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# THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE EMOTIONAL COMPETENCES OF THE TEACHER – A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

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**Abstract**

The article addresses the prerequisites for the development of a category of transversal competences of the teacher – emotional competences, which represent a novelty and interest issue in the postmodern pedagogy studies, focused on the professional training for the didactic career. The article tries to configure the cognitive nucleus of the emotional competence issues, based on conceptual analyzes in the representative literature, focused on comprehensive analyses of the terms of emotional competence and emotional intelligence. The multidimensional structures of the two conceptual domains, being in a functional connection, outline the perspectives of the theoretical and methodological approach of the teacher's emotional competence profile.

The presented theoretical foundations will be used in theoretical studies and future empirical research, which we intend to achieve, according to the general assumed objective, of developing a theoretical, methodological and operational system of the process of development of transversal competences for the didactic career, in general, and of the emotional ones in particular.

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**Keywords:** *emotional competence; emotional intelligence, emotional coefficient; emotional learning; transversal competences; emotional profile of the teacher; emotional competence profileof the teacher.*

## 1. MODELS OF CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE KEY TERMS

Appropriate management of the diversity and complexity of educational, teaching and classroom situations is conditioned by the unitary and progressive development of the teacher's professional and transversal competences. In the structure of the professional competence profile of the teaching career, the emotional competences are part of the transversal competences category, they are situated on the affective dimension and they are aimed at maximizing the emotions and feelings in the training-educational process and in their own personal and professional development.

The concept of emotional competence of the teacher is configured by integrating and developing elements from three conceptual spheres at the intersection of which are delineated the specific elements of this category: 1) the general concept of emotional competence; 2) the concept of emotional intelligence; 3) the concept of transversal competences of the teaching profession.

The emotional competence brings together, first of all, functional elements and features of transversal competences, which are structured from "competences of role and competences of personal and professional development" (Methodology for achieving the National Qualifications Framework in Higher Education – Application Guide, apud Bunăiașu, coord., 2012, p. 15) and are asserted in the "social and group context of exercising a profession, as well as in the awareness of the need for continuous professional training" (ibidem).

The conceptual analysis of emotional competence was initiated by Saarni, based on the assumption that they are developed and asserted in the process of

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socialization, in relation to the emotional development, the self-identity, the development of cognitive abilities, the development of moral consciousness (Saarni, 1999). According to Saarni, the abilities acquired in the emotional experiences, in the context of social interaction, underlie the structuring of emotional competence, which indicates "personal effectiveness in clarifying the social transaction of emotions" (Saarni, 2000). Having this in mind, ***emotional competence*** involves the ability to understand and capitalize on the "moral and ethical character of values that influence emotional responses to facilitate the individual's personal integrity" (ibidem).

Saarni identifies eight components of emotional competence, described in terms of capacities, abilities and attitudes that facilitate emotional learning, emotional management and social interaction (Saarni, 2000, apud Baudrit, 2011, 97-98):

1. Awareness of one's own emotional state and evaluation of the types of emotions lived.
2. Perceiving and analyzing the emotions of others based on expressive elements and contextual behaviours.
3. Proper use of terms that define emotions and expressions specific to cultural environments and the acquisition of cultural patterns that combine emotions and social roles.
4. Empathy and manifesting of sympathy for the emotions experienced by others.
5. Understanding the relationship between internal emotional state and external expressions that do not always correspond, and the impact of one's emotions on others.
6. Using personal strategies to overcome negative emotions.
7. Understanding the level of intimacy of social relationships that is determined by the mutual or reciprocal sharing of authentic emotions.

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8. Managing your emotional states by accepting your personal emotional experiences by referring them to your beliefs about emotional balance and adopting strategies and techniques to achieve that balance

Based on Saarni's theory, more conceptual-explanatory patterns developed, capturing the cognitive essence of the concept and delimiting categories of derived emotional competences. A representative model with cognitive consistency and educational applicative possibilities is Mikolajczak's model (2014), where five fundamental emotional competences are analyzed: identification, comprehension, expression, regulation, use (Mikolajczack, coord, Quoidbach, Kotsou, Nelis, p. 7):

| Competences | *Intrapersonal dimension* | *Interpersonal dimension* |
|---|---|---|
| *Identification* | identifying one's own emotions; | recognition of others' emotions; |
| *Comprehension* | understanding the causes and implications of one's own emotions; | understanding the causes and consequences of others' emotions; |
| *Expression* | expressing personal emotions in such a way as to determine their social acceptability; | accepting the expression of the emotional states of others; |
| *Regulation* | managing stress and one's own emotional states; | management of the emotions and stress of others; |
| *Use* | capitalizing on one's own emotions, in order to increase their effectiveness at reflexive, decisions and actions' level. | capitalizing on the emotions of others, in order to increase their effectiveness at reflexive, decisions and actions' level. |

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Each of the five general competences is detailed on three levels: knowledge, abilities and dispositions (emotional characteristics) (op cit, p. 8). On each level, derived competences are defined, which can be translated into specific situations of emotional learning. ***Emotional learning*** represents a type of experiential learning, centred on the acquisition of metacognitive strategies and techniques used in the development of basic competences that structure the emotional profile of the individual.

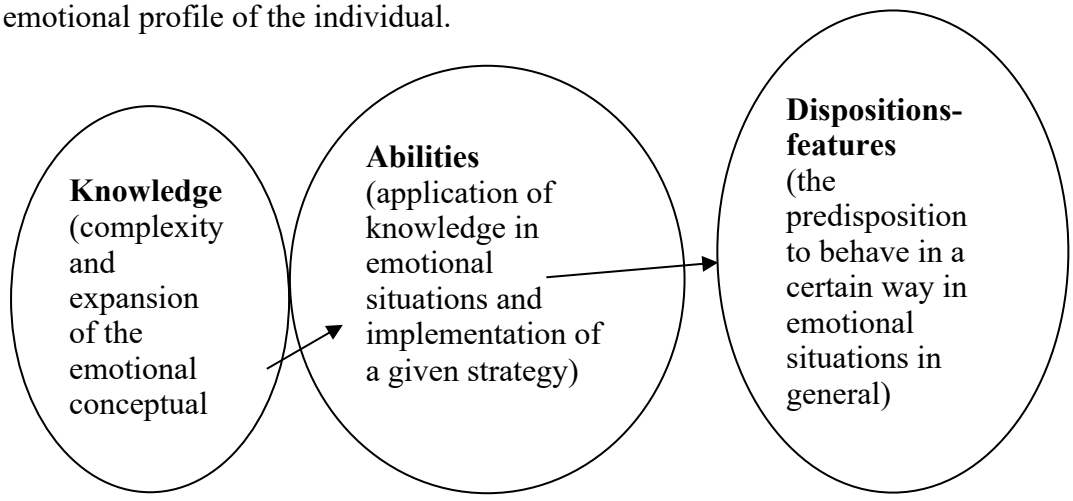



Fig. 1. The three-level model of emotional competences (Mikolajczack, 2014, p. 9)

The analysis of the psycho-pedagogical complementarity relation between the concepts of emotional competence and emotional intelligence facilitates the understanding and maximization of emotions in learning, training, counselling and psycho-pedagogical assistance activities. The psychological basis of emotional learning is the theory of emotional intelligence, developed by Daniel Goleman.

In a generic sense, ***emotional intelligence*** refers to the correct identification, understanding and interpretation of emotions and feelings of oneself and others, to their constructive management and approach in learning situations, social relationships, personal and professional development. Goleman

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identifies and operationalises four components of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2001):

1) *self-knowledge*: emotional self-knowledge and awareness of one's own emotional profile, self-confidence, self-image and self-esteem;

2) *self-control*: self-control by managing your own emotional states, defining desirable outcomes and focusing on them, flexibility, optimism, perseverance;

3) *social consciousness*: empathy, orientation towards social performance;

4) *social relationships management*: relationship and communication skills, in the context of organizational and social diversity, leadership skills and change management, adequate management of tensions, focus on cohesion and synergy of the group.

The psychologist Reuver Ban-On develops a theory in which he integrates the concepts of emotional intelligence and emotional competence, in the spirit of comprehensive approach and facilitating the educational approach. Reuver Ban-On introduces the term ***emotional coefficient***, which represents the level of development of emotional competences in four dimensions: 1) the intrapersonal level; 2) the interpersonal level; 3) the dimension of stress management; 4) personal flexibility (Bar-On, 1997).

## 2. THE TEACHER'S EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE PROFILE

***The emotional profile of the teacher*** is the ensemble of affective processes (dispositions, emotions, feelings), the characteristics and degree of development of emotional intelligence and emotional competence, whose conjugate functionality configures the affective-motivational framework of school learning and their own personal and professional development. An important feature of t***he teacher's emotional competence profile*** is the areas of intersection of the emotional competences with other areas of transversal competences of the teaching profession, where common elements can be identified: social and civic competences, educational communication skills, intercultural competences.

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In a generic sense, the *emotional competence* of the teacher represents the set of knowledge, abilities, values and attitudes so structured, related and transferred to facilitate educational, social and personal and professional development, through the proper management of emotions, feelings and situations which generated them. In our opinion, the teacher's general emotional categories of competence are:

**1.** ***Cognitive competences***, consisting of:

a) the complex knowledge of one's own feelings and emotions (intellectual, moral, social), of the impact of one's emotional states on the psychosocial climate of the class and of the school institution;

b) correct definition and complex analysis of the forms of manifestation of emotional states of the pupils, as well as the ways of using them as an affective-motivational support of learning.

**2.** ***Methodological competences***, development and application of affective-motivational strategies that generate positive emotions and positive feelings of the students, desirable values and attitudes in the school environment, impacting on cognitive, emotional, social learning.

***Networking and communication competences***, consisting of capacities and abilities that facilitate: the expressiveness of educational communication, the nuance of the educational message through non-verbal and paraverbal communication, didactic empathy.

4. ***Managerial competences***, divided into two categories:

a) competences of self-management of the emotional profile, with reference to: adequate management of their own emotional states; professional stress management; the definition of an emotional profile desirable for the teaching profession and the context of the class and of the school institution; the development and application of personal strategies aimed at forming the desirable profile of emotional competence as a structural element of the professional competence profile and objective assumed in career management;

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b) competences to manage the emotional states of the student class level, consisting of: managing the emotions and feelings of students; creating an affective framework and a psychosocial climate oriented towards: stimulation, encouragement, motivation, involvement, prevention of tensions in the class of students, cohesion, cooperation, solidarity, emulation.

## 3. CONCLUSIONS

The conceptual framework of the teacher's emotional competence profile provides the multidisciplinary perspectives of reflections, theoretical issues and applied research aimed at developing a taxonomy of specific categories and identifying strategies for developing the emotional competences of the teacher. These intentions represent the general objectives of our future studies, which will be on the particularization of elements of emotional competence on dimensions of the personality of the teacher, through the interdisciplinary relations between psychology, emotion sociology, education sciences, career management. Also, a feature of our further analysis and research will be to capitalize on the relationship between the emotional and the intercultural competences of the teacher, the latter having cognitive support and results of personal studies and research (Bunăiaşu, 2015, Bunăiaşu, Strungă, 2016).

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