

SCHOOL – OPEN SYSTEM AND FACTOR OF SOCIAL PROGRESS TEACHER'S COMPETENCE PROFILE, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIAL CHANGES

Mihaela Aurelia ȘTEFAN¹, Ecaterina Sarah FRĂȘINEANU²

¹Associate Professor, Ph.D., University of Craiova (Romania),

Email: mihaela.stefan@edu.ucv.ro

²Associate Professor, Ph.D., University of Craiova (Romania),

Email: ecaterina.frasineanu@edu.ucv.ro

Abstract: *In the context of the process of major restructuring of the professionalization system for the teaching career, the school / university has four important missions: a scientific mission, developing and maintaining a wide knowledge base; a mission of citizens, to promote equal opportunities, to develop active citizens; an economic mission, enabling the development of a professional project and promoting integration into the labour market; a personal development mission, contributing to the development of the personality and full potential of each person. The present study aims to examine the relationship between school and society, as it is reflected in the conception of students-future teachers. More specifically, we were preoccupied with providing a relevant diagnosis of the competency profile outlined by students-future teachers. The data collected and analyzed as a result of the investigation led to the following findings: the emotional-affective dimension determines, to a significant extent, the efficiency of the communication relationship; the investigated subjects especially appreciate the climate of communication, the emotional connection established between teachers and students.*

Keywords: competence profile, centering on educated, affective climate, supportive communication, autonomy.

1. Openness to the new - promoter of the educational partnership

The school, as a social subsystem, is in a relationship of mutual influence with the external environment in which it integrates. As long as all the individuals who form a group, a community and society as a whole are socialised from an early age through the educational system, the school holds the strategic position of prime importance in the progress of society. "Lifelong learning" is not only an educational philosophy, but the philosophy of facilitating the development of human beings as such, but also of human communities, with the potential to "reshape opportunities in life" (Evans, Schoon and Weale, 2013).

In this context, the wanted outcomes from the educational system must be educated people, who, in addition to information and cognitive acquisitions, must have beliefs that relate to a set of known and socially accepted values, attitudes compatible with the civic spirit and responsibility within the group of belonging or the community in which they integrate and last but not least, the skill of lifelong learning and thus the ability to adapt to an environment in continuous changing (<https://proform.snsr.ro/baza-de-date-online-cu-resurse-pentru-dezvoltarea-unui-management-institutional-antreprenorial-de-calitate-in-scoli-defavorizate/parteneriatul-scoala-societate>).

Open-minded, active, dynamic individuals also mean strong, cohesive communities/societies with a solid, healthy, competent, dynamic and thus competitive human capital (Nicoll, 2009). Facing this challenge, the Romanian school can be conceived as social service, open to the community partnership, which accepts the social influence from the external environment and is able to influence, in its turn, the external environment in the sense of social progress.

In Romania there are studies that confirm that school success also depends on the social and cultural characteristics of the original environment (Ivan, 2009; Țoc, 2013). For a real and efficient partnership in education, axiological, attitudinal and behavioral changes are needed at the level of the partners involved.

The change at school level must aim, in addition to promoting cooperation between all the elements interested in the development of education, and establishing a balance between the educational offer and the demand for education, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, ensuring the flexibility of the curriculum, in accordance with the identified educational needs of the community.

2. The role of the University in the current social context

The major role of the University has been intensely debated in the specialized literature. There are two different perspectives: on the one hand, the development of professional skills, on the other hand, the production of culture.

Like people, institutions and society as a whole learn and change: "He who does not learn anticipatively, will be forced to learn by shock, one of the most expensive and painful forms of education for societies or institutions" (Malița, 2001: 253).

In the contemporary era, the content of the general culture knows radical restructurings, imposed by the changes that have occurred and are occurring in the material and spiritual life of the society. All these require the revision of the traditional concept of general culture and its connection to the requirements of the contemporary era. The value of this concept depends not so much on the quantity and richness of knowledge, but on how it is articulated and organized in the system, according to the level of psychic development of the taught ones.

The professional culture of the student-future teacher is determined by the important social functions that derive from his/her status in our society:

a) the function of a *specialist* in a certain field. This function requires from the teacher a thorough specialized culture, partially realized in higher education and subsequently completed by different forms of improvement;

b) the function of an *educator*, shaper of the personality of the young generation, can be properly fulfilled by the teacher only by possessing a deep psychological, pedagogical and methodological training;

c) the function of *mediator and co-partner*, in order to establish cooperative relations with its students, but also with parents, state bodies, mass-media, etc.

With regard to the required European competences, three categories can be summarised (Joița, 2005: 36): *cognitive competences, social competences, affective competences*.

Living in a knowledge-based society, training represents, in this context, an action of shaping the educated according to the demands of the current society. The concept of training has allowed to make a closer connection between the initial training activities carried out in schools with the professional development activities.

In this context, the teaching-learning relationship acquires a new nuance, the responsibility of learning being an important objective that must be taken into account by the teacher, along with the formation of self-confidence and autonomy in learning. The teaching act must be built around the participation of the student in his/her own training.

The pupil/student – centred learning must be understood under the following aspects: *Conception, theory*, regarding the manner of approaching the instructive-educational process, with emphasis on the highlighting of the human resource, with the meaning of respecting the interests, needs and aspirations of the educated; *Deontology*: increasing the quality of the teaching activity by valuing the subject of learning.

Described by specialists as a coping strategy in organizational fulfillment in situations of uncertainty (Bond, Leung, Au et al., 2004), the unrealistic-optimistic attitude can produce

great individual and social damage as the progressive confrontation with the requirements of a reality that requests flexibility, effort and perseverance.

Therefore, in shaping the profile of future practitioners in the field of education, for the development of competences, the following objectives must be taken into account:

- a) the manifestation of an open attitude towards innovation, towards the new, of a receptive attitude towards the new requirements and changes in education;
- b) the development of mental flexibility, the construction of adaptable constructive structures, which would allow the future practitioner to adapt quickly and efficiently in various educational situations;
- c) the de-construction and re-construction of the model of teacher internalized as a result of traditional pedagogical practices;
- d) the development of social-relational skills, tasks and problem solving, through interrelationship and interaction; the development of empathy;
- e) the understanding and awareness of the idea that the teacher, in addition to the problems of teaching, faces many other problems (openness to the classroom management), that he must fulfill multiple roles (and not only that of knowledge transmitter);
- f) the affirmation of the affective -emotional side of the students' personalities, awakening the emotions of pleasure, enthusiasm in the act of learning.

3. Self concept – the connection between determination and self-determination, between knowledge and self-knowledge

In the present context, the school aims to form individuals capable of taking responsibility for acquiring competences. The thesis of cognitive flexibility (Spiro, 2001) brings to the fore the existing potential of the knower subject, the constructivist teacher having the role of determining what previous representations are necessary for the realisation of the cognitive compilation of knowledge.

In a broad sense, learning means a change that occurs in our cognitive structures, in the patterns of interpretation of reality, in the strategies of solving problems (Siebert, 2001: 28). Cognitive and metacognitive mental processes are essential in learning, teaching is a condition of training the mental processes of building understanding, it is a condition of organising situational terms to facilitate learning.

Knowledge cannot ignore neither the individuality of the one who knows, learns, nor the context in which he finds himself.

The central role in knowledge is played by the student because he faces cognitive conflicts (between his own ideas and other ideas, between previous and new experience), he raises questions, he seeks answers and offers solutions, he debates, he makes predictions, he produces cognitive experiences. It is the teacher's task to support the educated, to introduce them to scientific knowledge, to guide them, coordinate them, to organize the conditions and to facilitate the way to knowledge.

The training of the student-future teacher for lifelong learning, for continuous improvement is today a unanimously accepted necessity. Education can no longer be reduced to school institutions, nor can it be restricted to a single period of time.

The understanding of the individual as an extremely complex system, with the maximum capacity of self-organisation, offers new foundations for accepting and explaining the individual's need to learn continuously, independently, all his life. The concepts of *self-directed learning*, *self-learning*, *self-taught learning*, have raised in front of the theory and practice of education and training the problem of organizing new socio-organisational frameworks in which to learn. The progressive pedagogy, subordinated to the principle of "self-organisation instead of schooling", has focused, starting with the eighth decade of the XXth century, on the ideas: *self-determination*, *self-realization*, *self-experience*, *self-organisation*

(understood in this context as "an alternative to the rigid bureaucratic structures of the official training system" (Siebert, 2001: 28-29).

The learner's self-concept is "a cognitive construct that includes the set of convictions and beliefs about himself (and the world) of the learner. Essentially, the self-concept is formed on the basis and through the taking by the individual of his full responsibility for his own decisions, for directing his own life" (Dumitru, 2007: 108). For C. Stan (2001: 48) the self concept is defined as "the sum of the individual findings of a human subject, related to his personal attributes and qualities and open to self-improvement, self-realisation, so that self-knowledge and self-education are simultaneous and congeneric activities.

From the first steps it takes in the guided learning system, the independent, autonomous learning, however, involves a certain psychological instrumentation, a certain personality profile and above all, a certain learning experience, it involves specific resources - resources whose identification, measurement, control and development have entered the field of interest of many researchers (psychologists, teachers, sociologists, theoreticians and practitioners) for a long time and continues to arouse interest due to the practical purpose of enriching the scientific knowledge in this direction (Negovan, 2007).

I. Al. Dumitru (2008) presents some suggestions for teachers, necessary to guide the students in the process of self-knowledge. The teacher must *assist, support, guide the students in exploring their own Self*, to self-reveal, to be aware of their capacities, their positive and negative qualities. Rather than offering solutions, the teacher-counselor would better *try to find out which alternatives were previously experienced* or used by the student in similar situations and to what extent they gave results or not. Thus, the teacher can better understand why his student's previous attempts and efforts have failed;

Asking questions is a procedure that must be used with caution. Open questions are more comfortable for students than closed questions (which limit the possibilities of self-exploration), they leave more freedom of action.

The teacher must *listen carefully to his students*, encourage them to reflect and describe their emotions, present ideas and opinions; it is a good way to facilitate self exploration. Special attention is also paid to *non-verbal language*; students communicate not only verbally, but also through non-verbal means (facial expressions, looks, tone of voice, certain gestures and body movements, etc.). It is easier to censor our verbal communication than non-verbal communication.

In training activities, the teacher can make *use of metaphors*. Using metaphors, the teacher can facilitate the students' cognitive process, thus contributing to a better understanding of situations and problems. The teacher can ask the students *to synthesise and summarise the topics and subtopics discussed and to reflect* on the role of the methods and procedures used in the respective didactic activity. The way in which the students synthesise and summarise allows the teacher to make decisions regarding further steps.

Self-knowledge requires constant self-examination, self-evaluation. That is why the pupil/student must be required to systematically and consistently move from analysis to self-analysis, from evaluation to self-evaluation, from criticism to self-criticism and generally from knowledge to self-knowledge. There is a need, therefore, to increase individual responsibility.

Developing confidence in one's own strength, in the value of one's own ideas and opinions, represents another important objective.

4. The psycho-social portrait of teachers – a diagnosis among the educable

If in the case of other professions we talk about good specialists, in the case of the teaching profession, the efficiency can no longer be reduced only to the knowledge and mastery of the specialized field. A good specialist is not always a good educator. Only the combination of specialized competences with psycho-pedagogical, methodical competences leads to the education and training of an efficient teacher.

4.1 The Objectives of the study

The study aims to investigate the opinion of students-future teachers regarding the competences of the teacher in a society in permanent evolution and change, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the role of the Program for the certification of competences for the teaching profession in their training as future professionals in education.

4.2 Research methodology

The research method used was the questionnaire-based survey. The data collected from the questionnaire-based survey were filled in with those of the focus-group interview.

The questionnaire addressed to a sample of 80 students in the second year of the pedagogical route of initial training within the Department for teacher training, contains 15 items both open and closed.

The opinions and assessments of the students were requested in four ways: a) in the form of dichotomous answers: yes; no; b) by appealing to assessment scales; (c) by choosing one or more variants from a given list; d) in the form of open appraisals, without pre-formulated answers.

5. Conclusions and discussions

We present below the results obtained from the application of the questionnaire.

One of the items of the questionnaire addresses the competences of the successful teacher in today's society. Analyzing the results obtained from the descriptive processing, we observe that students appreciate the most the following characteristics: Relaxed environment, open towards communication (15%), motivational, supportive communication (12.5%), passion for teaching (11.25%), flexibility, openness to student opinions (11.25%).

The interactive style, scientific training, confidence in students, authority, authenticity, empathy, self-assurance were other characteristics of the successful teacher, identified by the subjects. These results are summarised in Table 1 and in Figure 1. :

Table 1: Characteristics of the successful teacher, in the student's view

Characteristics of the successful teacher	No of answers	%
Relaxed environment, open to communication	12	15
Motivational, supportive communication	10	12
Passion for teaching	9	11
Flexibility, openness to student opinions	9	11
Interactive style	8	10
Scientific training	8	10
Trust in the student	7	9
Authority	6	8
Authenticity	5	6
Empathy	4	5
Self-assurance	2	3

Following (table 2), we present the attributes of effective didactic communication, in the subjects' vision, in descending order of the percentages obtained:

The data in Table 2 and Figure 2 highlight the emphasis placed by the investigated subjects on *scientific accuracy*, *accessible language* (same percentage: 12%) and *synthetic and logical exposure* (11%), as the main attributes of effective communication between the teacher and the student; in third place it is appreciated the *expressive speech* (10%), *enthusiasm and motivational support* (the percentage being the same: 10%).

Figure 1: Opinion of students on the characteristics of the successful

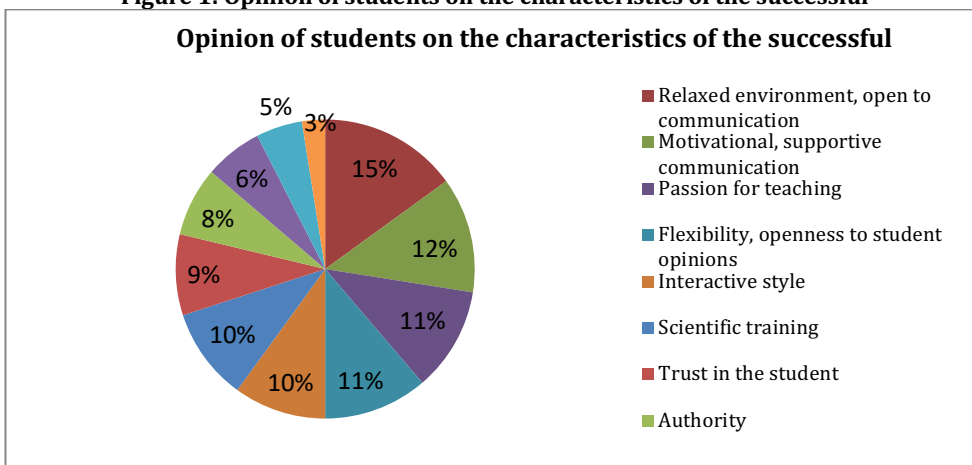
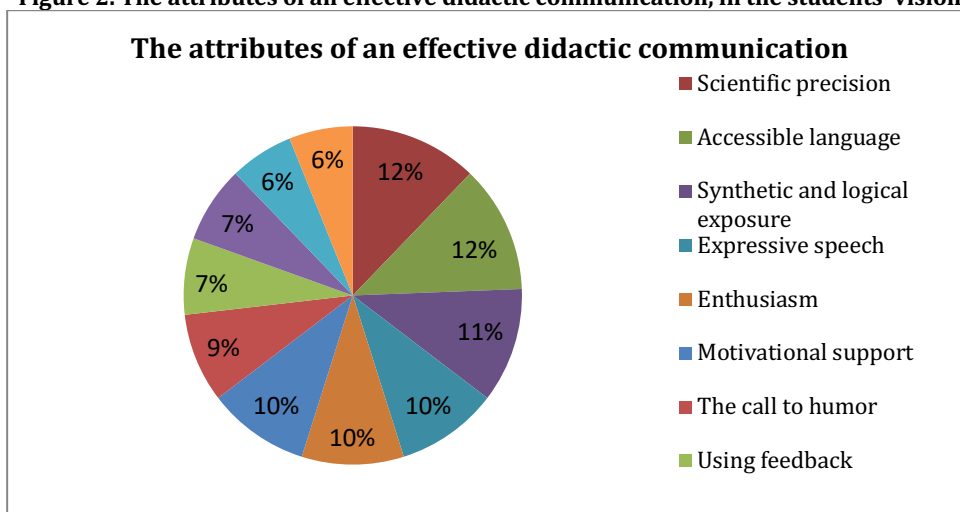


Table 2. The attributes of effective teaching communication

Attributes, in the students' view	No of answers	%
Scientific precision	10	12
Accessible language	10	12
Synthetic and logical exposure	9	11
Expressive speech	8	10
Enthusiasm	8	10
Motivational support	8	10
The call to humor	7	9
Using feedback	6	7
Stimulating curiosity	6	7
Using examples	5	6
Lack of prejudice	5	6

Figure 2. The attributes of an effective didactic communication, in the students' vision



Another item aims to identify the extent to which students are satisfied with communication with the teachers (table no. 3, Figure 3): only 8% appreciate that the communication relationship with the teacher pleases them to a *very large extent* and 27% - to a *large extent*; most of the students (46%) choose *the right extent*, and the rest: to a *small extent* (13%) and to a *very small extent* (6%).

Table no. 3. Students' perception of the communication relationship with teachers

Percent	The extent to which students are satisfied with communication with teachers	Percent	The extent to which teachers emphasize the emotional side of didactic communication
46 %	To a right extent	47 %	To a small extent
27 %	To a large extent	22 %	To a right extent
13 %	To a small extent	15 %	To a large extent
8 %	To a very large extent	9 %	To a very small extent
6 %	To a very small extent	7 %	To a very large extent

The data in Table 3 and Figure 4 also show the extent to which teachers manage, in the students' view, to emphasize the emotional side of didactic communication: most responses (47%) are focused on the option *to a small extent* or *to the right extent* (22%); the other variants of answer are: *to a large extent* – 15%, to a very small extent – 9%, and to a *very large extent* – only 7%.

Figure 3. The extent to which students are satisfied with communication with teachers

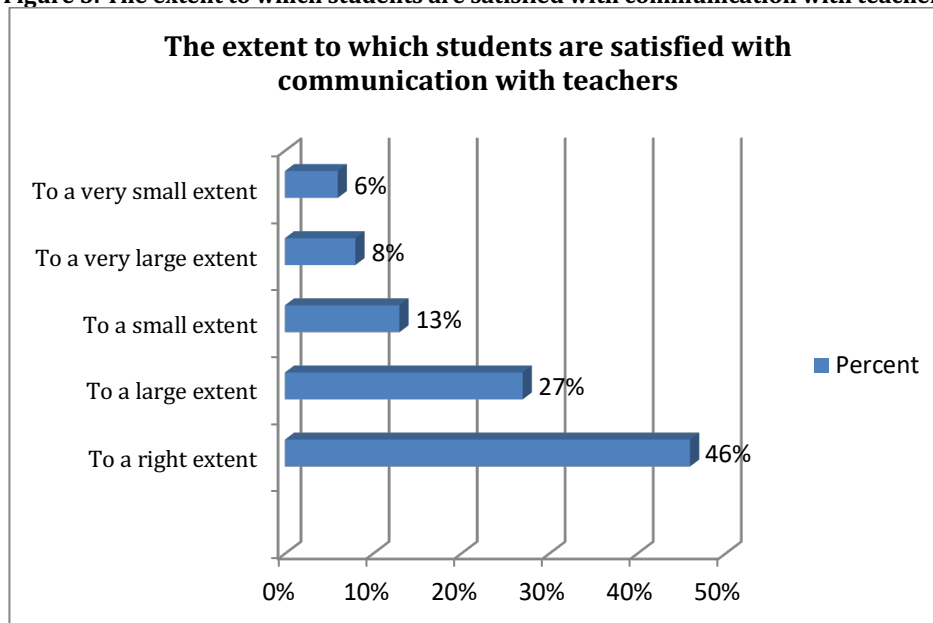
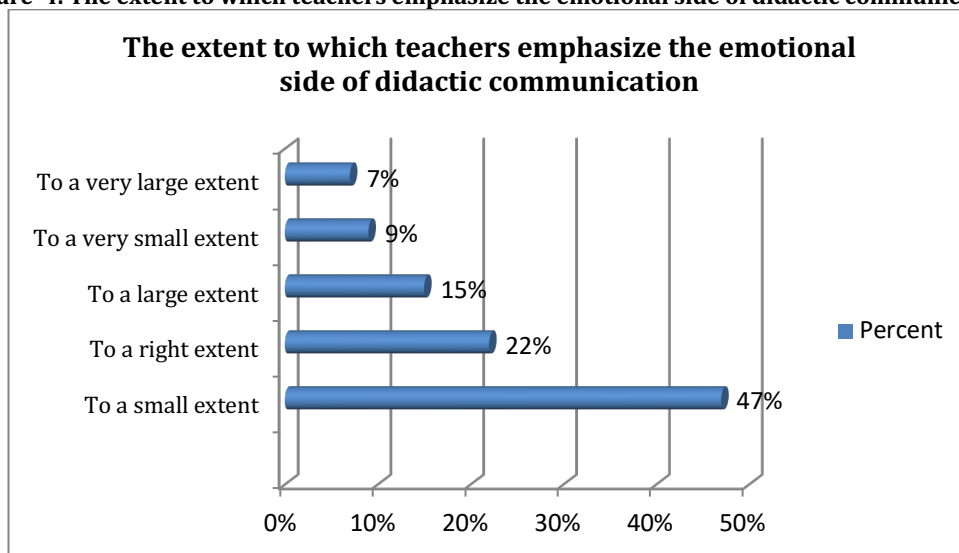


Figure 4. The extent to which teachers emphasize the emotional side of didactic communication



The students' answers regarding the role of the Teacher Training Department in the formation of managerial skills of future teachers are divided between the three answer options: yes – 51.25%; no – 41.25%; I cannot appreciate – 7.5%. These gratifying results are also confirmed by other responses of the subjects. For example, another item asked subjects to rank certain skills according to the importance they believe they have. The answers are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Hierarchy of the teacher's competences, according to the students

Competences	Rank/hierarchy
Of communication and relationship	1.
Methodological	2.
Motivational support/ development of self confidence	3.
Management, management of conflict situations	4.
Student evaluation	5.
Technical and technological	6.

The data recorded following the application and interpretation of the questionnaire were completed with those obtained by conducting the "focus-group" interview. The interview guide was applied on 16 people, the questions in the interview guide being varied: introductory questions, connection questions, key questions, aimed at the objectives of the investigative approach, and in the end, final, synthesizers questions, .

We aimed to identify the perceptions, representations and attitudes of the students regarding: the criteria for assessing the successful teacher; the main problems faced by students when communicating with teachers; suggestions regarding stimulating interactions in the classroom.

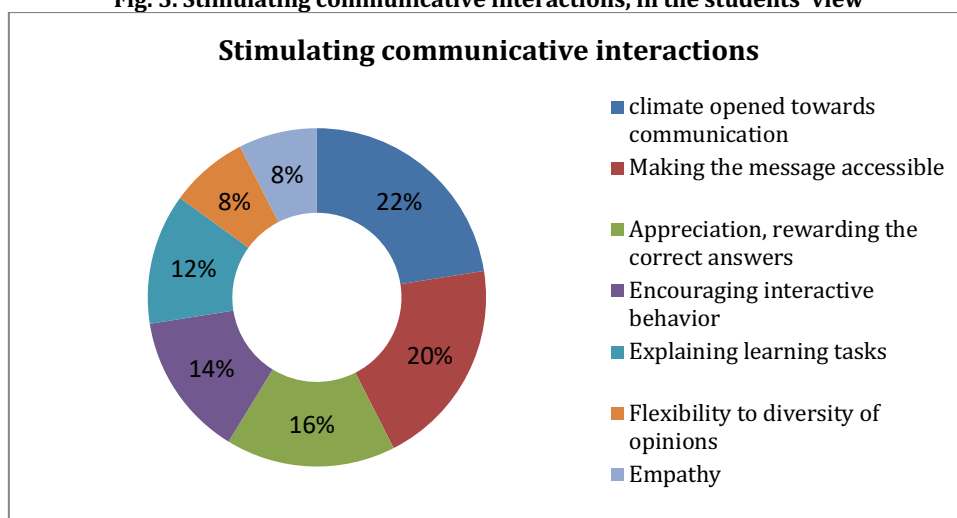
Regarding the didactic communication relationship, the investigated subjects appreciate, first of all, aspects related to the emotional side of the teachers' personality, to the psychological support: the supportive attitude, the communication and counseling skills. The main problems faced by students in communicating with teachers are: lack of understanding/empathy; abstract language; blocking/intimidation. It is noticed that the problems mentioned by the students were more aimed at the psycho-relational dimension.

With regard to the stimulation of communicative interactions, we present below the main aspects and coordinates which, in the view of the subjects of the sample, are of the utmost importance, as evidenced by the interpretation of the recorded data (table 5, figure 5):

Table 5. Coordinates of stimulating teacher-student interactions

Crt. No.	Stimulating communicative interactions, in the students' view	%
1.	Climate opened towards communication	22
2.	Making the message accessible	20
3.	Appreciation, rewarding the correct answers	16
4.	Encouraging interactive behavior	14
5.	Explaining learning tasks	12
6.	Flexibility to diversity of opinions	8
7.	Empathy	8

Fig. 5. Stimulating communicative interactions, in the students' view



The results obtained in the mentioned study provide an empirical basis for reflecting and restructuring the school curriculum, from the perspective of emphasizing the socio-emotional dimension, with emphasis on developing self-confidence, forming an open attitude towards the new and towards communication, easy adaptation to change.

Starting from the idea that lifelong learning seeks to awaken "in each individual the need to continue studying and training, the taste for new experiences, the desire to overcome oneself and to improve the quality of one's own life" (Neculau, 2004) and deepening the analysis of the pedagogical professionalisation of students - future teachers, at least two formative directions can be distinguished from a curricular perspective: one – that of building a desirable profile of competence of the teacher's training and the subsequent development of the outlined competences, another – of the scientific practice of the profession (Joița, 2008: 18). In this regard, the teacher is asked to demonstrate cognitive, social – relational, managerial and didactic teaching skills, he is asked to opt for the strategic options advantageous to the development of his students.

In shaping the profile of future practitioners in the field of education, the following *objectives* must be taken into account:

- a) focusing on the training/development of competences; development of mental flexibility, construction of flexible constructive structures, which would allow the future practitioner to adapt quickly and efficiently in various educational situations;

- b) de-constructing and re-constructing the model of teacher internalised as a result of traditional pedagogical practices; understanding and awareness of the idea that the teacher, besides the problems of the act of teaching, faces many other problems (openness to the class management), that he must fulfill multiple roles (and not only that of knowledge transmitter);
- c) knowledge and meeting of the various needs of the educated; individualisation and personalisation of learning;
- d) focusing on active, experiential, constructivist learning;
- e) promoting self-confidence;
- f) development of social – relational skills, problem solving, tasks through interrelationship and interaction; developing empathy and understanding towards colleagues and their opinions;
- g) the manifestation of an open attitude towards innovation, towards the new, of a receptive attitude towards the new requirements and changes in education;
- h) the affirmation of the affective-emotional side of the educated personalities, the awakening of the emotions of pleasure, enthusiasm in the act of learning.

On the one hand, school must be open to society, in order to form individuals capable of leading to the development of society, on the other hand, society is an important dominant source in the foundation of curricular design.

From this perspective, the curriculum is required to be designed based on the prospecting of the evolution of society in order to prepare students to cope with and adapt to the society in which they live. Thus, it is necessary for the curricular objectives to aim at developing the capacity of pupils/students to put into practice the knowledge they have, the content of learning to be derived from the social life, relevant and in line with the current and prospective developments of the society, and the teaching activities also to bear the social mark, the students being involved in activities that involve cooperation, communication and problem solving.

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