PART I
THE PROBLEMS OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

РАЗДЕЛ I.
ПРОБЛЕМЫ СОВРЕМЕННОЙ ФИЛОСОФИИ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND EDUCATION IN COMPETENCES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA[1*]

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Abstract. The construction of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has shaped university policies in European countries over the last few years. Education is seen as the basic factor in achieving social inclusion and progress in society at any level; hence the emphasis on the idea that universities should be closely connected with the market and employment. Training in competences has become a main feature in what is now a new educational approach. In this article, we would like to criticise some aspects of the "Competence Model" typical of the Bologna Process and, in presenting the results of a research work carried out among Education university students and lecturers in Spain, we argue in favour of Philosophy of Education as a kind of practical knowledge that is unfortunately often absent from the curriculum of Educational Studies and Teachers training.

Key words: European Higher Education Area (EHEA), Competence-based model, Philosophy of Education, Teachers training.

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ФИЛОСОФИЯ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТНОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ В КОНТЕКСТЕ ЕВРОПЕЙСКОГО ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

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Аннотация. Созидание Зоны Европейского высшего образования определяет в последние несколько лет политику университетов европейских стран. Образование рассматривается как основной фактор достижения социальной включённости и прогресса общества на всех уровнях; отсюда и акцент на той идее, что университеты должны быть тесно связаны с рынком и наймом на работу. Компетентностное образование превратилось в главную особенность того, что называется сейчас новым образовательным подходом. В данной статье мы высказываем критику некоторых аспектов «Компетентностной модели», типичной для Болонского процесса; и, представляя результаты исследовательской работы, проведённой среди студентов и преподавателей университетов Испании, мы обосновываем значимость философии образования как некоторого вида практического знания, которое, к сожалению, часто отсутствует в расписании занятий при подготовке учителей и специалистов по образованию.

Ключевые слова: Зона Европейского высшего образования, компетентностная модель, философия образования, подготовка учителей.

1. Introduction

The construction of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) has shaped university policies in European countries over the last few years, such that we have witnessed unprecedented reforms in university systems. We are not just faced with one more change to the curriculum, but rather with the transformation of Higher Education institutions into *a new kind of university.*

Universities ought to be equipped and ready to meet the expectations of today's knowledge-based society, and to answer its demands for lifelong learning. This is because universities are considered the driving force of economic growth, employment and productivity, and they are seen as the real driving force behind economic development in almost all countries.

Training in competences has become a main feature in what is now a new educational approach. The concept of "competence" is a broad one, including the set of necessary skills for performing a job, and the capacity of transferring these abilities and knowledge to new situations. But the "education in competences model" that is being proposed (and imposed) reduces the field of "competences" to those "skills required to perform a job, whilst forgetting many other aspects of life; and it would be better to remember that life is more than just *having a job.* "Preparation for life" – which is often invoked as the purpose of education

– is a much richer and all-embracing concept and it demands more axiological reflection to clarify the value we place on work in our lives.

In this article, we would like to present the results of a research work carried out among Education university students and lecturers in Spain, and to criticise some aspects of the "Competence Model" typical of the Bologna Process. In fact, we speak in favour of Philosophy of Education as a kind of practical knowledge that is unfortunately often absent from the curriculum of Educational Studies and teacher training.

2. The *Bologna Process* and the *Logic of Competences*

The final decades of the twentieth century were marked by continuous education-system reforms, together with the expansion to education for all (World Educational Forum, 1990), in an atmosphere of quick changes taking place in society, politics, the economy and other areas.

As a result of the *Bologna Declaration* signed by the Commission of the European Communities in 1998, which defined the idea of the university in accordance with the economic and social needs of the emerging European Union, the reform of European universities and the construction of the EHEA are known commonly as "*The Bologna Process*"[2]. The aim of this process is to create a new type of university characterised by high indices of international competitiveness, mobility and employability. To reach to this goal, it would be necessary to forge common structures that guarantee transparency, compatibility and comparability, as the only way to get a highly competitive system capable of attaining social and economic leadership.

Thanks to the implementation of the EHEA, it is said, the Europe of knowledge will be established, favouring growth and social cohesion, that will lead to the establishment of a quality educational system.[3]

At the core of the construction of the EHEA and in order to respond to the demands of the job market, is the effort to develop in the students the set of *competences* that are necessary to perform a job. This means that universities have to define clearly the basic skills that the students have to acquire and afterwards, to design a competence-based curriculum, that will help them to cope with new tasks and challenges (Monereo & Pozo, 2007).

The mirror the university has to look into when designing the curricula will no longer be the world of science, but that of economy. Thus, both the teaching and

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2 Entering 'Bologna Process' as the descriptor in any search engine will yield a considerable number of hits. For example, at the writing of this article, 'Bologna Process' had 1,950,000 hits on www.google.com. Accesed January 15, 2011.

3 To understand this European movement it is necessary to review, as the background to the process, the *White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness, Employment: The Challenges and Ways Forward into the 21st Century* (1994) and the *White Paper on Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society* (1996). Both are available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/index_en.html.

the research work done at the university have to satisfy vocational and economic needs and interests as their primary purpose. This obviously entails a radical change in the very essence of the idea of "the university". What is abandoned is the interest in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, stressing, on the contrary the practical aspect of learning *how to use and apply* knowledge.

3. Identifying Competences

It is not easy to define the concept of "competence". Nevertheless there seems to be a basic consensus about the four main features that delineate it:

It is a *complex notion*, including both personal dispositions (capacities, motivations, aptitudes, etc.) and attributes related with work contexts (knowledge, abilities, skills, attitudes, etc.).

– It has a pre-eminently *active orientation*, so that it is meaningful only if it favours action.

– Competences are *work-context oriented*, and they imply multi-purpose and flexible learning (Navio, 2005; Rué 2007; Rodriguez Esteban & Vieira Alle, 2009).

– Mastering a competence implies an effective, efficient, intentional, immediate knowledge of *what-to-do*, which makes use of resources in contexts of action, where new learning is generated (Marcelo, 2000).

Thus, "competence" can be defined as a "proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and/or personal development." (Commission of the European Communities, 2006). In short, it is the synthesis of knowledge, capacities, attitudes and personal traits involved in effectively carrying out a given activity.

It is possible to distinguish between *generic* competences (also called *transversal* competences), *key* competences and *specific* competences.

– *Generic* competences are those competences that people need to master in order to become active members of a flexible professional world, with adaptive and competitive abilities and the capacity for lifelong learning.

– *Key* competences are those abilities that must be learned for smooth integration in society and for the practice of any profession.

– *Specific* competences belong "exclusively to one professional profile, or shared by a small number of profiles. Generally they are related to the specific disciplines or abilities of the most common professional practices in the given profile." (Yañiz & Villardon, 2006).

The competence-based training model provides some positive ways of looking at education, – as providing greater versatility in learning and a better adjustment to the needs and demands of society. We cannot consider these now (Villa & Poblete, 2007). But there are also quite a number of negative aspects

to this approach, mainly because the notion of 'competence' that is used in the Bologna Process documents leads to a fragmentation of units that makes difficult the dimensions of integration and globalism characteristic of contextualized activities, as Carr and many others have pointed out (Carr, 2000; Navío, 2005, Rué, 2007; Rodriguez Esteban & Vieira Alle, 2009).

4. Training professionals: developing competences to do the job

Education, as an activity, is old as humanity and for a long time this task did not require high-level specific training, nor did it enjoy any remarkable social recognition. It was only in the second half of the twentieth century that, little by little, the professional teaching sector gained strength and autonomy. It was then when it was felt that what the provision of a firm basis for initial Teachers training was needed.

Nowadays, since education is no longer focused strictly on "teaching", there is a wide range of tasks performed by "educators". Education embraces other activities that correspond to specific social needs; and this gives rise to different jobs within the educational working sector.

A "professional profile" is the combination of traits that define the professional identity of the people who perform a particular job and show the primary functions that this job has to achieve, as well as the ordinary tasks in which such functions are exemplified (Yañiz & Villardon, 2006), we can say that in Spain there are four main professional profiles within the education sector: *Teachers (Maestros)*, *Pedagogues (Pedagogos)*, *Social Educators (Educadores Sociales)* and *Educational Psychologists (Psicopedagogos)*.

a. The *Teacher* is a professional who plans, organises, guides and acts in the institutionalised process of teaching and learning at the Elementary School level.

b. The *Pedagogue* is the professional who works in order to detect and diagnose the educational needs of singular persons or human groups in different contexts.

c. The *Social Educator* is the professional who works to favour the education and social integration of people and groups in situations of social exclusion.

d. The *Educational Psychologist* provides educational guidance to promote comprehensive personal development aiming to raise the standards of educational quality.

According to the competence-based educational model proposed in the Bologna Process, the list of specific competences, functions and tasks of each professional profile is the key element that allows to identify the training needs of the future professionals, and must configure the structure and contents of the curricula.

We present in Table 1 a summary of the information contained in the Spanish *White Papers of "Pedagogía" (Pedagogy), "Educación Social"* (S*ocial Education)*

and *"Magisterio" (Teachers*)[4] concerning the contexts and functions in which different education professionals perform their work. This information provides Spanish universities with the compulsory guidelines for the design of the new curricula, in the spirit of the Bologna Process.

Table 1. *Contexts, Functions, Spheres of action and Professional profiles of those people working in the Education area in Spain, according to the White Books (2004)*

Education Professionals			
Context	**Functions**	**Spheres**	**Profiles**
Educational Social Community Business Work Research	Intervention Teaching Planning Management Diagnosis Advice Design Evaluation Guidance Compensation Prevention Re-education Research Innovation Mediation Promotion	Action in education in formal contexts	Teacher at different educational levels
		Education administration	School administrator School administration inspector and supervisor Evaluator of educational systems and institutions
		Guidance and action in education psychology	Personal, academic, professional, family guidance counsellor
		Development and evaluation of didactic processes and means	Resource designer Designer and evaluator of teaching/learning processes and curricular materials Teacher trainer
		Training in labour organisations	Organisation training consultant and manager Trainer for trainers
		Educational action for community and family development	Family educator Social educational agent for community development
		Marginalization, drug addiction and social ostracism	Educator and mediator in social integration processes Designer and evaluator of social integration processes (Pedagogue)
		Activity coordination and management	Activity coordinator Cultural resource administrator
		Socio-educational action with minors	Educator in social services and social integration institutions Mediator in fostering and adoption processes
		Training and integration of adults and the elderly	Socio-labour guidance counsellor Trainer of adults and the elderly
		Socio-educational care for diversity	Specialist in diversity care Triggering agent for integration in society and employment

4   This table was drawn up using material from the ANECA's 2004 *Pedagogy and Social Education White Papers*.

Since there is a complex net of professional roles on demand in today's society, there is room enough for several different professional profiles. In consequence the competences that these different professionals must acquire must be properly specified. Some generic and specific competences can coincide in more than one profile, but they ought to differ in some way to the others, leaving each one of these professional roles clearly defined.

5. The "most valued" competences by education professionals

There are some basic elements of initial professional training that would be of common interest for any education professional (regardless of his or her future specialization). Such elements would constitute the hard core of the generic competences needed by everyone and which should be present on all Education certificates.

In a recent empirical research work developed by the Faculty of Education of UNED, a group of 1,241 persons in the Educational sector (university students and lectures, teachers and Associations and Trade Union members) were asked which competences they thought that ought to be fostered in initial training of future educators. Table 2 is a summary showing the six most highly valued generic competences that this group of educators considered indispensable.

Table 2: *Six Competences Essential for any Professional in Education*

	Pedagogy	Social Education	Teaching
1st	Capacity of analysis and synthesis	Ethical commitment	Capacity for oral and written communication in mother tongue
2nd	Ethical commitment	Problem solving and decision making	Organisation and planning
3rd	Organisation and planning	Organisation and planning	Recognition of and respect for diversity and multiculturalism
4th	Problem solving and decision making	Interpersonal competences	Interpersonal competences
5th	Commitment to professional identity, development and ethics	Recognition of and respect for diversity and multiculturalism	Creativity
6th	Capacity for criticism and self-evaluation	Commitment to professional identity, development and ethics	Teamwork ability

Note that professionals of the educational sector do not give priority to those competences often most highly valued by society in general: ICT, information management and mastery of a second language, for example. On the contrary,

the study reveals a picture of professionals who are highly committed to their task in an ethical and humanistic way.

Among the subjects education specialists wanted to see incorporated into the curriculum for trainees in education were: Anthropology, History, Biology, Psychology, Social Studies, Economy, Politics, Ethics and Multicultural studies (ANECA (2004).

Table 3 shows a summary of the four areas of knowledge most valued by education professionals.

Table 3: *Areas of Expertise most sought after by Education Professionals*

	Pedagogy	**Social Education**	**Teaching**
1.	Knowledge of the sources concerning the work in its diverse spheres	Knowledge of the theoretical foundation and standpoints in socio-educational action and its spheres of activity	Knowledge of the contents to be taught, comprehending their epistemological singularity and the specificity of their teaching
2.	Knowledge of the theoretical and epistemological bases of educational and formative processes	Knowledge of the pedagogical, psychological and sociological positions underlying the processes of socio-educational activity	Understanding of the complexity of educational processes in general and teaching/learning processes in particular (goals, functions, theories of development and of curriculum, etc.)
3.	Knowledge of the foundation and methodology of evaluation	Knowledge of the fundamental characteristics of social and work environments	Respect for cultural and personal differences of students and other members of the educational community
4.	Knowledge of the foundation and principles of the theory of the curriculum	Knowledge of the theory and methodology for evaluation in socio-educational activity	Internalisation of the ethical facet of teaching, fostering critical, responsible citizenship

Number 1 is the kind of knowledge provided by those "key subjects" that shed light on the fundamental ideas of the educational task, and try to respond to the questions about *what* and *for whom* is education, *what is its purpose*, etc. These are the contents that constitute the core of any educational practice in any circumstance. Education professionals consider that knowing *what, why* and *wherefore* is what enables them to know how to respond in different settings and diverse circumstances. It seems, therefore, that educational professionals do not consider so important to learn a set of patterns of behaviour; they rather value more what will help them know themselves, and what will help them

know how to behave and how to deal with different educational situations. Education professionals also showed a strong ethical commitment to individuals and society; they are aware of the importance of their work for personal and social progress.

Looking at Tables 2 and 3 we can conclude that education professionals, as it is to be expected, are concerned about the know-how specific to their professional task. But they are even more concerned about the development of interpersonal and instrumental capacities which will enable them to make autonomous, responsible and creative decisions; in a word, the capacities that they need for making an innovative approach to the problems and situations they encounter in their work.

Nevertheless, in many academic environments there is a more or less visible interest in ridding the curriculum of Humanities subjects. Yet if we consider the results summarized in Tables 2 and 3 we may conclude that, even if they are unaware of it, educational professionals are asking for a philosophical orientation or approach in their specific formation.

But there is also place for some hope, because in the latest Teachers training curricula in Spain, subjects such as Theory of Education and Philosophy of Education have – although little − space.

6. What can Philosophy do for educators and education?

After what has been seen, we may conclude, not without some degree of concern, that the educational sector is suffering a severe dichotomy of viewpoints.

On one hand, there is an attempt, promoted within *political spheres,* to steer education down a clearly mercantilist path, an attitude that is reflected not only by the legislation emanating from different educational agencies, but also in the language that is used to refer to the education sector. Its vocabulary is adopting nuances characteristic of the business world: objectives, targets, competences, competences, effectiveness, relevance, educational transactions, clients, etc. (Pring, 2004).

On the other hand, *education professionals* (at least in Spain, as the study commented above makes clear) are claiming that priority must be given to a series of competences that do not properly pertain to the commercial world, belonging rather to the humanistic sphere: competences that are acquired and consolidated with the cultivation of humanistic knowledge (See Table 2).

The Humanities deal with the matters that make human beings different from the rest of the world: language, thought, freedom, artistic creation, society, etc. By this, they should be important for every university student. In the humanistic disciplines man himself becomes the topic of study and contemplates the most typical aspects of his own existence. On many occasions, however, this kind of knowledge is sneered at in the political and economic spheres, since Humanities subjects are considered irrelevant to the material development of

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society or because of their supposedly abstract nature. But looking beyond the negative assessment the Humanities receive from some sectors of society (which, unfortunately, include the more powerful decision-making sectors), it is not difficult to reach top the conclusion that the Humanities should be present in all advanced studies, especially in the training of teachers. And if we look carefully through the list of education professionals "most wanted" competences, it seems that they themselves are asking for these humanistic subjects.

What is more, and judging by education professionals' own lists of competences they consider most relevant for doing their job well, it seems that they themselves are calling for this training in the Humanities.

And among the Humanities, Philosophy holds a prime position, when it is seen not as an exposition of a particular *metaphysical system,* but as an exercise in *philosophical reflection.* It is important to underline this point, because sometimes Philosophy is taught in a wrong way, as if it were a product (a system of pre-chewed conclusions that one must learn) instead of an activity in which human beings must become personally engaged.

Philosophy is not some lofty knowledge reserved for specialists, but a type of reflection that helps every human being to take the steering wheel of his or her own life, and take a standpoint with regard to the rest of the world. Philosophy facilitates correct, logical reasoning; it imbues knowledge with unity and consistency and it urges to turn a critical eye upon our own convictions and prejudices. In this sense, it is wise to remember the role that Newman attributed to the acquisition of what he called "the philosophical habit" while being at university. He said that the enlargement of the mind which occurs in Higher Education does not consist merely in the passive reception of a number of unknown ideas, but in the mind's energetic and simultaneous action upon and towards those new ideas; a kind of formative power. There is no amplification of the mind unless one set of ideas are compared with another and then organised into a system, tying what we learn to what we already knew. A great intellect is "one which takes a connected view of old and new, past and present, far and near, and which has an insight into the influence of all these on one another; without which there is no whole, and no centre. It possesses the knowledge, not only of things, but also of their mutual and true relations; knowledge, not merely considered as acquirement, but as Philosophy" (Newman, 1852).

This being so, the usefulness of Philosophy is not limited to providing thought-clarifying techniques. Rather, Philosophy's contents are relevant in themselves for teacher training. Escámez sums up some of the topics that have traditionally been entrusted to the theoretical knowledge of education: the study of education as a human construct, the design of good educational practices to facilitate the acquisition of a series of competences by the subjects being educated, the socio-political contextualisation of education processes, etc. (Escámez, 2007).

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In addition, among the most characteristic topics of Philosophy of Education there are some specially important for education professionals: the analysis of the anthropological concept that underlies the different theoretical models of education, the study of the specific traits of educational communication, the relationships between authority and freedom, the clarification of the ends, objectives and values of education, the place of social, civic, political, religious, ethical and aesthetic education within an educational programme as a whole, teachers' professional deontology, etc. All of them are key issues for understanding in depth educational practices.

Philosophy of Education makes a significant contribution to the training of education professionals; so that if Philosophy of Education were not somehow present in the training plans and curricula of future education professionals, their preparation could be considered incomplete.

This opinion is shared by many of them, working in different areas and at different levels of the educational system, for they consider that they need to know their subjects as well as how to teach them; but, in order to thoroughly accomplish their job – the task of *educating,* in the noblest sense of the word – they must cultivate their own character and personality, giving high priority to such things as intellectual life, critical thought, the capacity of deliberation and putting questions, research, and the way they relate to others. These cannot be considered peripheral or "optional" activities, but are to be found at the heart of all teaching work (Pring, 1996).

In order for Philosophy of Education to make an effective contribution it is necessary to consider Philosophy of Education as practical wisdom. Practical understanding is not *episteme*, theory or contemplation; nor is it *techne*, the knowledge that an expert possesses. The expression "*Philosophy of Education is practical knowledge"* not only means that Philosophy of Education is a *knowledge of* and *for* action, but that it is an *understanding in* and *from* action; it is the kind of wisdom that guides the *praxis*.

Philosophy of Education, as practical Philosophy, is a type of knowledge that, as Aristotle pointed out, helps to see *how to promote good through morally sound action*; in other words, it is a way of thinking that helps to make correct judgments about what is good to do here and now, to apply general law to a particular situation. It is, in short, a discipline that attempts to deepen our understanding in order to help professionals to acquire and cultivate prudence *(phronesis)* that is necessary in order to work well.

Philosophy of Education does not seek mainly "to generate new knowledge"; rather, it tries to provide a better and deeper understanding of things that we may already be familiar with. Philosophy of Education points towards the formation of a clear, consistent and specific *body of concepts that are able to illuminate and facilitate the task of educating.*

Thus the construction of the EHEA, based on the idea of training in competences, is a good opportunity − although it might at first seem otherwise − to introduce

a philosophical insight in the curricula of the future education professionals. This statement is backed by the fact that education professionals themselves depict the competences provided by Philosophy among the most valued to do well their job, as it has been shown in the tables provided.

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"FILIAL PIETY" – SPECIES OF TRADITION: A HEIDEGGERIAN PEDAGOGY FOR ITS REVISION … OR DEMISE (FOR THOSE SO INCLINED)

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Abstract. With the high speed of globalization, more and more ideas about how to achieve social reform are arriving in China from the West. There is controversy in China about whether people should remain faithful to Confucian philosophy of moral education with its "filial piety" principle or whether to follow the trend of globalization, entailing taking a new and critical look at this principle, which could result in its revision, if not its demise.

Key words: Moral education, China, Confucian tradition, filial piety, globalization, Heidegger.

«ПОЧИТАНИЕ СТАРШИХ» КАК ЭЛЕМЕНТ ТРАДИЦИИ: ХАЙДЕГГЕРОВСКАЯ ПЕДАГОГИКА КАК СРЕДСТВО ЕГО ПЕРЕСМОТРА ИЛИ УПАДКА (ДЛЯ ТЕХ, КТО ТАК НАСТРОЕН)

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Аннотация. В связи с ускоряющимся темпом глобализации, всё больше идей о том, как достичь социальных реформ в Китае, прибывают с Запада. В Китае имеет место острая дискуссия о том, должны ли люди оставаться верными конфуцианской философии морального образования с его основополагающим принципом «почитания старших» или следовать

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