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ABSTRACT
of PhD THESIS

**"DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSFERABLE COMPETENCES
THROUGH SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY EDUCATION"**

in Fulfillment for the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor in
Scientific Field:
2.3. Philosophy (Philosophy of Education)

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The dissertation has a total volume of 198 pages and consists of an introduction, four chapters, conclusion, appendix and bibliography. The bibliography contains 169 titles, 98 of which in Bulgarian, 59 in English, 8 in Spanish, 3 in Russian and 1 in German.

Keywords: philosophy, transferable competences, personal competence, social competence, educational practices

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INTRODUCTION

We live in a world shaped by the ideas, beliefs and values of human culture. Globalization and digitization make it increasingly diverse and dynamic. Almost unknown to us is how the complexity of the future will play out. Change is rarely linear and predictable. Therefore, it is increasingly urgent to educate our students to think independently, critically and creatively, to communicate and work in teams, to be flexible and adaptable, and to develop transferable competences. In the ocean of information, studying philosophy helps one to build authenticity, to make sense of one's own behavior, and to make informed choices. This attitude is far from the relativism born of selfishly understood freedom, from the conformist "nothing depends on me", and from the consumer attitude cultivated in the media. It is rooted in the deep and meaningful awareness of the principles and values of European spirituality.

One of the objectives of the vision for a European Education Area is to promote and develop competences as a condition for full personal, social and professional development. (*Recommendations of the Council of the European Union on key competences for lifelong learning*, 2018). The competence approach aims at the transition from purely theoretical knowledge to their practical mastery, to the formation of an attitude of self-actualization and shared values.

What is the contribution of philosophy to this new vision of education? On the one hand, it is knowledge, introduces into cultural traditions and classical problems in the history of philosophy, but it is also a skill, practical wisdom, questions and answers about identity, actions and consequences. It is also an attitude open to discovery, creativity, sharing ideas and respect for the diversity of life as well. In this perspective, the development of transferable competences and the education of philosophy are closely linked activities. In this context, teaching philosophy should be an "exciting journey" (Gherdjikov, 2019: 10), because when the emotion is engaged, the inclination and the attitude are different, the learning changes, it becomes meaningful, and it transformed into a process.

Subject of research

Object of the study of the dissertation is the education of philosophy in the high school in Bulgaria. *The subject* of research of the dissertation is the key problems and possible solutions related to the application of the competence approach in philosophy education.

Aim and objectives of the research

The dissertation is a theoretical and empirical research, *the aim* of which is an analysis of the legal framework, goals and activities in the education of philosophy in the first high school stage in connection with the practical application of a model for the development of transferable key competences.

The subject, the aim and the gained practical experience as a teacher of philosophy and civic education determine the objectives.

- 1) To analyze the main scientific and practical-applied positions on the philosophical-didactic concepts "teaching", "learning" and "educating". This includes the mechanisms, processes and models that regulate learning and point to didactic and pedagogical practices applied in school. Knowing these mechanisms, we can specify guidelines for the development of students' competence to acquire lifelong learning skills.
- 2) To critically analyze the two main sources as texts of the legal framework related to education in philosophy and curriculum in high school - the main vision of the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament on the competence approach, and the legal framework in Bulgaria - *Law on Preschool and School Education*, state educational standards, regulations and curricula.
- 3) To analyze the shared experience of researchers, teachers, and representatives of educational institutions in connection with educational strategies, policies and programs, innovative approaches, methodologies, standards, and practices in the application of the competence approach in the Bulgarian educational system.
- 4) To analyze the concept of emotional intelligence and the *LifeComp* conceptual framework on its applicability as a model of educational practices for the

development of transferable personal and social competences of first grade high school students in philosophy education.

- 5) To use the research in the development, implementation and analysis of innovative learning resources aimed at developing of transferable key competences through philosophy education.
- 6) *To share experiences of educational practices*, which put the student in the situation of an active participant in the educational process, with an emphasis on the affective¹ aspect of transferable competences - formation of values, civic position, social skills and positive educational attitude.

In the last twenty years, since the definition of the key competence of Rychen, Salganik, (2001: 5)² was known, many studies have been done in this direction. Since 2020, the Ministry of Education and Science has introduced the discipline "Competence approach and innovation in education" for teacher qualifications. There is almost no scientific literature that bridges the gap to philosophy. The problem of the practical application of the competence approach in teaching philosophy in Bulgaria has hardly been researched.

Transferability is an essential feature of all key competences. This research focuses on personal and social competence. The last chapter presents innovative educational resources and practices that apply the competence approach for the development of transferable competences in philosophy education.

Personal, social and learning to learn competence identified as a key in 2018. That is why the European Commission and the Council of European Union launched the development of a conceptual model as a reference framework for this competence. *LifeComp* (2020)³. The *LifeComp* framework is the result of a solid research methodology, which, however, has not yet been adapted and tested in practice. The authors expect feedback from realized educational practices both from the horizontal nature of this contribution (its transferability

¹The division of affective and cognitive aspect was made by Dafov, V., Mitrentseva, M., Petrova, S. Study of assessment in the subject cycle "Philosophy" in IX-XI grade.

²Rychen, D., Salganik, L. (2001). The Definition and Selection of Key Competence. OECD

³Sala, A., Punie, Y., Garkov, V., Cabrera, M., (2020) *LifeComp*. The European Framework for Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

in different areas of knowledge and realization) and as an experience related to social and emotional education (2020: 16).

Thus formulated, *personal, social and learning to learn competence* are not present in the legislation in Bulgaria. The *Law on Preschool and School Education* was promulgated in 2016, two years before the updated *Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning of the Council of European Union* of 2018 replaces the 2006 Recommendation.

The dissertation outlines some important pedagogical and methodological approaches to teaching and learning; the normative framework relevant to the introduction and application of the competence approach in philosophy education is analyzed; presents the idea of emotional intelligence, linked to the conceptual framework *LifeComp*, as a basis for the development of transferable personal and social competence. Experience from the application of innovative educational resources and practices in philosophy classes is shared.

The formulated topic is philosophical and methodical, so space is given and examples are given from the current textbooks, which the Ministry of Education and Science has approved for work in philosophy classes, for development of basic cognitive and functional competences, transferable and applicable in other content. areas: *analysis of a philosophical text, creation of an analytical text, participation in a discussion, case analysis, project development and public presentation.*

The development of various techniques and activities in philosophy education, developing skills, knowledge and attitudes that are transferable in various spheres of life and civil society is not new to philosophy education. Methodological practices have been developed since the beginning of the democratic changes in Bulgaria, so the main ones are briefly considered in historical aspect.

The educational experience described and analyzed in the last chapter is applied in a new textbook in philosophy for tenth grade in English, as well as in three educational practices. After presenting specific examples of various interactivity for the development of key transferable competences with the help of the educational resource, three implemented educational practices are described and analyzed, the first with emphasis on personal competence development, the second with emphasis on social competence development and the third with emphasis on the development of civic competence.

Relevance of the surveyed problem

The relevance of the surveyed problem and the practical significance is related to the fact that the *Law on Preschool and School Education* takes into account the serious gap in the process of teaching the inclusion of students in various activities and the acquisition of specific skills that will be needed not only in professional realization, but also in the realization of life. In practice, the application of the competence approach in the Bulgarian education system is still in its infancy. The Ministry of Education and Science encourages all innovative models in this direction.

First, as an example of the relevance of the problem, it can be noted that in recent years there have been many initiatives related to the application of the competence approach. In the autumn of 2020, as part of the joint celebration of Clement's Days, the theme of the university-wide scientific conference was: "Dimensions of Competence." As a continuation of the shared experience in 2021, the topic of the international scientific conference was "Formation of Competences in the Modern Educational Reality". Also, in addition to the academic conference on "Assessment and Philosophy" in 2020, several round tables were held that are relevant to the topic: "Assessment in Philosophical Disciplines in High School" in 2019; "Competence training" in 2019; "The Spiritual Heritage of Humanity and the Personal Development of Learners" in 2021.

Second, *The Strategic Framework for the Development of Education, Teaching and Learning in the Republic of Bulgaria (2021-2030)* notes that in the 21st century the complex of life skills is "constantly expanding, dynamically changing and the need for social and emotional intelligence is growing. more tangible" (MES, 2021: 11). In the priority area №2 *Competences and Talents* the practical applicability of the educational content and the development of social and emotional intelligence are presented (MES, 2021: 21). This new emphasis in the Strategic Framework, which has not yet been specified, in the dissertation is linked to the conceptual framework *LifeComp* (2020) as a model for the development of personal and social competence.

Third, the updates of the revised *European Reference Framework for Lifelong Learning* in 2018 have not yet been reflected in the *Law on Preschool and School Education* in Bulgaria, which was promulgated two years earlier. Linking the newly formulated *personal competence* with *social competence* and *learning to learn competence* leads to the development of personal and social knowledge, skills and attitudes, which are the main

content of the subject philosophy. The curricula in philosophy for the first high school stage are oriented towards the acquisition of transferable competences, which is the basis for the development of good educational practices

The scope of the research

In the dissertation the competence approach is configured as follows:

First, the definition of the term "transferable competences" is based on official documents of the European Union and the relevant legislation in our country, which is critically analyzed. The question of the competence approach is: how philosophy education fits into the vision of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe for education, so the framework of critical analysis is the rules adopted and regulated as reference points for the development of European education, teaching and learning.

Second, the competence approach is considered primarily with regard to the teaching of philosophy in the first stage of high school. The issue is similar in the profiled study of philosophy in the second high school stage, so there is a place for it. But the scope of this dissertation is primarily the teaching of philosophy in the first high school stage, because it is mandatory and covers all students. There is also a place for citizenship education in the second stage of high school, which also covers all students, but only in the context of its relationship with the teaching of philosophy.

Third, the study of philosophy in connection with emotional intelligence as a personal resource for the development of transferable personal and social competence is studied. This guideline fits into the general idea of the competence approach and the *LifeComp* reference framework (conceptual model for *personal competence, social competence and learning to learn competence*). Each competence includes knowledge, skills and attitudes. And if the first two are well developed in educational models, attitudes are difficult to differentiate and define in order to be evaluated. Activities to increase emotional intelligence focus on attitudes in learning, which have a huge impact on building knowledge and skills. Philosophy cultivates attitudes toward reasoning, creativity and empathy. When philosophy is taught and learned as an engaging game and journey, it becomes an activity that also develops emotional intelligence.

Hypothesis

At the beginning of this study, the working hypothesis is as follows:

The application of a model for the development of transferable competences derived from the conceptual framework LifeComp in philosophy education in the first high school stage increases the level of personal and social competence of research participants and promotes the development of other key competence.

The hypothesis is bound by the following assumptions:

- 1) the offered educational practices and techniques for the development of emotional and social intelligence have *a complex impact* on the students and they accept them with interest and positive attitude;
- 2) as didactic techniques, the activities for development of transferable competences through emotional experience stimulate self-improvement, behavioral and *personal changes* in students, related to their development as independent, critical and creative thinking people;
- 3) the purposeful development of the emotional and social intelligence of the participants in the training leads to the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes for communication, cooperation, empathy and teamwork, increases the *transferable personal and social competence* of students and promotes the development of other key competences;
- 4) the development of personal and social competences *reflects on the building of the class as a community* and has a complex impact on the development of civic and intercultural competence of students, specific values, knowledge and skills.

Research Methodology

The research methods used are: theoretical analysis, analysis of author's teaching experience, and analysis of integrative educational practices.

1) Theoretical analysis

Basic concepts of the concepts "learning" and "teaching" are analyzed. The four principles of modern education of Jacques Delors and basic ideas of Ivan Pavlov, John Watson,

Edward Thorndike, Burrus Skinner, John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Albert Bandura, Jerome Bruner, David Ausubel, Jean-Paul Sartre, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rodgers. are presented.

Publications related to various theoretical and practical aspects of competency-oriented education are analyzed: Alexander Andonov, Veselin Dafov, Serghey Gherdjikov, Silvia Krasteva, Yana Rasheva-Merdjanova, Vasya Delibaltova, Maya Mitrentseva, Evelina Ivanova-Vardzhiyska. Nikoleta Nikolova, Svetla Petrova, Daniel Alexandrov.

A review and theoretical analysis of the documents relevant to the competence approach and philosophy education in high school, the most important of which are: *European reference framework on key competences for lifelong learning* of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe (2006 / 962 / EC) and its update (2018C / 189/01); *Law on Preschool and School Education*; Regulation №4 on the Curriculum; Regulation №5 on General Education; Regulation №7 on Profiled Education; Regulation №11 for Evaluation of the Results of the Students' Education; Regulation №13 on Civic, Health, Environmental and Intercultural Education; philosophy curricula for eighth, ninth and tenth grade.

Theoretical key concepts on the idea of emotional intelligence are traced: to dr. Howard Gardner, Peter Salovi and John Mayer, Daniel Gollman and the conceptual reference framework *LifeComp*.

2) *Analysis and summarization of own experience*

The teaching experience discussed here is complex. It includes observation, self-observation, discussions with students and professionals on didactic practices, self-knowledge, class development as a community, personal and social skills such as empathy, assertiveness, creativity, tolerance, emotional resilience, active listening, conflict resolution skills, work skills in a team, etc. Pedagogical experience from teaching at 145 SU "Simeon Radev", 157 High School for Foreign Languages "Cesar Vayeho" and the Second English Language High School "Thomas Jefferson" in Sofia was used.

3) *Implementation and analysis of integrative educational practices*

Opportunities are presented for the application of the competence approach in educational resources and practices applied in actual classes held at the Second English Language High School "Thomas Jefferson" - Sofia, with indicators of personal, social and citizenship competence.

The analysis and interpretation of the observed results after the conducted educational practices for development of transferable key competences are made on the basis of a set of indicators that are difficult to measure and quantify, but are derived from specific descriptors of current reference frameworks and can be described as specific. change in the behavior of those involved in the educational process.

SUMMARY OF THE DISSERTATION WORK

The dissertation analyzes the main content and practical aspects of teaching philosophy in high school, which are related to the development of transferable competences. In addition to the analysis of existing problems, the dissertation aims to apply a model derived from the *LifeComp* reference framework in innovative educational resources and practices.

The dissertation has the following structure: introduction, exposition (four chapters), conclusion, contribution summary, appendix and bibliography.

CHAPTER ONE

Approaches to teaching and learning

Chapter One introduces the four basic principles of modern education, formulated by Jacques Delors in the report to UNESCO "Education, the hidden treasure" (1997), which are the basis of the competence approach:

- 1) learning to live together;
- 2) learning to know;
- 3) learning to be;
- 4) learning to do.

Then basic concepts for learning and teaching are critically analyzed. Learning is a process that combines both personal experience and the influence of the environment. Theories of learning and teaching develop hypotheses that describe how this process takes place. They are the conceptual frameworks describing how information is assimilated, processed and stored, how knowledge and skills are memorized, how attitudes and beliefs are acquired and modeled. Modern theories of learning are strongly based on psychology, but also reflect philosophical principles. The works used are grouped in three main directions.

First, the main behavioral ideas of Ivan Pavlov, John Watson, Edward Thorndike and Burrus Skinner are presented. John Watson (1913: 158) suggests that psychology forget about the mind (thoughts, feelings, motives, ...) and focus on studying and analyzing primarily observable and measurable changes in behavior and the relationships between stimulus and response. Its representatives use research methods that are characteristic of the natural sciences to establish the particularity of learning. According to behaviorists, learning is directive. This means that the emphasis is on the role of teachers in the organization of the learning process and the transmission of information, rather than on the role of learners in the knowledge, learning and understanding of the material. The main goal is to change behavior, because effective training will in turn change the mental state and the development of the personality.

Behavioral theories of teaching and learning are often criticized for their mechanistic nature, as they reduce human activity to a chain of stimulus and reactions, without taking into account the internal processes that underlie this behavior. But they are often used as a tool for reporting results, as a technology for analyzing and changing behavior related to motivation and school discipline.

Second, the cognitive ideas of John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Albert Bandura, Leo Vygotsky, Jerome Bruner and David Ausubel were analyzed. Cognitive orientation has its roots in more rationalist approaches, and in it learning is understood as a change in an individual's potential ability to do something. Learning here is essentially an internal process that cannot be directly observed. The change that takes place in behavior is only a reflection of the internal change that has taken place in the person. Cognitive theories of learning relate specifically to human learning and suggest that there is an interaction between the individual (such as cognitive abilities - perception, imagination, thinking, memory, attention) and the environment. Knowledge is not the result of a simple copy of existing reality, but of a dynamic and integrative process through which external information is interpreted and reinterpreted by the mind, which gradually builds explanatory models each time more complex and powerful. An essential feature is that the trainees present themselves as active participants in the learning process, and not as passive recipients of the influences of the teachers.

Within the cognitive approach to learning, three relatively independent directions are distinguished. In one direction, more attention is paid to information processing processes.

The cognitive activity of the students is revealed through the rules and models of perception, storage and organization of information, through the use of strategies adequate to the circumstances of its selection, storage and implementation. In the concept of the second direction - social-cognitive, learning takes place actively through performance and directly through observation of modeled performances. In the third direction - constructivism, the thesis is defended that a person constructs knowledge about the world around him by creating a personal meaning, which is determined by past experience, motivation, mental states, features of social interactions, already formed cognitive schemes for interpretation of facts and events. According to constructivists, knowledge does not exist outside the context of the activity being performed, outside the conditions in which it is acquired (Schunk, 2014: 469).

The competence approach in education directly realizes the ideas of the constructivist vision of learning, in which the student actively constructs his own experience and reformes learning from theoretical-academic to practical skills, attitudes and knowledge that guide us throughout life.

Third, the humanistic ideas of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers are analyzed. Humanistic ideas and concepts contribute to spaces in which the other two paradigms (cognitive and behavioral) have not worked in depth, such as the socio-affective domain, motivation, and interpersonal relationships in the educational environment. From this position, the most important factors in the learning process and in achieving academic results are related to the disposition, expectations, attitude, will or interest of the student.

Its representatives assume that the human individual is reliable, with enormous potential and the ability to solve his own problems on the basis of positive, constructive and conscious choices. People are driven by one basic, dominant need – self-actualization. It means to develop one's potential, to reveal oneself, to realize oneself through "openness to experience", "existential life" and "trust in one's own self". The image of the person “who is constantly learning how to learn” (Rogers, 2019: 450) is conceptually close to *the key competence of lifelong learning*.

Some of the criticisms of the representatives of humanistic psychology and non-directive pedagogy are that they reduce the role of the teacher to the psychotherapeutic interaction with the students and absolutize the role of the immediate, sensory-emotional experience. They connect the professionalism in the pedagogical activity with the self-actualizing

teacher, who is creative and has a huge influence on his students. Their approach is subjective and not very scientific. It does not rely on strictly consistent tests that can be verified.

Setting goals to integrate the three main approaches is a difficult task, the concepts are at first glance incompatible. In modern education, the positive accents of each of the three main approaches are used, but at the same time weaknesses are noticed as a result of poor combination. The concept of behaviorism as a set of rules for measuring behavior that changes as a result of learning breaks down and fragments the idea of personal development, but provides a tool for reporting results. The transition from teaching to learning is the realization of the constructivist concept of learning and the idea that the student constructs his own understanding or knowledge through active interaction with what he already knows and has experienced. How to insert into this framework the humanistic idea of free will and dignity, which are laid down in the basic rules of the creation of the European Union?

In order to overcome these differences at the end of the 20th century, within the constructivist vision of education, it is proposed to shift the focus in education from teaching knowledge, from subject-oriented learning to one that is results-oriented, to develop learning skills. lifelong and problem-solving attitudes.

In this regard, the most important principles that guide modern education are:

- development of key competences;
- real application of what has been learned;
- involvement of students in the learning process;
- developing social skills;
- a holistic approach;
- stimulation of personal initiative.

These ideas, related to the analysis of normative documents, are discussed in the second chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

The competence approach and philosophy education

In *the second chapter* of the dissertation, *the normative framework* of the competence approach is analyzed - the competence approach is briefly presented in a historical context

and as a legal document of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. The normative documents in our country are analyzed in the context of the application of the competence approach in philosophy education - *Law on Preschool and School education*, state educational standards and philosophy curricula for the eighth, ninth and tenth grades of compulsory general education. Examples are given from textbooks and teaching aids in philosophy, in connection with the presentation of specific activities for the formation of functional and transferable competences, which train, model and develop competences as expected learning outcomes. Finally, some of the functions of the philosophical approach, building transferable competences, are presented.

Scientific discussions about competence in a behavioral, cognitive, general, holistic or phenomenological aspect and the models created on them are numerous and do not subside (Delibaltova, 2021: 117). Within the European Union, for educational purposes, competences are defined as "the complex unity of knowledge, skills, understandings, values, attitudes and motivation that gives rise to effective and engaged action in a specific context"⁴. This definition includes several key aspects of competence.

First, the idea of goal setting and measuring competences emerged as the antithesis of standardized intelligence tests (McClelland, 1973: 1-14). In this sense, competence mobilizes knowledge, not knowledge itself. It presupposes knowledge applied in *a specific context*, not inert, separated from the practical situation.

Second, *competence is interdisciplinary*, but does not exclude subject orientation, but integrates it. The subject-based approach to education and the transversality of competences occur simultaneously and coherently "interdisciplinary learning allows greater coherence between subjects"⁵.

Third, *competence is alive*. The competent "recognized as the personal growth itself, is revealed in the reality of creativity and the project subject" (Dafov, 2021: 66). That is why it is difficult to operationalize, because it is "life-giving", "vital", "living" (Dafov, 21: 70).

⁴Petrova, S. (2015). Results of Bulgaria's participation in the PISA International Student Assessment Program, p.17

⁵Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of Europe on key competences for lifelong learning (2018: 12).

Philosophy education is analyzed from the point of view of the specifics of educational practice, as a different aspect of the diversity of the process of personal growth and from this position, how it fits into the guidelines of educational standards.

Key competences for lifelong learning have been identified by the European Reference Framework of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union 2006⁶year and updated 2018⁷year.

Eight key competences are set out:

- 1) Literacy competence ;
- 2) Multilingual competence;
- 3) Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering;
- 4) Digital competence;
- 5) Personal, social and learning to learn competence;
- 6) Citizenship competence;
- 7) Entrepreneurship competence;
- 8) Cultural awareness and expression competence.

Each of the eight key competences is clearly defined. The specific knowledge, skills and attitudes included in it are indicated.

In order to be set as educational goals, practically implemented in educational systems and evaluated as achieved results, consensus conceptual frameworks for competences are developed with the help of the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

Reference frameworks have been developed *for literacy competence (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2001)*, for competences in the field of digital technologies (*DigComp, 2016*), for democratic culture (*Competences for democratic culture, 2016*), for entrepreneurial competence (*EntreComp, 2016*).

Personal, social and learning to learn competence is newly formulated, so the Joint Research Center (JRC) on behalf of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC) has launched the development of a conceptual framework for this competency *LifeComp (2020)*.

⁶Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of Europe on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962 / EC).

⁷Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of Europe on key competences for lifelong learning (2018C / 189/01).

An essential feature of key competences is their portability in different situations and contexts. For this reason, *personal, social and learning to learn competence* are not only key but also transferable competences. All key competences are interconnected and acquired in an integrated way through training in all subjects. The transversality of competences complements the subject-oriented approach set out in Regulation №5 *on General Education*, according to which specific subjects form the basis of each key competence.

In the second chapter, the general educational preparation in our country is analyzed, directly linked to the acquisition of the eight key competences from the Reference Framework of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. The concept is enshrined in the *Law on Preschool and School Education* and in the secondary legislation. Its inclusion in the curriculum for individual subjects makes it possible to emphasize those knowledge that are essential, from an integrative approach and orientation to the application of the acquired knowledge.

Normative documents are analyzed from the point of view of a teacher applying them every day in his educational practice. The normative-applied analysis aims to prove that philosophy, both in its content aspect and as practical activities for developing skills and attitude, supports the development of transferable competences in students. At the same time, observed difficulties and problems in the realization of the goals of philosophy education are shared.

In connection with the presentation of specific activities for the formation of functional and transferable competences, examples are given from textbooks and teaching aids in philosophy, which form, train and develop the expected results as competences of learning - *analysis of philosophical text, creation of analytical text, participation in discussions, case analysis, project work, public presentation*. We can find their transferability in several directions.

First, these activities *are not unique to philosophy*. They are used in all other subjects to develop transferable competences. What is specific to philosophy is the sources that are used for philosophical analysis and the way in which they are worked with.

Second, these practical activities develop transferable competences in *a way that is measurable by PISA*. Knowledge and skills can be used, integrated, mobilized not only in a philosophical context, but also in different, close to real situations.

Thirdly, the practical activities organized as a free discussion space, similar to the training models, have their *impact on the emotional aspect* of the competence structure - formation of values, attitudes, motivation and teamwork, responsible behavior and solving problem situations, independence, criticality and creativity.

These activities are used in the competence approach, but have been developed since the beginning of the democratic changes in Bulgaria, so there is a place for major contributions in a historical context.

At the end of the second chapter are presented some of the functions of philosophy as a general education subject, which are the basis for the formation of transferable competences – *communicative, interpretive, argumentative, critical, dialogical, creative and valuable*.

It is not included, but it is a consequence and unites all the others, the function on which Alexander Andonov emphasizes - "to ensure the spirituality that can preserve and maintain the achievements of self-creation, the subjectivity of human spirituality" (Andonov, 2021b: 73).

CHAPTER THREE

Emotional intelligence and the LifeComp conceptual framework

The third chapter analyzes the *LifeComp* conceptual framework (2020), which provides a toolkit for operationalizing competences that have been given different names over the years, such as "21st century skills", "life", "socio-emotional", "soft", "horizontal" or "transverse". These skills and attitudes are included as segmental characteristics of the other key competences, but in 2018, due to their growing importance, they are derived as a separate competence from the *Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning* (2018).

The creators of *LifeComp* (Sala, Punie, Garkov, Cabrera, 2020) identify and specify the competences that are included in *personal, social and learning to learn competence* and can be taught, developed and validated. The frame of reference has not been tested, analyzed and evaluated in practice in a specific context. The dissertation is an attempt to provide

feedback from the application of the frame of reference in educational resources and practices in the teaching of philosophy in schools.

In the second chapter, this competence is considered normatively, in the way it is defined in the *Recommendation* (2018) in the context of the overall analysis of the competence approach. The third chapter analyzes, first, historically as a development of the concept of emotional intelligence and second, as the specification of descriptors in the reference framework *LifeComp*.

In the dissertation, emotional intelligence is identified and described as a term that summarizes the education, cultivation and acquisition of a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are the basis for the development of transferable personal and social competence. This definition is an attempt to distinguish it from the popular and everyday use of the term, which provokes many contradictory scientific discussions and too broad interpretations.

Why do emotions need to be educated?

Firstly, *it is important to preventively develop a skill for dealing with negative emotions* – the individual's and those of other individuals' negative emotions: stress, worry, anxiety. The global COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on health, culture, politics and the economy have heightened the complexity and uncertainty of modern life (LifeComp, 2020: 8). Growing polarization and social tensions increase the need to develop emotional and social skills to achieve and protect the common good.

Second, *emotionally intelligent people are more successful*. Recent scientific findings in this field prove that it is not the high IQ that determines academic and professional results (Goleman, 1995: 55). Professions such as doctor, nurse, social worker, teacher, human resources, sales, marketing, management positions that are tied to social relationships require high levels of emotional intelligence. In recent years, so-called "soft skills" have been increasingly sought in relation to the professional profile, such as teamwork, flexibility, adaptability, empathy, communication and critical thinking.

Third, *there is a direct connection between emotions and the immune system*. More and more doctors consider the importance of emotions in the occurrence and development of diseases. Negative emotions are a risk factor that lowers the body's defenses (Bracett, Rivers, Salovey, 2011: 95). On the contrary, positive feelings have clinical benefits. This is

not to say that positive emotions are curative and reverse the course of illness, but they may play an important role in the set of variables that influence the course of illness.

Fourth, *a positive attitude is creative*. In fact, it could be argued that the primary purpose of education is to cultivate the building of a repertoire of cognitive and behavioral strategies and capabilities that help recognize the complexity of situations in order to respond in increasingly refined, complex, and creative ways. These processes of recognition and response form the interface between cognition and emotion and give rise to creativity—artistic, scientific, and technological innovation.

Fifth, *emotions give meaning to learning*. If students do not feel an emotional connection to the knowledge they learn in school, the academic content will seem emotionally meaningless. Even if they manage to regenerate the correct information, it will be empty and will not influence their decisions and behavior. A better knowledge of the emotional world and the correct management of emotions lead to more ethical behavior and develop the cognitive, emotional and value aspects of the personality in an integrated manner.

Emotional intelligence includes skills and attitudes grouped around two key competences: personal competence and social competence. Personal competence consists of skills for self-awareness and self-control that focus on individuality rather than interaction with other people. Social competence consists of skills in social consciousness and relationship management, improving the quality of relationships with others (Bradbury, Greaves, 2019: 35).

Emotional intelligence is not only the basis of personal and social competence, but is also the key to effective learning. In education, as well as in life, we remember that knowledge and acquire those skills that touch our heart, our dreams, our essence. Social and emotional skills cultivate an appropriate attitude and have their impact on the development of cognitive skills, academic results, success in life.

For most students, the development of social and emotional skills remains a matter of chance, depending on whether it is a priority for their teacher. Philosophy education is suitable for raising the level of emotional intelligence of students both as content and as a practical direction and attitude. The specific training of philosophy teachers also allows for the development of emotional intelligence in the classroom. The *LifeComp* conceptual framework is a suitable tool needed for practical application in a variety of contexts, as a

model for the development of emotional intelligence in contemporary education and in philosophy education.

CHAPTER FOUR

Educational resources and practices

In the fourth chapter, the possibilities of applying the competence approach in educational resources and practical activities are presented, and innovative practices are described, the structure, content and analysis of which are based on actual classes held in the Second English Language High School "Thomas Jefferson" - Sofia.

First, an educational resource implemented under a National Program at the *Ministry of Education and Science* for the creation of a textbook on a general education subject in a foreign language is analyzed. The resource consistently presents and provides examples of the development of all eight key competences through a variety of educational activities related to the teaching of philosophy in tenth grade, transferable in different contexts and situations: *literacy competence; multilingual competence; mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering; digital competence; personal, social and learning to learn competence; citizenship competence; entrepreneurship competence; cultural awareness and expression competence.*

Second, three innovative educational practices are presented: integrative educational practice, with an emphasis on the development of personal competence, is linked to one of the four pillars of the vision for 21st century education "*learning to be*"; the second, modeled on the flipped classroom, with an emphasis on the development of social competence is linked to the principle of "*learning to live together*" and the third, using a model of role play developing citizenship competence in students with the principle of "*learning to do*" .

"The competence approach is a permanent educational perspective, precisely because it is related to both the spiritual level and the pragmatics of individual human, social, communal and generic life" (Rasheva-Merjanova, 2021: 115).

After an analysis of tests used to report the level of emotional intelligence, an answer to the question of how to report progress - whether by using personality tests and/or by emotional intelligence questionnaires, the relevant conclusion is that in the field of education these tests cannot to be used for assessment, but are a basis for self-knowledge, self-reflection and

development of emotional and social competences. The development of the affective aspect of the competences – emotions, attitude, attitude, cannot be measured mathematically and standardized, but it has a powerful impact on the cognitive aspect of the competences, effectiveness and success both individually and in a community.

On the other hand, observation as a research method has been greatly undervalued at the expense of standardized tests and surveys, mass collected for empirical data. When using methods of quantitative measurement, only certain final results are revealed, and the process itself, motives, inclination, attitudes, i.e. qualitative characteristics remain unclear. This rehabilitates observation, and nowadays it is one of the most authoritative research methods in psychology and in pedagogical practice.

The descriptors in the *LifeComp* reference framework can be used for different purposes. As a tool for designing and applying in educational resources as a textbook in philosophy in English for tenth grade. They can also be used to assess the current level of mastery of these competences by students to identify knowledge, skills and attitudes for future development. In the dissertation they are used to present the results obtained from the application of the educational resource and the conducted educational practices. Dynamically occurring simultaneously, coherently and coherently as the development of personal, social and civic competence are described. Each element is equally necessary for the overall personal development.

On the other hand, educational practices are analyzed through the most important characteristics of the competence approach, which are defined in the second chapter: *development of key competences; real application of what has been learned; involving students in the learning process; developing social skills; holistic approach; stimulating personal initiative.*

The analysis of the obtained results from the use of the educational resource for bilingual education and the conducted educational practices for the development of personal, social and civic competence shows that the correctly conducted in methodological terms lesson for practical activities in philosophy, integrating elements of training models is a reliable form of training and development of key competence

CONCLUSIONS

In the present dissertation, the main content and practical-applied aspects of teaching philosophy in school which are related to the development of key competences, were analyzed. At the beginning of the present study, the working hypothesis was as follows:

The application of a model for the development of transferable competences derived from the conceptual framework LifeComp in philosophy education in the first high school stage increases the level of personal and social competence of research participants and promotes the development of other key competence.

The hypothesis was confirmed by the educational practices applied in the class, respectively with an emphasis on the development of personal competence, the development of social competence and the development of citizenship competences and contributed to the development of other key competences.

The *LifeComp* reference framework provides appropriate tools for operationalizing *personal, social and learning to learn competence*. The *Democratic Culture Reference Framework* provides a concept that complements and builds on students' emotional and social skills. These frameworks can be used, on the one hand, to identify and integrate educational resources and practices, on the other hand, to assess progress towards objectives.

The analyzed educational practices in the dissertation can be used as feedback to the authors of the conceptual framework *LifeComp*. The results are related, on the one hand, to the subject-oriented approach of teaching philosophy, which consistently develops personal competence (PM, 2016), social competence (PM 2017) and citizenship competence (PM 2018). Transferability is described by sequentially examining the development of all key competences through activities included in a philosophy textbook for tenth grade in English. On the other hand, the results are linked to horizontal interdisciplinary educational activities, described through three educational practices, the first with an emphasis on the development of personal competence, the second with an emphasis on the development of social competence and the third,

As a problem, it was noted that such innovative practices and the development of transferable competences require more time than the set hours for normative documents for

teaching philosophy (36 teaching hours in eighth grade and 36 teaching hours in ninth grade). Philosophy training significantly develops transferable competences, but in order for the set high goals to be practically feasible, time, practice and practice are needed.

Also, a significant problem is the training of teachers. Current changes in the interaction between all participants and in the technology of the educational process require new skills and teaching strategies. Teachers are role models, so in order to engage students emotionally and socially, teachers themselves must also be emotionally and socially involved in the learning process.

The set of personal and social competences in recent years has been identified as important not only for individual personal realization, but also for the development of civic competence and society as a whole. Their development is an essential content element of philosophy education.

In order to place the philosophy at the basis of the development of the considered competences in the dissertation work, the following is presented.

- In connection with the updating of the *European reference framework for lifelong learning* from 22 May 2018, the text of Art. 77, para 1, item 5 of the *Law on Preschool and School Education* to be updated and changed from “learning ability” to “personal, social and learning to learn competence”.
- For the same reason art. 3, para. 4 of *Regulation №5 on General Education* training to be updated.
- In *Regulation №5 on General Education*, “personal, social and learning to learn competence” should be linked to the teaching of philosophy as building its basis.

CONTRIBUTION SUMMARY

The contributions of the dissertation for philosophy, methodology and didactics are primarily related to the screening of some problems related to the practical application of the competence approach in teaching philosophy at school. On the other hand, constructive proposals have been submitted for updating the legislation related to the 2018 update of the *Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning*, which would link philosophy education with the development of key *personal, social and learning to learn competence*.

Second, refracting the teaching and learning of philosophy through the prism of the application of the concept of emotional intelligence and the conceptual framework *LifeComp* as a basis for developing personal and social competence is a direction that not only fits into the general idea of the competence approach, but in this direction of knowledge and reflection philosophy can be extremely useful with its ability to set meanings, to form values, to cultivate attitudes.

Third, the topic is of interest and is practically useful for current teachers who teach bilingual philosophy in the first stage of high school. The considered author's resource - a textbook on philosophy for tenth grade in English is innovative. Until now, teachers in Bulgaria did not have a resource that is consistent with the curriculum in philosophy and to support bilingual education in philosophy in English.

Fourthly, the topic is of interest not only to active teachers, but also to students who are yet to learn what and how to undertake in individual pedagogical situations at school with the analysis of the application of the competence approach in the training resources provided by the teaching aid for training in tenth grade philosophy of English; and with the proposals and analysis of innovative pedagogical practices for developing personal competence through eighth-grade philosophy education, social competence through ninth-grade philosophy education, and citizenship competence through tenth-grade philosophy education.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS ON THE TOPIC OF THE DISSERTATION

1. The competence approach and philosophy education at school. In: Philosophy, XIX, issue 4, 2020, ss. 423-441
2. Developing emotional intelligence through philosophy education at school. In Sat: Doctoral readings, issue 4, 2021, pp.157-172
3. Teaching aid in philosophy for the 10th grade in English. Az-buki.2021
4. Development of personal competence through philosophy education at school. International scientific conference: Formation of competences in the modern educational reality - 26-27.11.2021, Sofia, SU, in press

APPENDIX 1

Plugarova-Raycheva, M. (2021). Philosophy 10. Grade. София: Аз-буки

Teaching aid in philosophy for the tenth grade in English, consistently analyzed in chapter 4.2., in relation to the transferability of key competences in the subject-oriented approach (pp. 113-140).

The electronic study aid is freely accessible on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science: <https://www.mon.bg/bg/1637>

An additional link and corresponding QR code is provided.



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xvjHZmkUXAqunTARPc7b9dygTh3wBXrW/view?usp=sharing>

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