

Development of General and Specific Skills Required for Teaching Activity

E. Balaş

Evelina Balaş

University "Aurel Vlaicu" Arad

Abstract: This paper presents from a theoretical perspective the staff training and skills development issues. Initial and continuing training must consider equipping the teachers with the necessary skills so they feel comfortable in front of the class, in all situations that may arise in the course of their teaching activity. They must be experts in one or more specialized disciplines, requiring a high level of academic qualification. Teachers have an increasingly complex mission, their responsibilities are growing, and the environments in which they work are becoming more difficult.

Keywords: teaching skills, academic qualification, development

The current debates on teaching profession are focusing more and more on the acknowledged reality that the profession is changing due to developments in contemporary society, and due to increasingly complex challenges faced by the education system. Accordingly, we found it necessary to answer a few questions raised by the researchers in this the field: What skills should teachers have in a constantly evolving and changing society? What should teachers "know" and "know how to do"? How should they be trained to practice this profession? What types of theoretical, methodological, actional and vocational skills teachers need to achieve? What are the most appropriate and effective initial training programs for teaching staff? Etc.

The answer to those questions can only be "professionalizing teaching career" and particularly developing the "professiogramme" of this profession, a rather difficult task if we consider the specifics of the educational activity.

In any field or profession there are talks about a general and specific system of skills, acquiring and developing these skills being an ongoing process, the knowledge and skills that an individual holds strengthening and enriching, being reorganized all the time as the experience grows. This is the acceptable standard of professional competence for pursuing a particular profession. Thus, initial training systems in all teacher training programs, are responsible for developing this system of skills training (V. Chis, 2005).

When we talk about education, it is necessary to emphasize that ensuring the quality and efficiency of the educational process is undoubtedly related to human resources involved, to how they are prepared and trained to achieve the educational goal. Contemporary society, ever changing, prompted also a change of view on the teaching profession, teaching roles changing and diversifying. Contemporary society has high expectations from teachers, and especially because the results of the work of teachers is the base of social and economic progress. Thus, the initial and continuing training system must take into account the "endowment" of the teacher with the skills necessary for the development and provision of educational content appropriate "to the present".

However, both initial training programs and continuing educational programs has to make sure that "teachers should always bring updated specialized and educational information and anticipate possible and valid solutions to new situations that modern society is developing and that will influence student and social actors behavior" (L. Gliga, 2002, p.11).

If in other professions we speak about good specialists, for the teaching profession the efficiency can not be simply reduced to the knowledge and mastery of specialized field, "preparing teachers to be capable of assuming higher roles also meaning learning pedagogical skills regarding the child and his education and practical skills required by conducting educational action"(I. Albulescu, 1999, p. 13). Psycho-pedagogical "culture" must therefore include knowledge of psychology (in particular the psychology of age), pedagogy, specialty didactics / methodology, supported by a set of skills and practical abilities leading to effective conduct of the educational approach.

Teaching and pedagogical skill supports multiple definitions in literature, as follows:

- In a broad sense, it is an educator's ability to rule on a pedagogical issue based on thorough knowledge of the laws and determinations of the educational phenomena, and in the narrow sense, it is a person's ability to perform at a certain level of performance all typical work tasks specific to the teaching profession (M. Diaconu, 2002, p. 27);
- It is the ability to be guided by the requirements of a given role in order to achieve educational goals set by a determined school system;
- Situated at the intersection of cultural and specialized scientific training of teachers, teaching competence acts as an instrument of unification, codification and expression in the form of educational behaviors, of character of those related to the status and role of teacher (Mitrofan, 1988);
- Up to a certain point the pedagogical skill is identified with pedagogical aptitude, but unlike the aptitude, the skill has a greater coverage, assuming also the results of the activity, in addition to the knowledge and ability to properly carry out what it proposes (E. Stanculescu, 2006, p. 397);
- Involves all the abilities that makes up the repertoire of teaching skills and supports the adaptation of teaching behavior to specific school situations (V. Chiş, 2005, p. 113).

Particularly in Romania, debates and studies on higher education show that important current issues include the funding mechanisms, the preparation of the graduates to join as teachers in higher education, the ethics in higher education, the quality of education and the development of private education. Romanian higher education reform focuses mainly on the implementation of objectives set by the "Bologna Declaration, on the European Higher Education Area", and the implementation of the Lisbon Convention (proposed jointly by UNESCO and the European Council in 2000), regarding the European recognition of qualifications. Within the Bologna process, the Romanian higher education has been going through a major transformation since the 2005-2006 academic year.

So far, Romania has taken important steps towards the European Higher Education Area by reorganizing the entire spectrum of university programs. All academic programs have been restructured in accordance with the Bologna process. The first cycle has been currently implemented in the 2005-2006 academic year, the previous programs of

the first cycle (long-term and short-term university studies) have been replaced gradually by Bachelor programs, so that in 2008 all have been Bachelor-type. The new structure of Romanian higher education provides full access to students from first cycle (bachelor) in the second (master) and from the second to the third.

At present, training teaching staff for a didactic career in secondary education is provided by specialized structures within universities, with specific responsibilities for initial and continuing training of teachers (**Training Departments for Teachers - DPPD**).

Initial teachers training is a strict actual matter nowadays as we are in the middle of reorganization process for universities in the country for compatibility with systems of higher education in other EU countries. This reorganization has an effective impact on the Training Departments for Teachers, the institutions empowered to prepare students for future teaching career. It is the time of initiating the curriculum change for the psycho-pedagogical module and also for the general programs curricula, credit system is introduced to classes within this module and changes are made in the distribution of disciplines over the years of study.

Initial training activities conducted by the Training Departments for Teachers are based on the Minister of Education and Research Order approving the program to obtain the certificate of graduation of the Training Departments for Teachers, no. 4316 from 3 May 2008.

In 2001, the National Council for Teacher Training initiated an approach to develop a system of standards for the teaching profession. It started with the idea that education had been for too long dominated by improvisation and empiricism, hoping that the development of these standards would ensure the right of the future teachers to have access to the best training in specialized institutions. So, standards for teaching profession were developed, in response to the question "what should a teacher know and know to do?" The teaching profession standards are based on five core principles expressing the current view on the content of the teaching profession qualities and on the qualities of a good teacher. These core principles are:

1. The teachers *have a good knowledge on the field and didactics of the discipline they teach.*
2. The teacher *knows the student and assists him/her in their development.*
3. The teacher is *an active member of the community.*

4. The teacher has *a reflective attitude*.
5. The teacher is *a promoter of a value system* consistent with the educational ideal and is responsible for controlling and monitoring student learning activities.

In this field of work, in many published studies frequent questions arise such: **What skills are needed in teaching, in order for student activities to include an ever upward curve?** We present below (see Table. No. 1) a picture of general and specific skills necessary to conduct educational activities developed by the Ministry of Education, according to the standards for teaching staff:

Table No. 1. General and specific skills – teacher

GENERAL SKILLS	SPECIFIC SKILLS
I. Applying optimal algorithms in the design, organization and evaluation of educational activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate use of knowledge: the general and the specialty didactics, psychology; • Design and evaluation of the educational content; • Adequate organization of the educational activities appropriate to the type of dominant lesson; • Optimal use of space-time factors, for efficient training process • Adopting teaching strategies that allow efficient use of resources and teaching aids in the educational process. • Mastering the modern concepts and theories of communication: horizontal / vertical, complex, total (ectosemantic) multiple, diverse and specific; • Documentation and updated information from different classical and modern sources; • Design, management and implementation of training process, as an act of communication; • Ability to diagnose family's expectations and interests. • Mastering the modern concepts and theories on the formation of "schemes of action" and knowledge capacity;
II. Implementation of teaching / pedagogical / educational communication strategy	
III. Development, consolidation and improvement of general,	

- thinking and motric skills
- Selection of optimal methods for training critical thinking and practical skills;
 - Selection of optimal methods for training technical thinking and developing the aesthetic sense;
- IV. Stimulating creativity and formative learning type
- Manifestation of an innovative psycho-pedagogical conduct on a professional / social level.
- V. Mastering the techniques of skills transfer in extracurricular and school activities
- Understanding the formation mechanism of psycho-morale features and adoption of methods and techniques of knowledge and pupils stir ups;
 - Designing and organizing educational and instructional activities in collaboration with the community;
- VI. Applying the techniques of knowledge of socio-educational problems in advising, orientation / socio-psycho-pedagogical integration of students
- Answering for the assumed social role;
 - Developing effective strategies of school-family partnership;
 - Formation of professional attitudes;
 - Knowledge of the dynamics and trends in the labor market.
 - Using methods and techniques of psycho-behavioral self-control;
 - Adopting an effective behavior to overcome "the limit situations";
 - Manifesting a (self)reflective conduct;
- VII. The acquisition of psychological mechanisms to achieve self-control and behavioral balance in all educational situations
- Training students' skills to allow them to devise an effective action plan in preparation of exams, competitions, contests, etc.
 - Opening to the changes taking place in competition, examination, contest situations;
 - Making full commitment in the different docimological roles (examiner / examined / competitor / supervisor, etc.).
- VIII. Harnessing the professional development opportunities in a transitional socio-professional environment
- Manifestation of (self) reflection conduct on own teaching/pedagogical activities ;
 - Openness to innovative trends necessary for professional development

The Ministry of Education and Research, in collaboration with the Institute of Education Sciences and National Center for Teacher Development and Training have developed an "inventory" of skills necessary for the teaching profession, structured on several levels: a) basic skills; b) specialist skills; c) psycho-pedagogical and methodological skills; d) psycho-relational skills.

In conclusion, "a good knowledge of the discipline, or a good knowledge of general pedagogy is not sufficient, an interrelationship between the two groups it is also necessary to be able to develop the knowledge of the pedagogical content as robust and systematic as it can get" (M . Bocos, 2007, p. 197). Therefore, the training of teachers aims at two complementary aspects: acquiring specialized skills (assimilation of knowledge in a particular field, orientation in this particular field) and psycho-pedagogical and methodological skills.

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