

Characteristics of Art Higher Education Institution Students' Social Competence

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Abstract

This paper represents a profound research of Kazakh and foreign scientific literature and tries to define the structure, the essence and meaningful characteristics of the art higher education institution students' competence as a set of professionally significant qualities of personality, which is determined by the nature and specifics of the forthcoming professional activities of those students. The results of the performed diagnostic study upon this subject are provided and allow to objectively evaluating the current development level of the components of social competence of students who are majoring in arts. The need for competence-oriented type of education for arts students will be justified. As a result of the conducted study, we concluded that the components of social competence, in their turn, are the components of the underlying method for forming this studied competence. The analysis of the criteria and a diagnostic research method, which comprises criteria, indicators and levels (reproductive, adaptively-transformative and creative) provided the possibility to perform an extensive revision and objectively evaluate the current maturity level of the components of the art higher education institution students' social competence.

Keywords: students majoring in arts, art higher education institution students, competency building approach, competence, competencies, socialization, structure of social competency

1. Introduction

In the process of studying at a university, each student gets prepared to take responsibilities for his own actions and make independent choices in the political, economic and cultural life. This development tendency requires reframing of objectives and education results. As the main result of a higher education one shall see readiness and ability of young people to carry personal responsibility for own personal well-being and well-being of society, and formation of key competencies which are necessary in life.

This issue is especially acute for the graduates majoring in arts. Art within the scope of this research is primarily a way to adapt which teaches a creative cognition of the world, helps a person to realize his or her place in the world around. In this regard, art is considered as a social and cultural phenomenon as far as it comes laden with the valuables, norms, aesthetic ideals and vision of life as inherent to the society and culture. If a person does not have certain maturity of cognition, hardened beliefs, some level of individual freedom, creative approach to solving difficult situations, the person will hardly withstand negative phenomena in society and will follow a standard way of things (Berezhnaya, 2008). Consequently, a special work is necessary to be done in forming social competency of a young person with university graduates majoring in arts in particular. This necessity is also supported by the fact that in the modern stage of society development and more than ever a decisive role in new personality creation is played by artistic creation as far as now there are new widely available art forms such as cinema or results of creative activities through Internet services.

Thus, the purpose of our research is to determine structure and content of the social competence of the students majoring in arts as well as identification of real condition which may help in determining ways of further development during university studies.

2. Main Text

Such processes of the modern world as a progressive integration of economies and societies, due to technological progress and economic interaction, which is also resulting in a collaboration of national and international educational interests and approaches, can be considered as an accelerated evolution of the globalizational-competency training system (Gunter, 2004). Revolutionary methods of the social and technological organization, competitive strategies of economic development (and therefore, education and technology) are in the opinion of Friedman (2006) the basic impetus to the idea of a competent approach as the main engine of growth and progress of societies and public entities. This, in our opinion, due, in particular, accelerate the development of the so-called «knowledge-based» (competency, or “knowledge-based”) industries in Europe (for example, according to statistics of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, at the moment, the German economy consists for 61% (Olsen, 2006) of such competence-oriented industries.

A contemporary education system contradistinguishes a dynamic form of competence-focused education to the static methodologies of knowledge framework as far as it is a competence focused approach that considerably strengthens possibilities and eases students’ focus to the practices of their future activities, operative and operational part of the assumed education outcome.

Outstanding characteristics of the contemporary stage for development of the competence building approach in development of the domestic education is documentary recognition of the approach. Thus, UNESCO materials dedicated to the education technologies (Illeris, 2009) include formulated groups of competences perceived as required objectives in the desired and currently realized education systems. For example, L. Petrovskaya notes that four cornerstones of the modern education specified by Zh. Delor (cognition, activity, socialization, self-actualization) are actually “global competences” (Petrovskaya, 1989). A new paradigm of education outcome within the framework of Bologna declaration is acquiring “competency/competence” which is identified by the ability to use skills and capabilities in standard or variable situations; to quickly adapt technologies and activity arrangement change; efficiency, flexibility of competence; ability to rationally arrange personal activities and activities of other people.

Consequently, at a modern stage the strategy of higher education is comprised of development and establishment of professional competence of the future specialist ready and capable to solve professional tasks and go beyond normative activities, implement innovative and artistic processes in a broad sense.

Competence building approach to academic activities management is highlighted in the works of B. Avvo, I. Agapova, V. Adolf, I. Arkhipov, N. Akhtamzyan, I. Zimmaya, V. Kraevskiy, S. Molchanov, Ye. Ogarev, L. Petrovskaya, G. Serikov, N. Tairov, A. Khutorskiy, M. Choshanov, S. Shishov, G. Begarisheva, A. Abdukadyrov, B. Akhmetov, B. Baimukhanov, T. Balykbayev, S. Beshenkov, Ye. Bidaibekov, T. Taubayeva, M. Sarybekova, G. Nurgaliyeva, etc.

To fully understand essence of the competence building approach we will study competence and competency notions which are now more widely used in philosophy, sociology, psychology, linguistics and pedagogic sciences.

Analysis of general theoretic approaches to understanding of the underlying notions shows that to the moment their definition, content and ontological characteristics have not been elaborated to the adequate extent. In the first instance it shall be noted that they are either identified or differentiated. From the point of identification of the notions “competency” is used in the meaning of “competence”. Herewith, the authors particularly distinguish practice orientation of the competence. Advocates of differentiation of the notions assume that competency contains not just cognitive and operational and technological components but also incentive, ethical, social and behavioral ones together with education outcome (skills and knowledge), value system, habits, etc. (Strategy for modernization of the general education content: Materials for developing of documents for a general upgrade of education, 2001). And, as it is noted by Zimmaya (2004) competency is always an actual consequence of competence.

We believe that “competency” shall be considered as an ability of a person to apply knowledge, skills and personal qualities for successful activities in a certain area whereas “competence” is a complex and concise content integrating professional, social and pedagogic, social and psychological, legal and other characteristics of the person. Competence includes a number of competencies in a certain area of activity.

Taking into account importance of the competence building approach, we think that it is necessary to determine important competencies to be acquired by the students for future successful work. Types of such competencies were formulated by the European Council at the Symposium Berne in 1996 (Walo, 1997). Hereby, it is necessary

to take into account recommendations made by the European Commission regarding eight key competencies to be acquired by each European, such as:

- 1) Competency in the native language;
- 2) Competency in foreign languages;
- 3) Mathematical and fundamental, natural scientific and technical competencies;
- 4) IT competency;
- 5) Academic competency;
- 6) Interpersonal, cross-cultural and social competencies as well as civil competency;
- 7) Business competency;
- 8) Cultural competency.

The competencies are the results of education and thus shall be formulated with every student, penetrate into all subjects, saturate all levels of education and developed at a high level. Herewith key competencies are not a separate part of the academic schedule but shall be integrated into the content thereof (Halstead, 2001). One of the key competences identified by the European community for professional education is a social competency as far as embodies essentially all competencies.

Social competency is a complex and cross-disciplinary notion which determines diversity of areas and research as well as multiple approaches to interpretation. Based on the theoretical analysis of the social competency essence in the foreign and domestic psychology and pedagogic science it may be concluded that due to comprehensive diversity of the social competency phenomenon there is no common definition of the notion. Investigations as to social competency are held within the scope of the economic science; in labor relations within the HR management; in psychiatry and medical psychology. Pedagogies pays much attention to the research of social competency with the students of schools, universities and other educational facilities.

According to the philosophers, the social competency is an aggregate of certain qualities of a person, abilities, social knowledge and skills, subjective readiness for self-determination ensuring integration of a person to society by productive performance of different social roles. Social competency of a person is perceived as possession of skills for joint (group, cooperative) activities, cooperation, communication as well as leadership and social responsibility for the results of activities held. Herewith those types of motivation the society needs as well as managing factors are the focus of attention. Here we talk about motivations which actualize or forming initiative, leadership, striving for effective work in cooperation with others. Growth of the person's social competency is inextricably associated with the system of personal values (identification and perception of the content, solution of value conflicts and assessment of alternatives).

In the early stages of the study of social competence, it was assumed that broad understanding of the social functions of an individual (as well as the quality of the operation) is more important than being able to predict certain behavioral responses. For example, Waters (1998) focuses on the enthusiasm, perseverance, flexibility and enjoyment of a person in solving this problem without taking into account the occurrence of the first symptoms of social problems and other similar criteria of the analyzed. It is expected that this approach gives better possibilities for reflection of the individual's ability to rely on its own resources and to deal with the opportunities and challenges in the world.

Formation of the social competency is closely related to the activity theory. Some researches established that activity of a personality is its natural state, moreover personality is formed in the course of activities which means that activity predetermines personality. Social competency of a personality as an integral quality is closely interrelated with its cognitive capabilities which are formed in the process of observing external and primarily social environment phenomena (M. Kholsted, T. Orji).

In considering the notion the psychologists place primary emphasis on "possession of professional communication skills peculiar for the profession, cooperative attitude, social responsibility for labor results" (Liginchuk, 2011). In social psychology social competency is in more detail considered from the position of the methodological principle of the subject and according to G. Belitskaya this new notion conceptualizes the highest level of social reality achieved in the course of activities, behavior, contemplation, etc., owing to harmonization of social problems and value system perception (Belitskaya, 1995). Conceptually close understanding of the competency is also present with other authors presenting social competency as a "level of social reality development".

Production of the student's competency skills will enable him to educate himself, from the informative standpoint of view and from the intellectual activity perspective, it will coordinate the formation of social competence. Here, we cannot disagree with Rogacheva (2012), as she states that "...the competence of the person has the integrative nature, as it incorporates a number of similar or closely related knowledge and experience, relating to the broad field of culture and activity". At the same time, Lebedeva (2005), complements this and defines competence as "...student's practical ambitions and his ability to realize the full potential (knowledge, skills, experience, personal qualities, etc.) for successful creative (productive) activity in professional and social life". Raven (2001), approaches the same concept in terms of pedagogical structuralism, believes that competence should be understood as "...specific capacity required for an effective execution of a particular action in a particular activity, and consists of highly specialized knowledge, a special kind of skills, ways of thinking as well as the sense of responsibility for their actions".

Insight characteristics revealed after analysis of different interpretations of the notion enable us to identify social competency as an integrated quality of personality coming from its life experience reflecting individual approach of the person to his/her social role and revealing level of social activity and perception of the social reality including aggregate competencies, skills and capabilities in inter-human relations (Taborsky & Oliveira, 2012). Social competency ensures survival of a human in new social and economic environment, success of his/her professional activity, diversifies possibilities for spiritual and material needs development, forms young people's personal responsibility for own well-being and well-being of the society (Bedenko, 2004). Creative mind is formed in acts of the art on the basis of perceiving imitation of artistic language, artistic culture as well as all other valuable and conceptual (ethical, political, religious, etc.) components of the worldview by psychological mechanisms.

Representatives of artistic professions shall possess the following:

- Ability to find reasons of these or that events, find unknown ties of known phenomena, new approaches to known problems, find out practical application of regularities of known disciplines in non-conventional situations;
- Ability to find out main discrepancies in the studied issues and tasks, ability to solve substandard tasks including tasks which are not related to the underlying area of specialization;
- Ability to set new objectives and issues.

It is typical for the art to solve current discrepancies where objective and ways to achieve it are closely interrelated. In this case whole new values may arise.

As main mechanisms of social competence development of students of creative disciplines acts the focus on individual's subjectivity, which is associated with the development of a humanistic position, moral maturity, activity, independence, reflexivity, manifestation of which is one's capacity for self-development, self-actualization and self-identification in the future professional and educational activities (Krasnokyt'skaya, 2005).

In general, the most common and widely used evolutionary definition of the social competency of a student majoring in arts is understanding of the notion through ability of a person to use social resources both personal and those of surrounding reality to achieve artistic objectives and tasks. Genetic characteristics identified as the result of central notion of our research enable to formulate functionally modulate definition of the social competency of the student majoring in arts such as readiness to solve social and professional tasks as well as ability for effective realization of this readiness in art directly with the use of academic and empiric experience taking into account socially important values and personal inclinations of a student.

Social competence in terms of human resource development implies a context for the development of the future expert model, based on the requirements for the competencies that are demanded in the society. This is directly related to the need to identify both, organizational and individual needs in the social and professional development (Mulder, 2014).

Social competence in terms of performance requires not only the labor result measurements, but also evaluation of the behaviors (how the results were achieved): "...solely such a comprehensive evaluation can help in making recommendations for changes in behavior of the person in order to obtain certain results, hence will help to start the process of real control the behavior of a particular person" (Morozova, 2000).

Analysis of a wide spectrum of approaches to the essence and structure of social competency enables to identify structure of social competency of a student majoring in arts composed of the following components: 1) cognitive; 2) axiological; 3) motivational; 4) practically effective; 5) emotional volitional. Essential characteristics of those

components are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Structure of social competency of the students majoring in arts

Components	Criteria	Indicators
Cognitive	Knowledge and understanding of the means, ways, programs for executing actions, solving social and professional tasks, implementing rules and behavior standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - knowledge of moral code; - knowledge of main skills of productive artistic cooperation; - awareness of the main theoretical approaches to understanding and studying of artistic cooperation; - awareness of the positions of the partners and behavior style in artistic cooperation situations; - awareness of the conflict as a special form of artistic cooperation; - reflection of the own behavior and partners' behavior in the course of artistic cooperation.
Motivational	Readiness to form social competency in activities and behavior, social skills and capabilities, engagement into the cognitive processes, artistic cooperation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interest to artistic communication; - love and respect towards people; - confidence in own integrity and possession of adequate artistic potential
Axiological	Knowledge of the nature of values, sense relation to the competency content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - awareness of the artistic cooperation as a value; - perception of another person (in the course of artistic communication) as a communication value; - personal identity as a value; - awareness of social competency as a value. - ability to tolerantly build cooperation tactics; - ability to cooperation in poly-cultural environment without conflicts; - ability to interpret and understand social surroundings; - ability to choose position, adequately understand situation of the artistic cooperation and select style of such artistic cooperation; - ability to solidly structure artistic cooperation; - possession of different strategies of
Practically effective	Socially adequate behavior, experience in demonstrating competency in different standard and non-standard situations.	

Emotional volitional	Emotionally volitional regulation as ability to adequately react in social and professional cooperation, social attitude and responsibility.	behavior in the conflict; - ability to solve problems arising in the course of communication. - ability to adequately perceive current situation of artistic cooperation and assess consequences of the actions taken; - ability to choose among the tools of solving objectives set; - possession of the skills for emotional reaction and maintenance of the artistic cooperation; - ability to forego from the selected desired action in case it contradicts social norms and attitudes.
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3. Results

Subject to the above criteria and indicators we have formulated the system for assessment of social competency of the students majoring in arts on which basis we made primary diagnostics of the maturity of social competency of the students majoring in arts. 74 students of the Russian State Social University (Moscow) majoring in pedagogic science at “Musical Education”, People’s Artistic Culture at “Ethno-cultural center management” took part in the experiment.

Based on the methodological principle on the leading role of motives in activation of the person’s activity, the backbone is motivation component as underlying basis of the person. Analysis of results of the ascertaining experiment showed that the students majoring in arts put artistic self-realization motives on the first place, whereas social motives take the very last position (see Figure 1).

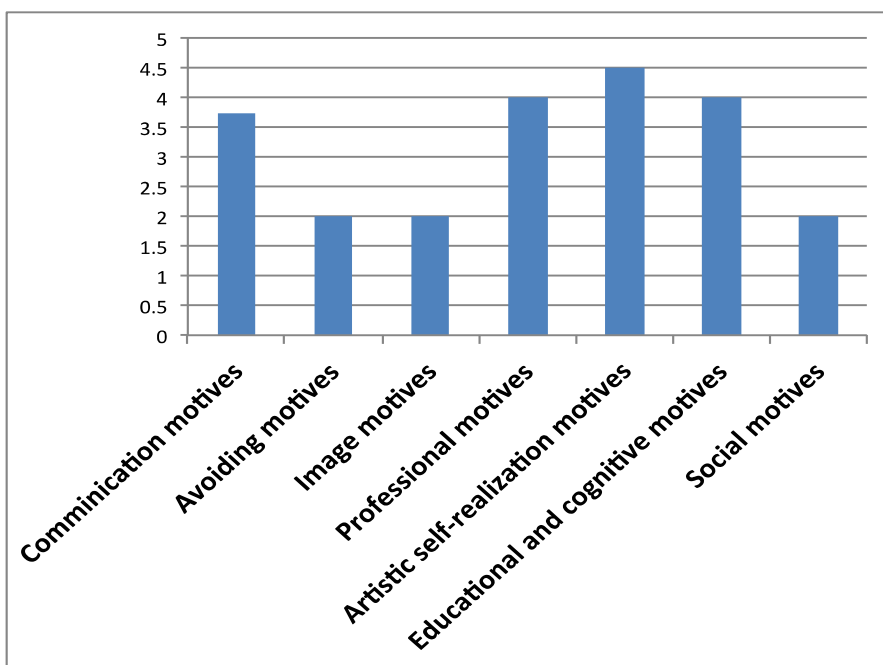


Figure 1. Bar chart with indicators of the motivational component of the students’ social competency

The results of the study of motivation of the students majoring in arts show some egocentricity as well as undervaluation of their professional role in the society.

Diagnostics of social competency of the students majoring in arts enables us to visualize a typical image of a student. This is an open minded, light, communicative, moderately emotionally stable, cheerful, having artistic mind and medium-level logical thinking, dependent on the group, follows public opinion standards in behavior person. Predominant way of thinking: verbal and logic, eye-mindedness, index of social impatience: low; behavior in conflicts: avoidance and adaptation.

Based on the experiment we conclude on fairly low level of maturity of social competency of the students majoring in arts. During educating students majoring in arts it is necessary to pay special attention to development of the social impatience and will characteristics as far as dependence on the public opinion is not acceptable for person of artistic profession. On the contrary, an integral component of the person's creativity is leadership qualities, thus, own vision of the problem and ability to find an effective solution, ability for productive cooperation. Besides, avoidance and adaptation in behavior of the students engaged in arts also stands for a low level of social competency maturity.

4. Discussion

The results of our research show that the customary system for educating students majoring in arts needs improvement, thus, it is necessary to elaborate a special program focused on forming social competency of the students which realization may be followed as follows:

- Equip young people with basic legal, political, psychological, social and economic knowledge as required for self-realization in the society;
- Introduction into socially relevant activities for acquainting with possible options of the social choice and accumulating experience for realization thereof;
- Development of prognostic willingness of a person to evaluate potential consequences of the social choice and behavior model.

Integrity and usefulness of a meaningful educational process with the integration of different educational disciplines can be achieved by "...creation of a more realistic and close prospects of students' knowledge and skills to eliminate duplication of material in order to ensure consistency in the formation of students' knowledge" (Pedagogy and psychology of higher education: The Manual, 2002). In context of the global informatization, computerization and technologization of the usage of computer-aided design systems in the study of academic disciplines is one of the ways to improve the education of students of creative disciplines and optimize methods of teaching these subjects.

5. Conclusion

Thus, our theoretical research and analysis of the experimental work give grounds to ascertain that forming social competency of a student majoring in arts is ensured in the first instance by the specially organized academic cooperation, form and methods of which are determined by the ultimate objective, i.e. education of an active, initiative, free, artistic, self-disciplined and self-developing personality.

Forming of social competence of the students majoring in arts is a special sphere of competence building method which also determines differentiation of the specialists training. This also explains an objective necessity for the artistic departments of the higher education institutes to adopt competence building type of education and, thus re-evaluate the current objectives of the educational process, transformation of academic plans to the notions of competence building approach, realization of new ways to evaluate education quality.

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