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# Students with Special Educational Needs Camouflaging and Teacher Training of University Teaching Staff: Practical Reflection

Ana Mercedes Vernia Carrasco

**Abstract**—The objective of this work is to reflect through the theoretical framework on the access to the university for the formation of a degree in a teacher of primary education. The University Access Tests in Spain evaluate a series of skills and competencies in writing, which leave aside the sample of another set of skills and tools that this type of test cannot evaluate. In the last years, a very much diversified student body has arrived in the classrooms of the universities. Nowadays, talking about special education means attending to the changes that are being experienced in this area. At present, the educational model focuses on the reinforcement by the educational institutions so that they form the students according to their personal characteristics and that it is not the students that must adapt to the system. A bibliographic review plus some years of experience in training for the future teacher allows us to make an initial assessment about the lack of rigor in the tests of access to the university. In conclusion, we can say that, although we are not a specialist in the type of Special Educational Needs that can manifest the students, therefore, we understand that teacher today needs training and support to develop their teaching with the best quality possible. These teacher and student needs also imply more institutional support.

**Keywords**—Teacher training, special educational needs, music education.

## I. INTRODUCTION

AFTER several years teaching in the university space and in didactics of musical expression, we have observed that students arrive with certain special needs, only once we have been informed by the university itself, they may not even detect these needs at the time of the famous tests of selectivity or access. Other times it is the students who report cases of classmates with Special Educational Needs (SEN). So, in this work we have limited ourselves to making a small assessment from our own experience and from what we have found related to the SEN and the responsibility that we should assume, both as teachers and from the university.

Our first hypothesis addresses the lack of detection in university entrance tests, when the SEN are not physical, nor are they accompanied by any report. And, on the other hand, we are aware of the relevant contributions that active musical education can offer, in emotional processes, psychomotricity, communication, social and personal relationships, or other factors of such nature. Therefore, our proposal is divided into two phases. A first phase is where detection is fundamental in access to the university and therefore, the type of test must be

changed, renewed or adapted, as well as the evaluation and those who evaluate it. On the other hand, it is necessary to adapt the tools that can help, such as musical education. One issue that concerns us, in this regard, is the lack of training that the university teacher receives, in terms of the attention of students with SEN in the classroom. For this reason, it is proposed to increase the training of future teachers with respect to both musical knowledge and attention to diversity in primary school.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

We can understand students with SEN as those who, in their study process, need certain support and educational attention [1]. In the [LOGSE [2], which is the General Organization Law of the Spanish Educational System, the concept of SEN is related to attention to the diversity of students, specifying those who need less usual help, temporarily or permanently and specialized way.

It was Warnock [3] who proposed that words such as "mentally retarded", "physically disabled", language disorders, maladjusted or similar, be replaced by Special Educational Needs (SEN), since he considered it inappropriate to classify people according to their deficit. This new concept addresses needs rather than disabilities, in addition to being broader. In this line, it is considered [4] that the space of special education must interact with the curriculum, teaching, support and learning conditions that allow SEN to be addressed in a meaningful way.

In the university context, it is explained [5] that in the last years we have attended a massification, with what supposes a significant increase of formative and professional needs. Universities need to review their curricula and educational policies in order to move towards educational quality. It is necessary that the training, teaching and learning of students be attended to with better quality. In this sense, orientation and tutoring should be directed towards:

1. Understand the training offer (profiles and itineraries) and mature the option or vocational choice.
2. Insert yourself effectively in university life.
3. Participate in the university.
4. Understand the profile and its relationship with the offer of the degree that is being studied.
5. Develop academic and professional skills.

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TABLE I  
UNIVERSITIES WITH A DEPARTMENT OF ATTENTION TO DIVERSITY AND ITS PROGRAMS

Andalusia	University of Almeria	It also has a Personalized Attention Program (PAP)	Galicia	Universidad De La Coruña	University Unit for Attention to Diversity (ADI)	
	Cadiz University	“Disability Care Program, General Directorate of Social and Solidarity Action”		Universidad De Santiago De Compostela (La Coruña)	University Participation and Integration Service (SEPIU)	
	University of Cordoba	Special Needs Care Unit (UANE)		Universidad De Vigo (Pontevedra)	Student Information, Orientation and Promotion Section (SIOPE)	
	University of Granada	Office of Social Attention to Students (GAE)		Balearic Islands	Universidad De Las Islas Baleares	University Office of Support for People with Special Needs
	University of Huelva	Service of Attention to the University Community (SACU)		The Rioja	Universidad De La Rioja	University Social Help of La Rioja (ASUR)
	Jaen University	Attention Unit for Students with Disabilities (UAED)		Madrid	Universidad Autónoma	Disability Care Area of the Solidarity Action and Cooperation Office
	Malaga University	Support Service for Students with Disabilities (SAAD)			Universidad Complutense	Integration Office for People with Disabilities (OIPD)
	Sevilla University	Disabled Student Care Unit			Universidad Politécnica	Office for the care and integration of people with disabilities, Program for the Integration of Students with Disabilities (PIED)
	Pablo De Olavide University, Seville	Welcome Program			Universidad De Carlos III	Disability Unit offers students with hearing disabilities curricular adaptations
Aragon	Zaragoza's University	University Office for Attention to Disability (OUAD)	Universidad Europea		Admission and attention to students with disabilities are personalized	
	University of San Jorge, Zaragoza	Program of Attention to Students with Disabilities	Universidad Francisco De Vitoria	Social Work Unit		
Asturias	Oviedo University	Vinjoy Foundation Hearing Impaired Educational Resource Center	Universidad Pontificia Comillas	Disability department		
Canary Islands	University of La Laguna (Santa Cruz De Tenerife)	Personalized attention for students with some type of disability	Universidad Alfonso X El Sabio	Attention Service for Students with Disabilities (SAED)		
	University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria	Support Service for Students with Disabilities (Social Help)	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos	Support and Integration Program for People with Disabilities (PAISD)		
Cantabria	University of cantabria	“Normalization Program. Attention to Diversity” of the University Orientation Service (SOU CAN)	Universidad CEU San Pablo	Unit for Equality and Help for the Disabled		
Castilla la Mancha	Castilla-La Mancha university	Support Service for Students with Disabilities (SAED)	Universidad De Alcalá	Unit for the Integration and Coordination of Disability Policies (UICPD)		
Castilla and Leon	University of Burgos	Support Unit for Students with Disabilities	Region of Murcia	Universidad De Murcia	Personal Counseling and Guidance Service (SAOP)	
	University of Leon	Support Unit for Students with Disabilities		Universidad Católica De San Antonio De Murcia	Disability Care Unit	
	University of Salamanca	The Social Affairs Service has among its units the Unit for Attention to University Students with Disabilities		Universidad Politécnica De Cartagena	Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities	
	University of Valladolid	Integration program between university students and people with disabilities		Navarra	Universidad De Navarra	Department of University Students for Social Assistance (UAS)
Catalonia	Catholic University of Avila	Student Support Service (SAE)	Universidad Pública De Navarra	University Students for Social Assistance (UAS)		
	Autonomous University of Barcelona	“PIUNE, Disability Care Service”	Basque Country	Universidad De Deusto	Social Action and Inclusion Service	
	Universidad De Barcelona	Office of Integration Programs of the University of Barcelona		Universidad Del País Vasco	Service for People with Disabilities	
	Universidad Politécnica De Cataluña (Barcelona)	Disability Care Program (PAD)	Valencian Community	Universidad De Alicante	Student Support Center (CAE)	
	Universidad Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona)	“Special Programs Support Unit”		Universidad Miguel Hernández De Elche (Alicante)	Area of Attention to Students with Disabilities (ATED)	
	Universidad De Ramón Llull (Barcelona)	Personal Orientation Service (SOP)	Universidad De Jaume I De Castellón De La Plana	Diversity Attention Program		
	Universidad De Vic (Barcelona)	Counseling Service for Students with Disabilities	Universidad Ceu Cardenal Herrera (Valencia)	University Guidance and Disability Care Service (SOUAD)		
	Universidad De Gerona	Support Program for People with Disabilities	Universidad Politécnica De Valencia	Care and Advice Service for People with Disabilities, of the CEDAT Foundation		
	Universidad De Lérida	Assistance Program for Students with Disabilities,	Universidad De Valencia	Delegation for the integration of people with disabilities		
	Universidad De Rovira I Virgili (Tarragona)	Student Service Center has a "Guide for students with disabilities"	Universidad Católica De Valencia San Vicente Mártir (Valencia)	Office of Attention to Persons with Disabilities		
Extremadura	Universidad De Extremadura	Attention Unit for Students with Disabilities				

6. Connect with the training and work environment related to the training and professional profile.
7. Clarify the postgraduate itinerary.
8. Prepare and execute the transition from the initial formation.

In Table I, we can see the number of Spanish universities that have programs or services for the attention to the diversity of students. So, we can deduce that currently the Spanish university system recognizes the importance of the SEN of its students, although it seems that programs are not shared among the universities of the same community, implying that each university considers it in a certain way. But, in any case, it is a topic that worries and therefore both material and human resources are dedicated to it.

The fact of eliminating architectural barriers at the university does not mean addressing total diversity. There is other SEN to take into account beyond physical needs.

#### *Musical Education and SEN*

The incidence of music on the central nervous system can produce relaxation, stimulation, etc. besides awakening memories, emotions or feelings. On the other hand, students with SEN have a good response to musical stimuli, depending on their limitations [6]. The main objective is to allow the student to express himself through music, developing both social and communication skills. In reference to intervention in students with SEN, a series of elementary procedures are understood that interact with:

- Listen, pay attention, learn to perform a selective listening.
- Motor coordination based on different rhythmic activities: sing, perform percussion, play instruments, dance ...
- Self-concept, self-esteem, becoming aware of the possibilities offered by "my body" as an instrument capable of "making music".
- The relationship with others, and with the environment, using music as a means of communication and expressing feelings and ideas through the voice, musical instruments and the body.
- Respecting the voices of the classmates, the turn when singing or playing, accepting the instructions to sing or play in a group.
- Attending concerts or programmed musical activities with didactic purposes, recognizing and valuing other music, other instruments.
- The recognition of sound parameters through sound exploration (intensity, timbre, height, duration, texture).
- Technology, using different materials: audiovisual, computers, recorders, sound mixer ...
- "Learn to learn", searching, collecting information of a musical nature, selecting sound materials: Play music videos, record sounds from home, from the street, voices, listen, modify, interrelate ...

One of the most relevant elements of music is rhythm, and it can be a very useful tool to work with children with certain SEN. In this sense, rhythmic activities are ideal for motor coordination, whereas melody is related to the meaning of music, expression and affectivity. And the harmony affects the

sensory, affective and mental side, from the chaining of chords, [6].

On the other hand, music and emotions share place in the prefrontal cortex, in addition, according to research at the University of Dartmouth, where eight musicians were analyzed, the music processing area remains active during the recovery of memory and reasoning [7].

### III. METHODOLOGY

We could call our pre-observational methodology, since we have not yet complied with the parameters that should be included within an observational methodology, because we have limited ourselves to observe and take note of those reactions that seemed to be related to our doubts/hypotheses. Thus, we took notes of the activities carried out in class within the subject of didactics of musical expression and we collected data from the didactic units that they had to make with a selection of activities aimed at acquiring musical competences within the framework of primary education, and the student body had to show actively, as if it were a real environment. On the other hand, we must mention the research procedure known as autoethnography and which would be within the scope of ethnography. As some authors say [8], it is a very useful tool to understand human, socially and culturally mediated experience. In addition, it facilitates the description of a human group in its habitat and from daily life. Thus, we could understand that self-ethnography would be a research strategy for our research, to incorporate the researcher's own experience, understanding this information as primary data. In this line, [9] believes that autoethnography is a suitable research method to know the musical performance during the process of instrumental practice, which, in our case, would also be related to the own practices and learning processes of our students.

TABLE II  
 DETECTED CASES OF SEN DURING FOUR ACADEMIC YEARS

<i>Case</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Answer</i>
X1	The classmates themselves state the situation.	The Vice Dean is notified so that the recommendations can be established. In class, he adapts perfectly and is aware of his behavior.
X2	It is announced from the University service and the student himself	It adapts perfectly to class, with important performance
X3	It is detected by the teacher and the classmates.	Vice Dean is notified. In class does not attend, he is continually confused. He is not aware of his attitude classmates do notice
X4	The students themselves inform the teacher	He adapts perfectly to class, with important performance and involvement.

Table II shows the cases and situations detected. During three academic years, we have witnessed four cases, either by our own communication or by external detection; in any case, we understand that when the student is aware of his actions, his adaptability is easier or more comfortable. We have not consulted these cases with the teachers of other subjects, so we only have samples of the behaviors in the didactic class of musical expression.

#### IV. DIDACTIC PROPOSAL

Our proposal links disciplines such as music education, attention to diversity, tutoring and guidance, to facilitate the educational inclusion of students with SEN in the subject of grade in primary school teacher. As a musician, and not as a music therapist or psychologist, we need qualified teachers in psychology, who can detect in the access phase, certain attitudes or delimitations that may indicate some type of SEN. For the second phase, after detection, the music specialist teacher must work as a team not only with the students but also with department staff (or similar organism) for attention to diversity.

In addition to the ordinary or standard tests for access to the university, a second oral test will be developed. A group interview is carried out that allows observation (behavior) individually or in groups.

A series of questions are posed to be answered in groups and individually, with the aim of obtaining information about some type of SEN. In case information was obtained showing any SEN related to psychomotor, emotion, character, communication, etc. music education could be a tool to help improve these needs.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

We consider that this practical application can guarantee a better attention to diversity, and a more real educational inclusion, with the particularity of being able to interact from the musical education not only as a subject in the own formation of the future elementary teacher, but also as part of their inclusion and interaction in the class. We are aware of our initial doubts when observing behaviors that were not usual in the classroom, and this at first, led us to reflection, from our own ignorance in the field of psychology, although we believe that inclusion was adequate, since activities allowed a wide flexibility to be able to attend to the different student profiles.

We believe that the most important thing is to attend to diversity from the beginning of access to the university and above all that the teachers are aware of these situations and that their complementary training also includes this area of knowledge.

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