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# The Curricular Reform of Art Education in Primary School in Slovenia in Terms of Certain Components of the European Competence of Cultural Awareness and Expression

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≈ One of the important positions of the last curricular reform in Slovenia, which included systemic issues of education (White Paper on Education, 2011) and curricula for compulsory subjects in primary school, is the fact that Slovenia has been integrated into Europe, and thus education should also include the development of core European competences. One such competence is cultural awareness and expression, which until now has been an issue more in the context of cultural policies than school policies in Slovenia. The purpose of the present article is to critically analyse the curricular reform of art education (i.e., visual art education), through which, in terms of certain components of the competence of cultural awareness and expression, it is foreseen that the student will gain a knowledge of art, develop an ability to experience works of art and develop a creative attitude towards art and heritage. Because the starting point and goal of curricular change is the curriculum, our analysis is derived from curriculum theories, and not from the art theories and pedagogical theories that have predominantly framed previous attempts at curriculum analysis. Critical consideration of the curricular reform of art education in primary school in terms of certain components of the competence of cultural awareness and expression was undertaken by comparing curricula in the field of aesthetic education. We compared art education with music education and literature within the Slovenian language curriculum. Qualitative analysis showed that, despite the reform, the curriculum for arts education does not realise selected components of the competence of cultural awareness and expression, largely due to the curriculum's conceptual structure. Art education is centred principally on art-making activities, with an obvious neglect of appreciation. The integration of arts subjects at school, as

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proposed by the White Paper, is therefore not possible, due to the existing model of art education. From a practical point of view, the analysis also raised the question of the knowledge and competences of teachers.

**Keywords:** Curricular reform, Curriculum analysis, The art education curriculum, Cultural awareness and expression, The model of art education

## Introduction

The last curricular reform was completed in 2011. It included conceptual and systemic changes in education included in the White Paper on Education in the Republic Slovenia, as well as updates of curricula for compulsory subjects in primary school. Updating curricula subsequent to Slovenia becoming part of the European Union and a member of the Council of Europe meant, among other things, the integration of fundamental European competences for life-long learning. One of these is cultural awareness and expression.

In the years since Slovenia was integrated into Europe, the competence of cultural awareness and expression has been an issue more in the context of cultural policy than school policy. Cultural education was placed in the core strategic document on cultural policy (The National Programme for Culture 2004-2008; 2008-2011; 2012-2015), a few studies were undertaken, and, in 2009, special national guidelines for cultural education were created, which were confirmed by expert councils in education. Based on the White Paper, the Ministry of Culture made a number of remarks that referred to cultural education.

The White Paper is a fundamental document for the development of Slovenian education. With principles, objectives, strategic challenges and conceptual solutions, it frames the whole system as well as the various areas of education within it. We could say that the issues of cultural education are integrated into the general principles of education, the general objectives of education and the strategic challenges and directions of the education system, since everywhere the emphasis is on the common European heritage of political, cultural and moral values.

In the field of elementary education, the White Paper includes many principles on the importance of cultural and art education (Bela knjiga, 2011, pp. 114–117). The principle of providing universal education, and quality and sustainability of knowledge assumes that general education, in addition to linguistic, mathematical, scientific, social science, technical, physical and informational literacy, also includes artistic literacy.<sup>3</sup> The principle of a school's cooperation with the environment explicitly foresees the cooperation of the school with museums and galleries, if we emphasise this authentic space of experiencing art. The principle of the creation and dissemination of national

<sup>3</sup> The White Paper does not include definitions of individual literacies, thus to understand the concept of literacy we refer to the definition of reading literacy in the National Strategy for the Development of Literacy (Nacionalna strategija, 2006, p. 6): "Literacy is the constantly developing ability of an individual to use socially agreed systems of symbols for accepting, understanding, creating and using texts for life in the family, the school, at work and in society. Acquired knowledge and skills, and developed skills, enable an individual successful and creative personal growth and accountability in business and social life."

culture and the promotion of intercultural understanding involves knowledge and creation of culture, a sense of the importance of culture and promoting interculturalism. In accordance with this principle, among other things, students need to acquire a knowledge of the history of Slovenia and its culture. This is connected with the next principle, the principle of creating an awareness of knowing one's own identity and active involvement in the creation of heritage communities. All of these and other principles are part of a wider programme of education – the curriculum.

In the present article, we critically analyse the curricular reform of art education in primary school in terms of certain competences of cultural awareness and expression. This was done by comparing curricula in the field of arts or aesthetic education, taking curriculum theories as a point of departure rather than art theories and pedagogical theories, which have mainly framed previous attempts at curriculum analysis (Zupančič, 2008; Herzog, Batič, & Duh, 2009).

## **Curriculum theoretical frameworks**

The curriculum is the focus concept of curriculum theory and is very wide in its definition. In the International Encyclopedia of Curriculum (Lewy, 1991), the concept includes conceptual and terminological aspects of the curriculum, influences of different theories, science disciplines, policies and ideologies on the creation, development and shaping of the curriculum, components of the curriculum (from curricula to the textbook), different models, approaches or concepts of the curriculum, curriculum planning (defining and conceiving curricula, content and methods), transfer of the curriculum to pedagogical practice, and evaluation of the curriculum. From the first definition of the curriculum as a programme of teaching and learning, which dates from the end of the 1940s, until now, the fundamental conception of the curriculum has not essentially changed. With four basic components – learning goals, content, methods and evaluation of learning accomplishments – the curriculum means the plan of the educational process (Tyler, 1949). That which changes with the development of curriculum theories is what we could call a shift from discussion of the curriculum as a product to process perspectives, where various issues associated with the planning, implementation, changing and controlling of the curriculum (who plans, what is planned, how is it planned, etc.) are in the foreground. The fact that we value and perceive goals, content and methods of education differently led researchers to discussions on systemic, ideological or philosophical concepts of the curriculum (e.g., Kelly, 1999; Marsh, 1992; Posner, 1995), as well as to discussions on the curriculum in terms of concrete

political, economic, technological, demographic and other circumstances (e.g., Ornstein, Pajak, & Ornstein, 2011). As Kroflič says in a discussion on theoretical approaches to planning the curriculum, planning educational activity has a "very interdisciplinary nature" (1992, p. 10).

At the core of curricular reform should be consideration of the planning and structure of the curriculum in connection with models of education (cf. Pevec Semec, 2007, 2009). Since curricular planning and implementation is a very complex process, a wide conception of the curriculum is very important, the basic question being what we want to achieve with a specific curriculum. Kelly says that we have to have a critical view of the curriculum, we have to doubt the appropriateness of our discussion on the curriculum and our views on it, and that we also need to consider and mainly fundamental values included in the curricular studies. "The concern is not with mere methodology, with the *how* of educational practice, but much more with questions of the justification of such practice, with the *why* as well as *how*." (Kelly, 1999, p. 20)

General curricular issues are also transferred to specific educational fields. In connection with the educational field of arts and visual art, Gluck (1991), in the aforementioned encyclopaedia of curriculum, introduces the reader to various curricular issues: the question of the role and meaning of art for the development of the student, the lack of definition of didactic recommendations and standards in the field of art education, and the question of the relevance (or irrelevance) of educational programmes in this field. In the encyclopaedia, we also find historical and conceptual reviews of aesthetic education (Otto, 1991) and programmes (models) of education in the field of art (Efland, 1991), a special discussion on museum education (Lee & Solender, 1991), with the curriculum in the field of art connected to the issue of the human relationship to art (acknowledgment of art as a personal and social value) (Morris, 1991), as well as other curricular topics in the field of art education. The diversity of these topics confirms the fact that the curriculum not only represents learning content, the implementation plan of the lesson, but also its context, the basis for it (cf. Kroflič, 2002).

According to the above, we could summarise the discussion on the primary school curriculum in the field of art in a few basic questions: Which learning goals we are trying to achieve? What are the selection, scope and succession of learning content? Which teaching methods aid the achievement of the planned and expected goals? Are learning goals, content and methods synchronised? And finally: Which model of art education do we have? Such discussion on the curriculum should include the curriculum in connection with manuals, textbooks and other learning aids, and should also include the wider

context.

## The purpose and method of the research

The article focuses on the curricular reform of art education in primary school in regard to certain components of the competence of cultural awareness and expression. This competence is written explicitly in the art education curriculum (the subject of discussion is the art education curriculum from 2011, which is an update of the 2004 curriculum).<sup>4</sup>

The competence of cultural awareness and expression is defined as: "Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts". Regarding the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence, the Official Journal of the European Union states: "Cultural knowledge includes an awareness of local, national and European cultural heritage and their place in the world. It covers a basic knowledge of major cultural works, including popular contemporary culture. It is essential to understand the cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe and other regions of the world, the need to preserve it and the importance of aesthetic factors in daily life. Skills relate to both appreciation and expression: the appreciation and enjoyment of works of art and performances as well as self-expression through a variety of media using one's innate capacities. Skills include also the ability to relate one's own creative and expressive points of view to the opinions of others and to identify and realise social and economic opportunities in cultural activity. Cultural expression is essential to the development of creative skills, which can be transferred to a variety of professional contexts. A solid understanding of one's own culture and a sense of identity can be the basis for an open attitude towards and respect for diversity of cultural expression. A positive attitude also covers creativity, and the willingness to cultivate aesthetic capacity through artistic self-expression and participation in cultural life" (Official Journal of the European Union, 2006).

In terms of art education, we assume in regard to certain components of the competence of cultural awareness and expression that the student acquires a knowledge of art, develops an ability to experience works of art, and a develops creative relationship to art and heritage. The emphasis is on the understanding of culture (to understand a specific culture, we have to know it) and the feeling of identity (to understand it, we have to develop it) in order to live and work in an intercultural environment. The competence, a new concept

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<sup>4</sup> The competence is written inaccurately, as cultural awareness and art expression.

in education, is understood as knowledge and skill or ability.<sup>5</sup> “The concept of competence warned about the *complexity* of knowledge, on its intertwinement with the dispositions of an individual and on the urgency of teaching the *use* of knowledge” (Bela knjiga, 2011, p. 23).

The methodology is qualitative. We have included updated curricula in the research, but the analysis itself does not include textbooks and other teaching aids, as they do not (yet) exist. We have undertaken content analysis of the curriculum for art education, and for comparison have included content analysis of other curricula in the field of art-music education and literature within Slovene language curricula (the latter also including elements of drama and film education). We classify these three subjects in the area of aesthetic education – education for experiencing – which derives from direct contact with visual, music and literary art (Otto, 1991). The comparison refers to the clarity, precision, direction and coordination of learning goals, content and methods. All of the curricula have the same basic structure: first we have the definition of the subject, second are the basic goals of the subject, followed by operative goals and content by educational periods, after which we have standards of knowledge, while the curriculum is concluded with didactic recommendations.

## **Analysis of the curriculum for art education**

An initial reading of the curriculum (Učni načrt: program osnovna šola: likovna vzgoja, 2011) first shows the use of many terms (also coinages) for art or an artwork as the focus concept of art education: “Artistic and visual culture”, “object of visual and art culture”, “art and visual culture”, “heritage of art”, “cultural heritage”, “art cultural heritage”, “artwork”, “artwork of an artist”, “visual artwork”, “cultural monument”, “art creation” and “artistic creation”. Direct contact with the artwork and attitude towards art is expressed with phrases such as: “to value” (art and visual culture), “to have an ear for” (artworks of artists), “to learn, experience, value” (heritage of art) and “to develop sensitivity towards” (art cultural heritage and cultural diversity). In connection with understanding a culture, the term “visual space” (also “visual environment” and “visual world”) is used, which is supposed to mean the natural, personal, social and cultural space. The basic task of art education is “development of the student’s art ability (competence), which derives from an understanding of the visual

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<sup>5</sup> “Some conceptions of competence include the ability of practical use of knowledge and skills in ever new circumstances, as well as beliefs, values, personal features (creativity, initiative, ability to solve problems, manageability, ability to adapt, conducting obligations, ability to learn), etc., which are a necessary condition for the successful implementation of a specific action.” (Bela knjiga, 2011, pp. 22–23).

(natural, personal, social and cultural) space and is expressed with the active transformation of this space into an art space". Among general learning objectives derived from the definition of the subject, objectives connected with art expression or creation prevail. The general usefulness of the subject is defined with the development of spatial representations and the ability to visualise.

The curriculum is substantively divided into the areas of art creation: designing on a plane (drawing, painting and graphics, in the second and third educational periods also graphic design) and designing in three-dimensional space (sculpture and architecture). In the first educational period, the areas are separated and there are five substantive parts (drawing, painting, graphics, sculpturing and architecture), while in the second and third educational periods, the fields are joined into two substantive parts (drawing, painting, graphics and graphic design in the part of designing on a plane, and sculpture and architecture in the part of designing in three-dimensional space). The teacher defines and deals with the content based on operative goals and concepts. Derived from the field of art creation, these are directed towards learning about art techniques, materials, tools and shape-forming concepts. The function of art is basically didactic; an artwork is "a means for showing and learning concepts", and in this role is equal to "the artwork of students", "nature" and "the environment".

In the first educational period, for example, in the area of drawing, students: "test different drawing materials and accessories, develop creative drawing abilities and maintain individual drawing expression, draw shapes with different drawing materials and accessories on different sized bases, observe and compare examples of lines in nature, the environment and artworks with works, art products of students and examples from nature and the environment; they learn about art concepts connected to drawing, develop a sense for the use of different types of lines, freehand drawing and with a ruler, draw shapes and fill with lines and points; in drawing they also use simple computer tools, develop a sense for the logical integration of motif in the selected format, draw shapes by observation, memory and imagination, become accustomed to the independent selection of shapes, colours, sizes and the purpose of drawing bases; they develop a sense for organising shapes in a drawing, develop a sense for the construction of a drawing from the whole to the parts, develop a sense for expanding a drawing with textures (linear, point), learn about the features of different drawing materials and accessories, and develop motoric ability for handling different drawing materials and accessories". The concepts that they learn in this area are: "Point-dot, line, drawing, drawing base, drawing materials, drawing accessories, shape, types of lines (straight, curved, polyline, short, long, horizontal, perpendicular, oblique), size of shapes, shapes of drawing

base, size of drawing base, drawing materials and accessories, different base for different art techniques, incomplete line, complete line, texture of shapes, shape filled with linear and point textures, organising shapes in the drawing, format, purpose of drawing base, hard drawing material, fluid material for drawing".

In the second educational period, where drawing, painting, graphics and graphic design are combined in the substantive part of designing on the plane, and sculpture and architecture are joined in the part of designing in a three-dimensional space, objectives directed towards art expression are joined with "learning important artworks within the different design areas of domestic and world heritage". The curriculum does not provide answers to the question as to which works these are and why they are important. Concepts are still connected to art techniques, while some formal (design) aspects of artworks become more complex (e.g., whereas before we had lines, now we have "a sparse string of lines – light plane (raster)", "a dense string of lines – dark plane (raster)", "organisation of light and dark hatched planes", etc.). One new concept is the "art motif": in the fourth grade students learn about the portrait, self-portrait, landscape and still life, in the fifth grade they learn about the family and group portrait, and in the sixth grade they learn about genre (they do not learn about other motifs.) They learn about these motifs in drawing, painting and graphics; they do not learn about the sculpture portrait, but they do, for example, learn about the sculpture monument (from further reading of the curriculum we see that the art motif also refers to the content, theme and message of the artwork, which is a professional mistake that we will not discuss here).

In the third educational period, we continue to learn about the concepts connected to different ways of expressing on the plane and in space. In this period, students should demonstrate an ability to analyse and evaluate artworks, thus objectives also include "learning about artworks of national and international art and cultural heritage". However, the concepts do not include discussion of which art we study and what we learn through it. In terms of drawing, painting, graphics and graphic design, the student learns about composition, the relationship of the parts to the whole in composition, ratio, types of compositions, shot, succession, the illusion of space, space keys and plans, drawing by observing, different perspectives, saturation of colours, colour opposites, colour dimensions, colour harmony, tone painting, art graphics, industrial graphics, high and deep print, small graphics and animation. On the basis of these concepts, however, the student is not able to analyse and evaluate, for example, graphic papers and series from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and, with this art, expressed concepts, ideas and values (e.g., Protestantism). We see some of these concepts only in sculpture (e.g., "abstraction in sculpture").

Among didactic recommendations on fulfilling the objectives of the subject, despite the reference that “in art education, the teacher constantly educates the students culturally”, there are no concrete recommendations on encouraging the experiencing and understanding art works. The emphasis is on methodical views of art expression, on “conducting art tasks”, while the curriculum does not include connections between art making and learning about artworks, so-called art creation according to artworks. It is recommended that the teacher “include examples of artworks, reproductions or originals of art creations in the individual steps of the learning process in a logical way”; the artwork has a function of “depiction (teaching aid)”, so that the students better understand the art technique or motif. Among the recommendations is a visit to a museum or a discussion with an artist (at least once a year), which is intended to be for “in-depth learning” about artworks, an activity that is not appropriately captured in the learning objectives and content; recommendations in regard to these activities do not exist. Didactic recommendations do not differ substantially during the various educational periods; in the third educational period, when students “are losing spontaneity in art expression” and it is “the time of depiction”, and when the student should know how to explain the meaning of cultural heritage for Slovenia and the world, the task of the teacher remains the same: he/she creates opportunities for art expression and tries to “nurture individual art expression” among students. The teacher is expected to still be “attentive to experiencing and expressing emotions, to the social development of the student (his/her relation with others), to emotions that emerge with this and to the student’s interest in art creation and ways of expression, as well as his/her relationship to items: experiencing the beautiful and developing abilities to create beautiful things”. There are no recommendations, however, regarding how to encourage the student’s interest in art, nor are there recommendations on how to evaluate knowledge and competences (which is true for all three educational periods); from the first to the ninth grade, the teacher can only evaluate art products.

### **The analysis of curricula for literary education, integrated in the Slovenian language curricula, and music education**

The curriculum for Slovene language (Učni načrt: program osnovna šola: slovenščina, 2011) has two areas: language and the literature class. The purpose of the literature class is clear, and is defined as follows: “In the literature class, students are faced with artistic/literary texts and, in addition to communicative

competence, develop experiential, imaginative, creative, evaluative and intellectual ability. With the perception of cultural, ethical, spiritual and other dimensions – which literary art possesses as one of the most universal achievements of civilization, and which are especially important for the existence of Slovene culture – there is a strengthening of cultural, patriotic and national education, as well as intercultural and wider social ability". The objective of the literature class is that students critically accept artistic/literary texts by Slovenian and other authors, that reading becomes their need and value (that they read texts, visit libraries and attend film and theatre performances as well as literary events in their free time), that they shape their identity with reading, broaden their horizons, learn about their culture and other cultures, etc. The curriculum emphasises literary and aesthetic experience: when accepting artistic/literary texts, students develop communication ability and gain literary knowledge. Placing texts in a temporal and cultural context and acquiring literary knowledge enables students a deeper experience, understanding and appreciation of artistic texts. Literary and aesthetic experience, supported by literary knowledge, enables in-depth learning about literature and aesthetic expressive possibilities, enhances pleasure during reading and helps to develop a positive attitude towards literature (reading), creativity and (self)expression in various media.

The literature class has two main operational objectives: (1) development of the reception ability by reading, listening and watching performances of art text and speaking, and by writing about them, and (2) development of the reception ability by (re)creating artistic texts (writing, interpretative reading, speaking). Each objective is analysed into specific objectives and content or areas related to developing reception ability. Reception ability is defined as the ability to experience, understand and appreciate literary texts of different genres and types (poetry, prose, drama), and as the ability to experience, understand and appreciate theatre/puppet shows, radio dramas and movies. Students are expected to experience, understand and appreciate specific literary elements in terms of literary class; to identify literary people, perceive and experience literary space and time, understand events, theme and message, distinguish author and narrator, identify literary perspective, etc. The curriculum defines the literary knowledge that students acquire in the individual educational period and suggests literary texts (authors and titles of works) for discussion in the particular educational period. In the third educational period, specific writers and their works, of which students have to have a good knowledge, are also listed; it is expected that the student be able to indicate the main characteristics of literary periods and movements and of selected representatives and their works, as well as to classify authors into literary periods.

Didactic recommendations on the development of reception ability include the definition of the communication model of the literature class, in the centre of which are the literary text and the student of literature, as well as models of school interpretation of the art text, including introduction motivation, announcement of the text, placement and interpretative reading, pause after reading, expression of experiences and analysis, synthesis, evaluation and re-reading, and assignments. Recommendations also include the relationship between reception activities (reading, listening) and formation activities (speaking, writing). For each educational period, the proportion of the Slovenian language class represented by the literature class is defined, as are methods of work (e.g., discussion, directed silent reading, reading aloud, role play, dramatisation, drawing), recommendations on the selection of texts and other recommendations on achieving the goals of the subject. The curriculum places particular emphasis on cultural education, in terms of intersubject connections. The method of assessing and evaluating the student's reception and literary reading abilities is also precisely defined.

In the definition of the subject, the curriculum for music education (Učni načrt: program osnovna šola: glasbena vzgoja, 2011) emphasises that music is a human need and value. Music as art is defined as musical production (creativity), reproduction (recreation) and reception (creative reception). Music education includes activities of implementation, creation and listening to music, which lead the student to adopt different forms of music and its assessment and evaluation. There is also an emphasis on school and extracurricular music activities (listening to music, participating in music groups) for the student's development and lifelong learning. The objectives of music education – e.g., "promoting experience and expression of music with music activities (listening, conducting, creating) and other means and media of expression", "provoking curiosity and developing an interest in, and an active attitude towards, music", "participating in different forms of music activities", "creating a positive attitude towards the national and world music heritage", "developing sensitivity and tolerance towards different music cultures and towards those who perform this music", "a knowledge of music literature, artists and performers, and of the laws of musical language", "developing critical judgment and evaluating music", "encouraging aesthetic development with the activities of musical conducting, listening and creating" – also have the important function of developing the competence of cultural awareness and expression among students.

At the operational level, the music education class is divided into three areas: conducting, creating and listening. Although these areas are complementary and connected, for the purposes of our analysis we will hereinafter

focus on listening, since this area is primarily focused on the development of the student's ability to apprehend aesthetic experience. Listening to music is defined in each of the educational periods, as the music class is gradually designed/planned. From initial listening to the sounds of nature and the early music concepts that students acquire in the first educational period, e.g., song, composer, choir, orchestra, etc., the curriculum in the third educational period includes listening (identifying, comparing, defining, evaluating) to prehistoric music, ancient and Medieval music, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical and Romantic music, as well as music of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. While listening, students acquire concepts such as (to take the example of music of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade): Impressionism – the whole-tone scale, dissonance, Expressionism – twelve-tone composition, serialism, Neoclassicism, neo-Baroque, folklore, ethnomusicology, new music, avant-garde, tonal music, atonal music, sound clusters, electronic (electroacoustic) music, experimental music, improvised music, jazz, popular music, dance music and folk music. Listening to music includes activities such as: active listening, re-listening, expressing one's experience while listening, and deepening of one's experience while listening. Through listening, students identify, distinguish, compare, regulate, establish and evaluate individual components or characteristics of music. At the end of primary school, students are expected to know music periods, genres, and important artists and musical works, as well as knowing how to place music (prehistoric music, ancient and Medieval music, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical and Romantic music, as well as music of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century) into the historical context. The curriculum also contains several recommendations on how to examine and evaluate (examination and evaluation is oral, through written products, diaries, records and other products, and through solving practical problems, while the implementation and process of creation is also examined and evaluated) knowledge, skills and abilities in the course of music education.

### **The comparison of art education with literary education and music education**

In terms of cultural awareness and expression, and the definition of aesthetic education as the education of experience derived from direct contact with art, music and literary work, the comparison primarily shows terminological confusions. The curriculum for art education does not include uniform and entirely appropriate terminology for art, the artwork, culture and heritage. Comparison with literary and music education also shows that in the context of art education there is no basic name for the direct contact (interaction) with the

artwork; books are *read*, music is *listened to*, artworks are *looked at* (Otto, 1991). Consequently, there are not even the most appropriate activities in this area.

Literary education includes reading, listening, watching performances of art texts, speaking and writing about literary texts and the (re)creation of art texts. In addition to conducting and creating, music education also includes listening to music. All of these activities lead to experiencing, understanding and evaluating literary and musical works of art; in short, they lead to the development of the student's ability to accept, evaluate and appreciate. It is about the affective area of learning and development, which is defined in the Oxford Dictionary of Education (Wallance, 2008, pp. 11–12) as the area of learning whose objective is embodied by the aesthetic appreciation in the area of visual art, literature and music, as well as in spiritual and moral education. Within art education, curricular learning content or activities relate to the field of artistic creation (creation on the plane and design in three-dimensional space) and lead to practical art expression (art making), which especially emphasises spontaneity and individuality, while the work of art has the function of a teaching tool to learn concepts related to art design (cf. Podobnik, 2011; Tacol, 2011). In accordance with contemporary curriculum theories that emphasise process and development planning (cf. Kroflič, 1992, 2002), we would classify such art education among older, behaviourist models, because it does not enable appropriate effects in the field of moral and social development (we should remember that the general usefulness of the subject is defined by the development of spatial representations and the ability to visualise). “The process and developmental model of education assumes the transfer of specific knowledge and experience, but emphasises the beneficial character of content and methods of teaching that contribute to the development of the student's personal abilities, whether this is the development of cognition, which is a fundamental condition of critical thinking, the development of those cognitive and affective features that enable the gradual creation of the value orientation of an individual and autonomous morality, or the assimilation of such knowledge, skills and habits that enable the quality professional socialisation of an individual.” (Pevec Semec, 2007, p. 136)

Although the goals of art education include goals related to the development of the abilities to experience art works and an attitude towards art, unlike in literary and music education these objectives are not aligned with content and methods. The fundamental difference is that literature and music education include a knowledge of artworks from different periods and their placement in the historical context, whereas the art class does not. Similar can be said of didactic recommendations on the teaching of literature and music: included are recommendations regarding the selection of artworks, reading

and listening strategies, as well as methods enabling the student to arrive at his/her own experiences of the artwork. The knowledge and abilities that students acquire or develop are also examined and assessed (both curricula include the methodology of examination and assessment). The comparison also shows that literature and music classes are planned gradually, which means that the steps of acquiring receptive abilities are precisely defined from the first educational period, through the second to the third.

In terms of the competence of cultural awareness and expression, the comparison also shows that in both curricula, for literary and music education, the art (literature and music), or its perception (reading, listening), is defined as a human need and value. The emphasis is on an active and creative attitude towards literature and music: reading texts, listening to music, going to film shows, theatre performances, literary events and concerts also in the student's free time. As Morris (1991) says, an active attitude towards art has to be learned, while it is not just about the student's attitude towards art, but about the teacher's attitude towards art, the status of the subject in school, and the human attitude towards art in general (*ibid.*, pp. 684–685).

## Conclusions

European policy is trying to introduce more artistic content into school curricula (Kulturno-umetnostna vzgoja v šolah po Evropi, 2010). Knowing and understanding art, critical evaluation, understanding the importance of cultural heritage, understanding cultural diversity, abilities to express and develop one's own identity through art and creativity – these are the fundamental objectives of cultural and art education. The purpose of art education is not only acquiring a knowledge of an artistic language and artistic expression, but also identifying the influence of culture on the formation of personal, local and national identity (recognising the importance of the cultural heritage), learning about and accepting different cultures, and aesthetic appreciation. A comparative analysis of curricula in the field of aesthetic education shows that visual art education does not realise these objectives, the reason primarily being the inadequate conceptual structure of the curriculum, which is organised according to areas of art creation, with goals oriented towards art making that has to be spontaneous and free, and has to enable individuality and subjectivity. It is basically an expressionist model of art education (Efstrand, 1990), regarding which one could say that it is not just one of the approaches to art education, but that it has for a long time been the dominant and official model

of communicating art content in Slovenia.<sup>6</sup> In this sense, adding “missing” modern art practices, which is where Slovenian researchers see the reform of art education (Vrlič, 2002; Zupančič, 2008; Herzog, Batič, & Duh, 2009), would only maintain the same concept. Our analysis has shown that art education is a completely different issue (which we have to consider in the context of what Kelly calls support of educational practice); namely, the issue of developing aesthetic ability that derives from interaction with the artwork – both historical and contemporary.

In terms of selected components of the competence of cultural awareness and expression, it is assumed that in regard to art education the student acquires knowledge about art, develops the ability to experience artworks, and develops a creative relationship towards art and heritage. This requires from the teacher a knowledge of art and methods of encouraging experience and understanding art. The Eurydice survey (Kulturno-umetnostna vzgoja v šolah po Evropi, 2010) has shown that in some European countries generalist teachers have also studied the area of art history – an area of study that is undertaken by specialist art teachers in almost every European country – while both generalist and art specialist teachers acquire knowledge on art pedagogy (other areas of study are child development in the arts, the arts curriculum and personal arts skills) (*ibid.*, pp. 68–69). Our analysis has shown the importance of appropriate knowledge and competences of teachers, as they are expected to develop the competence of cultural awareness and expression among students within art education. A question arises regarding the extent to which primary school teachers (generalist teachers and visual art teachers) are familiar with the natural processes of the perception, experience and understanding of artworks, and methods of encouraging the ability to apprehend aesthetic experience. It would be especially

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6 This is confirmed by the title of the basic and current textbooks for art education itself – *Likovno izražanje (Artistic Expression)* (we list first issues of selected textbooks from the first Slovenian curricular reform in 1995 on; to aid comprehension, the titles and subtitles are translated into English): *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade* (author Tonka Tacol, 1995), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade* (author Tonka Tacol, 1995), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade* (author Tonka Tacol, 1995), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade* (author Tonka Tacol, 1995), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade of Primary School* (authors Tonka Tacol, Črtomir Frelih, & Jožef Muhovič, 2002), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade of Primary School* (authors Tonka Tacol, Črtomir Frelih, & Jožef Muhovič, 2002), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade of Primary School* (authors Tonka Tacol, Črtomir Frelih, & Jožef Muhovič, 2004), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for Art Education for the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade of Primary School* (authors Tonka Tacol & Beatriz Tomšič Čerkez, 2005), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for Art Education for the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade of Primary School* (authors Tonka Tacol & Beatriz Tomšič Čerkez, 2007), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for Art Education for the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade of Primary School* (authors Tonka Tacol & Beatriz Tomšič Čerkez, 2005), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for Art Education for the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Of Primary School* (authors Tonka Tacol & Beatriz Tomšič Čerkez, 2006), *Artistic Expression: A Textbook for Art Education for the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade of Primary School* (authors Tonka Tacol & Beatriz Tomšič Čerkez, 2006).

useful to include a historical overview of fine art in the education of primary school teachers. A part of the art profession, and of the didactic profession itself, has already warned about this flaw in the education of primary school teachers (Podobnik, 2011). Some time ago, a similar problem was also considered in the field of the education of preschool teachers (Jontes & Lesar, 2003).

Starting from the names (and not the content) of subjects in some European countries, which integrate art subjects into, for instance, arts education, cultural growth, art and culture, artistic and cultural education, aesthetic education and similar (Kulturno-umetnostna vzgoja v šolah po Evropi, 2010, p. 24), the authors of the White Paper suggest that in Slovenia we should consider the integration of individual subjects into the field of arts, while ensuring the preservation of the existing goals and standards of knowledge of individual subjects (Bela knjiga, 2011, pp. 125–126). Whether or not such combinations in the field of arts would make sense is the subject of some other article, but the realisation about the possibilities of such mergers is interesting for our final discussion. The analysis of curricula for art education, literary education within the Slovenian language curriculum and music education has shown that such integration is not even possible, due to conceptual differences between art education, on the one hand, and literary and music education, on the other. There should be content analysis of these merged subjects, as well as comparative analysis of curricula in the field of art education. One such analysis (for the first primary school level) was undertaken in the time of the last curricular reform (Herzog, Batič, & Duh, 2009); one of the authors' conclusions was that Slovenian art education is geared towards developing awareness of one's own culture, learning about other cultures and developing an attitude to art (*ibid.*, p. 26). Given that our research has shown the opposite, this would have to be verified.

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