

The Romanian Curriculum of Early Education and Primary Education

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Abstract

The article analyzes the Romanian curriculum specific to primary and preschool education. The article focuses on the curriculum approved in 2011 for primary education, respectively the one approved in 2019 for early education. The analysis between the primary education curriculum and the early education curriculum follows the specifics of the curriculum, the purpose, the values promoted, the focus on the formation of the respective behavioral competencies. The analysis is performed on the basis of the educational policy documents elaborated by the Institute of Education Sciences and on the official curricular documents elaborated and approved by the Romanian Ministry of National Education.

Keywords: areas of development, competences, curriculum, early curriculum, primary curriculum

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1. Introduction

Over time, Romanian education has undergone several curricular reforms. According to the authors Popa and Bucur (2016), in Romania, from 1990 until now there have been 4 phases of the curricular reform in primary education: the first phase (1990-1997), the second phase (1997-2000), the third phase 2000-2010) and the fourth phase (2010-present).

Digitization, the advancement of technology, the increasingly complex requirements of the labor market, sustainable development are just a few aspects that have led to changes in the educational curriculum. Thus, new directions of training and development of the educated have been conceived so that it can face the challenges and correspond to the requirements requested by the society. "(...) Today's school must prepare students for the ever-changing changes in the economy and society, for occupations that have not yet been created, to use technologies that have not yet been invented and to solve social problems that are not yet we know that they will appear" (A. Schleicher, in the Educational Policy Paper, ISE, 2020).

Thus, in the current curriculum the emphasis is on the formation of behaviors in early education and the formation of skills in primary education. The profile of the early education graduate and the profile of the fourth grade graduate were made on the categories of behaviors and competencies.

2. Curriculum of early and primary education

Through this article we propose an analysis of the curriculum of the two cycles of education: primary and preschool. In the analysis we will follow the specifics of each current curriculum approved at the level of the two educational cycles, the values promoted at the level of the curriculum, its finalities, namely the focus on the formation of behaviors and competencies, the training profile of the primary and preschool graduate. For the comparative analysis between the two curricular documents, we will be based on the last phase of the curricular reform for primary education, namely the fourth phase from

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2010 until now, and the last approved curriculum for early education (2019).

The values promoted by the National Curriculum guide school life and consist of: respect, responsibility, innovative spirit and creativity, excellence, integrity, active citizenship, critical thinking, perseverance and resilience. The curriculum for early education is based on several principles that represent fundamental values such as: the principle of child-centered education, the principle of respect for the rights of the child, the principle of active learning, the principle of integrated development, the principle of interculturality, the principle of equity and non-discrimination. .

Early education is carried out according to the Curriculum for early education (2019) approved by the order of the Minister of National Education (4694 / 2.08.2019). The curriculum is organized around integrative annual themes (Who am / are we ?; How is it, has been and will be here on earth ?; How do we express what we feel ?; What and how do I want to be ?; Who also plans / organizes an activity ?; When / how and why does it happen?). The program for early education is structured on development areas, which include dimensions of development and for each dimension are specified a series of poe behaviors that the preschooler must prove by the end of the preschool cycle, these behaviors are premises for later skills development. The development areas are:

A. The field of Physical Development, Health and Personal Hygiene - includes a wide range of skills and abilities, but also coordination, sensory development, knowledge and skills related to personal care and hygiene, nutrition;

B. Socio-emotional development - aims at the beginning of the child's social life, his ability to establish and maintain interactions with adults and children, children's ability to perceive and express their emotions, to understand and respond to the emotions of others, and development self-concept;

C. Learning skills and attitudes - the way in which the child is involved in a learning activity, the way in which he approaches the learning tasks and contexts, as well as his attitude in the interaction with the environment and the people around him;

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D. Domain Development of language, communication and the premises of reading and writing - aims at the development of language and communication;

E. Cognitive development and world knowledge - includes logical thinking and problem solving skills, basic mathematical knowledge of the child and those related to the world and the environment.

Each development area includes development dimensions and behaviors, as in the example below (we will provide an example of the size with the related behaviors for each area):

A. Domain of Physical development, health and personal hygiene		
		<i>At the end of the preschool period, the child will exhibit a number of behaviors, including:</i>
1.	<i>Coarse motor skills and fine motor skills in familiar life contexts</i>	1.1. He coordinates his muscles in carrying out diversified activities, specific to his age 1.2. Participates in various physical activities, appropriate to his level of development 1.3. Uses hands and fingers to perform a variety of activities
B. Domain Socio-emotional development		
2.	<i>Interactions with adults and older children</i>	1.1. Demonstrates confidence in known adults by practicing interaction with them 1.2. Demonstrates ability to ask for and receive help in specific problem situations 1.3. Initiates/participates in positive interactions with older children
C. Learning skills and attitudes		

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3.	<i>Curiosity, interest and initiative in learning</i>	1.1. Shows curiosity and interest in experimenting and learning in new situations 1.2. Initiates learning activities and interactions with children or adults in the immediate environment.
D. Domain Development of language, communication and the premises of reading and writing		
4.	<i>Active listening to the message for understanding and receiving it (receptive communication)</i>	1.1. Get acquainted with the specific sounds of the Romanian language 1.2. I understand simple messages 1.3. Participates in group activities and play activities as an auditor
E. Domain Cognitive development and knowledge of the world		
5.	<i>Logical relationships, operations, and deductions in the immediate environment</i>	1.1. Identifies the characteristic elements of some phenomena / relationships in the immediate environment 1.2. Compare experiences, actions, events, phenomena / relationships in the immediate environment 1.3. Build new experiences, starting from past experiences 1.4. Identifies possible answers / solutions to questions, situations - problems and challenges in your own life and that of your group of colleagues 1.5. Conducts, in a guided way, simple environmental investigation activities, using specific tools and methods.

Table no.1. *Examples of developmental dimensions and behaviors for each area of development in the Early Education Curriculum*

It is necessary to create real links between all these areas of development through appropriate strategies that allow the development of these aspects to be achieved in preschoolers.

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In primary education, curricula are designed for each subject and include general competencies that are developed throughout the schooling period, specific competencies that are formed during a school year, as well as examples of activities for each specific competency. Each general competency has several specific competencies.

Examples of specific competencies and learning activities from the pre-school curriculum for class I, in Communication in Romanian:

General competence	
<i>1. Receiving oral messages in familiar communication contexts</i>	
Specific competence and examples of learning activities	<i>1.1. Identify the meaning of an oral message, on accessible topics, spoken clearly</i> - use of images to indicate the meaning of an audible message - making a drawing that corresponds to the subject of the text heard - providing answers to the question: "What is it about ... (in this fragment of the story / in this text)?"

Table no. 2. *Example of general and specific competence with learning activities from the Curriculum for the first grade, the subject Communication in Romanian*

The curriculum for early education is organized into categories of activities and provides for the number of hours allocated for carrying out learning activities. The categories or types of learning activities in the curriculum are: experiential activities, Free Games and Activities, and Personal Development Activities. Unlike early education, the curriculum for early education is structured in curricular areas (language and communication, mathematics and environmental exploration, man and society, arts, physical education, sports and health, technology, counseling and guidance) and subjects of study. , with the number of study hours per week allocated for each discipline.

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The aims of education

Unlike primary education, where the aims are the formation of the eight key competences, the aims of early education concern aspects that represent the premises for the formation of key competences in primary education, such as:

- the child's discovery of his own identity, the exercise of autonomy and the development of a positive self-image;
- practicing social skills, through interactions with other children, with adults;
- encouraging curiosity, active attitude and exploration of the close / familiar environment, as a basis for autonomous learning experiences;
- the acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities, attitudes necessary for entering school and throughout life.

The aims of early education cover five areas of child development:

- physical development, health and personal hygiene;
- socio-emotional development;
- cognitive development and knowledge of the world;
- development of language, communication and the premises of reading and writing;
- learning abilities and attitudes.

Early education forms behaviors on the different dimensions of each area of development. An example of behavior in the field of Language Development, Communication, and the Prerequisites of Reading and Writing, in the form of Oral Messages in Known Communication Contexts, is: Listens to stories and short stories, participates in games/songs/poems accompanied, initially, by gestures (receptive communication).

Primary education focuses on the training of the eight key competences recommended at European level:

- communication skills in the mother tongue;
- communication skills in several foreign languages;
- mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering;
- digital competence;

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- the competence of personal, social development and learning to learn;
- civic competence;
- entrepreneurial competence;
- competence of cultural awareness and expression

The aims of the education system are represented by key competencies that are formed at the preparatory level (as premises for the further training of competencies for the preschool level) and at the elementary level, a level that corresponds to the stage of concrete operations in terms of cognitive development. to be operated in new contexts independently by the student.

The aims of the education system are structured as follows for primary and pre-school education:


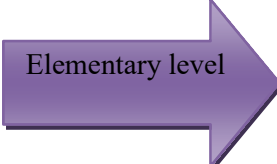
	ISCED 0	ISCED 1
Education levels	Early education	Primary education
	Early education	Compulsory education
Level of development of key competencies		

Figure no. 1. Structuring the aims of the education system for the pre-school and primary cycles (after ISE, 2020).

The training profile of the preschool graduate and of the fourth grade graduate describes the expectations expressed towards the graduates in relation to: social requirements expressed in the laws, the general aims of the education, the development characteristics of the students. In pre-school education, the graduate's training profile is built starting from the fundamental landmarks of development, and in primary education from the descriptors of key competencies. Below

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are some aspects from the training profile of the preschool graduate for each field, but also from the profile of the fourth grade graduate:

Cognitive development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operate with basic mathematical representations (numbers, numerical representations, operations, concepts of space, geometric shapes, understanding of models, measurement) in different learning contexts - Use of information about the environment and the world, by observing, manipulating objects and investigating the environment.
Socio-emotional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Appropriate involvement in interactions with adults and children, by showing initiative and applying simple rules of communication and relationships - Awareness of the changes that occur in itself and in the environment, by identifying differences and similarities
Physical development, personal health and hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify / recognize sounds, letters, words; sound-letter matching -Formulate simple messages in communication with others, following the basic rules of correct expression.
Language and communication development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exersarea capacității de pronunție corectă a sunetelor, cuvintelor - Identificarea/recunoașterea unor sunete, litere, cuvinte; punerea în corespondență sunet-literă
Developing learning skills and attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show curiosity and interest in changes /phenomena/surrounding events, to experience and learn new things - Manifestation of the initiative in interactions and activities.

Table no. 3. *Training profile of the preschool graduate.*

Communication in the mother tongue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify facts, opinions, emotions in oral or written messages, in familiar communication contexts - Expressing thoughts, opinions, emotions in simple messages in familiar
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	communication contexts
Communication in foreign languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify information in a foreign language in simple oral or written messages, in familiar communication contexts - Express opinions and emotions in short, simple, written and oral messages in familiar contexts
Mathematical skills and science skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show curiosity about finding out the truth and exploring regularities and mathematical relationships encountered in familiar situations - Formulate simple explanations using mathematics-specific terminology
Digital competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use in adult learning of simple functions and applications of digital devices in the immediate environment, with the support of adults - Develop simple digital content in the context of learning activities
Learning to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Identify / clarify the elements involved in the work task before starting a learning activity - Ask questions to clarify a task
Social skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Manifestation of interest in self-knowledge - Putting into practice basic rules of conduct in everyday contexts
Entrepreneurial competence	-Manifestarea curiozității în abordarea de sarcini noi și neobișnuite de învățare , fără teama de a greși
Competence in cultural awareness and expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying the usefulness of some trades / professions for community members - Recognition of elements of the local cultural context and of the national and universal heritage

Table no. 4. *Training profile of the 4th grade graduate.*

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3. Conclusions

The curriculum for early education, through its structure and the aspects it proposes for the development of the preschool child, lays the foundations for its further training, and the behaviors it provides to be trained in the preschool child are the premises on which the specific skills of education are formed and developed. primary. The curriculum of the two levels of training are in line with the requirements imposed by the company and the needs it has. It proposes the training and development of the child by acquiring the behaviors and skills necessary to deal with situations and challenges in real life contexts that he will face.

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