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COMPETENCES OF THE TEACHER IN THE FIELD OF VISUAL ARTS. CONCEPTUAL LANDMARKS

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Various meanings of competence can be found in the specialized literature. Guțu Vl. (2023) defines it as ,,an integrated system of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, acquired, formed, and developed through learning, whose mobilization allows the identification and resolution of various problems in various contexts and situations"; ,,purpose, as a projected objective and as a learning objective"; ,,intellectual capacity with various transfer possibilities (capacity to communicate, decide, detect, select, evaluate data, information, relationships), a capacity that associates affective and attitudinal components, motivating action".

Since the emphasis in higher education is on the formation of competent specialists, on the formation and development of competence as a quality of personality (Șevciuc M., 2007), the visual arts teacher, through good training, will contribute to the beautiful growth of students – forming the ,,person of tomorrow" (Berger G., 1973). The study programs, generous both through the variety of specialties and through the psycho-pedagogical training module, give confidence to young visual arts graduates to register and participate in the final exam, thus certifying the skills acquired in the initial training.

Keywords: *teachers, competences, visual arts, education, initial training, higher education.*

COMPETENȚELE PROFESORULUI DIN DOMENIUL ARTELOR VIZUALE. REPERE CONCEPTUALE

În literatura de specialitate găsim diferite accepțiuni ale competenței. Guțu Vl. (2023) o definește ca fiind „un sistem integrat de cunoştinţe, abilităţi, atitudini şi valori, dobândite, formate şi dezvoltate prin învăţare, a căror mobilizare permite identificarea şi rezolvarea diferitor probleme în diverse contexte şi situaţii"; „finalitate, ca obiectiv proiectat și ca obiectiv de învățare"; „capacitate intelectuală ce dispune de variate posibilităţi de transfer (capacitatea de a comunica, decide, detecta, selecta, evalua date, informaţii, relaţii), capacitate care-şi asociază componente afective şi atitudinale, de motivare a acţiunii".

Deoarece, la nivelul învățământului superior se pune accentul pe formarea specialistului competent, pe formarea şi dezvoltarea competenţei drept calitate a personalităţii (Șevciuc M., 2007), profesorul de arte vizuale, prin buna sa formare va reuși să contribuie la frumoasa creștere a elevilor - formarea „omului de mâine" (Berger G., 1973). Programele de studii, generoase atât prin varietatea specialităților, cât și prin modulul de formare psihopedagogică, conferă încredere tinerilor absolvenți de arte vizuale de a se înscrie și participa la examenul de definitivat, certificându-li-se astfel competențele dobândite în formarea inițială.

Cuvinte-cheie: *profesori, competențe, arte vizuale, educație, formare inițială,* învățământ *superior.*

Introduction

Antonesei L., in his work ,,An Introduction to Pedagogy. Axiological and Transdisciplinary Dimensions of Education", stated that ,,the didactic profession presupposes the authentic manifestation of a set of five types of competences: *cultural competence*, represented by general culture and the specific culture of the specialized field; *psycho-pedagogical competence*, which ensures the teacher a good quality of transmitting the specific culture to the beneficiaries of educational processes, as well as its connections with the field of culture as a whole; *psycho-affective and communication competence,* based on certain structural qualities of personality; *moral competence*, referring to the fact that educators must be infused with the values that

make up the educational ideal promoted by the education system in which they carry out their activity; *managerial competence*, intended to ensure the efficiency of the organization and management of activities, processes, collectives, and educational institutions” [9, p. 430-431].

In the paper „Common European Principles for Competence Training and Qualification of Teaching Staff”, resulted from the European Conference on testing common European principles for teacher competences and qualification (June 20-21, 2005, Brussels), *key competences* were described, reflected by the following *common European principles*: „a profession oriented towards quality standards in initial training through higher education institutions; a profession placed in the European context of continuous professional development/ learning and *lifelong learning;* a profession oriented towards mobility at both the initial training and continuous training levels; a profession based on partnership both in the inter-school and trans-school relations (industry, economic agents, providers of continuous training)” [9, p. 432]. Both the key competences and the advanced principles constitute a landmark in guiding the initial and in-service training of teachers.

In the Republic of Moldova, the „Standards of professional competences of teaching staff in general education” (approved at the meeting of the National Curriculum Council, minutes no. 18 of July 3, 2018; by the Order of the Minister of Education, Culture, and Research no. 1124 of July 20, 2018) aim at „consolidating the European dimension in the field of education and continuous professional development of teaching staff; orienting the professional development system in accordance with the requirements of the labor market and student-centered pedagogy; motivating teaching staff for lifelong learning; increasing the responsibility of each teaching staff for the success of their own professional career; promoting transparency, recognition of competences and/or qualifications” [3, p. 3]. The knowledge of these standards and their reception as core elements of the good functioning of the education system, ensure correlation with European education systems and integration in the field of work.

The competences of the teacher in the field of educational-artistic encompass both „artistic-pedagogical competences” and „general-pedagogical competences” [2, p. 30]. The coexistence of the two crowns the good training of the student at the Faculty of Arts, because they thoroughly prepare the graduate for the best possible integration into the Romanian education system. During the psychopedagogical training, the meeting with the system of pedagogical skills takes place, which includes (according to I. Gagim): „cognitive competence, affective competence, performance competence, evolutionary competence, exploratory competence” [2, p. 31], and the constitutive elements of artistic-pedagogical competence consist of: „perception (analysis, understanding, appreciation); interpretation (characterization, expression, transmission); creation (reflection, improvisation, composition)” [2, p. 34], capitalize on the artistic dimension.

The visual arts teacher, concerned with the standard of the teaching profession, knows and possesses the competences necessary for the successful conduct of the instructional-educational process, assimilating, integrating and retrieving elements that can help him in his activity in the classroom and beyond.

One of them is *the professional competence*, which includes: visual culture appropriate to the artistic field; creativity and the capacity of innovation; knowledge of specific techniques of visual arts; the ability to organize (diversification of tasks for students, teamwork, organization of exhibitions, etc. – „the competence to adapt and combine methodical algorithms and selected content appropriately, in relation to educational situations that arise, whether in class or study workshop, or outside the class”) [16, p. 38-39]. The continuous visual literacy and the constant feeding of the thirst for knowledge of the actors of various artistic activities and manifestations, only guarantees the continuity of the valorization of the arts among different categories of the public, starting with the most fragile human beings, children.

Moreover, another competence that highlights the fact that teachers are human beings is „the *human competence* – the competence to develop good relationships with students, parents, colleagues, superiors, and the community; the ability to work with the class of students; cooperation, positive collaboration with other colleagues, teachers, parents, etc.” [16, p. 38]. The workshop cannot be substituted by robots or any other means because empathy, emotional communication, and relevant explanations during the practical work process are necessary. This is because we can only shape an artist through hands-on work. For example, in the painting, sculpture, mural section, the direct involvement of the artist is essential, and learning must be direct through communication with the respective subject teacher. Therefore, human presence is

absolutely fundamental, precisely because the emotional dimension of human beings involves empathy, which can only be achieved through direct contact, person to person.

Under the umbrella of interpersonal relationships, the *competence of subordination* is also highlighted: the ability to maintain relationships with higher levels of hierarchy, such as directors, inspectors, methodologists (teachers are periodically monitored and evaluated by superiors and colleagues); this includes being prepared and appropriate in front of committees such as those in the examinations for obtaining teaching degrees [16, p. 38-39]. Motivation is also of human nature, it is about the construction of the ego. The values also instilled by people, at the right time, achieve special results in the training of specialists, visual artists capable of realizing their own management.

Good preparation highlights the didactic skills specific to the visual education teacher, which involves a series of capacities: „pedagogical analysis of the content in the visual arts curriculum; analysis of information and knowledge characteristics to be taught; planning visual education activities, conducting these activities, evaluating students, performing administrative and organizational tasks, developing students' personalities, programming personal artistic progress, and developing teaching performances" [16, p. 41-42]. Focusing on these capabilities highlights not only what to look for, but also how to measure progress.

The competencies of a teacher in the field of visual arts

Ezechil L. and Neacșu M. (2007) propose a national standard for the teaching profession that „respects internal needs for professional training in the field" [5, p. 11]. So, **the competences of the teacher- Romanian model,** abridged according to Ezechil L. and Neacșu M. [16, p. 39-40 apud 5] highlighten the general and specific competencies:

1. „*Methodological Competencies* (specific competencies: appropriate use of concepts and theories in the field of visual education - interdisciplinary approaches; application of modern and contemporary concepts and theories regarding the development of knowledge skills; competence in designing instructive-educational content; use of methods and teaching strategies suitable for individual/group characteristics, according to the objectives and type of the lesson; determination of materials and didactic aids used in learning activities; optimal use of spatiotemporal factors to enhance the efficiency of the instructive-educational process; use of a methodological repertoire suitable for the professional plan; linking instructive-educational activities to pre-established objectives);

2. *Communication and Relational Competencies* (mastery of communication methods – horizontal, vertical, multiple, complex, diversified, and specific; manifestation of empathetic, collaborative behavior; use of various sources of information for documentation purposes; concentration of instructive-educational activities on forms of communication);

3. *Evaluation Competencies* (competence in designing methods and forms of evaluation – phases, forms, types of evaluation; use of appropriate individual/group evaluation strategies; development of evaluation tools based on objectives and individual/group characteristics; use of specific evaluation methods for visual arts; capacity for self-evaluation, self-correction, and self-development);

3. *Psycho-social Competencies* (valorization of methods and techniques for student knowledge and activation – self-awareness and self-motivation; recognition of responsibility and assumption of the social role of the teaching staff);

4. *Specific Competencies in the Field of Visual Education* (competence in designing and supporting specific activities in plastic education; conception and use of materials/means of learning specific to the field; organizational competence);

5. *Project and Research Program Management Competencies (*knowledge of structuring methods, in European and non-European countries, in the field of visual education; knowledge of didactic methodology used in other countries; competence in finding and using informative tools to participate in European programs; valorization of experiences from mobilities that was part of);

6. *Career Management Competencies* (use of methods and techniques of psycho-behavioural self-control; adaptation of effective behaviors to overcome „crisis situations"; full assumption of various roles specific to the teaching profession; manifestation of self-reflective behavior regarding own didactic activities)".

The proposed model guides the teaching staff in understanding the importance of good training in the field, for the teaching career; brings to the fore the directions that must be at the center of the visual arts teacher's concerns, without them the educational process would be damaged.

Regarding training programs in higher artistic education, each specialty specifies sets of competencies. For example, the approved curriculum on June 28, 2023, for the *Painting* specialty [10] at the Academy of Music, Theater, and Fine Arts - *Faculty of Fine and Decorative Arts,* Chișinău, emphasizes the „accumulation of fundamental theoretical knowledge in the field of visual arts based on tradition and the history of the specialty; the broadening of knowledge about contemporary painting to promote national values; the acquisition of skills and their use in the development of techniques and means of expression characteristic of the visual arts; the application and accumulation of theoretical and methodological knowledge in the creation of artworks, and the use of new technologies in the creative process" – professional competencies that shape the profile of the university graduate.

High school graduates are familiar every year with the academic offers promoted both physically and online, through scientific conferences and the most diverse and exciting artistic manifestations, which bring more knowledge about the times to come.

The artistic higher education process is a transparent one. Within the National University of Arts „George Enescu" – *Faculty of Visual Arts and Design*, Iași, for the Painting specialization – Bachelor's studies, competencies include [19]: „mastering specialized terminology and grammar, understanding the basic principles of creative resources in the field; the ability to conceive, create, and complete projects in the field; and the ability to find visual and communicative solutions for ideational messages; the accuracy, the clarity and the argumentative consistency in the technical support of the practical work". Knowing them from the first year of study brings the student closer to the secrets of good training.

The aim of this specialization is to ensure a „sufficient level of training that allows the development of creative artistic personalities in the field of painting and visual arts, capable of integrating and engaging in national, European, or international value circuits" [18]. In other words, it is envisaged to favor a social integration as suitable as possible for each young graduate, who through his artistic activity will combat kitsch and advocate for beauty and good taste.

The „Integrated and Polyvalent Educational Program for Training Specialists in the Field of Fine Arts" [9], the study program for the Painting specialty, can be accompanied by the *Psychopedagogical Training Module*, providing graduates with the opportunity to work as teachers and leaders of creative circles in pre-university educational institutions. While this training is included in the curriculum for *Art Pedagogy* specialization, for other specializations, "the psychopedagogical and didactic training of students and graduates in higher education dedicated to the teaching profession" is complementary. Therefore, the opportunity to undergo a psycho-pedagogical training program is highlighted, including pedagogical practice, which certifies the competencies for the teaching profession.

Another way to valorize the skills formed in students, graduates of art faculties, is the definitive exam, which represents the first teaching degree in the pre-university education system in Romania.

According to statistical data collected from 2019-2023 [4], graduates from the Painting specialty showed interest in obtaining this certification of competencies through the definitive exam, ranking second in the 2019, 2021 sessions with a percentage of 15%, 17%, and first in the 2020, 2022, 2023 sessions with 23%, 27%, and 24%, respectively, of the total candidates, graduates of art faculties.

Also, this study made it possible to find out the status of the candidates, by bringing to the fore the type of college attended. So, in 2019, of the total number of students enrolled in the exam, 87% graduated from the Faculty of Fine, Decorative and Design Arts, 12% from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology and 1% from the Faculty of Architecture. Analyzing the data corresponding to the year 2020: 87% were graduate students in the field of Visual Arts, 9% with studies in Orthodox Theology and only 4% from the field of Architecture. In 2021: 81% belong to the field of Visual Arts, 9% to the Faculty of Orthodox Theology and 10% to the Faculty of Architecture. In the 2022 session: 88% of candidates are graduates of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Decorative and Design, 8% of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology and 4% of the Faculty of Architecture. The same hierarchy emerged for the year 2023, when: 85% are those who graduated from the

Faculty of Fine, Decorative and Design Arts, 10% from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology and only 5% from the Faculty of Architecture [4].

The results are gratifying, considering the constant and majority percentages attributed to initial teacher training in artistic higher education institutions.

In the article „Methodological Aspects of Developing Specific Competencies for the Teaching Profession", Stanciu M. considers that:

1. „The Bologna Process has brought significant changes regarding the organization and conduct of the initial training process for Romanian teachers solely through the university. However, we consider that the number of hours allocated to pedagogical practice is insufficient (as it was in the former pedagogical high schools).

2. The mechanism for teacher training after completing Module I and before the final examination in education (a mentoring program as part of an internship) has not yet been institutionalized in Romania».

3. The focus on competency in the initial (and ongoing) training process aligns with the requirements of a postmodern society, in accordance with global concerns in the field" [13, p. 308-309].

4. „The primary issue in the initial training of all students is the development of metacognitive competence, empowering them with techniques for efficient learning [14]".

In the Republic of Moldova, the Public Institution „National Institute for Education and Leadership" has been established, with functions such as „providing theoretical and practical expertise to establish the framework for the initial and continuous training of teaching and managerial staff, offering high-quality; continuous training for teaching and managerial staff based on individual training needs; monitoring the relationship between initial and continuous training and the realities of implementing acquired skills in the classroom; organizing mentoring networks at three levels: i) mentoring for pedagogical practice internships; ii) mentoring for young specialists; and iii) mentoring for professional development in the workplace; monitoring and improving the professional integration of young specialists and their career progress [7, p. 3].

In the volume „Andragogy", Guțu Vl. emphasizes a set of general/transversal competencies for the Arts field: „the practice–application of artistic skills and abilities under different forms and activities, showing human creative potential, sensibility, involvement and initiative; the transfer of artistic acquisitions/talents acquired within formal activities, within the individual vocational realization, exploring self-awareness, pointing the development journey of individuals through learning and work, based on the specific requirements and socio-economic expectations of the artistic field and living environment; exploring trends in self-awareness, self-information, self-education, self-promotion, and personal self-determination in the practiced artistic domain, ensuring through one's own abilities and capacities a quality vocational marketing; appreciating and managing resources/products in the artistic field, demonstrating the skills of a loyal and trainable creator/consumer, capable of contributing to the enhancement of the prestige of artistic/cultural professions, promoting and valorizing the entire artistic heritage at local, national, and universal levels; the use of the artistic domain in the social, cultural, artistic, and informational space by demonstrating compatibility with the chosen profile and ensuring the conscious self-modeling of personality; promoting artistic values at the national and international levels; demonstrating skills for continuous professional development in the arts field, as well as contributing to the broadening of general cultural knowledge [6, p. 152-153]. The interest in progress, knowledge, training of skills and abilities, mediated by the „new" tools keep the human being in a continuous search for beauty – and promotion of the values of art.

Conclusion

The conceptual approaches within initial training aim to highlight the path of developing teaching competencies in higher education. „The process of initial teacher training in pre-university education needs to be connected to new educational paradigms, promoting motivating and efficient education through modern, interactive, and informational technologies [8, p. 79]. The formation and development of teaching competencies in the field of visual arts can be seen as a guarantee of continuity in artistic value, and a well-trained

teacher will be „a source of joy in art, discipline, knowledge, culture, sincerity, and all the qualities that a human being has” [12, p. 18]. In context, the digital native and beyond, who embraces the teaching career, will consider the multiple aspects of learning, training and skill development, adherence to continuing education programs and the education of younger generations with and through art. Only by interacting with each other and interrogating art and science do we maintain the balance so necessary to human existence.

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