The importance of teacher training from a metacompetential course proposal based on cultural and artistic competence: case study at the University of Barcelona

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION. In an outstandingly visual and hyperconnected society, cultural and artistic competence training for soon-to-be teachers should be coherent with the social transformations taking place in the environment conditioning them. To implement the training properly, we believe it is necessary to assess whether or not current study programmes for soon-to-be teachers meet this challenge and connect with the professional world they will encounter.

METHOD. With the aim of analysing, comparing and reflecting on the way in which cultural and artistic competence is addressed in the teaching plans for double degrees in teaching, an analytical, exploratory and descriptive study was designed; to achieve this, documentary research on teaching plans was carried out, together with focus groups and questionnaires.

RESULTS. The results show how the subjects designed to develop this competence are insufficient in the opinion of all members.

DISCUSSION. We identified a need to agree on terms to facilitate an understanding of the cultural and artistic competence in the education process, since it is not explicitly included in course proposals, which makes it difficult to raise awareness about its importance.

Keywords
artistic education, teaching competence, cultural awareness and expression competence, cultural and artistic competence, competence assessment.

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Títol (català)

La importància de la formació docent des d'un pla metacompetencial basat en la competència cultural i artística: estudi de cas a la Universitat de Barcelona

Resum

INTRODUCCIÓ. En una societat eminentment visual i hiperconnectada, la formació competencial artística i cultural dels futurs mestres hauria de ser coherent amb la transformació social de l'entorn que els condiciona. Per a una correcta implementació formativa, creiem necessari avaluar si els actuals estudis de mestre tenen en compte aquest repte i sintonitzen amb el món professional que hauran d'encarar.

MÈTODE. Amb l'objectiu d'analitzar i comparar el tractament de la competència cultural i artística en els plans docents de la doble titulació del grau de mestre, i reflexionar-hi, es va dissenyar un estudi analiticoexploratori de caràcter descriptiu, dins el qual es va dur a terme una recerca documental dels plans docents, amb grups focals i qüestionaris.

RESULTATS. Els resultats indiquen que la presència d'assignatures on es desenvolupa aquesta competència és percebuda com a insuficient per part de tots els actors.

DISCUSSIÓ. Detectem la necessitat de consensuar uns termes que en facilitin la comprensió dins el procés educatiu, ja que no està explícitament recollida en els plans docents i això dificulta prendre consciència de la importància que té.

Paraules clau

educació artística, competència docent, competència en consciència i expressió cultural, competència cultural i artística, avaluació competencial

Título (castellano)

La importancia de la formación docente desde un plan metacompentencial basado en la competencia cultural y artística: estudio de caso en la Universitat de Barcelona

Resumen

INTRODUCCIÓN. En una sociedad eminentemente visual e hiperconectada, la formación competencial artística y cultural de los futuros maestros debería ser coherente con la transformación social del entorno que los condiciona. Para una correcta implementación formativa, creemos necesario evaluar si los actuales estudios de maestro atienden a este reto y sintonizan con el mundo profesional al que deberán enfrentarse.

MÉTODO. Con el objetivo de analizar, comparar y reflexionar sobre el tratamiento de la competencia cultural y artística en los planes docentes de la doble titulación del grado de maestro, se diseñó un estudio analítico-exploratorio de carácter descriptivo, llevando a cabo una investigación documental de los planes docentes, junto con grupos focales y cuestionarios.

RESULTADOS. Identificamos que la presencia de asignaturas donde se desarrolla esta competencia es percibida como insuficiente por parte de todos los actores.

DISCUSIÓN. Detectamos la necesidad de consensuar términos que faciliten su comprensión en el proceso educativo, ya que no aparece explícitamente recogida en los planes docentes, dificultando una concienciación en torno a su importancia.

Palabras clave

educación artística, competencia docente, competencia en conciencia y expresión cultural, competencia cultural y artística, evaluación competencial

1. Introduction

In an educational context that prioritises a more useful and practical view of knowledge and in a prominently visual society where images have acquired undeniable relevance (Triacca, 2021), competence building has been presented as an increasingly important value in recent decades (Schultes et al., 2021). The practicality of our day-to-day lives leads us to use cultural and artistic practices in a virtually spontaneous manner, without any deep reflection, and they govern our desires and interests (Bordón, 2021). The current communicative and expressive value of visual language in our society requires a full awareness so that its maximum teaching potential is developed in an effective manner (Sless, 2019); thus, to change these unconscious social dynamics, we believe it is necessary to carry out a critical review of teacher training in our universities.

Teacher training should respond to real needs and highlight the importance of cultural and artistic competence, thereby enabling direct openness towards innovation, creativity and social transformation. Thus, we sought to find out whether the competences in the curricula of the bachelor's degrees in Childhood Education and Primary Education, as well as the double bachelor's degree in Childhood Education and Primary Education (hereinafter, double bachelor's degree in education) taught by the Faculty of Education at the Universitat de Barcelona (hereinafter, UB) connect with these needs and with the reality of the professional world they will encounter as teachers.

Teachers must possess the same key competences that are defined as learning objectives for students, but it is also essential that they develop interpersonal, social and leadership skills, as well as a high capacity for adaptation and critical and creative thinking. It is therefore necessary to approach teacher training from a meta-competence perspective, which makes it possible to effectively incorporate the complicated set of knowledge that must be interrelated: disciplinary content and teaching (Torres & Castell, 2019). Meta-competences are made up of knowledge and skills from different competences, linked to the discipline and with the specific skills of that profession; they incorporate skills developed in professional practice, everything learned from the resolution of certain problems and work dynamics (Karashash et al., 2022).

For Reguant (2013), meta-competences are competences that enable individuals to continuously adapt and that facilitate constant learning from both a cognitive point of view, because they allow one to assimilate and reorganise thoughts, and an emotional point of view, since they trigger motivation to learn.

The education system seems to insist on maintaining the idea of the generalist teacher, which is why an interdisciplinary approach that includes education by competences is needed (Skilbeck, 2001). Both the prevailing educational model and teacher training continue to opt mainly for unifying training, closely linked to knowledge of watertight disciplines that neither interrelate nor feed back into each other. This hampers the implementation of competence-based education in schools and the implementation of effective competence-based learning during the university training period. Teacher training should enable future teachers to acquire in-depth disciplinary knowledge, but it should also train them in other areas, since there is a need, as pointed out by Jones (2005), to develop meta-competences to achieve integrated knowledge.

Across Europe, teacher training focuses on the importance of information and communication technologies (ICT) and languages, but basic aspects such as the development of interpersonal and social skills are less common, and artistic expression is largely absent (Gordon et al., 2009). The low number of credits offered by arts education subjects in the initial teacher training degree as a whole, which "does not ensure the development and acquisition of competence in students" (Giráldez, 2009, p.52), has also been pointed out. However, although the ultimate aim is to produce not artists, but sensitive people capable of valuing, enjoying and expressing themselves through

different languages (Torres & Castell, 2019), we believe that the cultural and artistic competence is fundamental in training for future teachers.

2. Competence-based education: a new teaching paradigm in teacher training

Competence-based education has transformed the education system in all its stages. This learning proposal results from a new approach, which expands the purpose of education from purely professional to a lifelong process (Delors, 1996). Thus, competences "involve the ability to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilising psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context" (Rychen & Salganik, 2003, p.3).

This new education paradigm began to take shape in the last decade of the 20th century at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand. However, it was not until almost a decade later, after the publication of a report by Jacques Delors (1996), promoted by the European Union and UNESCO, when the basic principles of what came to be known as "basic competences" were formulated. Later, with the launch of the Definition and Selection of Competencies project (DeSeCo), promoted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the key competences were finally defined.

The present-day reformulation of the practices of educational processes in accordance with the foundations of active pedagogies takes us closer to a transdisciplinary approach, which goes beyond mere knowledge of subjects to foster complex thinking that enables students to learn concepts, procedures and skills via applied knowledge (Torres, 2018).

In this context, arts education can be favoured since, in addition to boosting creativity (Boni & Lozano, 2006; Gouthro, 2018; Nozimovich et al., 2020), it is also connected in some way to many of the active methodologies currently promoted, thus fostering significant learning beyond the mere comprehension and integration of knowledge, while also taking into consideration the knowledge students have acquired in the cultural, experiential and educational environment (Hanchett, 2019).

We cannot ignore the fact that, in a world overflowing with information and conditioned by an obsessive optimisation of time—which inevitably leads to a certain superficiality—culture is more necessary than ever to foster critical and thoughtful citizens who can assess, enjoy and express themselves by means of different languages (Andrus, 2001). If we understand that arts have a direct effect on the building of positive personal perceptions and identities (Bamford, 2006), which represents a key element in the achievement of educational goals and continuous learning, including the study of cultural awareness and expression competence in course proposals seems particularly relevant to foster change.

Keeling (2006) highlights how the European Higher Education Area, developed as a result of the changes carried out as part of the Bologna Process, is presented in relation to the teaching and learning process of each of the subjects in the university degree by means of a document called a "course proposal". Beyond the content the teacher must address during the academic year, i.e. the syllabus, the course proposal addresses matters related to the objectives, the methodology or the assessment; in addition, it defines the context in which the learning process takes place (Valarezo-Serrano et al., 2018) and the minimum standards that are considered indispensable (Parcerisa, 2008). As regards competences, it presents the planned radius of action for teaching; that is, what students are guaranteed to integrate during their education. Even though this does not imply an actual

achievement and the final effect of the teaching practice is reduced to the competences observed, it does define a shared intention between teacher and student, thus forming the first step towards achievement of the objectives set and enabling a two-way dialogue between the teachers' expectations and the students.

3. Cultural awareness and expression or cultural and artistic competence

The principles of lifelong learning expressed by the European Union and the OECD broadened the traditional objective of arts education in primary and secondary stages. The report prepared by Robinson (1999), *Culture, creativity and the young: developing public policy*, established the key points that would give rise to the definition of the eighth key competence: cultural awareness and expression (Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council, 2006). This aimed to foster knowledge and appreciation of local, national and European heritage, as well as its place in the world, and to develop the ability to interpret and express oneself through artistic languages (Pérez et al., 2021). Furthermore, Sicherl-Kafol and Denac (2011) indicate that it also fosters aspects such as critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem solving, risk assessment, decision-making and constructive management of feelings.

After its initial inclusion in educational programmes, arts education has been sliding backwards in the curricula of many member countries, with the time devoted to these activities gradually decreasing (Craith, 2010). Nevertheless, some initiatives have been carried out in different countries such as the Espacio C project in Spain (París-Romia, 2019), Cultural Partnerships in the UK (Côté, 2009), the Cultural Rucksack in Norway (Erstad & Gilje, 2013) and a profound curricular reform of arts education in primary schools in Slovenia, based on cultural awareness and expression (Bračun & Kemperl, 2012). Outside the EU, the US Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2009) included the arts among the core subjects for the 21st century.

As a result of the LOE (Organic Law 2/2006 of 3 May on Education), this competence is called cultural and artistic competence in Spain, although the subsequent LOMCE (Organic Law 8/2013 of 9 December for the improvement of educational quality) recovered the term cultural awareness and expression. The autonomous regime in Spain has transferred powers over education to the different Autonomous Communities, which are responsible for designing their own curricula on the basis of the national organic law. Each one has adopted one of the two terms, although there is still no consensus. Given that the term chosen for the Catalan education curriculum (Generalitat de Catalunya: Departament d'Ensenyament, 2017) is cultural and artistic competence, and our study focuses primarily on this geographical area, we have chosen to use this term to refer to this competence.

The cultural and artistic competence is not limited exclusively to the arts, but includes other cultural expressions and concerns the development of an active attitude that also focuses on knowledge and participation as a spectator, as well as the development of a critical and interpretative judgement of cultural events (Castell & Torres, 2018).

The Cultural Affairs Committee of the European Council (2019) insists that the development of artistic and creative skills and the nurturing of talent lie at the heart of the cultural and creative sectors. It has set out five priorities:

- To promote access to culture and participation in culture for children and young people.

- To strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation, with an emphasis on synergies between culture and education.

- To encourage youth entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative sectors.

- To encourage the emergence of new talents.

- To promote e-skills and media literacy.

To this end, once it has been integrated into the primary and secondary education curricula, it is essential to influence the knowledge and acquisition of the cultural awareness and expression competence.

The cultural awareness and expression competence addresses different dimensions that, according to Darts (2006), are as follows: the cultural dimension as a stimulus/inlet through perception, experimentation and discovery of the environment; and the artistic dimension, understood as ideation and production of creative processes. The conjunction of these two dimensions enables *complex thinking*, which enables one to act in a specific manner and to be able to apply either, depending on the situation (Ten Dam & Volman, 2007). This process reveals the fact that the future teacher should be able to design scenarios and strategies to facilitate the acquisition of learning by means of active methodologies through which students must face situations that are similar to real life (Smeby, 2007), thus allowing them to implement all knowledge acquired (Schomburg, 2007).

4. Method

To improve the way in which the cultural awareness and expression competence is approached and addressed in the course proposals of the double bachelor's degree in Education taught by the UB Faculty of Education, we pursued the following specific objectives:

Objective 1. To analyse the cultural and artistic competence within the course proposals of the arts education subjects in the double bachelor's degrees in Education offered by Catalan universities and by a sample of other leading Spanish universities.

Objective 2. To carry out a comparison of the course proposals analysed to identify how the cultural and artistic competence is addressed and to determine the extent to which it is present.

Objective 3. To consider the approach to the cultural and artistic competence and the needs of artistic expression based on the perceptions of the different actors involved.

In the absence of a tool to study how the cultural and artistic competence is addressed in early teacher training, and taking related research as a reference (Calderón-Garrido et al., 2017; González & Muñoz, 2010), an analytical and exploratory study was designed to respond to the objectives of this research; the approach was mainly qualitative but also used mixed methods as regards its processing, based on process models used in well-founded research.

The research techniques developed focused on the documentary analysis of course proposals and the contributions of different actors involved in the study, which were collected through focus groups and surveys (see Table 1).

Table 1

Table summarising the data collection techniques and tools used for the research

Objective	Technique	Tool	Sample	Program
1 & 2	Desk research	Coding table. 3 blocks: Concept of competence. Teaching competence. Cultural and artistic competence.	63 plans from 12 universities	Atlas.ti 7
3	Focus groups (2)	Semi-structured script	10 participants (5 per focus group)	ELAN
	Survey	Questionnaire	Teacher of visual education (UB) (n = 22)	Google form
			UB Faculty of Education student body (n = 245)	

Regarding the first and the second goals, we carried out a documentary analysis based on a universal sample of the course proposals of Catalan universities and an intentional probability sample of the double bachelor's degrees in Education at the relevant public universities at national level, with a view to detecting similarities or differences in other university contexts and possible geographic biases. All of these were in force during the development of this research (2017-2018 academic year). In total, 63 course proposals from 12 universities were analysed: *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM), Universitat Abat Oliba (CEU), Universitat de Barcelona (UB), Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM), Universitat de Girona (UDG), Universitat de Lleida (UDL), Universidad de Salamanca (USAL), Universidad de Santiago de Compostela (USC), Universitat de Vic (UVIC), Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC)* and *Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV).*

For the analysis of the teaching plans for each subject, the subjects of each university in the area of artistic expression were initially identified and contextualised to quantify them and determine the percentage of credits in relation to the total for each study plan.

Subsequently, a coding table was drawn up, structured in three blocks: one referring to the concept of competence itself, the second linked to the teaching competence and the third linked to the cultural and artistic competence.

The new contributions collected through the focus group were incorporated into the structural approach that was initially defined, agreed upon and discussed by the research team based on functionality and operating rationality criteria. These contributions were identified by data processing the debates generated and detecting recurring terms linked to the definition of the cultural and artistic competence subject to codification.

In this way, the coding table was set up with 17 codes: eight referring to the concept of competence, in which aspects relating to the typological classification (General/Basic, Transversal, Specific) and the defining elements of these, such as aptitudes, attitudes and values, were included; one code for teaching competence; and eight related to the cultural and artistic competence in which perception, experimentation, processes or visual languages, among others, were highlighted.

For the analysis, the Atlas.ti 7 program was used to explore the intensity of concurrence between the coded fragments and to aggregate the cases on the basis of three functional organisational groups: the UB group, the Catalan universities group and the Spanish reference universities group.

With regard to the focus groups, two groups involving a total of 10 professionals in the area of visual education were held. According to the thematic and conceptual interests of the study, four participant profiles were selected for each of the sessions in accordance with criteria concerning links with educational experiences in formal and non-formal settings related to the area. In accordance with the objective (3), we believed that it was important that people with a non-formal education profile participated, since this is an area of special interest for the development of the cultural and artistic competence that is conditioned less by academic formality and is perhaps more attentive to the development of the competence: Primary Education teacher (1), teacher of Childhood Education teacher (1), artistic educator from a non-formal area (2) and university teacher from the area of artistic expression in the simultaneous itinerary for teacher of Primary Education and Childhood Education (1).

For the focus groups, a script was prepared with eight open questions that allowed participants to answer based on their own experience (Krueger, 1991) and were designed on the basis of the three central pillars of the research: concept of competence, teaching competence, and cultural and artistic competence.

The sessions were filmed and analysed with the ELAN Linguistic Annotator (v. 5.1) software application, which allowed for the interactive transcription and codification of the relevant fragments.

To collect information from other stakeholders, two questionnaires were developed—one aimed at the teaching profile of the area of visual education (n = 22) and one at the student body of the UB Faculty of Education (n = 245)—and were worked on the basis of a sample of possibilities. An online questionnaire was offered, based on Google Forms, and was open to voluntary participation during the 2018-2019 academic year in the bachelor's degrees in Childhood Education and Primary Education and in the double bachelor's degree in Education of the UB.

Given the specific nature of the research, and in accordance with its objectives, the questionnaire was drawn up based on the results of the focus groups with experts in the area of knowledge, as well as validation by the members of the research team.

The questionnaire was made up of 13 items distributed into Likert-type questions (9), polytomous questions (2) in relation to satisfaction with training in the area and knowledge of the competence area in the education system, and multiple-choice questions (2) referring to the identification of the competences of the area within the curriculum.

The results obtained from the automatic processing generated by the Google tool were added to the general data aggregation process in Atlas.ti 7, previously used for the desk analysis of the teaching plans.

5. Results

Based on the processing of the data obtained from the documentary analysis of the course proposals, the focus groups and the questionnaires, the following results were obtained:

Regarding the *presence of the cultural and artistic competence* (objectives 1 and 2), through a contextual analysis of the structural data collected that focused on the quantitative expression of the overall credits of the bachelor's degrees and the subjects linked to arts education (see Table 2), we found that:

- Each university offers a different number of credits for the double bachelor's degree in Education, even though it relates in all cases to classroom learning for a total duration of five academic years. With regard to the Catalan universities group offering these programmes, four offer 360 credits or more; whereas five offer 350 or more and the three remaining offer 330 or fewer.

- The number of credits linked to arts education also differs depending on the university. It is believed that the total number of credits in the area, in relation to the total number of those that make up the programme, ranges from 20% to 2%. If we focus on the compulsory number of credits, there are two clearly separate groups of universities based on whether or not there is a specialisation for arts education. Two out of the 12 universities (Universitat de Girona and UB) offer a specialisation, which matches, in terms of maximum values, the number of credits and subjects directly linked to arts education.

Table 2

Number of credits for subjects in the field of visual education offered by each university in relation to the total number of credits

University	TC	In relation to arts education		In relation to the visual arts area	
		Credits of compulsory subjects	% in relation to TC	Total credits	% in relation to TC
UAO	363	9	2.4	9	2.5
ULL	352	29	8.2	29	8.2
URV	364	30	8.2	30	8.2
UAB	360	22	6.1	22	6.1
UB	330	45	13.9	84	25.5
UDG	369	38	10.2	74	20.0
UIC	308	12	3.8	18	5.8
UVIC	313	15	4.7	15	5.0

Note. TC = Total credits in the double degree.

As regards the *treatment of the cultural and artistic competence* (objectives 1 and 2), the quality analysis of the content and the structure of the course proposals allowed us to observe that:

- The universities offer different structural and terminological options, which shows a lack of consistency when establishing a common structure and terminology for the identification of content sections in course proposals, as well as in the formal treatment related to the formulation and definition of "competences". Even though they all have a section on competences, these "degree competences" do not make explicit reference to the specialisation and are shown grouped in a generic manner under different criteria, such as "transversal competences", "specific competences", "basic competences" and "general competences".

- The cultural awareness and expression competence appears mostly in other sections such as the objectives of the thematic sections of the subject, albeit partially and with no specific wording as a competence.

Regarding the intensity of connections between the fragments codified with the terms "cultural and artistic competence" and "teaching competence", we observed that these latter terms were the most frequent, with a total of 218 in absolute values of the codification. This fact arises directly from the previously mentioned fragmentation, which allows for the detection of elements that would make up an integral part of what could be considered "cultural and artistic competence", but it is neither defined nor shown as such in the course proposals.

In relation to the perceptions *provided by the different agents involved* (objective 3), in the focus groups with experts, we identified 85 terms that were subsequently regrouped into three conceptual groups; these three groups were arranged in order of relevance: competence, knowledge and assessment (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Terms with the highest frequency of use (67 times or more) in the sample analysis derived from the focus group
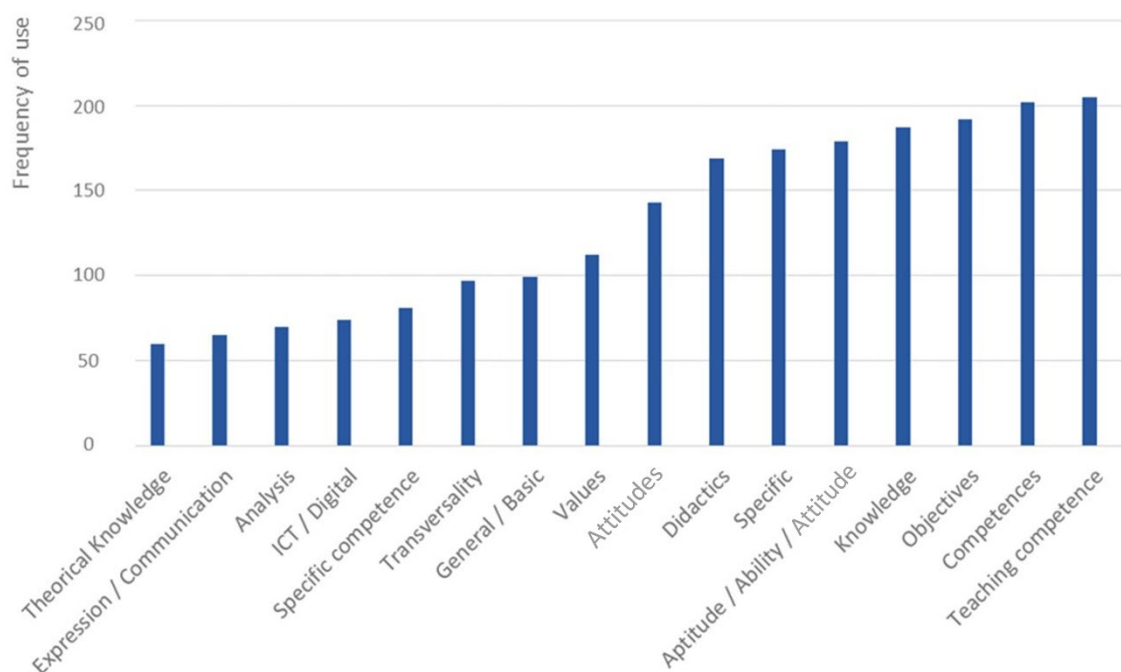
- Regarding the concept of "competence", we observed a higher relation intensity with terms such as ability, interrelation, attitude and knowledge, as well as with the ideas showing the tension between general or more precise definitions of competence or an understanding of the huge gap perceived between theoretical/administrative definitions and the ordinariness in the classroom or teaching space.

- When approaching the concept of "cultural and artistic competence", we observed a tendency to consider as positive the breadth of the area defining the recorsd of the Catalan Department of Education (Generalitat de Catalunya, Departament d'Ensenyament, 2017) regarding the dimensions and areas of arts education, since it is understood that it enables transversal processes. We also observed a critical attitude such as the perception of a certain lack of concreteness when defining the scope of action of arts education. At the same time, "creativity" is identified as one of the values belonging to the area that should play a key role in the educational innovation processes in schools. As regards the methodology, we highlighted the existence of models in the area (active learning, project-based learning, etc.), which

had been put into practice even before the competence-based system was established in formal education.

- The references to "assessment" appeared in a transversal manner as regards the topics introduced during the development of the debate groups. A certain core concern in this sense was apparent and several issues emerged around the idea of the assessment plans in the area serving as reference points for Skills-based assessment systems. In addition, there were doubts concerning the real development of such assessments, since the focal point of these assessment processes generally lies in the observation of the degree of knowledge of content. Another aspect to be highlighted is the need to educate teachers so as to foster an efficient demonstration of the substance of the competences, particularly bearing in mind the aspects of transversality and the breadth of arts education areas foreseen in the curriculum.

Finally, regarding the *questionnaires for teachers and students* (267 answers), we observed that the students assessed their arts education as *medium-high*. Among students on the bachelor's degrees, the *medium* score predominated (45.8% in the case of Childhood Education and 50.9% in the case of Primary Education), which contrasts with the double bachelor's degree in Education, which presented a slight downward trend (39.3%).

As regards the opinion of students and teachers about the extent to which they should be present in subjects related to arts education, a range of 20-40% was the option preferred in both cases; in the case of the double bachelor's degree in Education, most students (38.7%) opted for a continuous presence throughout the 10 semesters of the degree, while 19.4% opted for eight semesters and 16.1% for six semesters. The students on the single bachelor's degrees expressed contrasting views due to the educational priorities they linked to their future careers; they viewed reinforcement of the arts education in the bachelor's degree in Childhood Education as more important and hence opted for the presence of subjects related to this area in eight semesters—the entirety of the degree—(17.9%), six semesters (26.9%) and four semesters (32.7%), which contrasts with the four (35.7%) and two semesters (42.9%) selected by students on the bachelor's degree in Primary Education.

The survey for arts education teachers offered a similar though more weighted overview: presence in four semesters was the most common choice (40.9% of the answers). We also observed that the options of six and 10 semesters obtained the same proportion of answers (18.2%), whereas 13.6% of the interviewees opted for eight semesters—the whole duration of the single bachelor's degrees—and 9.1% opted for a two-semester-long presence (see Figure 2).

As regards the interviewees' knowledge of the concept of competence and the difference between cross-curricular and specific competences, we observed average general knowledge and difficulties when identifying the competences addressed in arts education subjects. We also determined that, when asked to identify the competences linked to arts education in the subjects they have studied, students identified them with the areas that integrated the cultural and artistic competence, albeit with a prevalence of artistic expression. When asked about the "cross-curricular competences" and "specific competences" addressed throughout these subjects in the bachelor's degrees in Childhood Education and Primary Education, respectively, they claimed to have sufficient knowledge (31.4% and 39.3%) or little knowledge (51.9% and 37.5%) and, in the double bachelor's degree in Education, little knowledge (54.8%) or zero knowledge (32.3%). Therefore, we can consider that students have medium-low level of knowledge (see Figure 3).

Figure 2

What presence should arts education have in the degree?
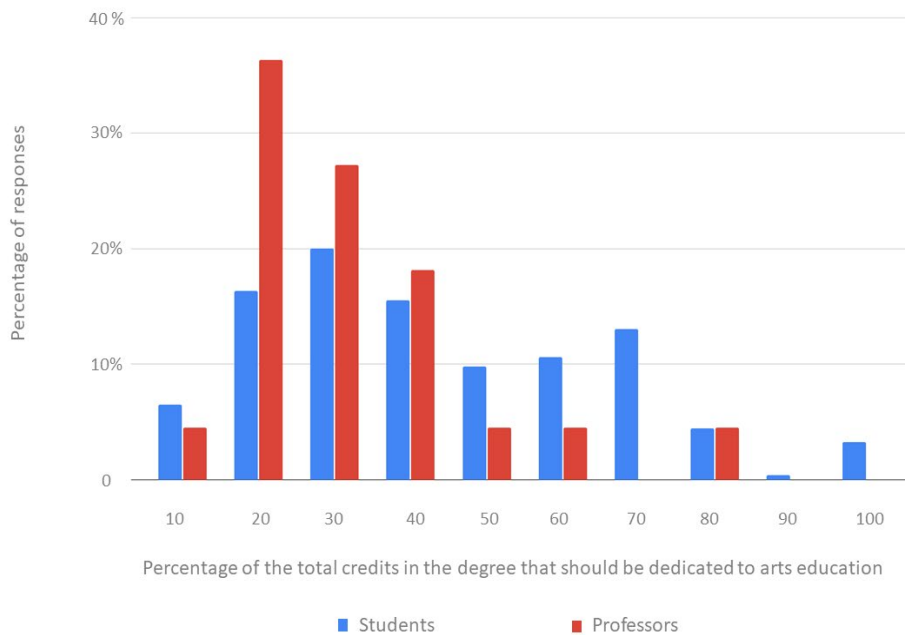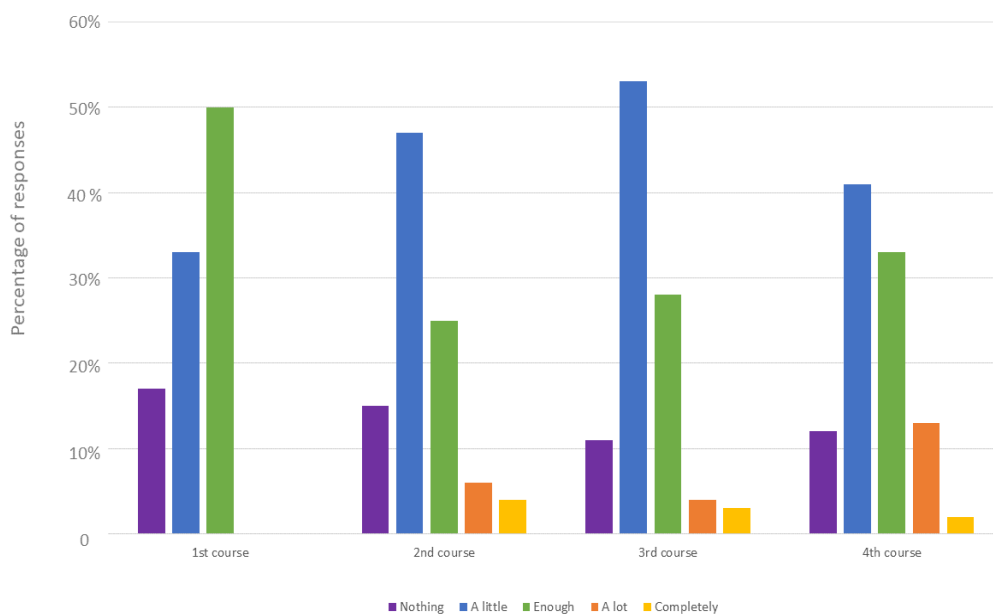

Figure 3

Do you know the general and specific competences you develop in different subjects?


By contrast, 22.7% of the teachers claimed to have in-depth knowledge of the differences between the two competences, although 59.1% claimed to have intermediate knowledge and only 18.2% acknowledged that they had little knowledge. The result changed slightly when they were asked if they work directly on the "cross-curricular competences" and "specific competences" in the course proposal. When we pooled the data, 72.73% of the teachers claimed medium-high knowledge of the difference between the competences; we observed how 43.75% of these claimed to fully depart from the definitions of the competences in the course proposal, 25%

answered that they mostly do, a further 25% claimed they usually do, and 6.25% stated they barely do (see Figure 4). These data certainly offer an overview of a situation in which there is room for improvement in the case of both teachers and students.

Figure 4

Do you know the difference between general and specific competences?
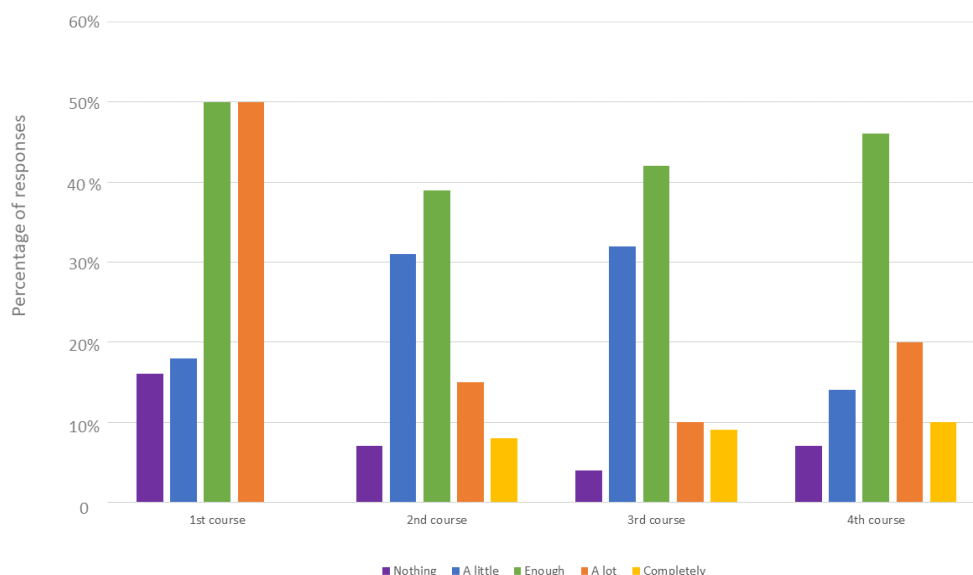
With respect to the competences students and teachers identified as most relevant to their education in the artistic field, from the list of competences in the bachelor's degrees in Childhood Education and Primary Education, in both cases they highlighted the ability to promote and enable learning processes in early childhood with a holistic perspective (64.2%), followed by the ability to promote students' autonomy and uniqueness as factors in education related to emotions, feelings and values in early childhood (60.5%).

In the case of the teachers, we observed that the three most commonly selected cross-curricular competences were: in first place, communication skills (81.8% of the answers); in second place, creative and entrepreneurial skills and the capacity to plan, organise and manage processes, information and projects, and problem-solving skills; in third position, the ability to show initiative and an entrepreneurial spirit and to generate new ideas and actions (77.3% of the answers). We highlighted how the teacher group placed more emphasis on communication skills than the student group, since students focused more on creativity and entrepreneurship and on interpersonal work processes (see Figure 5).

6. Conclusions

Based on the idea that the course proposal is a declaration of teachers' goals during the process of teaching a subject, this analytical and exploratory study shows the importance of developing the cultural and artistic competence in greater depth in teacher training.

Arts education provides and links defining and methodological aspects of the competence-based learning process since the mechanisms of competence-based education had always been put into practice.

Figure 5

What competences of the degree do you think are most important for your training in arts education?
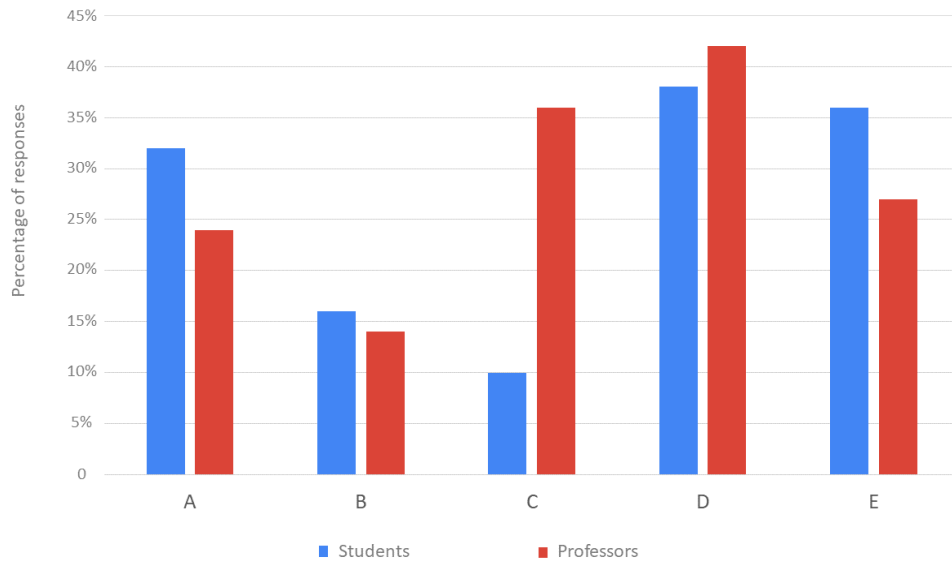
Note. A - Ability to apply knowledge to work in a professional manner and to develop certain competences that allow problems to be resolved within the study area.

B - Ability to demonstrate that you have knowledge and understanding in a study area that starts in general secondary education and is usually found at a level that, although supported by advanced textbooks, also includes some aspects involving knowledge from the vanguard of that field of study.

C - Ability to transmit information, ideas, problems and solutions to a specialised and non-specialised audience.

D - Ability to promote and facilitate learning in early childhood, from a holistic and integrated perspective of the different cognitive dimensions (linguistic, emotional, motor, social, philosophical and cultural).

E - Ability to apply the elements of the areas of the children's curriculum with coherence criteria: purpose, competences, objectives, content and evaluation criteria.

Despite recommendations from the Cultural Affairs Committee of the European Council (2020) to promote arts education to ensure the full development of individuals, the data show that the percentage of subjects in the UB curriculum in the field of arts education is minimal in relation to the number of compulsory credits. The presence of subjects in which the cultural and artistic competence of soon-to-be teachers can be developed, in quantitative terms, confirms that it is clearly insufficient to ensure the development and acquisition of this competence by future teachers (Giraldez, 2009), which demonstrates a need to revise plans. Both the university teachers and students interviewed agree on the need for a greater presence of subjects linked to the arts. Also, it was determined that the higher the number of credits students have signed up for, the more positive their perception of their artistic area.

As regards the comparison between the study plans of the other universities in the sample, significant differences can be highlighted in terms of the number of credits dedicated to arts education throughout the degree, with the highest values found in those that offer a specialisation in this area. On the other hand, we observed a lack of standardisation in the course proposals, as well as a lack of specific competences in the area. It is therefore necessary to reach a consensus concerning terms to facilitate an understanding of this competence in the education process, as it is not explicitly included in teaching plans, which also makes it difficult to raise awareness

of its importance. This lack of standardisation of teaching plans in Spain has also been highlighted in a recent study that analysed the specification of ICT competences in initial teacher training (Calderón-Garrido et al., 2021).

When analysing the perceptions of the different actors involved, we found that the teachers identified a gap between the theoretical/administrative definitions of the concept of competence and their actual materialisation, which reveals the need for the actors involved in the education process to agree on the terms and criteria relating to wording and expression to facilitate comprehension and guide the process. The results show that the course proposals of the universities analysed do not mention the cultural and artistic competence explicitly, nor is it properly integrated, which implies a lack of awareness of the importance of this competence; this compounds the problems encountered by teachers-to-be to fully develop and strengthen the competence before the end of their degrees.

Competence-based education must ensure more open education that allows students to adapt to the different needs of society by fostering the autonomy and entrepreneurial capacity of students and their proactive capacity (Rychen & Salganik, 2003). This implies that part of the training of soon-to-be teachers should introduce the competence model and propose changes on the what, how and why of learning, as well as the role of the teacher, thus fostering teacher training by means of meta-competences. Learning to learn implies learning to reason, having a self-critical attitude and knowing one's limitations. It ultimately means assuming responsibility for one's education and acquiring the necessary teaching competences for one's professional development. As Parcerisa points out, higher education requires one to "consider the challenge of identifying professional competences so that they can serve as references for formulating the objectives and contents of each subject" (2008, p. 16).

In conclusion, the information gathered clearly points to a need to redesign course proposals for the subjects that make up bachelor's degrees in Education, so that the cultural and artistic competence plays a clear role and gains the relevance that all actors involved seemed to claim it has. This would make it possible to draw a baseline in relation to the importance of arts education in effectively shaping positive self-perceptions and identities (Bamford, 2006) and skills training at all levels.

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