to intuitions that students may hold, which we can speculatively link to a less formalised or less institutionally led approach to expression in Spain. It will be of interest to corroborate these hypotheses about links between institutional and individual beliefs and approaches in future studies.

The differences in conceptualisation of musical expressivity in UK and Spanish students show a parallel with a distinction found by Schubert & Fabian (2014) between stylishness or musical expressiveness and emotional expressiveness. When asking participants to evaluate performances on a variety of dimensions they found evaluations of expressiveness to correlate with evaluations of stylishness, quality and clarity, while a second factor clustered evaluations related to emotional expressiveness including emotional tension and emotional activity felt and perceived. These differences in conceptualisation can be linked to academic debates about the role of aesthetic or evaluative judgment and valorized affective engagement as central to expressive performance or emotional expressivity with a reference to e.g. discrete emotions (Doğantan-Dack, 2014).

While the results of this study consist of a fairly straightforward comparison between responses to a questionnaire in two populations, the exact phrasing of questions and the use of specific vignettes to represent teaching approaches does induce certain limitations and has advantages as well as disadvantages. The use of vignettes has the advantage of specifying concretely what is meant by a certain concept, which helps to disambiguate the meaning of a question or statement. Vignettes have been successfully used in education research (Hughes & Huby, 2004), and to assess beliefs and practices in teaching (Fang, 1996). A disadvantage is that responses may be influenced by the specific example presented at the vignette, reducing generalisability of the results. The statements and vignettes used in the study were validated in a sample of Spanish music students and teachers (Bonastre, 2009; 2015) and were based on vignettes used in previous research (Juslin et al., 2006). Nevertheless, the number of teaching approaches exemplified were limited, as were the number of presented beliefs. Furthermore, in reality, teachers may use a combination of methods, which together may be seen as more optimal for teaching expressiveness, such as a combination of modelling and constructive dialog (Meissner, 2018).

In conclusion then, an important contribution of this study and our previous work (Bonastre, Muñoz, Timmers, 2017) is to clarify what beliefs and conceptions music students have about expressive performance, and to begin to explore how educational contexts and systems may influence such conceptions. Beliefs about expression may influence practice behaviour, attitudes, and the ownership that students take with respect to their learning and to performance outcomes. With greater understanding and awareness of ways in which performance can be expressive and how this can be developed, students can take greater ownership of their learning and the performance outcomes. Indeed, we expect that certain beliefs may change with the increasing advancement of research on

musical expressiveness and the ways in which it can be measured, compared across performances, and creatively developed (Juslin et al., 2006; Repp, 1992; Timmers, Sadakata, & Desain, 2012). Furthermore, teachers may take a more pro-active approach in developing this awareness in students and create an open dialogue with respect to their beliefs and interpretation of expression.

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Appendix 1. Vignettes used as examples of ways of teaching expressivity.

MODEL A: The student plays a passage, then the teacher gets up and says: 'like this, do you see the difference? Look what I am doing. Can you try to do it yourself?'.

MODEL B: The teacher listens and after the performance says: 'here, in this passage the color changes, think about a visual image that could help you. Here you could think about a sunny day, and in the bar 44 everything gets dark, like a dense fog. Play it'.

MODEL C: The teacher looks up and asks: 'What do you feel when you are playing?' While playing that passage think about something very sad and change the emotion in the following passage. I don't know…, think that sadness went away and everything is now right, you are now very happy and glad. And at the end, phew!, you have there an explosive ending, you have to feel happy, almost exultant with that end'.

MODEL D: The teacher listens the performance of the student and advises: 'The sounds in this passage are all very similar. You tend to play them with the same strength and length. Look for different sonorous levels, can you distinguish the articulation of each voice? Here you could make the melody more slurred and sonorous and the accompaniment lighter.