

STUDY ON THE ADOPTION OF COMPETENCE AS A PURPOSE OF THE TRAINING OF FORCES

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***Abstract:** In recent decades, a new paradigm marks the conceptual transformation through which competencies take the place of objectives in education, in general and in training and professional development, in particular. It becomes necessary and useful to analyze the necessity, possibility and opportunity of focusing the instruction on competences. Thus they acquire, in an integrative way, the triple state of a referential system for quality and performance in the military actions, of the objective of the instructive-formative process, and of the result of learning.*

Keywords: training of forces, competence, professional competence, theoretical knowledge, factual knowledge, skills

1. Introduction

In recent decades, a new paradigm marks the conceptual transformation through which skills take the place of objectives in education in general and in training and professional development in particular. An integrative concept, competence has become a reference element in the design and development of educational and vocational training programs, in their evaluation, as well as in the appreciation of their social activities as a whole. Thus, the paradigm of education centered on applied knowledge was abandoned in favor of education centered on education, on the formation of its professional and personal development competencies.

Beyond the disputes related to the opposability of the two paradigms, the indisputable contribution of the latter must be highlighted in the plan of satisfying the necessities and direct support of the formative processes of practice, of life, in

the sense of adding operative and actional structures to the system of classical “knowledge” necessary to be able to use what we know.

Military training is, essentially, a didactic process through which the contents of training with an obvious specificity are conveyed in order to acquire the cognitive, psychomotor and affective-volitional skills desirable from an organizational perspective. The didactics used was influenced by the formulation, more or less explicit, of some educational aims, assumed by society and inevitably went through the stage of content-centered didactics followed by objective-centered didactics. Thus, it went from the transmission of verified contents, in the most complete and qualitatively diversified forms possible, which placed little emphasis on their formative utility and on the critical dimension to the “didactics of achieving the objectives”, encouraged by the construction

of the taxonomy of educational objectives, made by B. Bloom. Currently, by adopting standardization as a way of designing, organizing, conducting and evaluating training, we are in a changed situation in which concepts such as essential requirements for mission, standards, standard training and evaluation activities occupy a central place. The conceptual detachment from the paradigm adopted at the level of the national education system or of the training and professional development programs is noticeable, without special efforts. In fact, even within the training of forces system, two of its components, military education and training through practice suggest the competence as a reference of the training process. Therefore, identifying the possibilities of conceptual correlation, adapting and, why not, mutual support and empowerment is a necessary and useful approach.

In this context, we structured our study on: outlining the theoretical landmarks necessary to analyze the issues under discussion, building the analysis methodology, identifying and explaining the differences and outlining the ways to achieve conceptual convergence.

2. Theoretical landmarks that explain the concept of competence as the purpose of the instruction

In the last decades, the aims of education have been redefined, which marks a relative rupture in the classical conceptual framework and the one suggested nowadays in the gestures of educational policy [1]. The abandonment of the formulation of goals and operational objectives has created a place for concepts such as competence as a reference system for all the definitions of education.

There is currently a strong debate on competencies as educational goals, as well as how they can be turned into appropriate training actions [2]. From the multitude of meanings given to the concept of competence, for reasons easy to understand,

in our study competence, as the main purpose of education, is defined as a multifunctional and multi transferable set of knowledge, skills and abilities needed in different situations [3]. It is an ensemble structured so as to provide transfer and applicability in the operation with the learning contents [4].

The learning outcomes acquire special relevance in the new conceptual context. They designate what the learner recognizes, understands and can do at the end of the learning process. They are defined in the form of knowledge, skills and competencies. Therefore, the learning outcomes represent the set of knowledge, skills, and competencies that a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate by completing the learning process.

Knowledge is the result of the assimilation, through learning, of information. Knowledge is the set of facts, principles, theories and practices related to a certain field of work or study. Similar to the European Qualifications Framework, knowledge is described as theoretical and / or factual.

Skill means the ability to apply and use knowledge to accomplish tasks and solve problems. Similar to the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments). Ability includes certain types of operating structures, from ability to interpretation and problem-solving skills.

In this interpretive framework, we will integrate our analysis on the conceptual coherence of the training of forces system, with special reference to the part of military training.

3. Methodological approach

The objective of our study can be achieved by using a theoretical, descriptive-analytical approach of conceptual nature, with applicative-ameliorating purpose. The

hypothesis supports the necessity, the opportunity and the effective impact of the coherent adoption of the educational aims at the level of the whole system of training of the forces, by explaining the finalities of the instruction in terms of competences. The study of current documents is the investigative modality to which we add a comparative and systematic analysis for the application of criteria that are becoming relevant in this context in order to highlight inconsistencies, limitations and disadvantages, so as to create premises for optimizing the training process.

4. Analysis of the educational finalities projected in the training of the forces' system. Interpretation of results

In summary, the finalities currently designed for the training of the forces' system fall within the classical paradigm of the formative processes. At the macro level, with rigor and precision, realistic goals and objectives are assumed that aim at the constitutional premise of the Romanian military institution, in accordance with the existing possibilities and, at the same time, according to the national and Euro-Atlantic doctrinaire requirements. Thus, the aims of different types and categories of training aim, on the one hand, to acquire knowledge and training, developing and maintaining the skills of defenders and specialists, to manifest psycho-moral and physical qualities necessary and training and development of basic skills necessary for the military in exercising its organizational and social role, in the case of individual training and, on the other hand, increasing the operational capacity of military structures in order to fulfill the mission established by the operational plans and orders received from the upper echelon, in the case of collective training.

At the same time, the system of objectives concretizes and customizes the goals. Thus, the individual training aims at: adapting the young recruits to the military environment; acquisition / acquirement of values and

behavioral norms specific to the military organization, knowledge of the professional field; training and professional development of the defender and the specialist; developing cognitive, psycho-moral and physical abilities according to the specific requirements of the organization, cultivating the fighting spirit and military virtues; increasing the confidence in one's own strengths and the spirit of discipline. The main objective of the collective instruction is the formation, development and maintenance of collective skills and the cohesion of the military structures in order to fulfill the missions.

We notice that their scope includes exclusively goals, objectives, knowledge and skills, individual or collective.

Without entering into extensive discussions on the completeness of the set of set goals, but emphasizing their generous and precise nature, we point out that they exclude skills and abilities. Or, as we have shown, competencies include other operating structures in addition to skills. In the literature it is specified that for some disciplines, skills are not enough. Thus, for some disciplines within the basic individual instruction, the formation of skills may be, and is sufficient, but for technical instruction, tactics or exercises more is needed, because in this case, more complex analyzes, calculations or decision-making processes are required which are not solved only by resorting to skills.

We add the fact that the concepts used in the standard training and evaluation activities (training requirements, standards, conditions, etc.) are not appropriate to the concept of competence but on the contrary are better articulated with it than with the system of goals and objectives.

More than that, the concept of competence aims at a structured set of knowledge, skills /abilities and attitudes that allows a pedagogical attachment to a high-performance curricular construct. We are considering the integration of the curriculum, both in the component of

military training and the academic or military education component. Therefore, the coexistence of the second paradigm within the same formative process induces ambiguity, inconsistency and, certainly, incoherence both in terms of designing the instructional-educational process and, especially, in terms of organization and convergent development of direct approaches to teaching-learning-evaluating and management of what the literature designates by the concept of *hidden curriculum*.

5. Conclusions

The hypothesis formulated is therefore confirmed by the arguments presented, in a

concise manner. The conclusion is reinforced by the fact that by adopting competence as the purpose of military training, a more comprehensive, better articulated and non-negligible concept is created, in accordance with the defining notes of the education and training and professional development systems. This would not produce discontinuities or disorders in the system, but would create favourable premises to ensure the integrated, phased and functional character of the training measures. Also, the military profession would acquire the same explicitness, in the same terms as the other existing professions on the labour market.

References

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