A study of talent in students from early childhood and primary education

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Abstract

Introduction. Identifying talent is the first step in a process that leads to an educational response for students with talent and high ability. Can talent be identified from an early age? Does talent remain naturally throughout the different stages of schooling, or, on the contrary, does it require orientation in order to be developed? The study of identifying talent is one of the topics most under investigation and is a field where new, interesting and easy-to-apply instruments are being made available. This paper presents a study carried out with a broad sample in order to identify musical talent from ECE until 6th grade of primary education.

Method. This study focuses on identifying one type of talent: musical talent. The method used in this study consists of music teachers' applying a questionnaire to students from ECE and Primary Education. The questionnaire was selected and adapted from that of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1998). Responses to the questionnaire were recorded, then the results were analyzed and interpreted and conclusions were drawn.

Results. Data obtained reveal that in ECE a percentage of students show musical talent, but that this percentage decreases over the passage of time, such that by 6th grade of Primary, we observe only a few students out of our broad sample that show musical talent.

Discussion. We conclude that: i) Already in ECE it is possible to identify musical talent, as various authors assert. ii) Beginning in Primary, one observes a decrease in students with musical talent. iii) In order for talent to be developed and to remain in successive school years, orientation and development are required.

Keywords: Talent, giftedness, high ability, identification, Multiple Intelligences, music