

## 9. SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF SCHOOL COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT IN PLASTIC EDUCATION CLASSES

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**Abstract:** *The article defines evaluation as a strategy for the development of school competencies in plastic education classes. Reveals the advantages of the criterion assessment through descriptors of the educational products, carried out based on the evaluation objectives through traditional and complementary evaluation samples.*

**Key words:** *evaluation, competencies, process, educational product, evaluation strategies*

### 1. Introduction

Evaluation should be conceived not only as a control of knowledge or as a means of objective measurement, but as a path of improvement, involving a comprehensive strategy of training. The evaluation operation is not an over-added or superimposed stage of the learning process but is an integrated act of pedagogical activity. Evaluation of the teaching-learning process has a formative and stimulating role. Knowing the results implies explaining them by the factors and conditions that generate them, as well as predicting the likely results in the following sequences of the didactic activity. Evaluation detects and stimulates students' success, but not their failure.

Thus, at present, the object of evaluation of plastic education in school is the individual school results of the child. The evaluation of plastic education will not only be limited to the appreciation of the students' plastic works but will also extend to the cognitive and affective fields. In the evaluation process, students' attempts to express their own visions and communicate through the plastic image will be stimulated [2]. Thus, plastic education contributes to the development of openness and tolerance, promotes individuality, supports personal confidence, stimulates creative expression, and improves children's academic performance.

### 2. Discussions

I. Nicola (2003) mentions: „The pedagogical evaluation aims at the efficiency of education through the relationship between the projected objectives and the results obtained by the students in the learning activity. It is carried out by the teacher through appropriate didactic strategies and consists in the formulation of value judgments regarding the results obtained by the students in the educational process.” [7]. In the context of education reform, the assessment of the level of training and development of school skills should focus on the following *principles*:

- evaluation is a permanent process in any educational establishment;
- evaluation stimulates learning, training and skills development;

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- the evaluation focuses on the need to compare the preparation of students with the specific objectives of each educational field and the operational ones of the educational activity;
- the assessment is based on state educational standards: what will know, what will know how to do and how will the student be;
- the assessment uses various forms, methods, and procedures in assessing school results;
- evaluation is a regulatory process, which indicates the quality of educational activities;
- the assessment should lead students towards self-assessment and continuous improvement of their performance for a quality and successful life [7].

Art today is viewed differently, because it generates ideas, conveys values, and evokes emotions. Today's children will constitute the future public of museums, exhibitions, and performances, they will also become adults with the artistic taste formed and will contribute to the change, and improvement of the environment of life. The role of plastic education in the development of the younger generation cannot be overstated; only through positive learning experiences through art, students develop their visual skills, which will allow them to observe and perceive the surrounding world. Thus, school evaluation should be viewed as an integral part of the curriculum, which produces effects on students, teachers and other educational agents, on responsible decision-makers in the educational process and not as an activity juxtaposed to teaching and learning. Evaluations of students performance in plastic education will focus on efficiency standards, specific competencies, key competencies, and transdisciplinary competencies.

*The basic function of plastic education* consists of culturing and educating the artistic sense. This discipline is not aimed at training a professional artist. In this context, it is important that the evaluation focuses on the degree of participation, effort, motivation, the creative idea selected by the student, the expressiveness and originality in the presentation, etc. For the evaluation of artistic-plastic skills, it is recommended to apply all types of evaluation and traditional and complementary evaluation methods. The role of the evaluation consists in ensuring permanent and appropriate feedback, necessary for the representatives of the educational process and decision-makers. In the educational process of teaching-learning evaluation, the evaluation component occupies an important place in professional and social activity. The modern approach to assessment as a learning activity is recommended as a priority. The evaluation process will focus on recognizing learning experiences and skills acquired by students in non-formal or informal settings. The evaluation of the school results in plastic education in the primary stage will be focused on the positive principle of evaluation:

- Assessment identifies and stimulates student success;
- Assessment does not focus on school failure;

In order to design the evaluation process and develop evaluation tools for plastic Education, the teacher must select the relevant product(s) from the list of recommended ones (it is also allowed to propose an optional product) in accordance with the competence units subject to evaluation, by correlating with the learning content and recommended learning and evaluation activities.

*The guide for the implementation of the curriculum for primary education* [4] proposes suggestions for the evaluation of the school products recommended in the curriculum, which have a generalizing character, and allow the realization of a wide spectrum of plastic works, individual/collective compositions, etc. Thus, the following products are provided:

- plastic works and compositions made using various materials, tools, and art techniques,
- plastic work using colored pencils,
- plastic work using watercolor/gouache,
- plastic work using color as a plastic language element,
- plastic work using points/lines,
- plastic work using the form as a plastic language element,
- plastic composition,
- a composition in natural materials,
- team collaboration, etc.

For the assessment of artistic-plastic competencies the curriculum implementation guide for primary education [4] recommends applying all types of assessment (initial–predictive assessment; formative – continuous assessment; summative–final assessment) and traditional and complementary assessment methods.

- ***The initial assessment*** will be carried out at the beginning of the school year/semester, in order to determine the levels of students' acquisition in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities. It does not have the role of control, but is used to know the cognitive behavior of the student and whether he has the necessary preparation for the educational process (knowledge, capabilities, skills, etc.). The results of the initial evaluation will be capitalized in order to streamline the teaching-learning-evaluation process. Taking into account the formative character of the initial evaluation, it will be taken into account the consecration and value of the evaluation types that stimulate the student through permanent feedback from the teacher.

- ***The (continuous), formative evaluation*** involves the permanent verification of the results, throughout the training process, usually operating on small sequences. It is the essential type of assessment that is currently being opted for. Correctly integrated into the educational process, formative assessment is a way of evaluation and at the same time a work strategy. It aims at systematic and continuous knowledge of current results and student progress. Respecting the meanings of these evaluation strategies, three types of formative evaluation are distinguished: *interactive formative evaluation; punctual formative evaluation; phased formative evaluation*. The formative assessment offers the teacher the possibility of immediate intervention and allows the application in optimal time of corrective measures, which modify the results of students in the desired sense. It is applied at the end of the study of some units of content and can be carried out at least once a month. From the list of school products recommended in the Curriculum, the formative assessment can be used: *plastic work, using the elements of plastic language, plastic composition, Poster etc.*

- ***The (final) summative assessment*** is designed and carried out at the end of a significant learning path (school year, semester, training stage). It relates to the competency units and content units designed for the given semester/year and is made on the basis of recommended school products, by designing topics that cover the entire thematic area addressed.

### **3. Results**

The practical control works or tests proposed to the students for the summative assessment will contain tasks or items from all the learned matter up to the time of the sample administration. Evaluation samples will be developed based on discipline standards, and measurement-evaluation grids will be applied for verification, in order to achieve an objective evaluation. Teachers will establish evaluation criteria that will be formulated based on the content taught, and students will be familiar with them in advance. Semi-annual summative assessments can be both practical (plastic works) and oral/written. Evaluation of practical work can culminate in an exhibition in the educational institution. Oral (written) assessment samples may include projects, tests, and essays related to initiation in the history of Fine Arts, artistic and cultural phenomena etc.

The results of the students 'evaluation in the discipline „Plastic education”, within all the mentioned evaluation strategies, will be evaluated based on criteria and descriptors. Because the basic function of plastic education in the general school is the culturing and education of the artistic sense, but not the formation of a professional artist, it is important that the evaluation focuses not so much on professionalism in the realization of the works, but on the degree of participation, effort, motivation, creative idea selected by the student, originality in presentation etc.

#### **Criteria for evaluating educational products**

***Plastic works*** (pictorial/graphic/decorative/sculptural):

- Realization of the subject;
- Representation of plastic images on a flat surface;
- Correct use of materials and techniques specific to drawing/ painting / decorative art;
- Obtaining plastic compositions based on realistic and abstract concepts of creating plastic images;
- Demonstration of special skills in the field of Fine Arts;
- Expressiveness and originality of plastic work;
- Individual-creative attitude

#### **Written works**

- Knowledge of artistic phenomena;
- Perceiving the evolution of the Arts in various historical periods;
- Analysis of works of Fine Art;
- Argumentation of one's own views in the field of Fine Arts;
- Perception of the dominant emotional background of the work;
- Perceiving the means of expression through which the plastic message is rendered;
- Awareness of the artistic vision of the author highlighted in the work;

- Individual attitude towards the plastic message [6].

In this context, says A. Britchi [2], the evaluation of *Plastic education* will not be limited only to the appreciation of the plastic works of the students, but will also extend to the cognitive and affective field. In the evaluation process, students' attempts to express their own visions and communicate through the plastic image will be stimulated. Thus, plastic education contributes to the development of openness and tolerance, promotes individuality, supports personal confidence, stimulates creative expression and improves children's academic performance. The evaluation will be carried out based on the evaluation objectives through traditional evaluation samples:

#### **Written Test (Test)**

A *test* is a methodological tool used in experimental investigation being a standardized assessment criterion or an objective scientific evaluation criterion. Tests differ from each other by several features. In plastic education, criterion tests and knowledge tests stand out. Criterion tests determine whether the student satisfies a criterion, knowledge tests are also called knowledge tests, which in turn, differ according to the underlying criterion: knowledge tests based predominantly on memory; knowledge tests based predominantly on thinking.

#### **Oral evidence ( dialogue, discussion)**

*Dialogue* is the mode of exposure that renders the direct conversation between the student teacher (several students), the exchange of opinions for the purpose of detailed research of a problem. The role of the dialogue is to give dynamism and to characterize the characters indirectly.

*Discussion* is an animated conversation at odds over a topic or theme. The advantages of this school product lies in the direct interaction of the student with the teacher, the possibility of alternating questions depending on the quality of the answer and the possibility of justifying/arguing the answers.

**Practical test (practical work)** that will prevail in the given discipline

*The plastic work* is the result of the exercises in practical activities with the application of plastic language elements and means of plastic expression, as well as art techniques. Plastic work can be created as a result of playing exercises, applying spontaneous colored spots, obtaining spontaneous forms by directing, blowing, pressing, using various processes such as monotypes, joining lines with points, reproducing spatial forms, etc.

*Plastic composition* (graphic, decorative, etc.) is the harmonious Organization of plastic language elements (points, lines, shapes, color) in a plastic space, built according to certain principles, which express the content of the work and make up its integrity and create a unitary form. In order to make the plastic composition, the student must know the elements of plastic language, specific means of expression, art techniques and materials, and compositional laws: rhythm, balance, symmetry, etc. The plastic composition can be figurative or abstract. The traditional evaluation samples allow the teacher to evaluate the cognitive and psychomotor domain and less the affective one, for this purpose, the complementary evaluation samples will be used: the project, the poster, the exhibition, the self-evaluation, the portfolio, etc.

*The project* represents „a complex evaluation method, individual or group, recommended to teachers for summative evaluation”. The elaboration of the project

takes a longer period of time (a few days or a few weeks) and can be individual or group work load. In the use of this method, the following steps go through:

1. Setting themes for the project (students can also be involved, if they are already familiar with this type of activity).
2. Establish and specify the period of implementation of the project.
3. Familiarizing students with the specific requirements of developing a project.
4. Activity planning (individual or group)
  - formulation of project objectives;
  - formation of groups of students (if applicable);
  - distribution / choice of subject by each student/group of students;
  - distribution/assumption of responsibilities by each member of the group;
  - identification of documentation sources.
5. Conducting research / data collection.
6. Production of products/materials.
7. Presentation of the results/Project.
8. Project evaluation.

Evaluation of the project involves both reporting on the quality of the product, and on the quality of the process, the work of the student. In this regard, it is necessary for the teacher to formulate clear criteria that ensure an objective assessment, and to communicate them to the students. The results are recorded in the monitoring chart.

**Poster** is a way of presenting a communication in the form of posters within the framework of a plastic education lesson. It is a decorative poster that contains images and notions with a clear and visible subject. The poster, as a school product, is recommended for the module why we love fine art. This is how posters with the theme will be evaluated: branches, genres of Fine Art, Masters and masterpieces, etc.

**The exhibition** (personal/collective) is an organized, public presentation of works of fine art, selected products (plastic works, plastic compositions) in order to shed light on the specifics of an activity. The teacher, together with the students selects the plastic works of a student (personal exhibition) or a group of students (collective). The exhibition can become an important cultural event that can be admired by both the school community, teachers, parents, while being a school product recommended for final evaluation.

**The portfolio** is a complete evaluation tool, which includes the relevant results obtained by the other evaluation methods and techniques. These results are oral, written and practical samples, as well as specific tasks for plastic education. It is also a means of valuing the student's work and a factor in the development of his personality.

**Self-evaluation** is an alternative/ complementary evaluation method that is provided on any type of evaluation in the context of criteria assessment by descriptors, but also an important format capacity. In order to develop the self-assessment capacity in students, the following procedures are recommended that require guidance from the teacher: *self-correction*; *mutual correction*; *self-assessment*; *mutual appreciation*. The formation of self-assessment capacity in students is closely related to the idea of accepting students as partners in the act of

evaluation. Students thus participate in their own training, get to know each other better, which is useful for their entire social life. In the framework of plastic education, the student evaluates his own capabilities, appreciating the results in learning activity. Self-assessment is important for the formation in students of realistic images of their possibilities and limits.

### **Conditions necessary for effective self-assessment**

- presentation of the work load (product) and success criteria;
- encourage students to ask questions about how to accomplish the task (awareness of the criteria);
- controlled application of self-checking grids;
- encouraging evaluation within the group or class (mutual evaluation);
- filling out a questionnaire (self-assessment sheet) upon completion of a relevant work task.

The following reflective self-assessment techniques can be applied in the lessons [6]:

1. Reflection as a means of forming self-esteem of schoolchildren of young school age. Types of reflection: reflection about the emotional state. The student announces about his emotional state with the help of muzzles with stylized drawings;
2. Reflection about activity. The success scale can be used to assess activity.
3. Reflection about content.

Evaluation methods are recommended: personal progress tracking, systematic observation, self-evaluation, inner-evaluation, project realization, portfolio composition, maintenance of work Maps, collections of art reproductions, etc. The evaluation process will focus on the recognition of learning experiences and skills acquired by students in the non-formal or formal environment. It is recommended to evaluate the plastic works on the basis of criteria known to students or on the basis of evaluation grids that follow processes of making a final product over a longer period of time. The assessment tests administered to students will contain items from the following areas:

#### **1. Receiving:**

- The beautiful around us;
- Perception in fine art;
- The meaning of colors in art and nature;
- Materials, tools and techniques of Fine Art.

#### **2. Expression:**

- The alphabet of Fine Art;
- Plastic language elements;
- How to make a plastic work;
- Initiation into composition;
- Compositional structures;
- Chromatic organization;
- Topic-material-techniques correlation.

#### **3. Transfer:**

- Why we love fine art;
- Interests;
- Preferences;

- Appreciation/ self-appreciation;
- Individual-creative attitude.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Overall, classroom assessments will demonstrate whether the competencies expected in the curriculum for that class are formed at the end of the school year. At the end of the primary education through the examinations at the state level, it will be assessed whether the specific competencies are formed and whether the standards of competence in the discipline are reached. At the end of each chapter will be given one hour of synthesis, at the end of two chapters - two hours; three chapters, three hours of integration. The summative evaluation in each chapter will include content from previous chapters. The results of the students' evaluation in the discipline of plastic education, within all the mentioned evaluation strategies, will be evaluated based on criteria and descriptors.

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