

Art Teacher Qualification Model: A Multicompetence Perspective

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Introduction

The quality of the renewed models of art education could be understood as a result of phenomenal changes undergone in education, including art education, during the last several decades. The shifting of standards and the problem of educational assessment established in turn a demand for new art educators' training conceptions. Such an attitude of mind towards the problem is fair enough, because in order to pursue excellence in education, teachers' qualification should be high enough. Inasmuch as qualification consists of different roles, which art educators should fulfil, they should be orchestrated to the utmost extent.

The problem of art educators' multi-role activity as their professional identity is far from new. It is enough to mention the article by Marjo Räsänen published in a newly established *International Journal of Education through Art*, which reflects debates on various roles of art educators (Räsänen 2005). The author describes the results of both case studies and artistic action research and provides theoretical support to ways, in which art educators can integrate different roles in their pedagogical activities. Four roles have been singled out there: those of an artist, teacher, researcher, and cultural worker. As distinct from them, the task of this study is to create a framework of six art educator competences and five roles.

The present work is divided into three parts. The first part is devoted to development of some principles related to the theory of art educators' multiple roles (TAEMR) at school, the second part is connected with the problem of multi-role art education framework, and some perspectives of multi-competence education of pre-service art teachers are discussed in the third part.

Towards the theory of art educators' multiple roles at school

The development of artistic activities at school has borne rather solid results and presupposed some possibilities to elaborate the TAEMR. At the same time, changing teaching standards raised the need to elaborate some principles of the theory, which should be revealed as fully as possible: 1) artistic activities at school, 2) art educators' roles, 3) art educators' competences, which they obtain from higher schools, and 4) the competences pupils are taught. The said aspects indicate that efficiency of such a theory depends on interrelation of competences of both teachers and pupils. Hence formulation of the initial principles of the TAEMR is a matter of great relevance to art educators' community.

1. The first issue that meets one's eye is prevalence of the experience in one artistic field while investigating art teachers' roles at school. On the one hand, such prevalence is no wonder present due to particularities of separate arts being different and distinctive yet. But, on the other hand, arts and, consequently, separate disciplines of art education are closely related by many aspects and here lays the foundation of their unity. Take, for example, understanding of the role of art for growing generations, goals and tasks of art education, or the vision and mission of artistic activities at school—they are highly familiar matters for teachers of all artistic fields. Therefore the TAEMR would be more complete if it were based on both particular qualities of different arts and common features of art education. This assumption leads to the principle of *the totality of artistic activities at school*. There is no doubt that the best results could be achieved only by coordinating endeavours of all art teachers at school. A systematic theoretical approach to aesthetic education has been elaborated by some educationalists in the late 1980s. It is worthwhile to notice that one of the most advanced conceptions in this field, the comprehensive art curriculum model developed by Bennett

Reimer, was just entailed by the idea that each art “manifests specifically and distinctively that which is common to all” (Reimer 1989, 6).

Systematic presentation of artistic activities should help both art education theorists and practitioners to gain artistic confidence. It also inspires them for better understanding of art educators’ roles in education of students as well as encourage their intention to seek the knowledge we need for educating ourselves. Lastly, the proposed renewed frame of art educator competences allows them to develop both curricula and their own vision.

2. The second element manifested through art educators’ work is a frame of their roles. The fact that art educators should be education people of vast dimensions and should not restrict their work, say, only by goals of artistic achievements, was oft noticed. John Goodlad has already suggested during the early 1990s that general education of art teachers should be emphasised much more. He puts it this way: “One of my proposals (...) is that arts educators become more deeply involved in pre-service teacher education generally, not just in the preparation of those who will teach music, drama, or the visual arts in schools.” (Goodlad 1992, 209). The problem of coordination and even integration of art educators’ roles is attempted to solve in the latest publications. So M. Räsänen tried to unify four roles: those of a cultural worker, teacher, artist, and researcher (Räsänen 2005). Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that to perform such an amount of roles in a qualified level is not an easy task for art educators, there is hesitation that even these roles reflect far less than all the variety of educational activities. First of all, a highly important role that teachers, especially art educators, have to pursue, and which cannot be passed by paving the way for the TAEMR, is the most successful exercise of management. After all, success of pedagogical activities, like captainship, depends to a certain extent on educator qualities of management or even leadership. Teachers of all art fields have to be good enough managers in order to implement the goals of the lesson, develop informal artistic activities or arrange an exhibition, concert, performance as successfully as possible. This especially concerns educators of performing arts. The work of music teachers with a choir or group of musicians like the work of dance or drama teachers could hardly be successfully pursued without manager abilities. At last, in order to open an exhibition or carry out a community-based project it is necessary to have at least some skills of manager work.

There are numerous books written on management at all levels within schools and in particular to anyone leading or managing teams. Many elements of team management are also valid for arts education practice, although the management of children’s artistic activities has some specific features. One of the newest issues on the topic, the book by Jeff Jones (2004), has demonstrated the importance of management at school more than assuredly. The main idea of this book is that a skilful team leader can create a culture of success, and it is a vital element of school success in general. This idea ideally supports the activities of art educators, especially when they are ambitious enough and seek to pursue the role of cultural workers as successfully as possible. Summarising this discussion it is possible to formulate the second important principle of the TAEMR – *the wholeness of art educators’ roles at school*.

3. There is one more question that needs to be discussed while speaking about general theoretical principles. I have in mind the interrelation of art educators’ roles. Probably a few will argue the relevance of this question. It is doubtless that the more correlative the links among the roles are, the better understandable their whole system is, also the more definite the place of the roles in a context of school work,

the more obvious the status of art educators in school. M. Räsänen has already made an important step in this direction. High significance lies, for example, in her insight that a more appropriate professional identity of art educators could be achieved by involving the artistic action research into the educational process. She generalises her findings by the implication that action research in the context of art education “might help art teachers to recognise how the artist, teacher and researcher roles overlap” (Räsänen 2005, 61-62). We see that action research can both increase the role of the researcher and integrate it with other two roles, i.e. those of the teacher and artist. At the same time, the latest observations indicate that the potential of the researcher role, if exploited more extensively, could be much greater and help art educators to fulfil significantly vaster activities. But this problem will be discussed further a bit later, in the next part. Now the issue of role integrity should be drawn to the end.

For higher integrity of art educators’ roles it is possible, to my mind, to make one more step forward and try to include into this range the manager role, too. It is known that the ability to be an efficient team leader is important enough and can impact, along with artistic activity, the interrelation of different roles, such as artist, teacher, researcher, and cultural worker. It also seems that the process of both research and management of art education can significantly advantage the role of a cultural worker (which is still not easy adaptable for some art educators) and integrate it far stronger into the framework of multiple roles. So the third principle, although its importance should still be validated in the future, could be already formulated as *the integrity of art educators’ roles at school*.

The formulated principles can serve as a baseline for further investigation of art educators’ roles by various aspects. One of the most important facts of the TAEMR taken could be the problem of better understanding of the art educator roles framework.

Towards a framework of art educators’ roles

Art educators’ roles at school differ by various aspects, and they could be classified both by coordination and subordination principles. First of all, the said five art educators’ roles (artist, teacher, cultural worker, researcher, and manager) are quite convenient to divide according to their character into two parts, i.e. *direct* and *indirect*. The three former roles, namely, artist, educator, and cultural worker, could be ascribed to the direct part, because they directly impact the development of appropriate schoolchildren competences. The other two roles – those of researcher and manager – are considered as indirect, since their main function is complementary to the three former roles and have no indirect influence on schoolchildren competences.

A systemic approach enables to single out some sub-roles in different direct and indirect roles, i.e. every art educators’ role could be accompanied by some sub-roles. But they are often hidden and, therefore, their influence on schoolchildren competences is mostly secondary. Say, during the media art teaching the basic role of art educators is to teach the artistic mode of thinking. But at the same time pupils’ competence in digital technologies is developed and it manifests itself as a sub-role of the artist role. To articulate when and what role of every art educator could have sub-roles would be a long way and deserves to be analysed in a separate paper. Here it was important to take a look at the big picture of the motley framework of different art educators’ roles. I restrict, therefore, myself here by the task to characterise concisely only direct

and indirect parts of the multi-role framework.

1. The direct roles are closely linked to art educator status. The concept "art educator" by its nature is twofold, and is therefore ambivalent. This means that every art educator is both an artist and educator and his or her primary task is to teach the mode of artistic thinking. Such twofold art educators' status is justified by the history of education, because disciplinary modes of thinking are accepted universally. Appropriately school teaching and learning is based on the scholarly disciplines all over the world. Of course, far not every pupil likes such a way of schooling, and scholarly disciplines could be criticised by discontents for numerous defects. However, the better way of education of the growing generation is not invented so far. To teach mathematical, historical, scientific or artistic mode of thinking is an essential task for teachers – trained specialists of different disciplines. In the view of H. Gardner, the scholarly disciplines should be considered even as the most important invention of past-2000 years (Gardner 2004, 137). That is why the mode of artistic thinking by means of music, dance, drama, and visual arts, as distinctive for every kind of art, can be changed neither by different disciplines, nor by different roles. Accordingly artist and educator roles should be "marked" by the sign of priority.

Taking into consideration the fact that members of the arts family are in an unequal situation, ontological and semiotic criteria were used to form the taxonomical structure of both artistic areas and systems of artistic languages and the received structure was linked with the competences of art teachers. The investigation is particularly focused on several points: on the peculiarities of presentational and non-presentational arts, on the ways of artistic embodiment, on changing limits of art, on art-like and non-art phenomena as well as their correlations. Appropriately the frame of art teachers' vocational competences, which could encompass the main artistic areas (visual arts of two- and three-dimensional medium, literature and music, theatre and dance) was designed. The straightforward task of every art educator at school is to fulfil the roles of artist and teacher, that is to teach pupils a mode of artistic thinking.

Why, then, art teachers' role of a cultural worker should be considered as basic alongside to the artist and teacher roles, too? The answer to this question could be found in a cultural context of contemporaneity. Rapidly changing cultural values have resulted in the situation where the contemporary culture is not able to prevent pupils from being involved in a good deal of trouble. On the other hand, committed art teachers as cultural educators are likely candidates to carry out a lot of functions, from multi- and trans-cultural to micro- and macro-cultural education, from moral and civil to patriotic and religious education, and the like. The size of art educators' arena is highly diverse and they have strong enough potentials to create institutions that could embody cultural and ethical principles. So the role of an art educator as a cultural worker is to my mind of special interest and should be anchored significantly more substantially at school as well as in the community and at least to be equal to that of social workers and/or psychologists.

2. Researcher and manager roles of art educators, at least nowadays, are as indirect more suitable to be considered. Such position of theirs is determined first of all by their complimentary purposes, however, such a situation by no way decreases their importance.

The idea that, for example, *action research* could be of significant benefit while fulfilling artist and teacher roles and could even help art educators to recognise how artist, teacher and researcher roles overlap, has already been underlined above. To my mind the researcher role, especially when based

on *environmental research*, could coexist highly successfully with the cultural worker role. Recent investigations convince that contextual-based issues can determine the quality of art education and increase the competence of art teachers (Stokrocki 2004). Due to the fact that knowledge of contextual situations helps teachers to make the most appropriate decisions in particular circumstances and particular time, the understanding of arts education contexts also makes practices of teaching arts more effective. It is also known that teachers need to integrate into the educational process the knowledge of the socio- and psycho-cultural class, school environment, visual-physical, and community-based contexts. Teachers testify that context understanding leads to better knowledge of environmental needs and other individuals and makes the educational process more workable. Artistic activities of students, depending on the context, could vary from making high-quality artworks to the developing of the sense of beauty, whereas the electronic context reveals the tendency to use social criticism to explore such phenomena as sex or violence in the media. The best art education practices discovered during the research of various contexts insure art educators to improve the educational process and increase their ability to translate theory into practice more successfully. Consequently, both action and environmental research are able to a large extent to complement all art educators' basic roles: those of artist, teacher, and especially cultural worker.

The role of art teachers' manager competence is in some aspects similar to cultural worker competence. Although the literature on teacher management is as not yet voluminous, it is clear that successful day-to-day work in a classroom full of children to the greatest extent is determined due to the abilities of the teacher as leader. Inasmuch as art teachers' work alongside with the classroom also encompasses work with groups of dancers, singers, orchestra players, theatricals and so on, they have to demonstrate their leadership abilities in the daily lives of both the classroom and school and even larger cultural policy environment. The teacher leadership role also manifests itself while organising research. Hence the manager role of art educators, although prescribed to the category of indirect roles, can make positive impact on both the basic (artist, teacher, and cultural worker) and indirect (researcher) roles.

In order that both of the aforementioned principles of the TAEMR as well as direct and indirect art educators' roles could be implemented, art educators should firstly be competent enough for such activities. Tautologically speaking, in order to fulfil various roles a person has to be educated enough for that. So how should a curriculum be designed in order to teach future art teachers for multi-role activities? The answer to this question could be found by studying a tentative pre-service art educators' Master's (postgraduate) programme.

Towards a multi-competence education of pre-service art teachers

Following the anticipation that demands for art teachers will increase in the future, new conceptions of art teacher education (alongside with new standards of certification as well as preparation of new curricula) were raised. Moreover, such forms as theatre, dance and design education along with visual arts and music education occupy increasingly stronger positions in the curricula of schools today. Thus now such questions are crucial like in what direction art teacher qualification should be developed, what competences should contain the essence of their qualification, what kind of licensure standards should be set, and the like.

At the most general level, a curriculum based on proposed

theoretical construct should consist of such content, which could ensure pre-service art educators' sufficient competence to carry out all principal art teacher roles at school. The aforementioned presumption was one of the reasons that encouraged the initiative to try to harmonize multiple competences of pre-service art educators. Thus there were six competences singled out, which constitute the core of art Masters' curriculum in the Institute of Cultural and Arts Education at Vilnius Pedagogical University. They are as follows: studio art, media art, art didactics, art education research, cultural awareness education, and arts education management. Appropriate study modules devoted to acquisition of the said competences are compulsory for all pre-service art teachers as Master students of various artistic specialities: music education, visual arts education, dance education, and drama education.

It seems that the enumerated competences encompass fully enough the main roles in which skilled art teachers should be experienced. Accordingly, taking into consideration the nature of the university work, several modules were singled out for each competence. A descriptive variant of competences as well as modules to be mastered by pre-service art teachers during two-year Master's studies could be summarised as follows:

1. *Studio art competence*: Artistry Education, Artwork Analysis, Art Didactics.
2. *Media art competence*: Contemporary Media Art, Media Art Didactics, Multimedia Art Project.
3. *Art education competence*: History of Arts Education, Contemporary Art Didactics, Special Art Education.
4. *Arts education research competence*: Qualitative and Quantitative Research, Planning the Research, Research Data Processing.
5. *Cultural/artistic awareness education competence*: Cultural Studies, Psychology of Culture and Art, Contemporary Conceptions of Arts Education.
6. *Art education management competence*: Contemporary Management of Education, Leading the Artistic Team, and Art Management in School.

The main goal of the proposed curriculum is an attempt to find a way to optimal accord among separate competences of art educators and base it as a ground for the Master's course level. Of course, not all competencies, which pre-service art teachers get during Master studies, have equal opportunities at school. Say, the roles of the educator, researcher and manager are not directly linked with the competences that pupils should obtain. The prior thing they are to do is to increase to a certain extent the possibility to develop pupils' competences such as artistic thinking, cultural awareness and informational communication or know-how to learn. Meanwhile the competence of a cultural worker and appropriately the role of a cultural worker at school are directly addressed to develop the competence of pupils' cultural awareness by involving them into traditions and cultural life at large.

Due to the fact that pre-service art educators have started to learn the new curriculum only this academic year, the proposed blueprint of their multiple competences education cannot be fully supported by empirical data yet. Nevertheless, a preliminary discussion on the topic with art education Master students indicates that quite many of them appreciate, at least during the beginning of their classes, such multiple competence approach as a relevant way to acquire adequate professional qualification.

Conclusions

Changing teaching standards and ways of teaching/learning, on the one hand, and thickening fields of literacy as well as entrenching paradigms of cultural life as a whole, on the other hand, entail in turn changing teacher, including art educator, roles at school. Since the art teacher qualification model, as a central element between pre-service teachers' institutions and schools, could be developed more successfully when based on appropriate principles, the necessity for an appropriate theory of art educators' multiple roles (TAEMR) has risen. Consequently, in order to increase art teachers' professional identity, the following principles have been elaborated: (1) totality of artistic activity, (2) wholeness of art educators' roles, and (3) integrity of art educators' roles at school.

Taking into consideration that the size of art educators' arena is highly diverse and art educators have strong enough potentials both to work in various cultural institutions that could embody cultural and ethical principles and create new institutions of this kind, the role of the art educator as cultural worker becomes of special interest and, consequently, should be anchored at school as well as in the community significantly more substantially and at least to be in an equal position with those of social workers and/or psychologists.

Since art educators' roles are underway according to the needs of the contemporary culture and appropriate competences are expected, which could in turn be obtained only by specially arranged pre-service art teachers' curricula, the proposed art education Master courses are to bring concordance to the competences of art educators and the ones that should be developed in schoolchildren.

References

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