

AN ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE THAT CAN BE OPTIMIZED AND EXTENDED

The formative route and process of students and teaching staff
revealed by the master study program PERFORMER
Analysis and reflection

Rodica Mariana NICULESCU
Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania

ABSTRACT

The paper is the result of processing the questionnaires applied to students and teachers involved in the program PERFORMER in order to know some aspect of utmost importance for monitoring the project which involves this study program.

A range of issues related both to the perception of teachers and students against the main issues involved by the academic activity are scrutinized: curriculum structure, support materials available to students, teaching methodology, assessment centered on active learning in the context of a model blended type of learning, and actual practice. The analysis highlights issues resulting from a SWOT analysis of the program.

The final of the paper is focused on some important lines of action and optimization of the training activity.

KEY WORDS:

Professionalized training for early, preschool and primary education, curriculum, blended learning, SWOT analysis of a curriculum

1. A BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE INTENTIONS OF PERFORMER PROGRAM AND CURRICULAR SPECIFICITY OF THE PROGRAM

Psycho-pedagogy of early education and early schooling is a master program initiated and developed in the context of the European project: PERSPECTIVES OF A MASTER TRAINING FOR EXPERTS IN EARLY EDUCATION AND EARLY SCHOOLING at a higher quality [PERFORMER]. This project is coordinated by the University Transilvania in Braşov.

The collaboration of three Romanian universities as partners (Transilvania University of Braşov, University "1 Decembrie 1918" Alba Iulia, University "Aurel Vlaicu" Arad) with the Istituto di Scienza e della Formazione

Psicologiche della educazione Rome, Italy had as result the curricular philosophy of the PERFORMER master program. The resulting curriculum is slightly different from the original program implemented in Italy as a result of a necessary adaptation to the cultural and educational essence of Romania. [MASTER. ISPEF. 2011/2011].

Graduates' diploma can be recognized by the Italian partner institution to the extent that project requirements are met as they agreed. The master program is operating under the approval of ARACIS as Romanian authority

The program has designed the desired competence profile for future alumni, aiming to obtain it as a outcome. This profile contains three categories of competencies: cross/ transversal, general, and specific competencies.

The pedagogical approach designed for this master program is a complex built on the following milestones:

1. Respecting, essentially, the structure and innovative ideas offered by experience of ISPEF, Rome with the necessary adaptation to the requirements and specificities of Romanian education.
2. Respecting the fundamental principles of a clear curricular design:
 - 2.1. Designing the final target (the graduate's competence profile as a portrait of an effective professional performance required by the evolution of education during the next years)
 - 2.2. Shaping the strategy of action according to ISPEF's model.
 - 2.3. Selecting the content related to the set competence profile
 - 2.4. Designing of each module, respectively subjects, in such a way that ensure the synergistic effect of their implementation in order to reach the designed competence profile; choosing the pedagogical methodology within the specific types of activities able to lead towards the designed competencies.
 - 2.5. Establishing evaluation formulas (including performance standards) for each subject / module in order to ensure accuracy, reliability in process and, ultimately, a high quality of graduates' training.

As a novelty, the model involves four categories of activities with a synergetic action on the development of graduates' competencies as they are defined by the designed competence profile. Figure nr. 1 shows the relations and the specific of the four types of involved activities.

2. Analysis of formative route. Positive aspects, difficulties, and formative effects of the implementation process

The analysis of the formative route and its effects on masters' students and teaching staff was conducted in the context of the monitoring program in the third semester of its development. It was based on discussions with the

students, among partners in the teaching teams from the three partner universities, and the processing of questionnaires applied in all three centers for students and teachers.

The reference points of the analysis are focused on the perception of the program by students and teachers as a program with specificity compared to other master's programs in Romania. The analysis's milestones are the following:

- 2.1. Students' and teachers' perception about the master program as a whole.
- 2.2. Strengths and opportunities mentioned by students and teachers
- 2.3. Outlined weaknesses and constraints
- 2.4. Improvement directions as formulated by teachers and students.

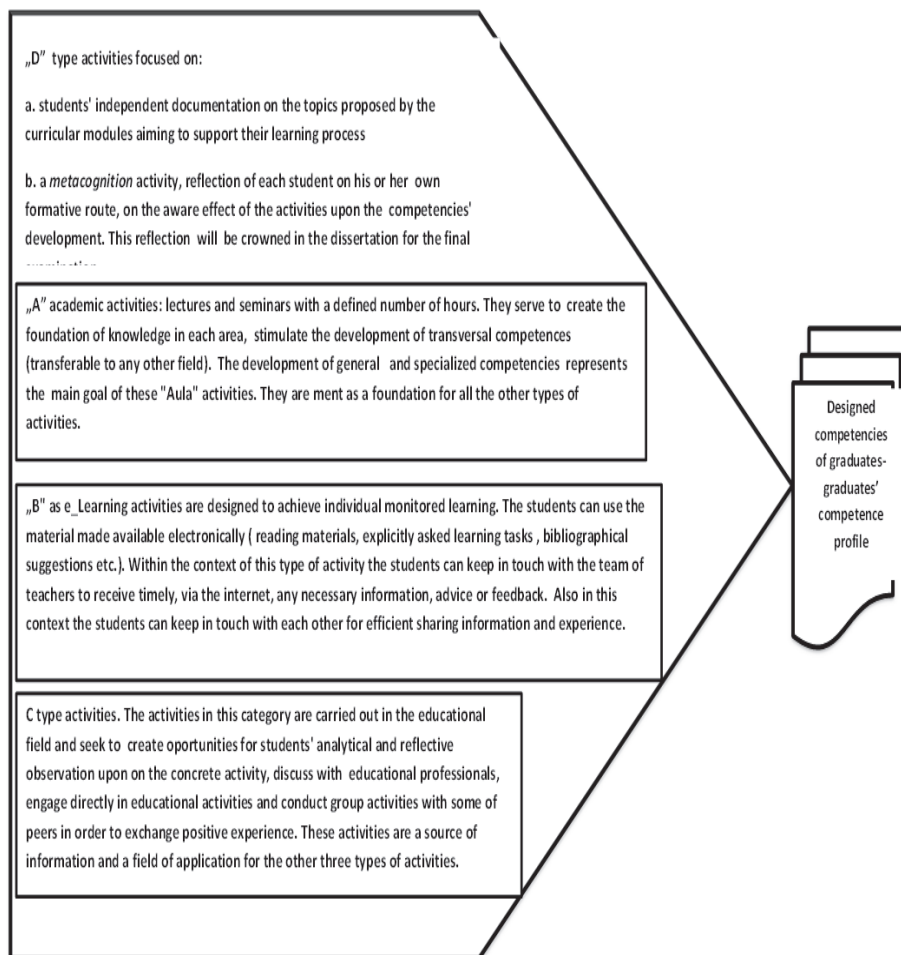


Fig. 1. The four types of activities specific for the curricular structure of the ISPEF model

2.1. Students' and teachers' perception about the master program as a whole.

The first issue investigated was the master students' perception about the importance of curriculum modules for training of their competencies as future professionals.

Regarding the hierarchical importance of the master modules, the picture is interesting. The general perception of students is almost similar in the three campuses. The first rank is different from one university to another and it is divided between *Methodology of Educational Research*, *Methodology of Instructional Process*, and *Developmental Psychology*. The second position is the same in Arad and Alba Iulia and it mentions the *Methodology of Instructional Process*, while *Methodology of Personalized Intervention* is situated on this position for Braşov students. The major difference occurs when it is about the module *Education Research Methodology* where one can find a significant difference between Alba Iulia and the other two centers (Alba Iulia : 1.3 rank , Arad: rank 11,12, Braşov: rank 11 10). Probably the perception of the person who teaches this module had a specific influence in this case. Another exception but less defined occurs in the case of the module *Methodology of Personalized Intervention* for students of Braşov when one can possibly keep the previous explanation , but where differences are less obvious (Alba Iulia : class 6.8 , class 4.6 Arad , Braşov rank 1.4¹).

What is interesting in students' evaluation refers to the perception of the two disciplines belonging to the same module. According to the philosophy of curriculum for this master program, each module has two components: a more theoretical approach and one focused on the application of the learned theory. The students consider as being more important for them the theoretical approach than the application of the theory, even if they claim the necessity of a more practical approach of the teaching activity. A possible explanation in these cases can be the existence of more difficult tasks to accomplish for these applicative approaches and that is why the perception was distorted. This observation is valid for the module *Methodology of personalized intervention in education* in Braşov, where although the theory is on the first rank, the application stands only fourth position while it asked achieving specific individual intervention program in a particular case. (Alba Iulia: rank 6, 8; Arad: rank 4,6 ; Braşov rank 1,4).

The only exception to all three universities appears in the case of the module *Education and Community* where there were differences between 2 and 4 ranks in favor of the more applied discipline.

The module explicitly focused on educational field activities has a last position within this hierarchy. But there is an explanation, as well. Each module

¹ Ranks by subjects in each module (Table 1)

involves practical activity by component C of curricular structure. This is the more important specific of the curriculum of this model. The practice module separately designed, is a necessary compromise between the ISPEF 's model and the requirements of ARACIS for a Romanian master program. That is why it can be perceived as something “added”.

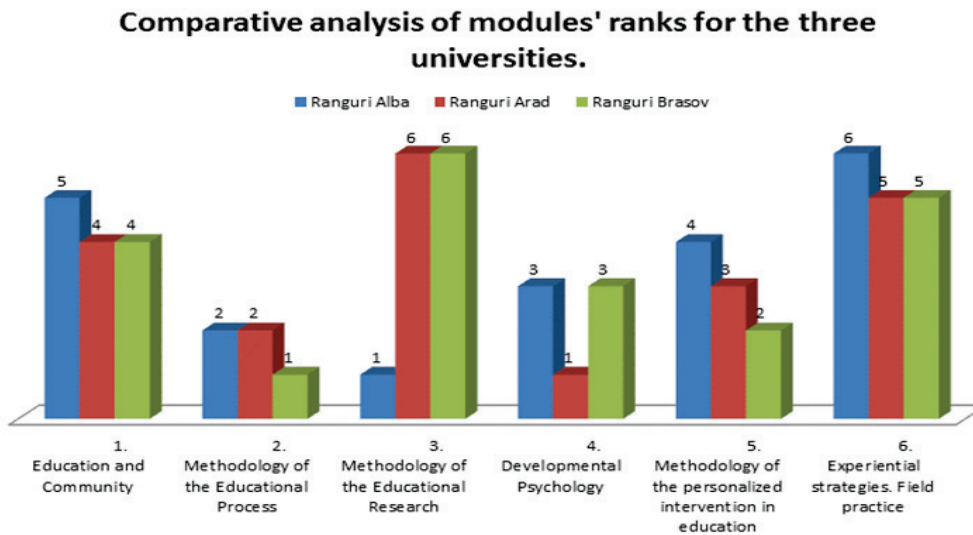


Fig. 2. Students' opinion about the importance of first year curriculum modules

Table 1. Ranks for each module and subject- first year in the three partner universities

Module	Discipline	Ranguri pe discipline		
		Alba	Arad	Braşov
1. Education and Community	1.a. Advanced study of education in the community	11	9	7
	1.b. Educational designs in relation to community and family	9	5	5
2. Methodology of the Educational Process	2.a. Teaching methodology in early education and early schooling	2	1	1
	2.b. Teaching models for early education and early schooling age	5	7	3
3. Methodology of Educational Research	3.a. Management of research projects in education	1	11	11
	3.b. Qualitative research methods in education	3	12	10
4. Developmental Psychology	4.a. Advanced studies in developmental psychology for children and early schooling students	4	2	2
	4.b. Management of psychological learning process in early childhood	6	3	6
5. Methodology of Personalized Intervention in Education	5.a. Methodology of personalized intervention in education	6	4	1
	5.b. Management of strategies for personalized intervention in education.	8	6	4
6. Field Practice	6.a. Field practice- designing the activities with children and students	10	8	8
	6.b. Field practice- evaluation and inter-evaluation within the field practice of master students.	12	10	9

For the second year, first semester presents a more balanced hierarchy; the first and second ranks are identical in the three campuses and are occupied by modules: Educational and teaching design, and, respectively, Communication inter-personal relations. The practice in the educational field remains on the last ranks in Arad and Braşov, but it has the ranks 3 to Alba Iulia.

Table 2. Students' opinion about the importance of subject studied in the third semester

Modules	Ranks per modules		
	Alba	Arad	Braşov
1. EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND TEACHING	1	1	1
2. DOCIMOLOGY and EVALUATION	5	5	3
3. COMMUNICATION AND INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONS IN EDUCATION	2	2	2
4. SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT	6	4	6
5. <i>COMPLEMENTARZ MODULES AS OPTIONALS</i> Professionalize teaching in early education / Recovery literature in early education	4	3	4
6. FIELD PRACTICE (experiential internships)	3	6	5

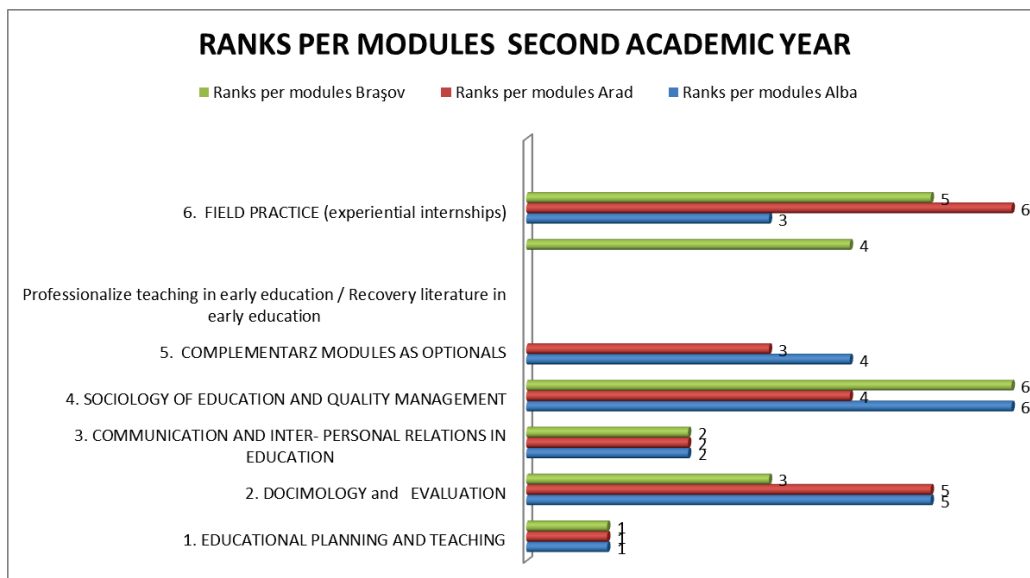


Fig. 3. Students' perception of modules importance in the third semester of the program

Teaching staff in all three centers consider that the existence of the four categories of activities, as they were described above, represents a real gain, if they are well managed along the implementation process.[Alba Iulia -100% 85% Arad, Braşov 100%.]

The existence of clear evaluation standards is well evaluated, as well. [Alba Iulia: 62.5% Arad: 71.4% Braşov:100%]. These are mainly mentioned as positive issues.

The teaching staff, although generally appreciates positively the model, they criticize bureaucracy, excessive number of documents asked as proofs, the tendency to assess pieces of competencies instead of considering the connection among competencies in action used by students in order to solve professional problem situations; essentially is criticized the focus on the shape instead of the essence. Along the three analyzed semesters a number of bureaucratic issues have been corrected, but still there are resources to optimize in this regard. Teachers also highlight the interdependence between the ISPEF model and the Romanian experience to the benefit of both parties.

2.2. Strengths and opportunities mentioned by students and teachers

The master program has been undergone a SWOT analysis from the perspective of students and teachers. The same reality is to be analyzed but the criteria and the subsequent points of view are in somewhat different (Table 3).

Table 3. Comparative analysis of program's strengths according to students and teaching staff

Aspects analyzed and evaluated in terms of students	Aspects analyzed and evaluated in terms of teaching staff	
1. Materialele puse la dispoziție de profesori	1. Materials provided by teachers as a result of collaboration between teaching teams of the three university centers	31%
	2. Materials provided by teachers without a proper cooperation between teaching teams of the three university centers	0%
2. Surse de documentare recomandate	3.Documentary sources recommended by teachers were effectively capitalized by students, and completed by additional sources	78.30%
3. Surse de documentare gasite de noi înşine	4.Documentary sources recommended by teachers were not effectively capitalized by students, and completed by additional sources	0%

Aspects analyzed and evaluated in terms of students	Aspects analyzed and evaluated in terms of teaching staff	
4. Modalitățile de predare	5. Teaching methods were appropriate to a modern education, forcing teams teaching self-improvement	71.60%
	6. Teaching methodology has been largely preserved, within traditionalism that proved as a trend more difficult to overcome, even in new contexts.	0%
5. Caracterul aplicativ al abordării disciplinelor	7. Practicality of the disciplines' approach has added a higher quality for both students and teachers	78.30%
	8. Practicality of the disciplines' approach has raised difficulties for both students and teachers	0%
6. Șansa de a aplica/ analiza în contextul practicii educaționale a tot ceea ce am învățat	9. New knowledge had the chance to be applied or/and analyzed in the context of educational practice	78.30%
	10. New knowledge had few chance to be applied or/and analyzed in the context of educational practice	0%
7. Evaluarea pe unități de învățare distincte, cu probe distincte, vizând competențe definite	11. High level of effectiveness of the assessment that focused on each learning unit and defined competencies	46.50%
	12. The assessment focused on each learning unit and defined competencies proved to be unwieldy and time consuming	6.60%
8. Relația profesor – masterand		
9. Relația dintre masteranzi (generată de sarcini de lucru în echipă)	13. The interrelationship among master program students had effective educational effects	50.10%
	14. The interrelationship among master program students has proved to be extremely difficult because of objective reasons	4.16%

Students considered as main strength the materials provided by teaching staff (average percentage 82.6%), even if only 31% of teachers considered the item as a strength. Teachers rather considered as a positive aspect the recommended documentary sources and those capitalized effectively by

students based on their own documentation (78.3%). Methodology of teaching are named as strengths both by students and teachers (73% - 71.6%).

Applied nature of the teaching approach is higher assessed by teachers than by the students (students 64 % - teachers: 78 %). It is necessary to stress confusion about the meaning of “applicative ” term that is obvious in the comments inserted in the answering files. The very structure of the master program that includes the 4 types of activities where the C activities are explicitly focused on practice is an appropriate context for this applicative feature of the program. Some of the students understand the applicative term as the approach of courses and seminars only in the form of applications, understood as grouping and regrouping of students and “doing things that involves complex learning tasks, with a defined role for developing the graduates' competencies. This should be the center of attention and not the exterior of the methodology used. This assertion is supported by the values recorded in item chance to apply / analysis of everything we have learned in the context of educational practice considered strong aspect of the program by teachers (78 %) and a less strong one by students (36 %). "Chance to apply" could be translated into the students' vision as the chance to “translate in terms of a direct transfer” those made at seminars and courses directly in practice.

The relationship between students and teachers is retrieved as explicit item only in the students' questionnaire. 72% of respondents considered it as strength, which is remarkable. Unfortunately, the relationship between students is positively valued by them in a low manner (only 29.3%), a much higher percentage considering that is one of the weaknesses of the program. (Fig. 4)

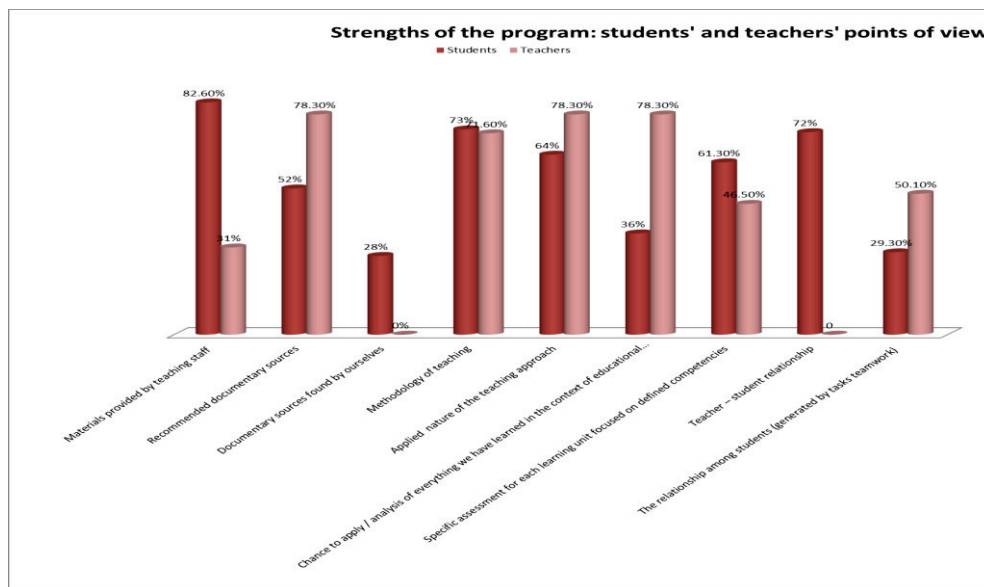


Fig. 4 Graph comparing the strengths of the master program (students' and teachers' opinion)

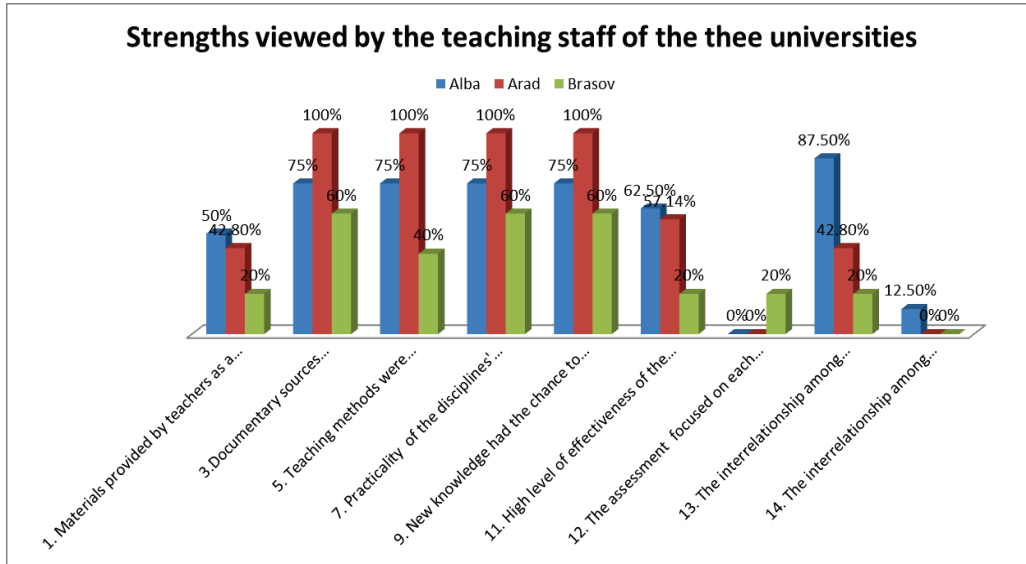


Fig. 5. Strengths seen by the three universities' teachers

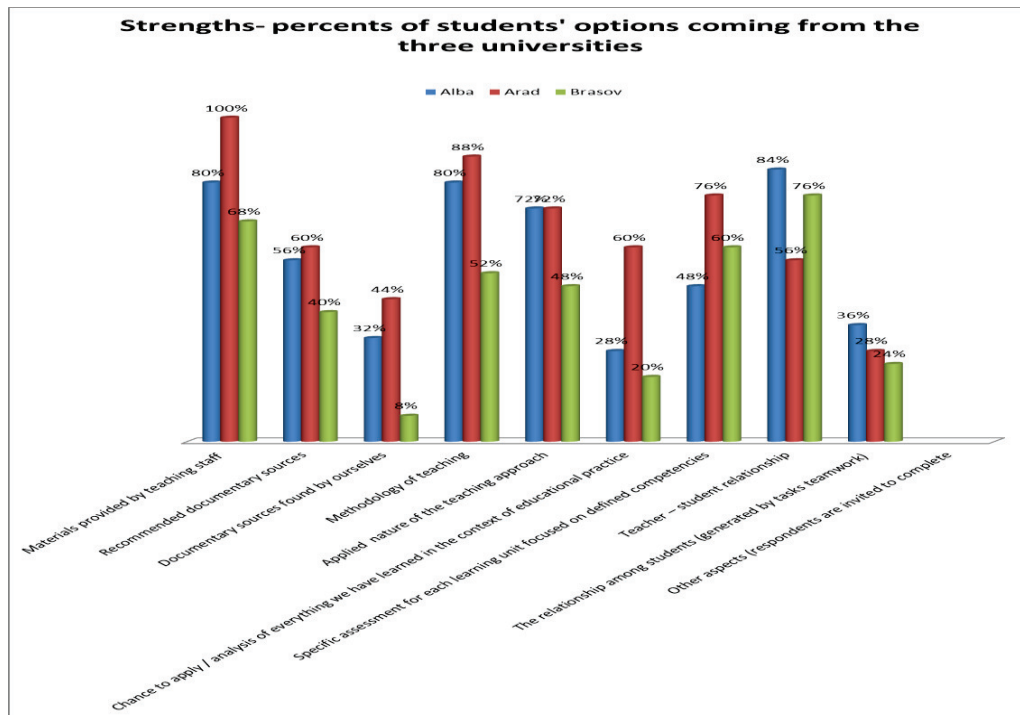


Fig. 6. Strengths seen by the three universities' students

The above charts provide details about the position about the strengths of the program coming from students belonging to the three universities,

respectively, to the teachers. Significant differences are sometimes found and the tendency of Braşov students and teachers to be more critical.

The opportunities offered by the program sometimes overlap the considered strengths. The meaning of this concept seems to be not very well understood, being decoded in different ways by students and teachers. In general students and teachers see some categories of items as opportunities; the average percentages received by these items are highlighted by the following chart. This chart should be viewed in conjunction with one of strengths .The chart notes that the recommended and found documentation sources are the main opportunity viewed by the students (73.3 %); this item has a much lower quality as opportunity in the opinion of teachers (13.3 %). Moreover, teachers generally have converted the possible opportunities into already manifested positive aspects. Therefore, in general the percentage recorded in teachers' mentioned opportunities is smaller. Then, perhaps the teachers and students decode concept of opportunity in a nuanced different way. For teachers most frequently mentioned opportunity (28.33 %) is the ways of teaching. We believe that in this case it is an explicit reference to students who have the opportunity to know, to be involved in a teaching and learning resulting from the synergy of the four types of activities. Students seem to understand less this novelty(4% only consider this item as opportunity) .

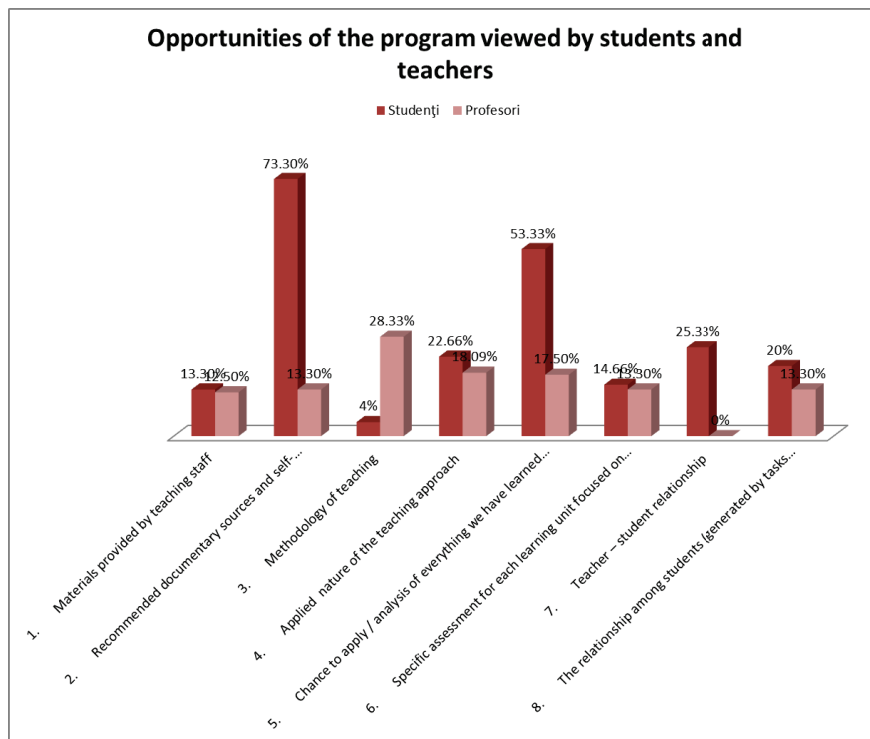


Fig. 7. Opportunities of the program viewed by students and teachers

2.3. Outlined weaknesses and constraints

At a first and superficial glance it seemed like the Arad respondents have the least perceived weaknesses and the most are in the answers of Braşov respondents; Alba Iulia students are on the median values.

An in-depth analysis, however, reveals a critical attitude cultivated by teachers from Alba Iulia and Braşov. In these two centers the students are encouraged to express their views. Once known the students' perceptions can be corrected where they are wrong and can take action to improve, where looming necessity. We believe in open communication and I had confrontations even under ARACIS visits on this topic. Students of Braşov had always their view, their criticism, even if it is not directed against certain substantive issues, they were always expressed. Assertion that students from other universities have not critical observation about their academic activity can be interpreted negatively rather than positive.

Also, is important to note that “other aspects considered as weaknesses ” appear in the highest percentage in Braşov (16 %) and Alba Iulia (8%). These relate in particular to the details of the evaluation. One aspect considered as weakness is workload for individual portfolios asked for each discipline. If in Braşov, for the first semester there were indeed numerous requirements on at least two of the modules the appearance was regulated substantially, but the perception remains. The reason of these numerous requests consists in the difficulty of teachers to understand in depth the specific of the new model. It was necessary to start and run the activity for a proper understanding. On the other hand, the students' philosophy focused on solving tasks only during the exams session is the main reason of their complaining about “too much work and short available time ”. It is important to highlight that tasks are announced at the beginning of the semester; they are not numerous but require documentation, reflection, and sometimes individual or group activity. They had a clear scheduling deadline on learning units. In these circumstances it is necessary to work with the students, which means their business management and shaping a more accurate perception of the model proposed by this master program.

The most common weakness is considered as being the relationship between students. Individualized education tradition, students' multiple statuses and their difficulties to properly play the connected roles, the distance between them as belonging to different communities, caused difficulties for solving the group tasks. On the other hand, how to work in groups is a fundamental requirement of the present and future, it requires explicit focus on students'.

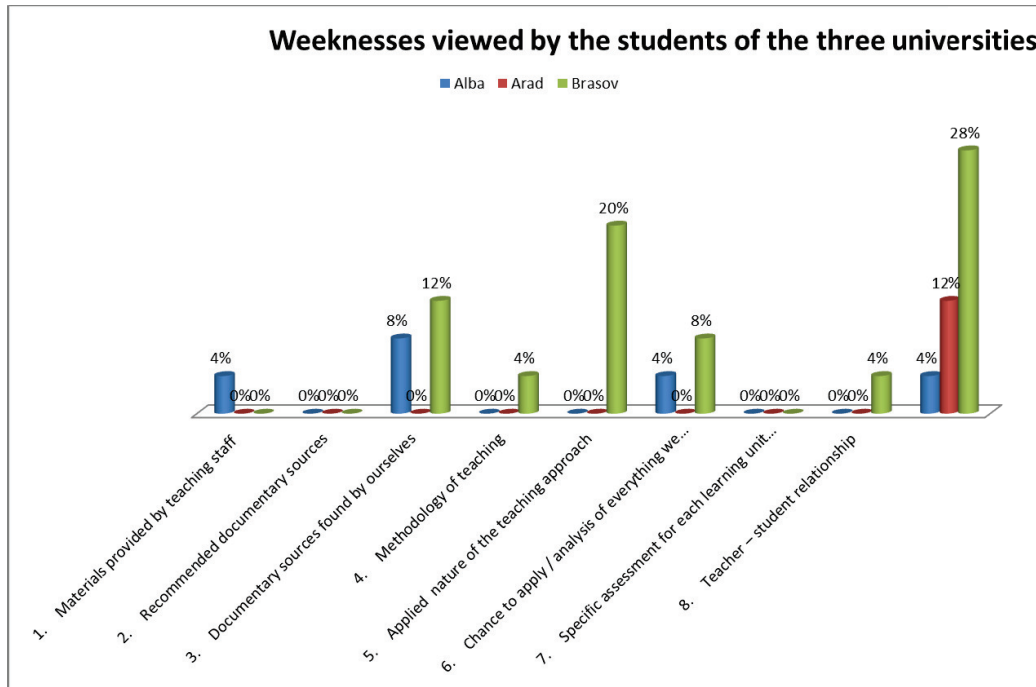


Fig. 8 Weaknesses of the program viewed by students

In respect of teaching staff category it is difficult to understand how failed to specify some weaknesses as long as, the discussions conducted during project monitoring process have revealed enough weaknesses. Several issues had been highlighted.

The first is a clear rejection of burdensome bureaucratic elements that still are a burden for the essential work. The large number of requested “proofs” for everything is happening in the process of teaching and learning - evaluation is considered as the main weakness in a significant number of comments made by teachers. There is even a comment (Alba Iulia) which highlights an interesting idea that *the more dense and demanding is this system of "proving" is easier to "cheat"*. We agree that excessive concern for production of proofs is time-consuming and has detrimental effects on the quality of education itself.

These negative aspects have been revealed rather in the context of free responses (open questions).

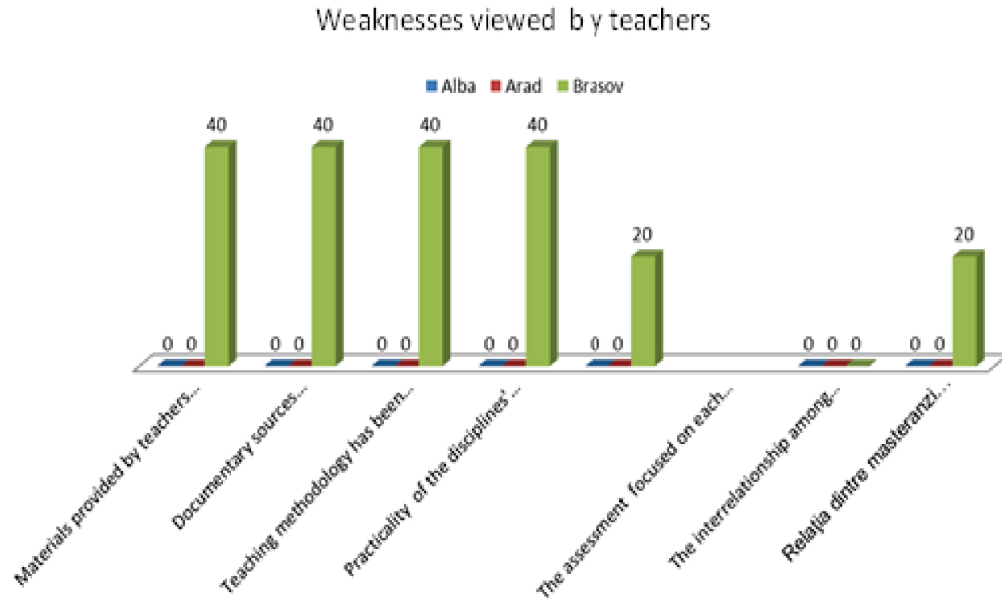


Fig. 9. Weaknesses viewed by teachers of the three universities

Constraints are interpreted very differently by the participants in the SWOT analysis. This case reflects the sliding from mentioned constraints of the program for the students and teaching staff, towards the environmental constraints against the program itself.

It is hard to understand why a 4% of students in each center consider materials provided by teachers as element of coercion. Even if the item is checked in this category, it is not elected to be argued. Thus, no arguments for this opinion can be found. From the discussions with students results that a certain degree of difficulty of some of the contents, the quality or lack of materials provided by teachers can appear as constraining factors for students involved in the learning program.

Documentary sources recommended constitute the greater constraint for students in Arad (20%), Alba Iulia (16%) and a lower percentage in Braşov (12%). The sources independently consulted by students are higher constraints in Arad (28%) and Alba Iulia (20%) but they seem to not exist in Braşov (0%). The arguments generally are focused on the difficult access to the Internet and libraries, always combined with lack of time. This item of documentary sources has the higher percentage in Arad (28%). For Alba Iulia students the distinct evaluation for each learning unit (32%) seems to be the most obvious constraint. For Braşov students (32%) work and team tasks that generate the need for effective relationships between students is the highest constrain. The

heterogeneous structure of Braşov group, the members' background, occupation and the personality seem to be the fundamental cause of this percentage.

Teachers relate very differently to the constraints. Teaching staff from Arad does not take into consideration any constraint. Three items are highlighted as constraints by respondents from Alba Iulia. The assessment is considered cumbersome as long as the topics assess fragmented competencies developed through each type of activity (32%). Other 12.5 % must be added. It refers at evaluation as well, but this time the constraints come not from the focus on the learning units but from an extremely bushy documentation of the assessment. A third item with the same percentage of 12.5 % occurs in Alba Iulia and it refers to the documentary sources with an explanation that reinforces the students' opinions (difficult access to sources). The teaching staff of Braşov reveals several types of constraints that revolve around the same possible causes: heterogeneity of the group of students (initial training, profession and personality). This heterogeneity makes the materials provided by teachers, the recommended documentary sources, and ensuring the applicability of students' new competencies beyond the auditorium, to act as areas of difficulty in understanding and using the new knowledge. Hence, a high percentage of 32 % is connected to relationship among the students seen as a constraint. Braşov teaching staff also considers as a constraint the bureaucratic element of the assessment and the evaluation with too detailed requirements for skills. The discussions show another major constraint to the program. It derives from early education status in Romania which, while benefiting from the legal frame, the implementation is likely to arrive very late sometime in the future. This is considered as a constraint with negative influences on the students' learning motivation.

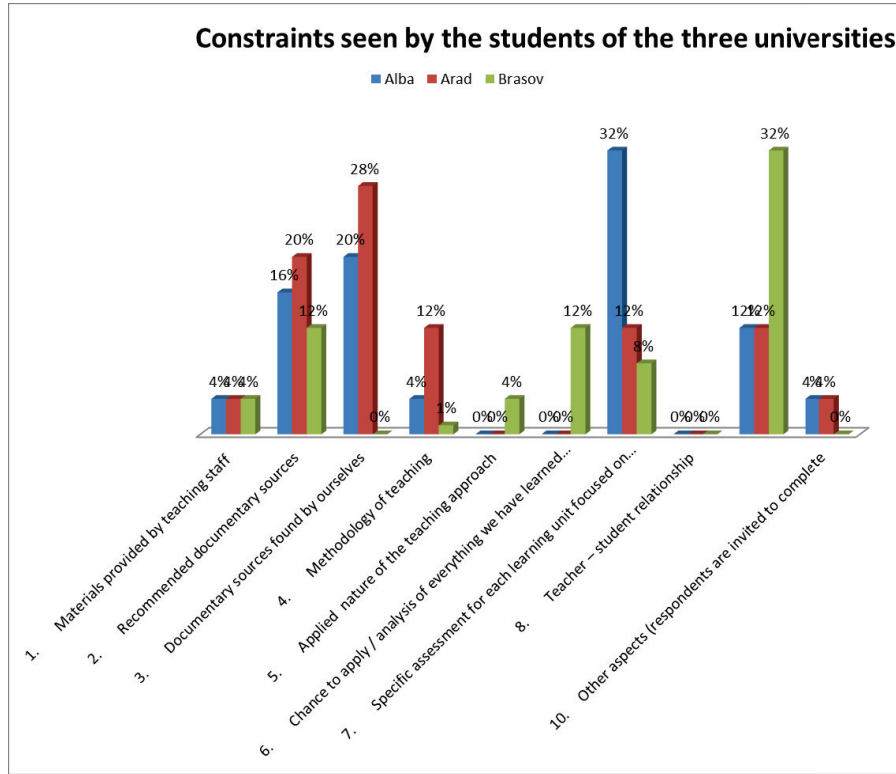


Fig. 10. Constraints of the program viewed by students

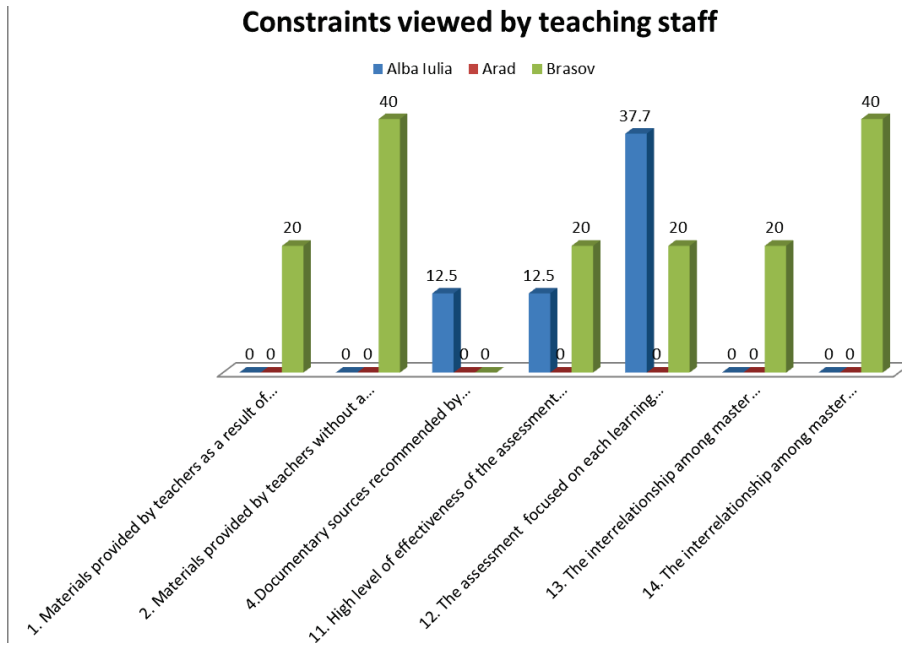


Fig. 11. Constraints viewed by teaching staff

2.4. Improvement directions as formulated by teachers and students.

Improvement directions suggested by students and, respectively, by teachers follow the same logic of different nuances coming from analyzing the same reality from different perspectives.

In terms of improving contents, the trends of the students are relatively similar. Firstly they require contents having a more obvious relation to their future profession (Alba Iulia: 44%, Arad: 52%, and Braşov 68%). A better structure of the contents is placed on a second place (Alba Iulia: 28%, Arad: 40%, and Braşov 36%). Some clarifications are required. Students do not seem to really understand that the training of the capacities specific for their future profession is part of the contents of the training program.

They are still tributary to the concept that content is synonymous with the information submitted. Unfortunately, some of the comments made by teachers seem to be quite close to the same vision. Teachers think that should be reviewed and optimized the project contents, but large differences appears in their opinion. If at Arad 85% of teachers' requests for improvement seem to be mostly related to the enrichment of information, discussions and project meetings in Braşov highlight the need to rethink some modules and their subjects aiming to avoid any duplication of contents, and to ensure the full contribution of contents to achieving graduates' competences profile.

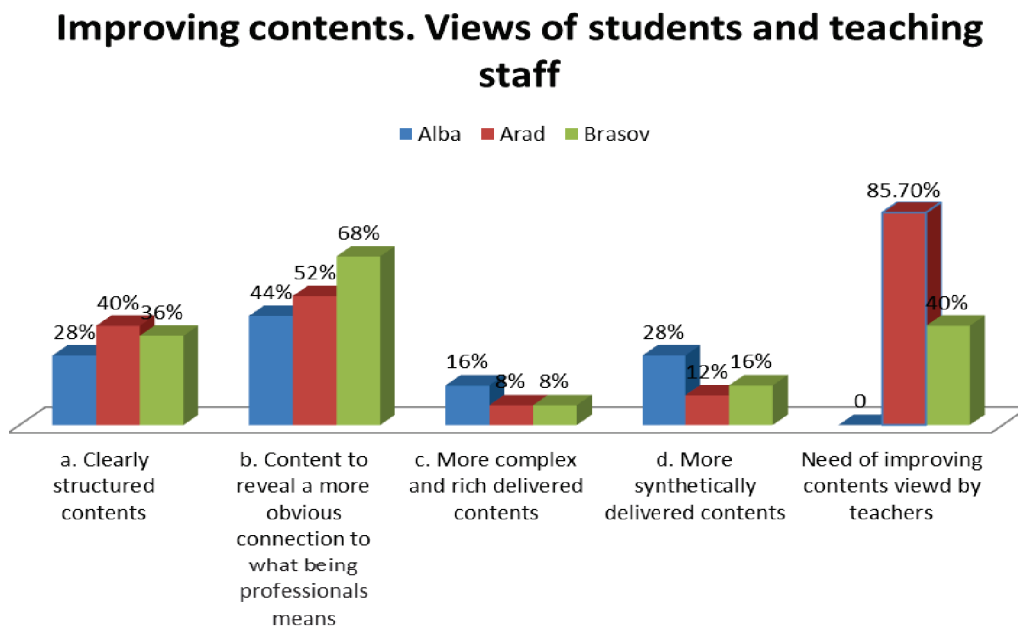


Fig. 12. Improving contents in the view of students and teacher

Improving teaching methodology is claimed by many students, especially its components as anchor in practice. A comment seems to be necessary; it refers to the students’ optics against this “anchoring “. Some of the students are practitioners in the field of education. Often appears as obvious their tendency to think restrictive by reference only to the narrow field of their own experience or asking something utilitarian. They often require practical solutions to their problems, and if the tasks solved in auditorium do not lend it to finding solutions, the students are dissatisfied. Also, the issues discussed in the course or seminar ask sometime to be detected and analyzed within the context of practice; students often do not answer to these tasks on a high quality parameters. In these conditions a discussion professors-students aiming to clarify the vision about anchoring the teaching in practice seems to be absolutely necessary.

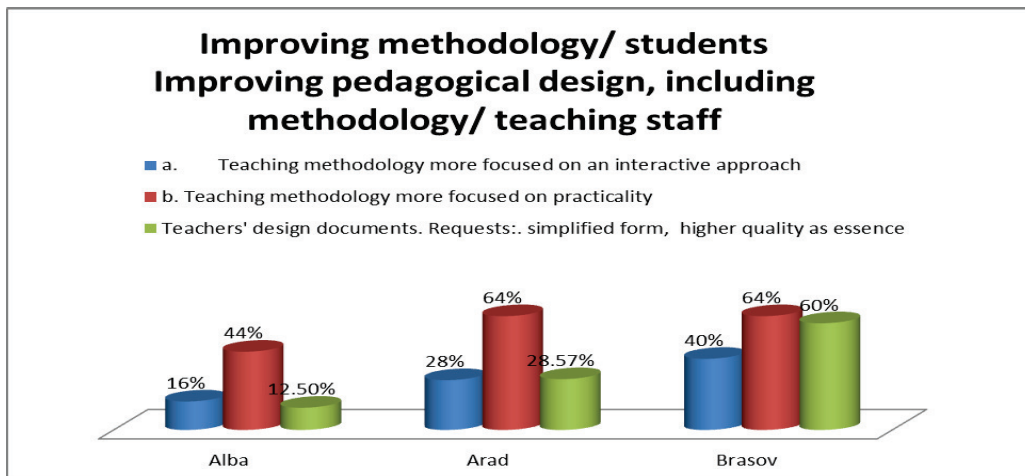


Fig. 13. Improving methodology in the view of students and the pedagogical design in teacher’ vision

Teaching staff require the improvement of the design documents focused on waiving sophisticated and bushy forms and increasing concern for the essence, especially on the component of methodology design (Alba Iulia 12.5%, Arad 28.5%, and Braşov 60%).

Evaluation is one of the issues with specific shades in *Performer* project. It is requested separately for each learning unit. The assessment is designed to be related to the competencies to be developed by each learning unit. The details of the assessment are designed from the very beginning and all the implementation steps have to be specified. Both teachers and students have complains and requests for improvement when it is about evaluation. They are mostly related to external aspects not necessarily to its substance. The existence of standards well defined, keeping the principle known in our small

classes of performance descriptors is a recognized plus. But the initially requested fragmentation of the assessment focused on components and subcomponents of competencies is considered as artificial and ineffective. Teachers were concerned with finding the most appropriate forms of assessment that is truly focused on competencies, but considered in their complexity and unity. These issues are most acute requested by teachers in Braşov but they appear in the other universities. A lower number of tasks for evaluation are a requirement for students. But it is obvious that explanation of the different philosophy of learning, working and assessment involved in this project must be done and accepted by all the present and future students. Students' requirements for a better link of the assessment of what is done in the auditorium seem to be correct, but when it involves a request to solve the assessment tasks in Aula context it is no longer justified.

Generally speaking, it is certainly necessary to re-discuss with the current generation and from the very beginning with the next ones, about the specific philosophy of this project.

Figure 14 shows the issues mentioned above; the first four items are bound to students and the last two items are connected to teachers' views.

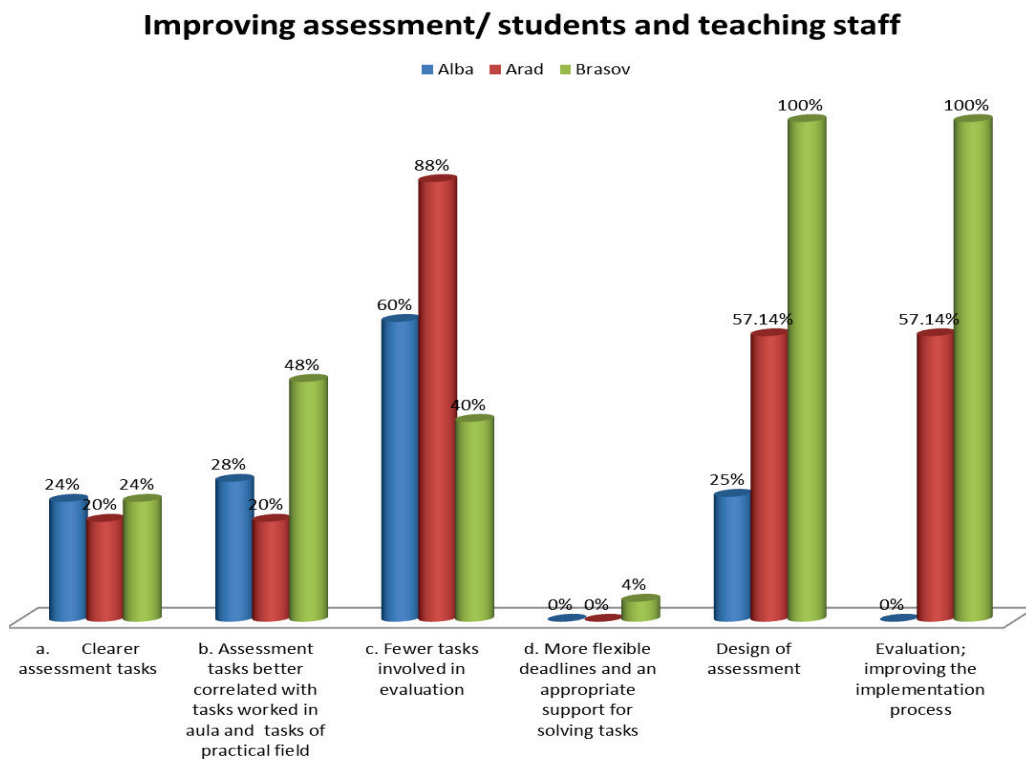


Fig. 14. Improvement of assessment in students' and teachers' vision

Students have some other specific requests. They refer to the necessity of a higher level of empathy but mostly understood as leniency which is not good for the educational context (Alba Iulia: 24%, Arad: 64%, Braşov: 40%). No one of the students ask for a more demanding attitude but they want a higher level of transparency especially in Alba and Arad (12% and 16%, but in Braşov as well (8%). It is important to highlight that the assessment process is a transparent one within this project and discussions about what the students understand through more transparency are also necessary.

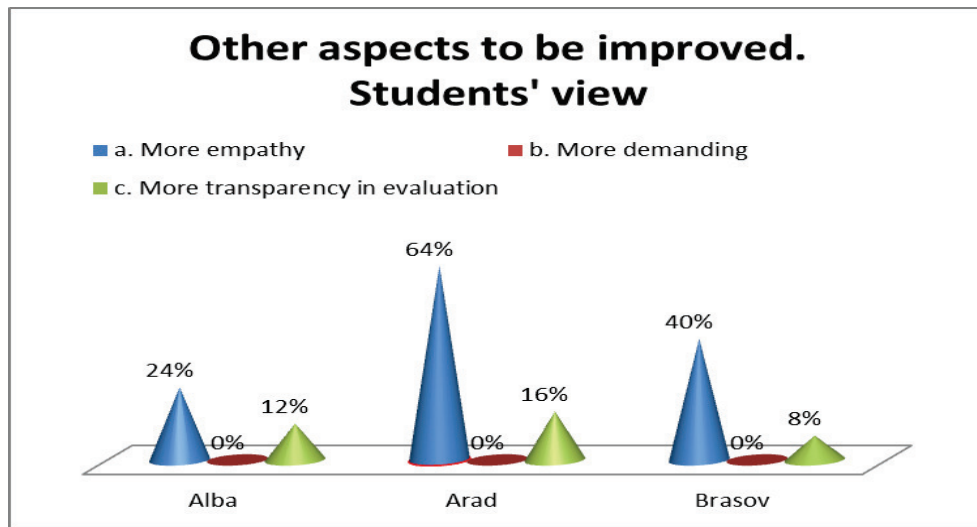


Fig. 15. Other aspects to be improved. Students' view

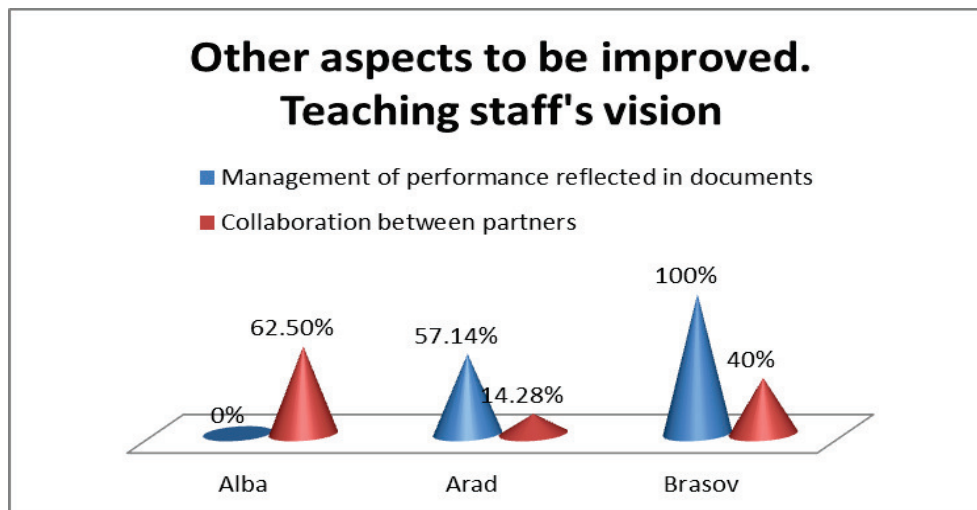


Fig. 16. Teaching staff's vision about other aspects to be improved

3. Conclusions and future directions of a more effective action

The analysis above is only a stage of the monitoring process of PERFORMER project and aims to figure out the core issues to be improved, the necessary changes to be done. All these are meant to keep the track of this innovative approach of training professionals for early and education and schooling through a master program. The most important aspects that come out as successful approaches can be extended through adaptation to other master programs.

The existence of these four types of activities synergistically leading towards the development of high quality competencies of graduates can be considered in other academic context and implemented with very good results. An in depth analysis of the effects of these activities shows some interesting issues:

1. The effective focus on students' developing competences through an active and interactive involvement of students in their own developmental process become easier and much more efficient in the context of a good management of these four types of activities.
2. A clear design of competences for each learning unit and the assessment process authentically focused on these competencies is the strength of the model. This statement is true if the general design of graduates' competence profile is genuinely connected to all these competencies considered for each module, and for each subject. The consistency of competences development process leading towards the final expected competences profile of the graduates has to be a frame for all the master programs. (Fig. 17)

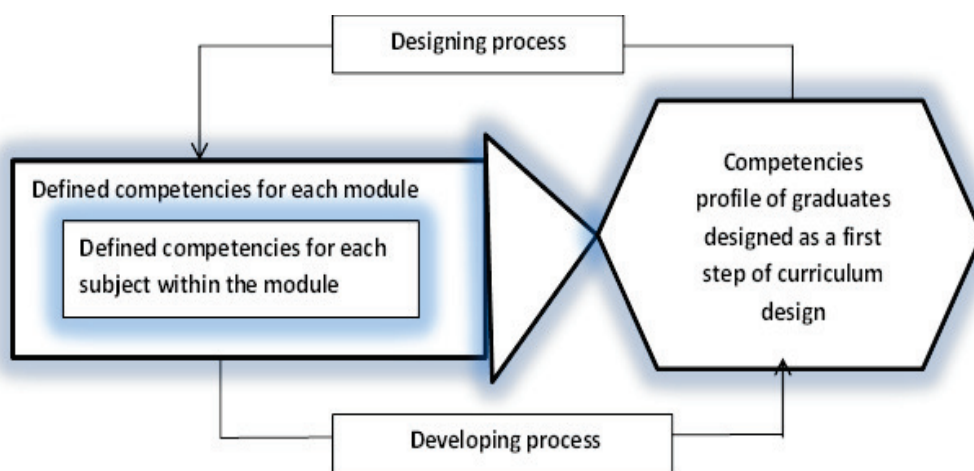


Fig. 17. Consistency and coherence in the design and development of graduates' competencies

The contents and the methodology of teaching - learning- assessment process should be selected from the perspective of the genuine development of the designed competencies. (Fig. 18)

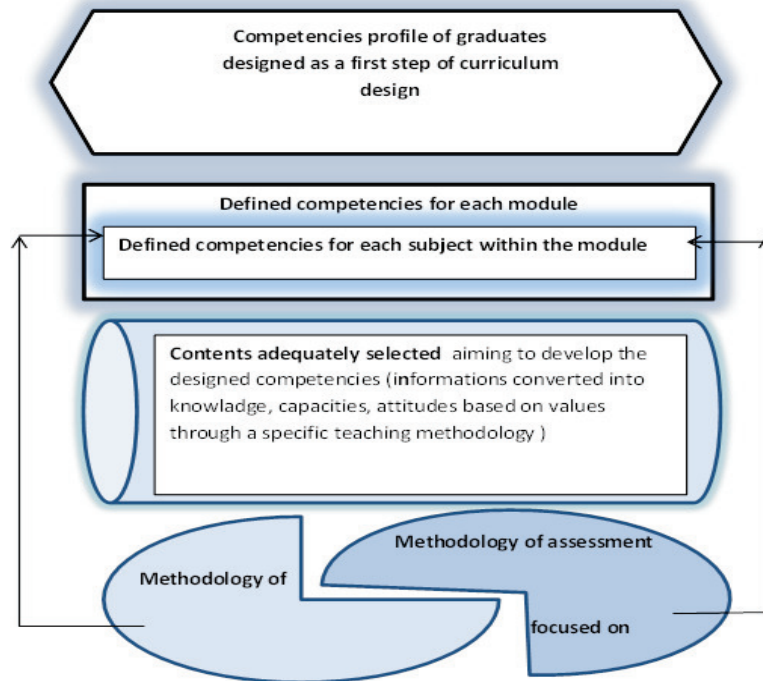


Fig. 18. Selected contents, methodology of teaching –learning – assessment process, and their connection to the graduates' competencies profile

3. An aware balance must be taking into consideration in the assessment process in order to avoid the artificial and ineffective fragmentation in assessing competencies.
4. The adapted ISPEF model to the condition of Romanian legal and concrete educational context is an example that good practice can be successfully shared.
This model is an interesting example of a type of blended way for the educational process, a complex and effective blended manner of working. It is a specific, complex, and effective design and implementation of this blended manner in the academic context.²

² Adapted after Knewton: <http://www.knewton.com/blended-learning/>

The figure below presents the positioning of the four types of activities of ISPEF model inside of a graphic representation of blended learning focused on the combination between the manner of delivering contents and learning tasks and geographical location of learners against their teachers.

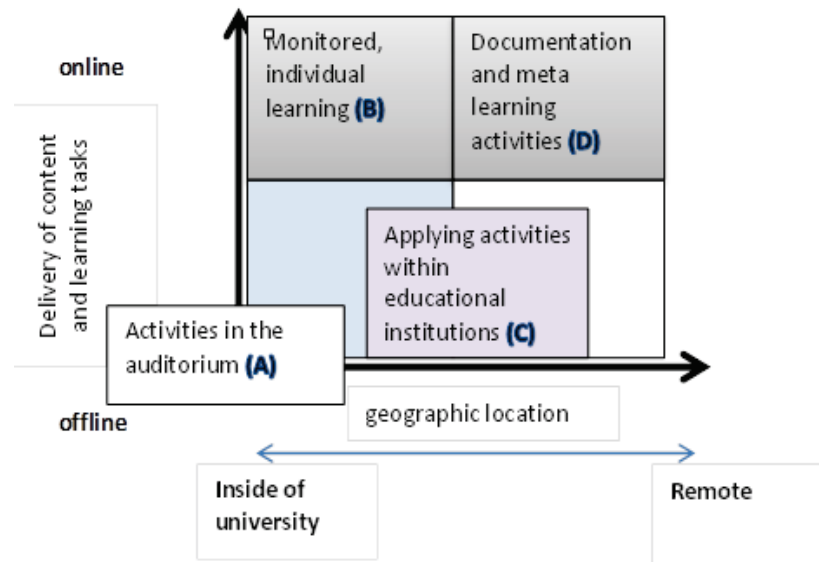


Fig. 19 Positioning the four categories of activity in the context of one of the graphical expressions for blended learning

It is obvious that the activities in auditorium are the starting point of the teaching- learning process. The students are put in the situation to learn independently but under the monitoring of their teachers (activities B), based on what the teaching staff delivers online for study and solve as learning problems. They receive suggestions, help if necessary and effective feedback. Students are invited to find out issues to be analyzed and theoretically approached, and to apply theoretical aspects in their practical activities (C). These do not take place in university but in institutions for early education and schooling. Here the independence of students against their teachers is higher and the possibility to interact with professionals in the field is important. The students is asked to develop his/her own documentation on different topics of curriculum and, more than this eventually to reflect and to assess the own route of the learning process (D activities, remote by the university but with deep roots in the entire student's learning activity).

No effort is too great, no attempt is useless when educators really want performance and quality in the learners' training. Our experience is an invitation for others to join it.

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