

WCES 2014

## Arts Teacher Education In Lithuania: Aspects Of Postgraduate Arts Education Research

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### Abstract

Learning paradigm which takes stronger positions in contemporary education practise orients teacher to be a consultant, adviser, assistant, as well as a researcher ready to apply evidence based teaching. To prove acquired research competence on a Master's level future arts teachers have to perform arts education research. Our purpose in this study is to reveal field of arts education problems and research methods which postgraduates choose for their research as well as tendencies of these choices. Seeking to answer these questions methods of literature review and content analysis of one hundred thirty one final arts education Masters' thesis were applied. The results of the research show wide range of pedagogical problems which interest future arts teachers: attitudes and motivation for artistic activities, formal arts education, arts teacher education and competences, arts for people with special needs, etc. Tendencies of research methods shift from quantitative towards qualitative including interviews, observation, action research, case study, etc. In conclusion it can be stated that future arts teachers despite peculiarities of art branches (music, dance, theater, visual arts) are interested in similar arts education problems which they look at through qualitative research lens and by this showing interest in improving quality of education.

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Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of WCES 2014

**Keywords:** teacher education, arts education research, arts teacher.

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### 1. Introduction

Over the last decade worldwide documents on education emphasize the importance of high quality teacher education which ensures appropriate teacher competences acquisition (Common European principles of teacher competences and qualifications, 2005; Profile of teacher professional competences, 2007; Improving the quality of teacher education, 2007). Complexity of teacher competences which include not only perfect knowledge of the subject matter, but also knowledge of pedagogy as well as skills required to guide and support learners has always

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been an issue of discussions and investigations. Scholars (Aramaviciute & Martisauskiene, 2006; Matonis, 2007; Subotkeviciene, 2008; Martisauskiene, 2009) investigating teacher roles exposed through competences needed to fulfill these roles reveal complexity and diversity of teacher competences structure and definitions. Learning paradigm which takes stronger positions in contemporary education practise orients teacher to be a consultant, adviser, assistant, as well as a researcher ready to apply evidence based teaching (Ciuzas & Juceviciene, 2006; Vaicekauskiene & Paravinskaite, 2012; Baneviciute, 2012). Though, investigators report that teachers lack competences in communication, information management and research (Ciuciulkiene, Augustiniene & Bankauskiene, 2007). Teacher skills to undertake classroom-based research and to incorporate the results of classroom and academic research into their teaching are underlined as of high importance improving the quality of teaching at schools (Improving the quality of teacher education, 2007, p. 14). Seeking to ensure quality and professionalism of teachers some documents (Improving the quality of teacher education, 2007) encourage and some (Teacher education in Europe, 2008) demand to have teacher education on Master's level. Trying to correspond to principles of European education documents implementation of teacher education in Lithuania gradually orientates towards Master's level. Not an exception is arts teacher education.

According to the Open Vocational Information, Advice and Guidance System (AIKOS) arts teacher education Master study programmes in Lithuania are implemented in six universities. Visual arts education, Music education, Dance education and Theater education Master study programmes which grant Master's degree in study field of Education in the study area of Social Sciences are implemented only in Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences. Other programmes in Lithuanian high schools such as Klaipeda University, Lithuanian Music and Theatre Academy, Vytautas Magnus University, Vilnius Academy of Arts, Siauliai University have programmes in different arts or arts pedagogy studies however mostly they provide Master's degree in study areas of Humanities or Arts Studies. For instance Master study programme of Choreography in Klaipeda University, which is ascribed to the study field of Dance in the study area of Arts and grants graduates with Master's degree in Dance, which shows their clear orientation towards artistic activities. Most of study programmes related to visual arts are ascribed to the study field of Art History of the study area of the Humanities (in Vilnius Academy of Arts) or to the study field of Visual Arts in the study area of Arts Studies as it is in Siauliai University. The graduates from these study programmes are conferred Master's degree in Art History or Visual Arts, which orient specialists to activities of arts historian (critic) or to those of an artist. There is several music education Master programmes in Lithuanian universities which provide Master's degree in Arts pedagogy (Klaipeda University, Siauliai University, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuanian Music and Theatre Academy) or in Education (Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences), but all of them belong to study area of Social Sciences. Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences stands out in Lithuanian teacher education institutions providing arts education Master study programmes in four main arts – music, dance, theater and visual arts. All these programmes are implemented in the Department of Arts Education for more than 10 years: the Master study programme of Music Education since 1997, Visual Arts Education since 2002, Dance Education and Theater Education since 2007. Music Education programme was one of the first in Lithuania whereas Dance Education and Theater Education are not only first, but still are the only one in Lithuania. We as researchers and members of academic staff of Arts Education Department for nearly ten years are closely connected to arts teachers' preparation process through teaching in all four arts education Master study programmes and supervising preparation of final thesis. We are also members of study programme committees as well as of the Board of Final Thesis Defence and Qualification. Therefore our scientific interest in arts teacher education on Master's level is induced by our concern to improve quality of study programmes which should provide relevant competences for our graduates. To prove acquired competences on a Master's level one of which is a research competence future arts teachers have to perform arts education research. Our purpose in this study is to reveal field of arts education problems and research methods which postgraduates choose for their research as well as tendencies of these choices.

## 2. Method

Seeking to answer these questions methods of literature review and content analysis of one hundred thirty one final arts education Masters' thesis were applied. Research works of last five years of period of 2009-2013 since graduates of all arts education programmes exist were analysed.

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