

English for Music Studies

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Universidad de Granada

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For Jaime and Andrea

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FOREWORD

WRIT IN WATER

‘Farewell and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare thee well.’
L. Byron

This farewell sentence by Lord Byron, who heads the piano elegy 'El último adiós' by Marcial del Adalid (1849) as a motto, shows (however fleetingly) the profound imprint of English language and culture in Spanish music. I do not intend to enumerate an endless list of names and works, just to cite two personalities who illustrate the spirit and interest shared by the subject of *English for Music Studies [Inglés Técnico para Musicología]* and this workbook. At the end of the 19th century, London witnessed the adventures of two young Spanish musicians (it is essential to read the memoirs of Arbós) who would remain forever linked to English culture: Isaac Albéniz succeeds as a performer and sets music to poems by F. Money-Coutts - beautiful songs studied by Marta Falces. Enrique F. Arbós makes concert tours, is appointed professor at the Royal College and collaborates for twenty years with a concert society in the British capital. One hundred years ago, on the occasion of the premiere of *El sombrero de tres picos [Le Tricorne]* at the Alhambra Theatre, Arbós writes to Falla: 'I wish I could go with you! My heart aches and pains that I won't be there with you. I wish you a lot of success and may London be for you what it has been for me for 25 years. A paradise!'¹

Entering the paradise of the English language is what this notebook aims to do with a double purpose. On the one hand, to open the doors of the immense musicological production in English, making us aware of the semantic and expressive richness of the original texts:

For music isn't just something nice to listen to. On the contrary, it's deeply embedded in human culture (just as there isn't a culture that doesn't have language, so there isn't one that doesn't have music). Music somehow seems to be natural, to exist as something apart – and yet it is suffused with human values, with our sense of what is good or bad, right or wrong. Music doesn't just happen, it is what we make it, and what we make *of* it. People *think* through music, decide who they are through it, express themselves through it.

Nicholas Cook (1998)

1 “Quien pudiera ir con VD! El corazón se me hace pedazos de pena que no estaré allí con VD. Mucho éxito y que Londres sea para VD lo que ha sido para mí durante 25 años. ¡Un paraíso!”

To enter also in the paradise of the English culture is the second object of this workbook, propitiating a transnational and cosmopolitan attitude, like that of Albéniz and Arbós, so necessary for the study of any discipline of Humanities, even more for musicology. Because after all, music, as Keat's name, 'is writ in water'.

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INTRODUCTION

'In Canada pianos needed water. You opened up the back and left a full glass of water, and a month later the glass would be empty. Her father had told her about the dwarfs who drank only at pianos, never in bars.'

Michael Ondaatje, *The English Patient*

This workbook compiles a collection of selected materials that have been produced over the last six years. Its content has arisen from the authors' experience and has been designed to provide specific practice for students of Music Studies. Its aim is to offer a comprehensive set of activities which act as a foundation for particular topics developed in the classroom of *English for Music Studies [Inglés Técnico para Musicología]*.

This second edition of the book appears as a response to the authors' practice in class, where the original contents were tested for the last three academic years. It includes new exercises and expands some of the more theoretical sections in it; conversely, the content has been simplified at some points and its title has been changed, in an attempt to be more precise and make things easier for our students.

The workbook is divided into four main sections dealing with particular areas of interest and skills:

PART I. Activities in *English and music* propose a comparative approach to the study of English and music as modes of communication, with references to aspects such as rhythm or grammar and vocabulary as cohesive devices. It ultimately tries to teach students how to read texts in English, within the broader context of Music Studies.

PART II. *The basic language of music* focuses specifically on the study of technical vocabulary: notation, music instruments, ensembles and genres.

PART III. *Music and academic skills* includes activities related to main text typologies. They are understood as the necessary academic skills that music undergraduates are expected to develop: to prepare their resumé, to design an oral presentation, to write a short essay and to organize a review.

PART IV. The so-called *Seminars* include a group of tasks designed for five texts, each of a different nature (blogs, radio broadcasts, academic articles or lectures). The strategies explored in the former three sections are combined and put into practice here.

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PART I. ENGLISH AND MUSIC

'Like the grass that is restless and would go
To where the wind goes, I wish to go,
A stream, a river, a continuous dancer knowing nothing,
On no particular stage, without audience.'

Brian Patten, *The optimistic song*

ENGLISH, MUSIC AND RHYTHM: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

RHYTHM AND STRESS

Rhythm implies the repetition of elements grouped regularly in some sequence or order. Rhythm is intrinsic to the language of music. This is something we all know regardless of our musical knowledge or cultural tradition. All languages are also rhythmical in their own way, although this is something we do not always consider as evident as we do for music.

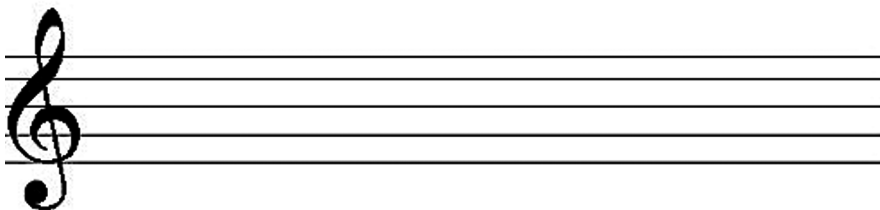
English is described as an accentual-syllabic language. This means that the rhythm of the English language attends to the following two conditions:

- a. The assumption that the amount of time between stresses is roughly equal.
- b. The fact that every content word (nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs) carries one stressed syllable.

1a. Keeping in mind these general considerations:

- Read the following English line carefully.
- Choose a music time signature for the score below.
- Create a rhythmical pattern for the following English line. Stressed syllables have been underlined to make your task easier.

Mud, mud, glorious mud



While Music Lasts

The line in exercise 1a comes from the famous *The Hippopotamus Song*, a humorous composition written by the British comedians Flanders and Swann back in the 1950s. Here you are given a full transcription of its chorus:

[...]
Mud, mud, glorious mud
Nothing quite like it for cooling the blood
So follow me follow, down to the hollow
And there let me wallow in glorious mud
[...]

YOUTUBE LINK: <https://youtu.be/Vt6xGqk0FOU>

1b. Read the following text aloud. Identify and underline the stressed syllables in these lines:

Shyness is nice and
Shyness can stop you
From doing all the things in life
You'd like to

Now, answer the following questions:

- Do you recognize these lyrics? What song is this?

- What is the name of the band that performs this song? Where are they from?

- Can you guess the genre/style of this band?

- Identify the instruments in this band.

YOUTUBE LINK: <https://goo.gl/hc2MzE>

STRESS AND METRE

English verse is based upon a two-term contrast between positions in a line that should contain strong and weak syllables.

- ✓ ICTUS (X): strong syllable
- ✓ REMISS (-): weak syllable

Strong and weak syllables in a line are stored into structures of two or three syllables, each called foot. Each line may contain anything from one to eight feet. Depending on how stressed and unstressed syllables are distributed, a foot is classified under each of the following categories:

- IAMB or IAMBIC FOOT (- X)
- TROCHEE (X -)
- ANAPEST (- - X)
- DACTYL (X - -)

As for music, a measure comes to be the equivalent term for foot as used in English prosody.

1c. Consider the following lines. Underline stressed syllables for each of them. Then, match each line with one of the rhythmic patterns provided below (A, B, C, D). To make things more *interesting*, there are 2 examples that match with the same pattern (!):

- Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious even though the sound of it is something quite atrocious ('Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious', in *Mary Poppins*)
- Through the forest have I gone (*Midsummer Night's Dream*, by William Shakespeare)
- With you again in sweetest sympathy ('Come again, Sweet Love', by John Dowland)
- Those were days of roses, poetry and prose ('Martha', by Tom Waits)
- Out of the cradle, endlessly rocking ('Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking', by Walt Whitman)

MUSIC RHYTHMIC PATTERNS

Four musical rhythmic patterns are shown, labeled A, B, C, and D. Each pattern is written on a single staff in treble clef. Pattern A is in 6/8 time, with a tempo marking of quarter note = 80. Pattern B is in 6/8 time. Pattern C is in 2/4 time. Pattern D is in 2/4 time. Each pattern shows a sequence of notes and rests with accents and numbers 1, 2, 3 indicating the start of a foot.

1d. Find below the lyrics for *Song no. XVII* by John Dowland. Do the following tasks:

- Listen to the song. You can find to a version by Steven Rickards, counter-tenor via this link: <https://goo.gl/MykFiS>.
- Underline stressed syllables in the text while you listen to the song (version for clarinet with piano accompaniment).
- Match the lyrics with the provided music score below.
- Mark syllables which coincide with strong music pulses.
- What words are highlighted by metre?

XVII. COME AGAIN, SWEET LOVE DOTH NOW INVITE (JOHN DOWLAND)

Come again:
Sweet love doth now invite,
Thy graces that refrain,
To do me due delight,
To see, to hear, to touch, to kiss, to die,
With thee again in sweetest sympathy.

Come again
That I may cease to mourn,
Through thy unkind disdain:
For now left and forlorn,
I sit, I sigh, I weep, I faint, I die,
In deadly pain and endless misery.

Gentle Love,
Draw forth thy wounding dart,
Thou canst not pierce her heart,
For I that to approve,
By sighs and tears more hot than are
thy shafts,
Did tempt while she for mighty
triumphs laughs.