

CAN A TEACHER TAKE ON THE PROFESSIONAL ROLE OF AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST?

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The purpose of this article is twofold: first, to briefly consider the possible causes of the current decline in educational guidance, in spite of Spain's economic progress in recent decades; and second, based on the existing legal framework, to present a proposal carried by general consent within the psychology community. According to said proposal, the educational authorities, in conjunction with universities and professional associations, would promote a model consistent with training and professional qualifications on the basis of existing quality standards in other developed countries, and in which professionalization – as opposed to encroachment – is a beneficial factor in relation to the effectiveness, efficiency and functionality of psychoeducational intervention services.

Key words: Educational psychologist, Professionalization, Professional encroachment

La finalidad de este artículo es doble, en primer lugar, hacer una breve reflexión sobre las posibles causas que determinan, en la actualidad, el retroceso de la Orientación Educativa, a pesar de los avances socioeconómicos acaecidos en España en las últimas décadas. En segundo lugar, partiendo del marco legal existente, presentar una propuesta desde el consenso, en la que la Administración Educativa, conjuntamente con universidades y colegios profesionales, promuevan un modelo de intervención coherente con la formación y cualificación profesional, en función de los estándares de calidad existentes en los países desarrollados de nuestro entorno y en la que la profesionalización frente al intrusismo marquen la diferencia en eficacia, eficiencia y funcionalidad de los servicios de intervención psicoeducativa.

Palabras clave: Psicólogo Educativo, Profesionalización, Intrusismo profesional

OUR STARTING POINT

We begin this analysis with a brief historical overview, which will reveal how past mistakes are repeated and how today we still fall far short of achieving certain goals in the field of higher education guidance and counselling.

Educational Guidance in Spain, as in the rest of Europe and the United States, emerges as part of the social reform initiatives of the early 20th century, and goes through periods of success and failure, closely linked to the socio-economic and political histories of the respective countries. In Spain, a return to the erratic policies of the past, together with the failure of governments since the transition to democracy to adapt the legal and organizational framework to the demands of society, have led to a situation in which the development of

guidance and counselling is still somewhat limited compared to the cases of many other European countries.

In the years following the Spanish Civil War, educational guidance was always linked to vocational and technical training, one of its principal functions being the selection of candidates for entry to workers' schools (*escuelas de trabajo*), created by the trades unions throughout the 1940s for the vocational training of workers.

Also in this period it was attempted to introduce Professional Guidance in Primary Education, in the first stage of Secondary Education (12 to 15 years, in an effort to connect it to vocational training through a vocational foundation course), and at the high school diploma stage, but with scant success due to a lack of specialists and funding. Even so, there were some honourable exceptions, such as that of the Ramiro de Maeztu school, one of the few that maintained a guidance service, doing so until the 1960s.

In the period between 1953 and 1964, Guidance featured in the principal legislation forming the framework of the education system, such as:

- ✓ Secondary Education Act of 1953 (*Ley de Ordenación de las Enseñanzas Medias de 26 de Febrero de 1953*) (published in BOE¹ 27 February).

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¹The *Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE)*, Spanish for *Official Bulletin of the State*, is the official gazette of the Government of Spain. It publishes the laws of the Cortes Generales (the nation's legislature, comprising the Senate and the Congress of Deputies) and the dispositions of the Autonomous Communities. Also, judicial rulings, royal decrees, and decrees of the Council of Ministers are published in it.



- ✓ Industrial Vocational Training Act of 1955 (*Ley del 20 de Julio de 1955 de Formación Profesional Industrial [FPI]*), which substituted the Vocational Training Statute of 1928 (*Estatuto de Formación Profesional de 1928*), but whose introduction was delayed until 1963, coinciding with the launch of the Workers’ Professional Advancement Programmes (*Programas de Promoción Profesional Obrera, PPO*).
- ✓ Primary Education Reform Act of 1965 (*Ley 169/1965 de la Reforma de la Enseñanza Primaria*).
- ✓ Secondary Education (Stage 1) Act of 1967 (*Ley 16/1967 de modificación del primer ciclo de Enseñanzas Medias*).

However, the inclusion of Guidance in these measures was little more than a legislative gesture, since at that time there was more concern with the structural and functional shortcomings of the school system than with providing proper guidance for pupils.

On the other hand, the policy of openness of Education Minister Ruiz-Giménez bore some fruit in the university context, where Guidance became a fundamental element in the quest for educational quality. For example, the so-called *universidades laborales* (actually state-run technical colleges) had an important effect on the quality of the workforce, combining regulated and non-regulated education in the vocational training context. Thus, 1969 saw the inauguration of the *Centro de Orientación de Universidades Laborales “Jesús Romer”* in Cheste (Valencia), where the theoretical approach was inspired in the European psychometric tradition and in the guidelines of the National Institute of Applied Psychology and Psychometric Testing (*Instituto Nacional de Psicología Aplicada y Psicotecnia, INPAP*), permitting the design of an Eclectic Guidance Model, perfectly integrated at an organizational level in the university, and which was successful in the 1970s.

TABLE 1
EDUCATION LEGISLATION IMPLEMENTED SINCE THE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN SPAIN

LEGISLATION REGULATING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM	REPERCUSSIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE
General Education Act (<i>Ley General de Educación, LGE</i>). 1970.	Creates, for the first time in Spain, Services for School and Vocational Guidance, following European models.
Spanish Constitution (<i>Constitución Española</i>). 1978.	Recognition of need to avoid discrimination for personal, cultural or social reasons.
Statute of Non-University Teaching Institutions Act (<i>Ley Orgánica del Estatuto de Centros de Enseñanza no Universitaria, LOECE</i>). 1980.	Declared unconstitutional in 1981.
University Reform Act (<i>Ley de Reforma Universitaria, LRU</i>), 1983.	University guidance is deprived of a specific legal framework and an organizational structure necessary for meeting the demands of students.
Right to Education Act (<i>Ley Orgánica del Derecho a la Educación, LODE</i>). 1984.	
General Regulation of the Education System Act (<i>Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo, LOGSE</i>). 1990.	Makes provision for the creation of specialized services of educational, psychopedagogical and professional guidance. Establishes a three-tier organizational model: classroom, school and education system.
Participation, Assessment and Administration of Teaching Institutions Act (<i>Ley Orgánica de la Participación, la Evaluación y el Gobierno de los Centros Docentes, LOPEG</i>). 1995.	No regulation of Guidance.
Universities Act (<i>Ley Orgánica Universitaria, LOU</i>). 2001.	Ignores the Bricall report, which stressed the importance of a relevant role for educational information and guidance.
Quality of Education Act (<i>Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación, LOCE</i>). 2002.	Involves no progress for Educational Guidance.
Education Act (<i>Ley Orgánica de Educación de 3 de Mayo, LOE</i>). 2006.	Refers to the existence of services or professions specializing in educational, psychopedagogical and professional guidance.
Universities Act (<i>Ley Orgánica 4/2007 de 12 de Abril de Universidades</i>). 2007.	Involves no progress in relation to university guidance services.



During the 1960s the international prestige of the INPAP increased, despite a lack of resources both human and financial. José Germain, who in addition to being Director of the Institute, was also head of the Department of Experimental Pedagogy at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) and President of the Spanish Psychology Society (*Sociedad Española de Psicología, SEP*), set up interdisciplinary research teams, whose activities included work in the area of Educational and Professional Guidance.

Thus, the Institute itself became an important research council, helping to promote Guidance in the different educational stages with the assistance of private initiatives, such as those of the Jesuits, who as early as the 1920s had created permanent or mobile guidance services for secondary schools.

This period also saw the setting up of the first training courses for educational counsellors through the School of Psychology at the University of Madrid (Decree, 29th May 1953), marking the beginnings of what would later become the Psychology degree course, which emerged first as a specialization in the Faculty of Philosophy and Education Sciences, in 1968 in Madrid, later as a section (1970), and finally as an independent faculty of Psychology, in 1977.

In 1969, during a State of Emergency in Spain, a committee of experts, advised by UNESCO, drew up a White Paper which would form the basis for the reforms undertaken by Education Minister Villar Palasí in 1970. Guidance, according to this document, was to take place throughout one's schooling, and to be provided by experts.

Since the transition to democracy in Spain, eleven pieces of legislation (see Table 1) have come into force, though only the General Education Act (*Ley General de Educación, LGE*), originally passed in 1970, and the 1990 General Regulation of the Education System Act (*Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo, LOGSE*) explicitly acknowledge the social need for Guidance initiatives and consider them fundamental for the achievement of educational quality. However, none of these legislative measures came to be fully introduced (Pérez Solís, 2005).

The LGE (*Ley 14/1970*), then, recognizing for the first time the social need for guidance and counselling, makes provisions in its articles 9, 11, 15, 50, 125 and 127 for Guidance Services in the different non-university educational stages, though it is not until seven years later (Ministerial Order [*Orden Ministerial, OM*] of 30th April

1977) that posts are created, first in the Provincial Educational and Vocational Guidance Services (*Servicios Provinciales de Orientación Escolar y Vocacional, SPOEV*), and subsequently in the Educational and Vocational Guidance Services (*Servicios de Orientación Escolar y Vocacional, SOEV*). These services, under the authority of the Provincial Education Boards and the School Inspection Offices, were set up to cater for pupils aged 6 to 14 and those in Special Schools.

Later, Article 18 of the 1987 Education Reform Bill stipulates that Guidance must be offered within the framework of a group of services, proposing for the first time the need to create a sector-based network of Psychopedagogical Support Teams, with preventive, remedial and technical support functions.

The year 1980 sees the creation of the so-called Multi-professional Teams (*Equipos Multiprofesionales, EM*) in the area of special education, their members being offered full-time contracts. The legal regulation of these teams takes place two years later (OM of 9th September 1982) within the framework of the Integration of the Disabled Act (*Ley de Integración de los Minusválidos*, 7th April 1982). But the existence of two parallel Guidance networks, those of the SOEVs and EMs, with similar functions but in different frameworks and under different authorities, led to a dysfunctional and uncoordinated situation. Moreover, such difficulties increased with the creation of new services, such as the Guidance and Remedial Education Teams (*Equipos de Orientación y Compensatoria*), Multi-professional Early Intervention Teams (*Equipos Multiprofesionales de Atención Temprana*) and Specific Multi-professional Teams (*Equipos Multiprofesionales Específicos*). As though this were not enough, there was soon also a proliferation of private consultants and other services created by local and regional authorities, such as:

- ✓ Municipal Psychopedagogical Services, under the authority of local councils.
- ✓ Psychopedagogical Offices and Rural Teams, under the authority of provincial councils and regional governments.
- ✓ Minors' Tutelary Court Offices, under the authority of the Ministry of Justice.
- ✓ Provincial Services for the Rehabilitation of the Sick and Disabled (SEREM), later referred to as INSERSO (National Institute of Social Services) and now as *Centros Base*, under the authority of the Ministry of Health and Social Security.



In addition to these diverse services (external support systems), the OM of 25th of February 1988 on projects for psychopedagogical support and educational guidance makes provisions for Guidance officers in primary and middle schools, and sets up the so-called Educational Support and Guidance Services (*Servicios de Apoyo y Orientación Educativa*, SAPOES) and the Psychopedagogical Intervention and Educational Guidance Programme (*Programa de Intervención Psychopedagógica y Orientación Educativa*, PIPOES). However, these services went no further than the experimental stage, and their results, with a few exceptions, were unsatisfactory.

In Secondary Education, the OM of 31st July 1972 creates, on an experimental basis, the Guidance Services for High School Courses (*Servicios de Orientación para el Curso de Orientación Universitaria*), but these remain in force for just one academic year (1972/1973). Some years later the Royal Decree of 21st November 1980 and the OM of 22nd September 1982 herald the first serious attempt to introduce Guidance in Secondary Education, with the creation of the Institutes of Educational and Professional Guidance (*Institutos de Orientación Educativa y Profesional*, IOEP), under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Science and centrally coordinated by the Madrid Institute of Educational and Professional Guidance. The priority function of these institutes, established in all Spanish provinces, was to provide educational guidance in high schools and technical colleges, and sought to coordinate the Guidance services previously offered by the SOEVs and EMs. But this task of coordination was never carried out, the responsibility for it having been left in the hands of the School Inspection Offices. Subsequently, in response to the demands expressed in the secondary school students' strike of 1986/1987, the so-called Educational and Professional Guidance Projects (*Proyectos de Orientación Educativa y Profesional*) (OM of 4th June 1987, OM of 25th February 1988 and OM of 28th March 1989) were introduced, but Guidance could be provided by any teacher, not necessarily a psychologist or education specialist, and this led to the failure of this measure.

In parallel to this, in Vocational Training (*Formación Profesional*), the OM of 28th September 1982 makes provision for the Educational and Professional Guidance Service, under the authority of the Vocational Training Board. At the same time, as the *universidades laborales*

become transformed into Integrated Education Centres (*Centros de Enseñanzas Integradas*), now under the auspices of the Education Ministry, their psychometric services are extended (through the Resolution of 17th September 1981) to include educational and professional guidance and counselling.

Elsewhere, the Technical Professional Guidance Services (*Servicios Técnicos de Orientación Profesional*), part of the apparatus of the National Employment Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Empleo*, INEM), had been up and running since 1976, and from 1983 was devoted essentially to professional guidance.

In sum, this period saw the creation of a multitude of services, but what was missing was an overarching policy of planning and coordination, not only among the professionals working in them, but also among the different bodies and institutions on which they depended. In spite of this, the excellent work of the professionals involved, especially in the SOEVs and EMs, led to increased numbers of citizens from all levels of society seeking advice and to greater demand in schools for educational psychologists.

Up to that time, the psychoeducational support services (SOEV and EM) were of an interdisciplinary nature (psychologists, educationalists, social workers, speech therapists, and even doctors in some cases), and the contributions of the different professional profiles helped increase the efficiency and effectiveness of these services, with ever greater demand for their advice and technical support, not only from the educational community but also from health, legal and social institutions and services, for example. At the same time, the coordination of these services became the responsibility of experts from the fields of Psychology and Education at provincial councils, instead of the Inspection Offices, which led to an improvement in psychosocial and educational interventions and their coordination and channelling, in line with the demands of citizens in both the public and private sectors.

In 1990, the LOGSE education legislation, following the same philosophy as the 1970 General Education Act, and in its additional provision 3e, sets up specialist educational, psychopedagogical and professional guidance for the different non-university educational levels. At the same time, in a significant step forward, it proposes an Institutional Organizational Model involving a three-tier organizational structure: classroom, school and institutional.



Imitating educational models from the USA and Britain, as a result of the reforms introduced by the Education Ministry in 1992 a distinction is made between educational counselling, which focuses on the personal,

school and family contexts, and professional counselling, concentrating on the provision of advice and information about professional and general employment programmes. In practice, this reform will have structural repercussions for the organization of resources and the way they work, and in this respect it unfortunately represents another backward step (2005).

Following Royal Decree 929 of 18th June 1993, Guidance in Secondary Education becomes the responsibility of the Departments of Guidance, whose members must include at least one specialist in Psychology or Education. From the academic year 1994/1995, an experimental scheme brings in a professional from law or economics, who in collaboration with the counsellor shall provide training and professional guidance.

The Quality of Education Act of 2002 (*Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación, LOCE*) maintains the organizational structure of the systems of internal and external support for schools of the previous legislation, but does nothing to improve these services, whose provision becomes seriously delayed, due to, among other factors:

1. The access of psychopedagogues² and graduates of diverse subjects to posts normally occupied by psychologists and educationalists by means of a Pedagogical Adaptation Course (*curso de adaptación pedagógica, CAP*).
2. The gradual loss of the interdisciplinary nature of these services. The psychopedagogue is a teacher who, having completed a Diploma in Teaching or Social Education and two specific training courses, can substitute the psychologist and educationalist, who both have five years' training in their respective professional fields.
3. The renunciation of responsibility of central government, leaving the question of Guidance to the Regional governments (*Comunidades Autónomas*). As a result of this, the right to Guidance is not enjoyed equally by all Spaniards (to the detriment of those in Regions such as Galicia or Castilla la Mancha).

In relation to the first of these factors, since they are clearly not teachers, educational psychologists should not take on that role, as they currently do in some secondary schools. This practice originated not only because at some

TABLE 2 CORE AND MANDATORY SUBJECTS IN THE FIRST (DIPLOMA) PHASE OF THE DEGREE COURSE (FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID, 1993)		
LIST OF CORE AND MANDATORY SUBJECTS FOR THE PRIMARY TEACHER'S DIPLOMA	Type	Credits
FIRST YEAR		
General Teaching	Core	8
Psychology of Education	Core	4
Psychology of Development in School-Age Children	Core	4
Sociology of Education	Core	4
Contemporary Theory and Institutions of Education	Core	4
Foreign Language and its Teaching	Core	4
Fundamentals of Spanish Language	Mandatory	4
Fundamentals of Social Sciences	Mandatory	4
Mathematics	Mandatory	6
Natural Sciences and their Teaching I	Mandatory	4
Fundamentals of the Plastic Arts and their Teaching	Mandatory	4
In addition, the student must choose two more courses from a list of optional and elective subjects	Optional /Elective	8
TOTALS		66
SECOND YEAR		
School Organization	Core	4
Psychological Bases of Special Education	Core	4
Natural Sciences and their Teaching II	Core	8
Social Sciences and their Teaching I	Core	8
Mathematics and its Teaching I	Core	8
Artistic Education and its Teaching	Core	5
Teaching of Language	Core	8
Fundamentals of Spanish Literature	Mandatory	4
In addition, the student must take two optional subjects from the list offered in stage 1.	Optional	8
TOTALS		65
THIRD YEAR		
Didactic Bases of Special Education	Core	4
New Technologies applied to Education	Core	4
Practicum	Core	32
Physical Education and its Teaching	Core	4
Teaching of Literature	Core	4
Natural Sciences and their Teaching III	Mandatory	6
Mathematics and its Teaching II	Mandatory	4
Social Sciences and their Teaching II	Mandatory	6
In addition, the student must take one optional subject from the list offered in stage 1.	Optional	4
TOTALS		76

²Psychopedagogy is the applied science that studies human behaviour in socio-educational situations. The Psychopedagogue's work involves: attention to diversity, academic and professional guidance, education in social, moral and values-related aspects, the teaching of strategies for overcoming learning problems, etc.



point teachers from different disciplines were given the job of counsellor in staff redistributions, but also due to the efforts of teaching staff to blur the definition of a professional profile that was increasingly in demand, not only from the educational community but also from other sectors, such as health, justice and social services.

Currently, the educational authorities (in accordance with Article 24 of the now-repealed LOGSE), permit the direct access to psychologists' and educationalists' posts of psychopedagogues and any graduate or engineer with the "teaching specialization" obtained by means of the CAP (soon to become the Masters in "Educational

TABLE 3
CORE SUBJECTS MANDATORY IN ALL STUDY PROGRAMMES LEADING TO THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE IN PSYCHOPEDAGOGY
(FROM BOE 27 AUGUST 1992)

CORE SUBJECTS (in alphabetical order)	CREDITS	KNOWLEDGE AREAS
Diagnosis in Education. Principles of diagnosis in education. Variables of diagnosis in education. Techniques and resources of diagnosis in education.	6	Methods of Research and Diagnosis in Education. Developmental and Educational Psychology.
Curriculum Design, Development and Innovation. Processes of curriculum design. Teaching methods, strategies and media. Strategies of curricular adaptation to different social and personal situations.	6	Teaching and School Organization.
Special Education. Educational treatment of differential needs. Strategies and processes of integration. Specific areas of intervention, school integration, social integration. Systems and experiences of integration. Remedial teaching.	6	Teaching and School Organization. Methods of Research and Diagnosis in Education. Developmental and Educational Psychology.
Learning Difficulties and Psychopedagogical Intervention. The concept of learning difficulties. Characteristics and aetiology of the principal learning difficulties. Specific intervention for different learning difficulties.	6	Teaching and School Organization. Methods of Research and Diagnosis in Education. Personality and Psychological Assessment and Treatment. Developmental and Educational Psychology.
Psychopedagogical Intervention in Developmental Disorders. The development of persons with sensory, physical and mental deficiencies. Developmental disorders and educational needs. School learning and difficulties of adaptation.	6	Developmental and Educational Psychology.
Research methods in Education. Paradigms of educational research. Design of educational research. Techniques and instruments of research and education.	6	Methods of Research and Diagnosis in Education.
Models of Guidance and Psychopedagogical Intervention. Epistemological and methodological delimitation of Psychoeducational Intervention. Fundamental models of Psychoeducational Intervention. Conceptual model for the provision of psychopedagogical services.	6	Teaching and School Organization. Methods of Research and Diagnosis in Education. Developmental and Educational Psychology.
Professional Guidance. Principles and foundations of professional guidance and the need for it. Programs and systems of professional guidance in the context of differential psychopedagogy. Social and work-related problems and techniques of Guidance for the transition from school to work.	6	Teaching and School Organization. Methods of Research and Diagnosis in Education. Developmental and Educational Psychology.
Psychology of Teaching. Education, development and school learning. Intrapersonal and interpersonal conditions of school learning. Individual differences and learning capacity. Processes of learning and structure of teaching content.	6	Teaching and School Organization. Developmental and Educational Psychology.
Practicum. Integrated set of practices providing direct experience of diverse aspects of psychopedagogical intervention.	12	Teaching and School Organization. Methods of Research and Diagnosis in Education. Developmental and Educational Psychology. Theory and History of Education.



Guidance”), which seems to us quite incomprehensible and unacceptable, since the competencies thus acquired fall far short of what is required for exercising the profession of educational psychologist.

The situation is easier to understand if we consider, by consulting the relevant study programmes, the diversity and heterogeneity in the initial and specific training of psychopedagogues (whether they hold the Diploma in

Social Education or any specialization of the Teaching Diploma) and of educational psychologists.

Thus, it can be seen that in the case of the specialist Primary Teacher programme, the basic training is largely made up of content related to teaching: curriculum, teaching practice and school organization (see Table 2), and that the specific training, leading to the award of the Psychopedagogy Degree, is wholly insufficient in relation to the requirements of the Psychology Degree (Table 3). Such shortcomings in the education of these teachers mean that they are not adequately equipped to respond to all the challenges of the modern-day school.

TABLE 4 CORE AND MANDATORY SUBJECTS IN STAGE 2 (UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID, 1993)			
LIST OF CORE AND MANDATORY SUBJECTS IN STAGE 1 OF THE DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY	CREDITS		
	Theoretical	Practical	Total
FIRST YEAR			
Introduction to Psychology	5	3	8
Statistics applied to Psychology I	5	3	8
Fundamentals of Neuroscience	8	3	11
Psychology of Learning	5	5	10
Statistics applied to Psychology II	5	3	8
Psychology of Attention	2.5	1.5	4
Research Methods and Designs in Psychology I	2.5	2.5	5
Logic and Computation	2.5	2.5	5
Anthropology	2.5	2.5	5
Sociology	2.5	2.5	5
TOTALS	40.5	28.5	69
SECOND YEAR			
Social Psychology	5	4	9
Psychology of Perception	5	3	8
Psychometrics	5	3	8
Psychology of Motivation and Emotion	5	3	8
Psychology of Human Learning and Memory	5	3	8
History of Psychology	5	3	8
Research Methods and Designs in Psychology II	2.5	2.5	5
Philosophy of Psychology	2.5	2.5	5
In addition, the student must take 2 optional subjects from the list offered in stage 1.	6	2	8
TOTALS	41	26	67
THIRD YEAR			
Psychology of Personality	5	3	8
Differential Psychology	5	5	10
Physiological Psychology	5	5	10
Psychological Assessment	3	1.5	4.5
Cognitive Development	5	4	9
Social Development and Development of the Personality	5	3	8
Psychopathology	2.5	2	4.5
In addition, the student must take 1 optional subject from the list offered in stage 1.	5	3	8
In addition, the student must take 1 optional subject from the list offered in stage 1.	3	1	4
TOTALS	38.5	27.5	66

TABLE 5 CORE AND MANDATORY SUBJECTS IN STAGE 2 (FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID, 1993)			
LIST OF CORE AND MANDATORY SUBJECTS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SPECIALIZATION	CREDITS		
	Theoretical	Practical	Total
FOURTH YEAR CORE			
Psychology of Education	6	3	9
Psychology of Groups I	3	1.5	4.5
Psychology of Organizations I	3	1.5	4.5
Behaviour Modification Techniques	6	4.5	10.5
Practicum	-	2.5	2.5
TOTALS	18	13	31
MANDATORY			
Educational Guidance	5	3	8
Development and Education	5	3	8
Psychology of Teaching	5	3	8
In addition, the student must take 2 optional subjects from those available in stage 2.	6	2	8
TOTALS	21	11	32
FIFTH YEAR CORE			
Psychology of Language	6	1.5	7.5
Psychopathology of Abnormal Processes and Psychology I	3	1.5	4.5
Psychology of Thought	3	1.5	4.5
Practicum	-	6.5	6.5
TOTALS	12	11	23
MANDATORY			
Social Psychology of Education	5	3	8
Psychology of Educational Intervention	5	3	8
Psychology of Special Education	5	3	8
In addition, the student must take 3 optional subjects from those available in stage 2.	9	3	12
TOTALS	24	12	36



On the other hand, and as can be seen in Tables 4 and 5, the study programme for the Psychology Degree (Psychology Faculty of the Madrid Complutense University) includes the competencies fundamental and specific to the professional practice of psychology.

In sum, the comparison of these programmes clearly reveals a difference at an epistemological level in the initial training of psychologists and psychopedagogues, and therefore, naturally, in their professional knowledge and skills.

The lack of solidity in the initial training has a profound detrimental effect on the subsequent professional status.

The emphasis in the core training of the psychopedagogue is on teaching: essentially, students are trained not to be psychologists or educationalists but to be teachers. Likewise, the two-year (*segundo ciclo*) “psychological and pedagogical” course is at best short, and in our opinion its function has been not so much to produce expert professionals in psychology or pedagogy as to respond to bureaucratic demands and a provide potential route to jobs with greater social prestige.

Hence, the second basic thrust of the general common guidelines in Royal Decree 1497/1987 (27th November) for the regulation of the content of study programmes leading to official titles fails – at least in the case of the psychopedagogue – to achieve its objective, which is the coherence of training required for this qualification by Article 149.1.30 of the Constitution.

In a similar line is the second of the problematic factors, that is, the imposition of the Degree in Psychopedagogy, in accordance with Royal Decree 916/1992 of 17th July (published in BOE 27 August), which was rejected unanimously by the Psychology Deans’ Conference (San Sebastián, 30th and 31st May 1991), the Spanish Psychological Association (*Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos*) and all practicing Psychology and Pedagogy professionals nationwide.

To better understand how this Degree in Psychopedagogy comes into existence, we have to go back to the 1983 University Reform Act (*Ley Orgánica de Reforma Universitaria 11/1983, de 25 de Agosto, LRU*), which marks the beginning of a process of university reform and which deals with the statutory conditions of universities, their departmental arrangements and the organization of teaching staff. However, this legislation fails to address one of the crucial aspects of university reform, the regulation of the actual material taught on courses.

The year 1985 sees the setting up of the Council of Universities, a body to which Article 28.1 of the University Reform Act assigns the authority for proposing to the government the qualifications which will have official validity at a national level, as well drawing up the general guidelines for the corresponding study programmes.

To this end, the Council of Universities organized a series of working groups, which met throughout 1986 and 1987, among them Education Group XV, to which we owe the proposal for the Degree in Psychopedagogy. This group considered it necessary to substitute the five-year degree course in Education Sciences (Pedagogy) by three two-year (*segundo ciclo*) courses: Psychopedagogy, School Organization and Administration, and Social Education. The last-named of these courses was vetoed by the Ministry of Education, but not Psychopedagogy, despite the fact that it implied substantial interference with the proposals of Group XI of the Council of Universities, which included Psychology.

In explaining the proposal for the Degree in Psychopedagogy, Group XV maintained that they made it with a view to enhancing the professional nature of the training and to avoid competition between areas of professional activity that should be covered by an interdisciplinary training. Likewise, they argued that “... It is not appropriate for the educational system, nor helpful for those wishing to study in this field, to maintain the duplication of qualifications for exercising what should be an identical function”. Obviously, we do not endorse any of the arguments put forward, which are so divorced from reality and which have unfortunately served only to harm the interests of the principal users of the services involved, that is, students and their families.

We can conclude, then:

1. That the effect of the Degree in Psychopedagogy has been to distort the role of psychologists and educationalists.
2. The Degree has been used to promote those with Diplomas in Teaching and in Social Education and to allow secondary teachers with specialities less in demand to work as counsellors.
3. It has represented an unnecessary and gratuitous renunciation of part of what had been achieved by psychologists and educationalists.

Consequently, the Degree in Psychopedagogy makes no sense. The proposal by Group XV, partially accepted by the Council of Universities at the time, has had negative consequences for the identity, prestige and social and



institutional recognition of Psychology as a whole, and immeasurable professional costs for those holding the Degree in Pedagogy.

Finally, in relation to the third of the dysfunctional factors – the devolution of authority for Guidance to the different Autonomous Regions – this measure could be effective and useful, in our view, if those responsible for educational administration were to increase their awareness of the national and European dimension in the provision of Guidance services, and if the Ministry of Education were to set down common guidelines for the organizational and functional structure of these services, with a view to guaranteeing comparable levels of quality throughout the different Regions.

At a European level, the “Swiss model” has been adopted in other, more developed European countries (Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, etc.). In all of them there is a single model which lends coherence to intervention, despite the differences, depending on each country’s administrative organization, between *départements*, cantons or federated states. Such services are of a predominantly interdisciplinary and external – as opposed to internal – nature, and action is taken according to needs identified, with increasing importance given to psychoaffective and behavioural aspects. This model can also be found in countries such as the United States, particularly in the wake of the Columbine phenomenon.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

The Education Act of 2006 (*Ley Orgánica de Educación de 3 de Mayo de 2006*, LOE) (published in BOE 4 May) supersedes the previous legislation, and although its Section VIII, Article 157 (“Resources for the improvement of training and support for teaching staff”), paragraph h refers to “the existence of services or professions specializing in educational, psychopedagogical and professional guidance”, none of the Decrees published to date, nor the draft Statute of non-university teaching staff (*Estatuto del Funcionario Docente no Universitario*; MEC, 2007) makes provisions for the organization, functions and structure of these educational support services.

Our concern is that the future Masters on the psychology and pedagogy specialization, referred to in the fourth additional provision of Royal Decree 1834/2008 (*8 de Noviembre*) (published in BOE 28 November), might become a specialization in “educational guidance” for professionals from areas other than psychology and

pedagogy, since it has already been anticipated for the case of future teaching graduates. The existence of this specialization is no way justified by its teaching-related aspects, which are inherent to other university specializations, and we therefore do not consider that this Masters in Educational Guidance, with 15 specific credits in Psychology (this was the plan for the qualification to be awarded in 2009/2010 at the Madrid Complutense University) will equip any graduate to fulfil the role of educational psychologist; consequently, it should not be seen as a means of acceding to such posts via public competitive examination.

In a school context as complex and heterogeneous as today’s, and in view of problems such as school failure, violence and drug addiction, there is a need for experts to work with teachers in response to the challenges. Such experts would have a thorough training in psychology that not only covers all the basics but also equips them as professionals. In sum, that which is provided by a degree in Psychology and the Masters in Educational Psychology, and the same training background is required for the professional profile of the educationalist (Pedagogy). Specialization – as opposed to generalization – of roles is what permits us to respond effectively, efficiently and functionally to the demands of the educational community.

In the university context, neither the 2001 Universities Act (*Ley Orgánica 6/2001 de 21 de Diciembre de Universidades*) (published in BOE 24 December) nor the 2007 Universities Act (*Ley Orgánica 4/2007 de 12 de Abril de Universidades*) (published in BOE 13 April), which modifies its predecessor, succeeds in improving the situation of professional and educational guidance for university students.

The recognition and incorporation of Educational Guidance at the non-university levels of education is an established fact in Europe and in Spain, but not in the university setting, where, with a few notable exceptions, its situation is more precarious and unequal (Watts, Guichard, Plant, & Rodríguez, 1994; Ballesteros, 1996; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998; Sánchez García, 1999); moreover, in the majority of countries Guidance is not considered an integral part of the educational process, and so does not feature as an element in study programmes (Alvarez, 1995; Van Esbroeck, 1997; Sánchez García, 1999).

It is clear that the way in which Guidance is developed and introduced in the different contexts is influenced by



the prevailing conception of Higher Education. The characteristics of university education systems and the degree of institutionalization of their Guidance services influence the functions of the counsellor and the organizational model adopted (Salmerón, 2002). In our universities here in Spain, Guidance services are still, unfortunately, at the developmental stage, and the Bricall Report, which proposed a university project for the twenty-first century, in which information and guidance should play a relevant role, has been ignored by all the legislation referred to so far.

A CONSENSUS-BASED PROPOSAL WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

At this point, and bearing in mind the academic and professional recognition of the educational psychologist at an international level, we consider that the Ministry of Education should set down the basic principles guaranteeing effective acknowledgement of the professional exercise of psychology, and in introducing the new university reforms, should ensure that they enjoy the support of teachers and professionals. The organizational proposal we outline below is based upon an agreement between the Deans' Conference and the General Council of Spanish Psychological Associations, and is aimed at the improvement of educational quality and professional practice.

It is clear that the agreement reached by European governments to create the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) following the Bologna Declaration (1999) has led to changes in university study programmes in the different member states.

In Spanish universities, the academic year 2009/2010 was scheduled to see the introduction of courses leading to the new Degree in Psychology (*Graduado en Psicología*). The different Spanish universities in which the new course was to be taught participated in its design, leading to some variation among the study programmes. Although the vast majority of the Psychology Faculties, in drawing up the syllabuses, very sensibly followed the common guidelines in the White Paper on the Degree in Psychology produced by the Psychology Deans' Conference working with the General Council of Spanish Psychological Associations, it would have been advantageous for Psychology, as is the case of Medicine, to have its own guidelines; however, this was not accepted at the time by the General Directorate for

Assessment and Regulation of the Education System, since the profession of psychologist is not subject to a European Law or Directive that regulates its general professional functions, even though in Spain the profession is legally regulated.

Given this situation, and to avoid a breaking of the link between training and professional practice, totally unacceptable in times like this, the Ministry of Education should also take into account the European education and training standards recognizing psychologists as competent to practice independently, and which were ratified unanimously in 2005 by the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA), in the context of the European Union directive on the recognition of professional qualifications (COM, 2002,119), and accepted by the European Parliament (2005). The EFPA considers that for the professional exercise of psychology it is necessary to have a minimum of 6 years' training, which breaks down as follows: a degree (lasting 4 years in the case of Spain), a Masters in a given specialization, and supervised practical training.

Likewise, on completion of this generic, basic and specific training, EFPA will award the European Diploma in Psychology (EuroPsy) to those professionals who request it. The idea behind the creation of this Diploma, as stated in the Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications (2005/36/EC), is to promote the free circulation of psychologists in Europe and to permit the automatic recognition of the psychologist's qualification in countries in which it is valid. Currently, it is scheduled to become valid in 34 countries, including all 27 EU member states.

Consequently, in line with the Education Act of 2006 (*Ley Orgánica de Educación de 3 de Mayo de 2006*, LOE) (published in BOE 4 May), whose Section VIII, Article 157, paragraph h refers to "the existence of services or professions specializing in educational, psychopedagogical and professional guidance", and within the framework established in the Basic Statute of Public Employees (*Ley 7/2007, de 12 de Abril, del Estatuto Básico del Empleado Público*) – through which the Public Service Teacher's Statute is intended to regulate public sector teaching as referred to in the aforementioned 2006 Education Act – , the Ministry of Education, respecting the peculiarities of each Autonomous Region, should set down some common guidelines in the organizational and functional structure of these services, guaranteeing the right to Guidance of



all Spaniards and permitting similar levels of quality in the different Regions.

The educational community, the reflection of a plural, competitive and demanding society, is at the same time vulnerable, fragile and often problematic and the source of controversy. Hence the need for effective policies which as far as possible anticipate the different potential problems, reducing the risks and promoting mechanisms leading to the achievement of educational quality.

In this context, the role of the educational psychologist is one which, at its borders, comes close to other specializations such as clinical and social psychology, and requires a solid theoretical-practical training that permits professionals to undertake work in areas such as: attention to diversity (mental, sensory or motor disabilities, anti-social behaviour, severe developmental, personality or behaviour disorders), academic and professional guidance, integral development (cognitive, emotional, social), or prevention (drug-addiction, violence, school failure).

Hence the importance of a normative development resulting in the clear delimitation of the competencies and functions of these professionals within the framework of the Public Service Teacher's Statute. Thus, the draft of said Statute (2007), in its Section II, Chapter 2, Article 18, "educational support services", refers, in paragraph 2, to the fact that "the personnel or list of jobs in these services shall cover the requirements for their provision". Given

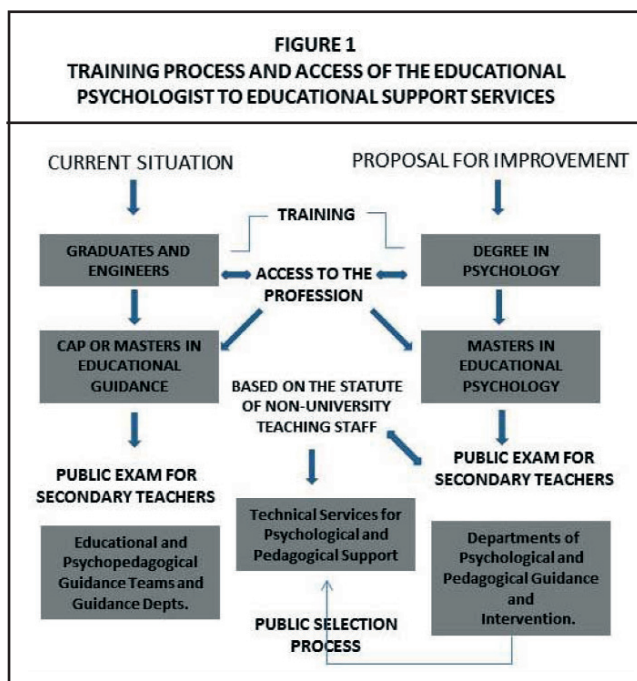
that such services must be interdisciplinary in character, their staff should include, among other professionals, psychologists with a specialization in Educational Psychology.

We fully endorse the European education and training standards for professional psychology relating to the European Diploma in Psychology (EuroPsy), and therefore we understand that for psychologists specializing in Educational Psychology (Figure 1) the training should contain, as a minimum:

1. Degree in Psychology qualifying the holder to exercise the profession under supervision.
2. The Masters in Educational Psychology, which provides basic postgraduate training in psychology. We should stress that this Masters is not equivalent to the specialization in "Educational Guidance", a part of the Masters in Secondary Teaching that substituted the Pedagogical Adaptation Course (*Curso de Adaptación Pedagógica, CAP*), and which is designed, as we were informed by the General Sub-Directorate of Academic Regulation (2008), to provide secondary-school teachers with knowledge of psychology, but not with access to the profession of educational psychologist.
3. Supervised practical work of at least one year's duration. In the case of psychologists with the educational specialization this practical work can be carried out in the first year of professional practice, both for those who opt for a public-sector position and those who opt for the private sector. In the former case the supervision will be carried out jointly by the university and the public authority, while in the latter case it will be carried out by the university and the professional associations.

As regards the structure of Educational Support Services (now called Technical Support Services for Education), in accordance with the stipulations in the draft Public Service Teacher's Statute, Section II, Chapter 2, Article 18, paragraphs 1 and 2, it will be as follows:

- a) Technical Services for Psychological and Pedagogical Support.
 - ✓ External support system
 - ✓ Interdisciplinary in nature
 - ✓ Intervention organized by educational sectors or districts
 - ✓ Cover the different non-university educational stages.
- b) Departments of Psychological and Pedagogical Guidance and





- ✓ Intervention.
- ✓ Internal support system
- ✓ Cover one educational institution in particular.

The coordination of these services in the different contexts and developmental stages must be carried out by experts in Guidance; to this end, agencies should be set up for the planning, supervision and structuring of Guidance in each Autonomous Region and at a national level.

As for the functions of the Technical Support Services for Education, as an antecedent to our proposal it is worth citing those set down in the legislation still in force in the majority of Autonomous Regions, such as the Order of 9 December 1992 (published in BOE 18 December) and the Resolution of 29 April 1996 (published in BOE 31 May).

The functions of Educational Psychologists (the rest of the professionals working in these services will have specific functions in accordance with their qualifications) are defined as follows:

- a) To advise and assist individuals, groups and/or institutions, based on their specialist knowledge as psychologists.
- b) To mediate between two or more contexts, institutions, groups or persons, with the aim of reaching agreements.
- c) To guide and counsel people throughout the life cycle in relation to psychological, personal and professional aspects.
- d) To intervene in different contexts: school, family, community, and so on.
- e) To gather, analyze and appraise relevant information on the diverse elements involved in the teaching/learning process.
- f) To carry out psychological assessment and diagnosis, to make reports and to guide proposals for intervention.
- g) Prevention and early detection of mental health problems and their referral and follow-up.
- h) To mediate in the modification of circumstances in a given context that are generating problems, as well as equipping individuals with the appropriate competencies to cope successfully with problematic situations.
- i) To intervene from a systemic or global approach, taking into account not only the person but also the social-family and school contexts.
- j) To cooperate in the helping process with a view to promoting the integral development of each person's potential.

k) To design, plan and select techniques and resources of intervention and research.

l) To respond to the demands of institutions and of the educational administration in relation to reports and rulings, and especially those referring to students with special educational needs.

Finally, in relation to the form of access, according to the draft Public Service Teacher's Statute, Section III, Chapter 2: Selection of public employees for access to either the position of Psychologist in the Technical Services for Psychological and Pedagogical Support or the Departments of Psychological and Pedagogical Guidance and Intervention, at the different non-university educational levels, shall require:

- a) Degree in Psychology.
- b) Masters in Educational Psychology.
- c) Success in the corresponding public competitive examination.

For access to the Technical Services for Psychological and Pedagogical Support the following shall also be required:

- a) At least five years' professional experience in the Departments of Psychological and Pedagogical Guidance and Intervention.
- b) Success in the corresponding public selection process.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

Today, although the standardization of qualifications and the mobility of Europeans at the educational and employment levels are considered positive developments, there is considerable uncertainty among university students about the structure and function of the new qualifications and professional requirements within the framework of the European Higher Education Area.

Likewise, educational psychologists (practicing professionals) are concerned about the fact that Royal Decree 1834/2008, on specializations, repeats the errors of the past, permitting teaching graduates with different specializations to accede, via the Masters in "Educational Guidance", to the position of educational psychologist without the necessary generic, basic and specific training in that field, thus undermining the prestige of these professionals and harming the interests of service users.

In the university context, lecturers in the educational psychology specialization can see no justification for the above-mentioned Masters, unless its purpose be to substitute the Masters in Educational Psychology or make



it equivalent to that qualification. In either case, the result would be the *de facto* demise of the Postgraduate Certificate in Educational Psychology.

For all of these reasons, the Ministry of Education, in conjunction with teachers and the professional associations, and within the framework of the Public Service Teacher's Statute, has a responsibility to rectify this dysfunctional situation, establishing clearly, and in accordance with the European standards, the form of access to and the organizational and functional structure of educational guidance services

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