
RESEARCH

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**DESIGNING AND VALIDATING A QUESTIONNAIRE TO
DETERMINE THE TEACHING PRAXIS OF THE TRANSVERSE
FLUTE PROFESSORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION CENTERS OF
VALENCIAN COMMUNITY**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to design and validate a questionnaire to determine the opinion of higher education transverse flute professors of Valencia on the teaching practice. The reference population is composed of all transverse flute professors of the top three music conservatories of the Valencian Community: CSM "Oscar Esplá" of Alicante, CSM "Joaquín Rodrigo" of Valencia and CSM "Salvador Seguí" of Castellón. The questionnaire was sent to all the population and the data generating sample was found to be 100%. However, two of the respondents did not answer, so we have a bias of 33'33%. It is considered that the study is still viable because there is at least one subject who answers per each center, so we have information from the three centers of the Valencian Community. The results show that the questionnaire is valid and reliable for getting feedback on the flute teaching practice in the higher conservatories of the Valencian Community.

KEY WORDS: Questionnaire – Higher education – Conservatory – Validation – Professors – Flute – Valencian Community.

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DISEÑO Y VALIDACIÓN DE UN CUESTIONARIO PARA CONOCER LA PRAXIS DOCENTE DEL PROFESORADO DE FLAUTA TRAVESERA EN CENTROS SUPERIORES DE LA COMUNIDAD VALENCIANA

RESUMEN

El objetivo del presente estudio es diseñar y validar un cuestionario para conocer la opinión del profesorado de las enseñanzas superiores de flauta travesera de la Comunidad Valenciana sobre la praxis docente. La población de referencia está formada por el conjunto de profesores de flauta travesera de los tres conservatorios superiores de música de la Comunidad Valenciana: CSM "Oscar Esplà" de Alicante, CSM "Joaquín Rodrigo" de Valencia y CSM "Salvador Seguí" de Castellón. El cuestionario fue enviado a toda la población y la muestra generadora de datos resultó ser del 100%. Sin embargo dos de los encuestados no respondieron, por tanto tenemos un sesgo del 33'33%. Se considera que el estudio sigue siendo viable debido a que hay por lo menos 1 sujeto que responde de cada centro, por ello hay información de los tres centros de la Comunidad Valenciana. Los resultados obtenidos muestran que el cuestionario es válido y fiable para conocer la opinión sobre la praxis docente de la flauta en los conservatorios superiores de la Comunidad Valenciana.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Cuestionario – Enseñanzas superiores – Conservatorio – Validación – Profesorado – Flauta – Comunidad Valenciana.

DESENHO E VALIDAÇÃO DE UM QUESTIONÁRIO PARA CONHECER A PRAXIS DOCENTE DO PROFESSORADO DE FLAUTA TRANSVERSAL NOS CENTROS SUPERIORES DA COMUNIDADE VALENCIANA

RESUMO

O objetivo do presente estudo é desenhar e validar um questionário para conhecer a opinião do professorado do ensino superior de flauta transversal da Comunidade Valenciana sobre a praxis docente. A população de referência esta formada por um conjunto de professores de flauta transversal dos três conservatórios superiores de música da Comunidade Valenciana: CSM "Oscar Esplà" de Alicante, CSM "Joaquin Rodrigo" de Valência e CSM "Salvador Seguí" de Castellón. O questionário foi enviado a toda população e a mostra geradora de dados resultou ser de 100%. Mesmo assim dois dos entrevistados não responderam, portanto temos uma inclinação de um 33,33%. Considera-se que o estudo segue sendo viável devido ter pelo menos um sujeito que responde de cada centro, por isso tem informação dos três centros da

Comunidade Valenciana. Os resultados obtidos mostram que o questionário é válido e confiável para conhecer a opinião sobre a prática docente da flauta nos conservatórios superiores da Comunidade Valenciana.

PALAVRAS CHAVE: Questionário – Ensinos superiores – Conservatório – Validação – Professorado – Flauta – Comunidade Valenciana

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1. INTRODUCTION

The teaching practice is not imminent in time, it is a changing evolution subject to many variables. This makes it difficult to review it, which is often relegated to a study of methodology but not of the teaching action (Botella and Escorihuela, 2014).

Research on the teaching of instruments and the teaching practice has been approached from different fields, both at amateur or complementary and professional education. The recorder has been the most studied flute, since it is an important teaching tool in the subject of music in Primary and Secondary Education. However, there are hardly scientific papers related to the instruments professionally studied at the Conservatories. Stringed instruments are the most researched ones in this field. This is due to their high technical and methodological variety that is deeply rooted in national schools and supports easy differentiation and measurement of results. In most cases, teachers have clear objectives to be achieved and the contents to be developed, but they often neglect reflection on practice in the classroom. That is, the technical concepts are well known but there is no reflection on how to transmit knowledge to the student (Botella and Martinez, 2015).

Instrumental flute teaching at higher cycles has scarcely been dealt with. Little of what teachers teach and how to teach it is known, and there is little knowledge of the flute trends that are being followed and the type of flute expert that, once their higher education is finished, is going to the music market. In short, what musical "product" the educational system is launching to the professional world. Therefore, as Botella and Escorihuela (2016, p 412) say, "one needs to know what and how is

being taught to know what and how to improve this practice and review, even export the characteristics of the type of flute teaching".

Since what is considered to be the first method of flute was published in 1707, *Principles of the transverse flute or German flute* by Jacques-Martin Hotteterre, there have been methods and textbooks about this instrument. During the nineteenth century, the instrumental teaching evolved with improvements in the construction of instruments. Thus the appearance of methods, some self-learners, was encouraged, promoting professional musician and depopularizing the music played at home. The systematization to be imposed on any method can be seen in the *Celebrated Method* by H. Altès, one of the classics along with those of Devienne, Tulou, Hugot-Wunderlich or Taffanel. Romanticism, as an aesthetic movement, led to definitive mechanization of the transverse flute, developed and popularized by Theobald Boehm. The adoption or not of the Boehm flute by teachers and prominent flute players of the moment marks a before and an after in the teaching of this instrument, and the methods of flute can be catalogued in ancient or modern, depending on for what flute system they are written. This dichotomous cataloging is not exclusive in the sense that there are methods that are valid for more than one flute system or model, but it helps to understand the emergence of abundant literature about the learning of the new flute that has extended as far as today.

In addition to the method or methods, the teaching of flute can also be influenced by what has come to be known as school. This concept covers the methodology used by the teacher or professor, or set of teachers of an institution. In the field of art, the school defines the group of followers, fans or apprentices of an individual acting as master or source of inspiration. National transverse flute schools have played an important role in the generalization and exponential techniques and methods that have managed to be timeless and of proven solvency. They can distinguish two large flute schools: the French and the English. However, from the twentieth century on, The American school emerges strongly, and we must not ignore the influence that the Central European School (Germany and Austria) once had.

With all this, a number of variables must be taken into account when researching the teaching practice. These are not always stable, because the flute is played in each country with its own characteristics, usually a result of the influence of one or more known instrumentalists of the site concerned. In the case of school, trips, recordings and radio are gradually erasing differences. The school as a concept of execution based on the enormous influence of a great flutist through his teaching method, his books and his playing is compromised (Wye, 1988).

This piece of research reflects the teaching practice at this stage and addresses other

issues that refer to the general objective that teachers seek to achieve with their students and the methodology they use in their transverse flute lessons.

2. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study was to determine the teaching practice of transverse flute professors of higher teaching in Valencia. This framework objective encompassing all research will allow us to gradually unravel the fabric which is the teaching of the instrument in this field of study. To accomplish this task, the following specific objectives directly related to the structure of research arise:

1. Describe the teaching practice of Conservatories of the Valencian community.
2. Observe and determine what flute profile is assigned to each professor and how it influences the type of students.
3. Know the reference authors who are interpreted both in the repertoire and in the technical books and studies, and if professors follow a common program or if each one prepares his schedule.
4. Discover to what extent the musical background of each professor influences their way of imparting flute lessons and scheduling.

3. METHODOLOGY

The following methodological procedures were used to achieve the objectives:

1. A literature review and a historical-musical study based pm a detailed analysis of primary and secondary sources of what has so far been written about the study of the flute. Referring to treaties of the seventeenth and eighteenth century and to the most current writings. Remarkable are the findings on the flute in Spain during the nineteenth century.
2. A study linked to the practice of the flute in the classrooms of the higher music centers of Valencia. It is useful to know the attitude of professors by way of a questionnaire allowing them to express their views on the best way to teach this instrument and what the pillars underpinning the training give the students are. A questionnaire through which professors can provide information about their teaching practices.

3.1. Populations and samples.

Sampling techniques used in research can determine the part of the studied reality (population) to be examined in order to make inferences about that population. This is to obtain an adequate sample that would achieve a simplified version of the population and accurately reproduce their basic features. The reference population of this piece of research is composed of all transverse flute professors at the higher

music conservatories of Valencia. The following formula allows us to calculate the sample size for finite populations:

$$n = Z_{\alpha}^2 \frac{N \cdot p \cdot q}{i^2 (N - 1) + Z_{\alpha}^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$$

Wherein:

- n is the size the sample needs to have, knowing the population size N. N = 6 in the case of transverse flute professors of the higher conservatories of Valencia.
- Z is the corresponding value to Gaussian distribution of 1.95 for $\alpha = 0.05$ if we work with a confidence level (1- α) of 95%. The confidence level is the probability that the estimate made fits reality. It is the probability that the interval built around the statistical captures the true value of the parameter.
- P is the variability parameter to be estimated which is generally obtained from previous or pilot studies but which, when unknown, as in this case, the worst possible option ($p = 0.5$), which makes the sample size greater is applied. $q = 1-p$, where $q = 0.5$ in this case.
- i is the error that is expected to be made and indicates the amplitude of the confidence interval between samples. This error measures the variability of different samples obtained from the same population.

The reference population of this piece of research consists of: the group of transverse flute professors of the three higher music conservatories of Valencia, which are: CSM "Oscar Espla" of Alicante, CSM "Joaquín Rodrigo" of Valencia and CSM "Salvador Seguí" of Castellon. Based on the websites of these centers, the Higher Institute of Art Education of the Valencian Community (ISEACV) and the Ministry d'Educació, holder of the three conservatories, there are six transverse flute professors consisting of two professors per school. They belong to the body of teaching staff of the Ministry, among which there can be professors, professors on secondment working as professors or substitute teachers. The data are taken concerning the academic year 2012/2013. We work with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. Therefore, the results of this piece of research derive from very significant and representative samples of the population.

3.2. The questionnaire. Construction and validation

The instrument for collecting information was the questionnaire entitled "Questionnaire to determine the Teaching Practice of Transverse Flute Professors in Higher Centers in Valencia". The basic criteria to be taken into account in this report

are simplicity, accuracy and precision of the items that compose them as well as discretion and preservation of anonymity in handling the information gathered. We chose this procedure for collecting highly structured information, which raises a number of questions about the variables to be measured. Through this, we could gather a lot of information in a relatively short time.

First the questionnaire was devised from the review of existing literature. The first version was reviewed by professionals being expert in university level and specialized in program evaluation, which was modified after considering their input and suggestions. Thus, we have reviewed the necessary aspects, clarifying the wording and expression of questions, taking care to use a vocabulary more adapted to professors and rearranging the order of the items. We want to note that this preliminary review has been basic and fundamental in developing the questionnaire. Content validity is the degree to which a test adequately represents what has been done (Thomas Nelson, 2007; Ortega Jimenez, Palao and Sainz, 2008, cited in Garrido, Zagalaz, Luque and Granados, 2010). A second review was conducted by content-validating experts who have verified that the proposed items measure the instrumental teaching of flute. They are three professionals² in the field, thus following the criteria of triangulation. They have a long career in teaching and instrumental practice of flute, both in conservatories and orchestras:

- Magdalena Martinez, soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra of Barcelona and Catalonia (OBC) and, since 2006, flute soloist with the Orchestra de la Comunitat Valenciana del Palau de les Arts, she has taught at the University of Alcala de Henares and l'Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, besides imparting various master classes and postgraduate courses.
- Miguel Llopis, in the field of symphonic music, he has collaborated with the Orchestra of Valencia, the Mediterranean Symphony Orchestra, the Valencia Symphony Orchestra, the Madrid Symphony Orchestra and develops teaching at the Conservatory of Music of Torrent.
- Federico Peris, he has been a member of the Valladolid City Orchestra and has developed his work as a professor at the Higher Conservatory of Zaragoza, Music Professional of Gijón, Music Professional at Amaniel in Madrid, Music Professional at Ontinyent, Professional at Valencia currently at the Conservatory of Music of Catarroja. He is collaborating with the Madrid Symphony Orchestra and the RTVE Orchestra. The last two are members of the Valencian Seminary of Flute, and he has signed publications on the teaching of the instrument together with other colleagues.

² Magdalena Martínez, Miguel Llopis and Federico Peris.

Therefore, in developing the questionnaire, the following was taken into account:

- Definition of the construct to be measured.
- Purpose of the scale.
- Composition of items (number, content, definition and management).
- Prevention of bias in its completion and coding of responses.

The variables for information and classification of this study are those making it possible to structure the questionnaire by setting the various items. These are: age, sex, nationality, workplace, managerial position and number of students.

As regards its structure, the questionnaire consists of an initial box containing the classification variables that allow a first characterization of the sample. Next come 5 dimensions relative to the professor profile, placement and mouth, sound study, fingering and articulation, study and repertoire. There is a total of 93 items, which collect information on various study variables. Regarding the type and characterization of the questions, the questionnaire contains closed, semi-open and open questions, distributed in the following dimensions, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Questionnaire to know the Teaching Practice of Transverse Flute Professors in Higher Centers of Valencia

<u>DIMENSIONS</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ITEMS</u>
Classification Variables	<i>Sex, age, nationality, workplace, managerial position and number of students.</i>	1-6
Professor's Profile	<i>Years of teaching, department, studies, main professors, studies abroad, hours of daily study, work with orchestras, chamber music, solo activity, preferred musical style, national flute school, reference flutist, dedication to research, other higher studies, courses and seminars, contributions in journals and main objective with their students.</i>	7-37

Placement and Mouth	<i>Importance of placement, time devoted to lessons, reference to organs and muscles of the breathing process, type of exercises, exercise books, importance of body position, importance of breathing, exercises and mechanization or not of exercises</i>	38-50
Study of Sound, Fingering and Articulation	<i>Importance of sound, time devoted, intention at work with the student, type of exercises, books, material of one's own, vibrato, color changes, pitch possibilities, fingering and articulation work, type of exercises, technique books.</i>	51-71
Studies	<i>Study books, preference of books, styles and periods, traditional and contemporary studies</i>	72-77
Orchestra Repertoire and Repertoire Works	<i>Frequency of the repertoire subject, do you teach that subject or not, orchestra solo books, profile of repertoire professor, orchestra practices, instruments of the flute family, repertoire works that are worked with, type of most interpreted work, preparation to play in public and remarks</i>	78-93
TOTAL		93

Closed questions generate different possibilities of answers: 1) exclusive (affirmative or negative dichotomous answers, degree of importance); and 2) with several answer options which may point to more than one alternative. We chose dichotomous questions because they require less effort on the part of respondents, they are simple to answer and keep the subject attentive to the topic. Likert scales were used in many of its items, because we think that through them we could get the favorable or unfavorable, positive or negative reaction, without forgetting that we are measuring their attitudes to this kind of music.

The semi-open questions directly derive from the above, when the possibility of adding alternatives not included in the questionnaire to enrich the analysis is contemplated. With open questions were intended for professors to have a say freely on what they demand and include the information they want on their personal situations. These questions also allow them to refine the closed questions and add new perspectives on the subject.

Once the final draft was designed, the information was delimited and the questions were made, their number being defined and arranged, an evaluation of the

measurement properties of the scale must be performed. The questionnaire has been subjected to:

- Validity of content. It refers to whether the questionnaire and therefore the chosen items are indicators of what is being measured. It is about exposing the document to the assessment of researchers and experts, who should judge its capacity to evaluate all the dimensions we wish to measure.
- Validity of construct. It assesses the degree to which the instrument reflects the theory of the phenomenon or concept it measures. The validity of construction ensures that the measures resulting from the questionnaire answers can be considered and used as a measure of the phenomenon to be measured. It can be calculated by various methods, but the most common are the factorial analysis and the multi-trait-multi-method matrix.
- Validity of criterion. Relationship of the score of each subject with a Gold Standard that guarantees to measure what is wanted. Not always are there benchmarks, so instruments that have been supported by other studies are often used.

4. DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data and results, the following derives from the study:

Most of the sample is composed of women, compared to one man. Contrary to what happens in other European countries, where staff mobility is a constant, in Valencia all professors are Spanish. Usually, the number of students varies widely, although no reason has been found in relational analyses. An average of approximately 14 and 15 students per teacher can be set.

Professors at the Conservatory of Valencia are the most elderly and with most seniority in the body, devoting more time to teaching. Also, they are the only two transverse flute professors of the Community. It is therefore possible to argue that professors of the conservatories of Castellón and Alicante are younger and less experienced, while Valencia has become the center that brings together the most experienced professors.

Valencia has a staff of professors trained at the conservatories of Valencia and Alicante, who combine the two aspects of the musician: Interpretive and educational. 100% studied abroad (France, Germany, UK and Italy). In their curriculums, there are outstanding professors like Jesus Campos, Alain Marion and Peter Lukas Graf, since they coincide in the formation of some subjects. In addition, all of them are usually active as soloists, with annual recitals. This is a group of active flutists as they continue studying an average of two hours a day. They also have extensive experience in chamber music. This is in line with the ideal teaching instrument presented by Purser (2005), an active professor recognized as a good instrumentalist, while he was familiar with the philosophy of teaching-learning process and bases training at the conservatory on more than just an education in instrumental dexterity.

Virtually the entire sample adheres to what Wye (1988) affirms that today there are as many schools as influential professors. As for the reference flutist, 75% agree on Emmanuel Pahud.

Professors use both books and methods from all schools, therefore, they are inspired by all the trends they apply based on each particular case. However, the way to proceed in practice indicated in their answers as to the pillars of the instrumentalist: placement, sound, finger technique and articulation, are the basis of the French school.

There are many connecting links in the educational praxis of these centers. The most prominent are those concerning the technical and sound exercises as well as regarding the study books that are scheduled. The range of methods used is very wide. All use material from different schools (French, Italian, German), but the titles are coincident. This implies a common practice that can be generalized. Thus, one can say that there are hardly noteworthy differences among the centers of Valencia.

As happens in Purser's research (2005), there are many similarities. He discovered a group of artists who were in various stages of development in their teaching philosophies. However, there was a consensus on many issues. With all this, we can take one of his conclusions: "It is difficult not to conclude that a forum for the exchange of experiences and ways of good teaching practices would be beneficial" (p. 298).

5. CONCLUSIONS

Music is an art that essentially needs the presence of a mediator between the creator and the audience for whom the artistic product is intended. This mediator is the interpreter (Botella and Escorihuela, 2014). The purpose of this study was to design and validate a questionnaire to determine how the teaching practice of transverse flute professors is at the higher music centers of Valencia. All this, considering that the future interpreter must learn to correctly read the score, penetrating the sense of the writings in order to appreciate their aesthetic value. At the same time, students are required to develop the necessary skills in handling the instrument so that the performance of this musical text acquires its full dimension of expressly significant message and can convincingly transmit the aesthetic emotion that the musical work encoded in the score arouses in the spirit of the performer.

Thus, the questionnaire gives validity to the study and can be used to measure attitudes related to the teaching practice of the transverse flute professors at higher education centers. It can also serve as a model in researching any musical performative teaching, while its structure fits the prototype of preparation given in conservatories.

The results describe the practice, as intended by the questionnaire; also, they allow improvement in the didactics of the flute, while the teaching community can take

new ideas and different points of view to address the educational processes. Both the similarities and the differences enrich teaching and present a reliable and valid model of the paradigm of the professional flutist trained in Valencia.

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