Communication Didactics

The Competence – The Finality of Didactic Communication

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Abstract: The paradigm of pedagogy through competence promotes the priority of forming the competence as one of the aims of education. The skill requires mobilizing the declarative and procedural knowledge that can be mobilized in new situations by the educated. It selects, organizes and structures them in order to find solutions and resolutions. The accumulations achieved by the educated at several levels of his personality allow him to prove that he is able to solve a task or a problem. Mobilization in solving and finding solutions means adaptation, differentiation, integration, reflection, combination, specification, coordination, planning, decision, formulating hypotheses, reconfiguration of fields at conceptual, attitudinal and behavioral level. Become mental and practical tools, all these prove the existence of competence. The competence is significant in terms of real action, by which the educated "puts into practice" his system of accumulation. Then he is periodically evaluated, based on efficiency and effectiveness in various and complex contexts of the real environment.

Keywords: competence; curriculum; problem solving; context; mobilization

1. Introduction

In today's world, the role of education is reconfiguring, and competence formation paradigm must be accepted and checked into the curriculum. The educational methodology must be adjusted, the syllabus should be reformulated, it is required the development of curriculum documents for students, the purpose being a training and practicing competence. In this way, it initiated a superior approach of designing formation for integration and professional development after school. The curriculum must include the appropriate goals and objectives, content matching, ways of practice in varied and complex situations and a new methodology of

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training and assessment of the integration of acquisitions' level, a different use of metacognition.

2. The Concept of Competence

In its quality of concept, the competence presents definitions, nuances and details of his defining notes, the intention being identifying the closest sense of real possibility of training, and its purpose being effective integration into the social and professional reality, according to its evolution.

The competence can be defined as the integrative assemblies of knowledge, skills, motivations and attitudes that mediate the professional conduct and guarantee the expert action in domains and specific contexts of activity. (Joita, 2010, p. 52)

2.1. The Content of the Competence Concept

- After *affirming in action*, we may identify the following defining notes:

- it is achieved by action, it is manifested;
- competence is formed, perfects through practical actions and thus the individual becomes competent.

- After *asserting in solving tasks*, we can identify the following features:

- it is proven that a task can be solved;
- it is established that there is a capacity to act effectively in a particular type of task;
- the activity that activates the competence is functional and useful and it has finality and purpose;
- it is proven the mobilization of knowledge assemblies, of some capacities for action and a set of structural behaviors, according to a predetermined purpose and a specific type of concrete situation, regarding certain tasks to be solved, in different circumstances;
- the competence possess a certain potentiality, it can be observed only in activity, its fulfillment consisting of solving complex tasks.

- According to the criterion called *the assertion in complex situations*, the essential characteristics of the competence are:

- identifies and solves real problems at the right moment, mobilizing and using knowledge, mental and instrumental resources, proving their effectiveness in specific and concrete situations;
- mobilizing competence is always necessary to solve a case successfully;
- the competence has a strategic capacity, one that cannot miss in complex situations;
- possessing skills activates a new combination of known procedures in solving practical, real, complex and unusual problems, ignoring stereotyped procedures;
- competence can be a bond of similar situations that should be clearly identified in order to be clarified and refined in the curriculum;
- a similar set of circumstances, as a situation of integration are central for competence, offering to solve complex problems; they, in turn, are indicated for use in forming competence;
- its basis is set by a strict competence necessary for obtaining the success in solving cases, applicable in any context and necessary for further action; the competence is known in the literature as basic, fundamental, essential, minimal or skills-base;
- psychologically, it is the recognized ability, deep knowledge that gives the right to judge, to decide;
- in the profession, the competence is a set of knowledge, qualities, abilities, capacities that give relevance to act to discuss, consult, to decide; to decide in the field and make predictions on the effectiveness of problem solving;
- competence in terms of solving complex situations, requiring expertness and procedural operational validated knowledge and also problem solving capacity in a given context, the ability to raise the knowledge, abilities, capacities and motivations;
- the competence requires a relationship of individual initiative and responsibility to the professional situation that he is facing.

If we adopt as a criterion the component elements, we may identify the following defining features of the competence concept:
- it refers to the combination, in complex situations, of procedural knowledge, skills, abilities and rules;
- as a structured and coherent set of resources, the competence enables effective action in a certain field;
- the interaction of elements forming competence has a dynamic feature;

- the ability to bring into reality an organized grouping of knowledge, procedures, attitudes in order to solve a number of tasks;
- competence is heterogeneous because of the elements that compose it, but also homogenous by the results and the social and professional finality;
- competence has the ability to mobilize a complex of resources, consisting of various knowledge, assimilated experience, schemes, automatisms, capacity, procedural knowledge, attitudes;

Competence is a structure that combines at individual knowledge level, professional capacities and abilities to achieve effective results.

- Under the condition where the criterion is represented by the mobilization of elements, we can identify the following notes defining the competences:
    - the subject mobilizes and updates certain elements in a single context;
    - the competence includes an ability to judge how an effective solution is obtained;
    - in a new situation, he can find another way to integrate the basic elements;
    - a key element may represent an assimilated conscience, based on mobilization and efficient use of a set of resources;
    - the component elements must be considered in their entirety, in the whole dynamics of their own, according to a purpose;
    - competence involves knowledge of complex, based on efficient use of a set of resources;
    - after the task that need to be solved and according to the procedures used the skills can be global (macro-competences) or particular part (micro-competences);
    - component elements, by mobilizing them in real practical situations, it manifests social-cultural-productive utility functions in solving complex situations, proving a complete character; they are activated at various stages of training, until efficient professional integration;
    - the competences have disciplinary, interdiciplinary and transdisciplinary feature;
    - by activating competence, there is a selection of mobilized resources, that are meaningful, goal oriented, that allow the increase of efficiency in a given situation;
    - assume the coordination of resources deemed to be useful, involved in the situation;

- the competence requires the mobilization of different capacities and contents, in an internalized manner integrated by a set of resources in order to solve a problem-situation family.

The role of competence is to mobilize internal resources of the trainees, which consist of knowledge, schemes, capacities, information, tools, rules, values, attitudes, motivations. All these are required as prerequisites for achieving the functional transfer in solving complex practical situations. The competence must be practiced, formed, trained, stimulated, improved, so that the role of education in their construction overrides the previous role of scholarship. The derivation competence must be reflected also in the official reference of the syllabus, according to the decisions of each country, as a general body of skills for a wide field of situations. From here there are derived another problems for educators, such as how to achieve their learning, how to evaluate them.

The competence training paradigm must include the ethical dimension of solving complex situations (Joita, 2010, p. 58):

- assuming the responsibility in decisions and actions;
- real involvement and compliance of efficiency norms;
- adapting the plans to reality;
- application of critical thinking;
- identifying and setting the priorities and formulating questions;
- communicate facts and ideas, involvement by the assertion of points of views;
- focusing on quality;
- demonstrating standards of professionalism;
- creating a supportive environment and respecting others;
- achievements of objectives within a group.

2.2. Competence and New Roles of the Trainee and of the Trainer

Changing the methodological paradigm required building transversal competences of the educated by:

- reflective involvement in action-research;
- application inter-and trans-disciplinarity;

Transversal competence requires the creative application of syllabus built on competence and it requires the progressive diminishing of the resistance to change.

In the implementation process of training the educated, its active role shape and affirm states progressively (as in the paradigm of focusing on educated):

- being aware of the given context, and tasks, he checks what he knows, what he can, what experience has, what is the performance that he anticipates, how he can collaborate;
- perceives the relationship between the task difficulty and his ability to solve it;
- projects the anticipated action and he anticipates the strategy and performances;
- carries out the actual building, directly or through collaboration to solve more efficiently the task, resorting to mobilizing all its resources;
- the use of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies for action and also he proceeds with his own self-solving approach;
- Continuous use of a retrospective approach on the taken task and he creates relationships between the new performances and the achieved progress;
- identify the reasons of successes and it identifies the difficulties that are under its control: effort, the used method, attention, attitude, experience, feelings, etc.;
- assess his state of satisfaction by referencing it to the used strategies, the abilities, capacity of development, through various evaluation techniques;
- applying or transferring its purchases in future tasks and checks the approach that facilitates the transfer of new knowledge, etc.

Competence has become a priority for socio-professional reasons and personal affirmation. Currently, the approach is not limited only to professional tasks, but it must be developed, by linking them, through integration at cross-level. Competence requires not only effective execution of the given task, but also creativity, initiative, autonomy, innovation, openness, to face the more complex reality, more problematized.

The pedagogy of competence developed in the last decade, has become a benchmark for many curricular reforms in order to prepare the young people for the real life. A competence is built in a specific way, it is improving, adapting to the requirements of context, in practicing the profession, because each has a way of exposing and solving problems, resulting in different solutions. This is the *pragmatic transposition* (Joita, 2010, p 22).

Competence is not only the ability to apply in a given context using knowledge and skills, by mobilizing resources, but the ability to exercise a role, to solve situation / situations. When we speak of skills, we speak of an *intelligence of situations* that builds continuously.

Professional and Transversal Competence

Professional competence is the proven ability to achieve a pertinent selection, to combine and use the appropriate knowledge, capacities, values and attitudes, in order to really and effectively solve a particular category of work or learning situations, circumscribed to the profession in question, in conditions of effectiveness and efficiency.

Transversal competence represents capacities, abilities and skills that exceed a certain area, a certain program of studies, because they are shaped by transdisciplinary approaches. They consist of teamwork skills, communication skills in oral and written of the mother tongue or foreign language, use of information and communication technology ICT, problem solving, decision making, recognition and respect for diversity and multiculturalism, learning autonomy, entrepreneurship initiative and spirit, openness towards lifelong learning, and development of values and professional ethics, etc.[1]

Transversal competence is inter- and transdisciplinary. They are considered and evaluated as "terminal objectives of integration" as macro-competencies, because they manifest in complex situations, which can be solved only if all the necessary acquisitions are integrated and structured. The transversal competences are terminals that seek to establish a final synthesis, after a year or after a cycle, through which it is assessed the level of training, the ways in which its possessor is manifested in a complex situation of real integration.

As terminal objectives, these skills enable different approaches of combining forms of acquisitions:

- through the inter-relation of specific elements of the field in question;
- by mobilizing and coordinating this body of elements in complex and real situations;
- by the polarization of all mobilized elements and activated by a goal.

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[1] *http://www.upt.ro/pdf/calitate/Metodologia_CNCSIS*, accessed on 12 July 2012, time 12:30.

The integration competence derives in the basic skills and each of these in other specific sub-competences, found in the training profile at different levels.

Professional skills represent the unified and dynamic whole of knowledge and abilities.

Knowledge is expressed by the following descriptors:

- knowledge, understanding and use of specific language;
- explanation and interpretation.

Ability is expressed by the following descriptors:

- application, transfer and problem solving;
- critical and constructive reflection;
- creativity and innovation.

Each qualification related to a specific cycle of studies (bachelor's degree, BA, PhD) is defined based on the general description of learning outcomes and it is expressed by:

- *general professional competence* that is developed in the broader field of study;
- *specific professional competence*, which develops within a narrow program study.
- *transversal competence* represents valuable and attitudinal acquisitions that transcend a certain area/syllabus and expressed by the following descriptors:
- autonomy and responsibility;
- social interaction;
- personal and professional development.

In applying the change of paradigm is emerging, in building and implementing a new curriculum, certain practical problems such as:

- a different articulation of knowledge, which remain but are selected, organized, mentioned in different ways;
- the development of skills raises fundamental questions on how they are transformed, on how their transposition in the didactic act, how it is transformed the understanding of knowledge and in practical, applied action for the demonstrating also that the educated knows what to do;

- achieving the harmonization of disciplines tendency, of knowledge to specialize, diversify, deepen with the cross / trans-disciplinary approaches of competence, able to mobilize, to link different knowledge.

The problematic curriculum research is one of discovering the significance for educational practice. Post-modern definition of the curriculum enriches the significance of curriculum, bringing meanings and it refers to (Joita, 2010, p. 75):

- identification of favorable opportunities favorable in classroom for applying the given curriculum time;
- promotion of knowledge as a process, being carried out in several stages;
- supporting the identity, goals and personality features of the educated;
- positioning the intercultural modeling in specific local contexts.

Currently, in the specialized literature there are advanced other principles of reflection as well on the curriculum:

- it must capture all significant developments in science;
- the process of education should be a priority towards the training process;
- it is necessary the development of open programs, flexible, that is based on the results of research in the field;
- it is necessary to diversify the active teaching-learning methods, in order to achieve learning by designing and modeling;
- curriculum must allow redefining the curricular areas whenever necessary.

3. Curriculum Focused on Competence

Optimization of an educational curriculum and building a new curriculum are always public activities they are always public activities and they must be carried out in conditions of maximum transparency. Curricular changes affect diverse population groups, that require their involvement in curriculum development process. (Negreţ Dobridor, 2008, p. 207) Cooperative approach is required by any democratic philosophy of education, but also by effective communication needs between direct agencies and the different categories of beneficiaries of change.

In Romania the autonomy is only recognized to higher education, which has the freedom to develop the curriculum at the level of each faculty. In public higher education there are not allowed curricular change initiatives except in the optional subjects. (Negreţ Dobridor, 2008, p. 207) Once the decision is made of optimizing

or developing the educational curriculum and there are stated the goals of this new curriculum, it becomes possible the selection of "learning field" ("areas of experience" or "content areas") in order to achieve these purposes. The "Learning fields" are not simple lists of disciplines or content inventories.

Their identification is carried out at least two levels:

- the establishment of "curriculum as a whole" and the major areas in which it operates. "In what area will the educated be trained?, "In what profession or activity will he be competent?"
- specifying the curricular sub-domains (disciplines or interdisciplinary fields, models, "content packages" (Negreţ Dobridor, 2008, p. 212).

At this level there are identified and there are established the components of the curriculum plan, which occurs through content areas, as a project of "learning experiences". The term "curriculum by competencies" contains a range of different realities. Therefore, they started to diversify and rethink the real practices, by going through cognitive and constructivism, with their consequences on the learner, the educated. How to actually build a curriculum that would meet the effective application of the skills training paradigm, according to the new requirements and expectations?

One practical solution for skills formation can be assumed as the design of a unitary curriculum for all schooling, built on longitudinal logics and the transversal one of the progressive development of skills, by providing circumstances, opportunities for their effective development.

In the didactic approach of skills development it is also important that a competence does not develop linearly, but moves in a spiral shape, with returns to basic, significant concepts, with new associations of situations and contexts in which the educated are put into. They provide a basis for socio-professional insertion efficiency, and the syllabus should be constructed on-base competence, also known as integration skills, with specific derivatives, to which are provided also situations, actions for practicing.

Newly developed programs will specify what competences must be provided priority and how, in relation to specifying a basic competencies, organized logically, progressively, with appropriate content taken from their reality, as professional references, but also with competence specifically derived without destroying completely the spirit of traditional programs.

The curriculum designed in terms of competence formation is a complex and evolving system of rules, mentioning the structuring of pedagogic development of education or of training at different levels of transposition into social reality. These structures include:

- finalities, under the form of general objectives of action and under the form of expected effects after achievement;
- the contents regard the subjects, specific objectives, capacities and competencies that need to be developed;
- active teaching methods;
- ways of managing processes and ways of connecting;
- developing relationships with the whole organized context;
- methods of evaluating performance.

The curriculum focused on skills is something else than the classical analytical curriculum; it is a structuring of different learning experiences planned and then offered for the achievement of predetermined objectives. This type of curriculum requires a specific educational context of specific achievement, especially by alternatives of methodological achievement and it can be elaborated in several ways:

- by thinking and developing a new curriculum;
- by restoring the existing one in the depth of its elements;
- by adaptation and negotiation;
- by selecting a curriculum from several that are already developed.

3.1. Conditions for Introduction and Implementation of Curriculum

From this general conceptual design model as application of the current paradigm of curriculum focused on competence, Miled M. proposed in 2005 an applicative project on designing a curriculum centered on competency, trans - and inter-disciplinarily based, that would facilitate the transversal capacity, as general objectives, through integrating learned acquisitions. (Joita, 2010, pp. 86-87) Certainly such a prescribed curriculum project will become a real curriculum that will be adapted to the socio-cultural and economic size of didactic environment, at the methodological dimension marked by previous practices and traditions, by the specific meanings, understood and related according to the applied concept, of the

educators' potential and of other potential partners in its acceptance and implementation.

It is also necessary the correlation of the curriculum centered on competence with other initial two dimensions:

- specifying the contents structured on the essential concepts of the domain and of the terminal objectives, general and specific, balanced by the development of personality and on reporting it to the socio-professional expectations (profile, referential of skills);
- evaluation criteria, especially the formative one, in situations, tasks, issues, real, complex projects, that would mobilize the learned things, use them as resources in order to demonstrate competence.

Regardless of the steps taken to define a curriculum according to this paradigm, changing its design is important at the central level of national curriculum, on the listed coordinates: the competence profile of expected competence, the different skills and capabilities on fields, disciplines and types of activities, appropriate content, projects of curricular documents, the evaluation system. Reporting the design and its implementation depends on the understanding and reporting way to the priority paradigm of focusing on the educated.

3.2. Principles and Consequences in Tackling the Curriculum Centered on Competence: the classical necessary resources for learning, different psycho-pedagogical services for success (counseling, facilitation, motivation, critical evaluation), social services (communication, collaboration). Along with classical elements, these elements must be provided in the curriculum. (Joita, 2010, pp. 86-88) What is the correspondence between the new paradigm of curriculum and the implementation, its putting into practice, which is the relationship with the real practice of educators, that would prove its efficiency, quality, following the principles according to which it was rebuilt?

Its development and solving lies either by developing personalized curriculum documents after an official processing and adaptation, either by direct designed or implemented activities. And even if the image is present, the practitioner will not understand it and apply, without explicit organized redesigning of his methodological training.

Basically, such a curriculum would be represented by a table with four columns: statement competence, basic knowledge, procedural knowledge, attitudes in school programs. Then the classical contents are transformed into specific objectives, by building and inserting such tasks, not just an assertion, traditional transmission and reproduction. Which it would allow, after synthesized theoretical support, the indication of actions, derived tasks, that become resources, training and achievement tools. Finally, there are proposed also assessment situations, for each competency, specifying the criteria, the indicators for at least two significant situations for that competence, with a clear presentation.

But is practice ready for new methodological paradigm of the curriculum, with all its elements? Also:

- How firm does the transformation appear or is only a hypothesis, a fashion?
- How democratic would its application be?
- How can the attitudes of the educated, parents be changed (from knowledge to skills)?
- How can all conditions for a context condition based on experience curriculum and skills be created?
- How to move from training paradigm to that of learning in the classroom?
- How to change the motivation of learning if everyone expects immediate results?
- What should be the conditions to form or to exploit different learning experiences (past, on subjects, non-formal, informal)?
- How to create the conditions for transferring in different contexts for skills, performance and motivation?
- How to balance the training education with training in school?

The evolution in time of the conception of curriculum and particular alternative paradigms, called micro-paradigms, and also principles in developing programs by subject, with methodological consequences for diverse application. They are not used in pure state, but different proportionate combinations, according to the chosen, formative criteria of efficiency and effectiveness. We identify, firstly, the classical approach by content, which reveals the structuring of matter according to concepts, main knowledge, ordered according to the logic of scientific knowledge.

In this situation, the paradigm of education is centered on the environment from where it takes the information, concepts, facts which are transmitted by the professor, through classical methods, and the student appropriates them with the

support of the teacher. We identify a reproductive curriculum based on the prevalence of learning sciences, the use of traditional methods, with emphasis on cognitive operations, on the hierarchical organization of the stages of learning and formal school organization. The approach through objectives is derived from the pedagogy by general specific and operational objectives, structuring the curriculum after this hierarchy, together with their assessment. Currently it is the education paradigm in the environment that is used as a context which develops the learning experience.

4. Conclusions

Currently it is affirmed increasingly the approach through which the competence or through integration, as a mobilization of various formed dimensions and it becomes resources of subsequent effective actions: knowledge, capacities, abilities, skills, motivations, and attitudes, through various disciplines, with location of the awareness of the actual experience, explaining and approaching training in various contexts created by stimulating opportunities. To this approach it corresponds to the paradigm of environmental education, with a reconstructive curriculum, with predominance of social sciences, of the centering learning on problem solving and research, bringing to the forefront the values, attitudes and skills of knowledge, with involvement in environmental practice, with an interdisciplinary approach.

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