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*Professionalization as a Factor in Development
of Professional Awareness of the Future Teacher*

Profesjonalizacja jako czynnik rozwoju świadomości zawodowej przyszłego nauczyciela

ABSTRACT

The article deals with theoretical aspects of professionalization of future teachers as a primary element of developing professionalism and orientation toward formation of professional awareness. The opinion is proved that the development and formation of professional awareness is regarded as integrity of the three components constituting an integral model of professionalism: activity, self-awareness, and community.

Key words: educational and professional activity; personal professional development; vocational training; professionalization; professionalism; professional awareness

INTRODUCTION

Formation of a highly professional teacher, capable of performing the functions and fulfilling the tasks of the educational activity in the ongoing process of development of Ukraine as a democratic, lawful and social state, has become a priority task in education. Since the educational qualification framework in Ukraine is not at a high level now, professionally qualified teachers are needed in Ukraine very much. The process of professionalization is intended to enhance the professional growth of future teachers. It is the professionalization that allows a person to change in all aspects – development of his or her individual, personal,

subjective qualities, formation of an individual style of activity, the result of which is a new specific quality called *professionalism*. The higher education defines the professional self-education as the most important factor of future teacher's professional training efficiency. Such processes of humanization and individualization of learning show the high topicality of the problem of the professional awareness development of future teachers at the stage of professionalization. The above clearly indicates the multidimensional character and insufficient state of research and development of this problem, which determined the choice of the topic of the article.

THE NOTION OF PROFESSIONALIZATION

A specialized training develops a person's interest in professionalization which is a real progress in the individual development. In a broad social sense, professionalization is the creation and development of social institutions as well as rules and norms related to the formation of the professional structure of the society, while in a narrow sense, it is a process of the formation of professional groups having specific interests and values as well as the process of formation of the professional positions and roles.

O. Obolensky and V. Soroko understand professionalization as "a set of interrelated and interdependent social institutions providing formation, identification and development of abilities of a person, assistance in professional self-identification, application and formation of professional experience" (Obolensky and Soroko 2005, p. 21). This definition leads to the conclusion that the most important institution of professionalization is the professional training, encompassing all the stages of the professional life of an individual, providing an efficient educational activity.

An important approach to comprehend professionalization is to correlate it with the process of socializing.

Thus, A. Turchynov explains professionalization as a social phenomenon caused by the development of the professional activity in the society, the content of which reflects the process of an activity acquiring the professional character (labour professionalization), when a person masters a profession (personality professionalization) and growth of social institutions aimed at helping the person to become the professional worker (personnel professionalization system) (Turchynov 1998, p. 18).

Therefore, the phenomenon of professionalization has its manifestations both on the personal and the social levels. The social level is characterized by the changes taking place in the society as a result of the development of labour, acquiring a professional character. This causes the rise of the professional cul-

ture and a number of other processes and mechanisms aimed, on the level of the society or organization, at controlling the sequence of a person's involvement in the sphere of professional work types, at a rational use of his or her professional capabilities and experience. On the personal level, the professionalization is represented by the changes characteristic of a person when mastering a profession. These changes are manifold; they influence both the spiritual world of such a person and often his or her appearance, behaviour, health, etc.

The teacher's profession is characterized by an extremely high level of requirements to the morality of its representatives, responsibility for the results of the activity as well as formation of a pedagogical type of thinking in the process of professionalization. Only recognising himself or herself as a teacher, an educator, the person discovers the possibilities of an active professional self-development, trying to form the professionally meaningful personal qualities and pedagogical skills.

Thus, the personal and social levels are closely related. Their interaction provide for dynamics of the professionalization development as a social phenomenon, formation of social groups on the basis of the professional interests and values, content of the elements of the professional culture, professional relations, realization and integral evaluation of the person's own knowledge, opinions, ideals, behavioural motives, actions, moral qualities, etc.

Generalizing these conclusions, V. Tsvyk claims that "professionalization is a process of acquiring necessary professional knowledge, competencies and skills, adaptation to the professional environment" (Tsvyk 2003, p. 259).

The identical views are shared by a Ukrainian scholar V. Oluiko. He sees the professional development "in formation and continuous enrichment of qualities, professionally significant knowledge, competencies and skills, necessary for efficient performance of professional functions, right and duties" (Oluiko 2001, p. 134).

Since at the present stage of development, the professionalization phenomenon has become controllable both in terms of the labour itself and the worker, when the formation of the competencies has become a conscious purpose and acquires the features of an organized activity, the choice of activity aspect of systemic vision of the future teacher professionalization seems to be productive and methodologically justified. This approach directs the research to determination of the functional content of professionalization as a purposeful social activity, which provides a high level of skills and professional competence, high preparedness to perform the tasks of the professional activity and ensures a process of formation of the future teacher as the professional, possessing high objective qualities to perform the professional activities.

I. Ilyasov considers the learning activity as self-changing, which enhances the student's self-development changing him or her from someone who does not have

a certain knowledge, competencies and skills into the person who has mastered them. A university professor must be interested not so much in an analysis of the structure of a didactic activity as in the problem of its adequate formation with the junior students. Actually, the thing is to teach students to study and not to provide them with a certain amount of subject knowledge.

The above again confirms the fact, that university professors not only should have a profound knowledge of their subjects but also be comprehensively schooled in the theory of education, have deep psychological knowledge, master various methods and techniques of teaching.

The modern approaches to the structuring of the teacher's professionalization enable us to single out its two different aspects: the first is related to improvement of the teacher's working conditions, the other – to the development of the professional skills, since improvement of the teacher's working conditions does not necessarily lead to the development of the teaching skills, on the contrary, it enhances automatically the teacher's performing his or her activity. Therefore, the main purpose of the teacher's training is to train professional people, capable of implementing innovations, who continuously raise their own professional levels and improve themselves.

According to the above, the process of professionalization is regarded as a factor of the development of the professional awareness, which becomes topical in the context of the analysis of the personal professional development of university students. This proves again the necessity to reveal the impact of the modern university on the development of the structure of the leading activity, called the *professional education*, or a failure thereof.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AS A BASIS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL AWARENESS

Professional development is an integral part of the general life-long development of a person, that is, the professional development of a person may be regarded as a means for the development of an integral personality. Acquisition of values, ideals, opinions and experience is performed while entering the professional environment, which itself is a part of a broad social medium, where professional requirements and the professional awareness are developed.

However, the professional awareness of a future teacher is subordinated to the general laws of an awareness and is determined by the specific character of the profession itself. T. Myronova stresses that the "professional self-awareness (...) is formed under the impact of the professional environment and an active preparation of the teacher to performing his or her professional duties and further work" (Myronova 1999, p. 58).

According to A.K. Markova, “the stage of creative self-identification as a professional”, the main purpose being the realization of students’ own professional capabilities and their further “self-development”, lasts throughout all the period of the professional training. The scholar defines the professional self-awareness as a “set of ideas of a person about oneself as a professional; it is an integral image of oneself as a professional, a system of relations and attitudes toward himself as a professional” (Markova 1996, p. 88).

According to I. Romanov and A. Khvan, a person requires the development of the professional awareness when entering the professional environment, which is accompanied by interiorization of a standard professional model. This interiorization includes the following stages: 1) familiarization with the model through the training; 2) the assimilation of the model with practice; 3) identifying oneself with a certain model, including the realization of the professional activity as a value in the hierarchy of motives of the personality, providing these motives with a socially significant character, correspondence between the personal and the professional image (Romanov and Khvan 1995, p. 58).

Experimental research shows, that the professional awareness leads to active thinking and understanding of one’s professional designation. Practically, all the scholars single out the professional self-actualization based on self-analysis, self-estimation and self-prediction as a leading component of the professional awareness. These features determine the dynamics of the professional awareness and the professional activity of a young teacher.

Thus, the process of professionalization of a future teacher is associated with the creation of only such an educational environment in which the idea of values and meanings of the profession are purposefully formed, in particular – the personal and professional development in general, and especially – the improvement of the professional awareness.

The professional awareness of future teachers develops most actively during the professional training and further work in the chosen profession. Based on the methodological positions of relation between an awareness and an activity, one can say that the awareness is not only manifested but also develops in the course of the activity, therefore, the impact of the professional training as a form of the educational activity on the development of an individual conscience is indisputable.

However, numerous studies on the activities of university students show the presence of the numbers of negative phenomena existing in the system of the professional development. Thus, studying the motivation of students’ professional choice, scholars found a significant number of students desperate in their professional choice (satisfaction with their university decreases in the course of studies). This shows that the interest in studies decreases in the senior years, as the share of

students dissatisfied with their professional training grows. It has been found that in the long-time perspective, the professional activity is perceived as an imposed activity, pursued only as necessity.

Studying the peculiarities of students' motivation, we found no desire on the part of the students to influence their life, which is quite an alarming sign, a symptom of suppression upon a personality by the education system.

The results of the studies are disappointing and show that freshmen shift the responsibility for their professional development to other people and circumstances, and only 50% of those who completed secondary and higher education, can and want to find a job in the speciality they gained.

In our view, these data can be explained by the spontaneous development of the professional awareness that does not foster the professional competence of future teachers. That is why the development and formation of the professional awareness is regarded as the integrity of the three components of human life constituting an integral model of professionalism: activity, awareness, community. Thus, the professional activity is always conscious and conjoint (carried out in the community); the professional awareness is active and intersubjective (exists and is formed in the community); the professional community is caused by inclusion of subjects in a distributed joint collective activity, based on the positional self-identification of every partner in the interaction. According to this distinction, the teacher is both a subject of the educational process, and a subject of the teaching activity. As the subject of the educational process the teacher is a designer, an organizer and a direct participant in the meeting of generations, the bearer of a personal, everyday position, that implies a free and conscious self-identification in the teaching practice, adopting responsibility for the training and education of the younger generation.

Subjectivity in the pedagogical activity is manifested in mastering the appropriate regulations, ways and means of its implementation. In this capacity, the teacher acts as a carrier of an active position necessary to achieve the goals of the education and the personal development.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PECULIARITIES OF PROFESSIONAL AWARENESS FORMATION

Positive results in the formation of future teachers' professional awareness of the future teachers can be achieved if, from the very beginning of their studies in the universities, there will be a real unity of the educational and pedagogical activities influenced by the formation and synthesis of practical experience of their own efforts as teachers. "Whoever and whenever is acting" – said G.P. Schedrovitsky – "he must always fix his awareness, first, on the objects of his activity (he sees and knows the objects), second, on the activity itself (he sees and knows

himself as acting, he sees his actions, operations, his means and even his goals and tasks)” (Schedrovytsky 1991, p. 67).

During the training and the preparation for the pedagogical activities, understanding of the profession and themselves as future teachers is replenished and expanded, the result of which is the establishment of a personal meaning of professional training, which only the senior students come to realize. The efficiency of this process is influenced by an active and a regular professional self-cognition aimed at formation of an adequate understanding of oneself as a subject of future pedagogical activity. Thus, the professional awareness is the basis for the efficiency of the professional development of future teachers; a necessary condition for their professional competence, it acts as an internal condition and prerequisite of students’ active understanding of significant – for them – areas of the activity, the basis of self-regulation, self-government and self-improvement. The degree of student’s awareness of features and peculiarities of his or her own “ego”, important for the educational and professional activities, can be an indicator of the successful professional development.

Only in the case where the teacher knows, on the one hand – what qualities he or she must possess, and, on the other hand – the extent to which he or she has developed these qualities, can the person strive consciously for the formation and development of these qualities. Only the knowledge of a person’s psychological peculiarities and matching them with the requirements of the professional activity can stimulate the activity of future teachers aimed at self-improvement and acquisition of necessary qualities.

The presence of the professional awareness allows the individual to understand what he or she is doing, put and solve production problems consciously, plan his or her actions and perform duties, to identify the reasons for their own failures, make adjustments in own activity.

The complexity of the structure of future teachers’ professional awareness, the presence of a significant number of factors that determine it, make this essential to update constantly and develop ways and means, as well as specific methods and techniques of a purposeful formation and increase of the existing level of the professional awareness of the students of pedagogy. O.M. Bobrova in her works studies the problem of choice of the most effective ways, methods and forms of training future teachers, with the aim not only to acquire the knowledge in science fundamentals, but at a personal professional development of future professionals. The author opines that the main ways to develop professional awareness of future professionals are as follows:

- Introduction of new forms and methods of teaching that enable students to gain as much information about their future profession and its requirements for the individual practitioner as possible;

- Stimulating the cognitive activity aimed at oneself as the subject of work, cognition and communication, forming the ability to observe, accumulate, record, analyse and summarize his or her professional experience; introduction of special courses on communication skills;
- Consideration of the specifics of a particular form of the activity, which essentially – when used rationally – can create some opportunities for self-correction and self-education;
- An extensive use of discussion and game methods in the university training, the implementation of methods of active social-psychological training (Bobrova 1989, p. 49).

I.V. Vachkov stresses the importance of a pedagogical reflection in the development of professional awareness of future teachers (Vachkov 2001). The specific character of future teachers' reflection, according to the author, is due to numerous real and practical situations (during teaching practice) for the effective solution of which a student-teacher must possess the ability to an objective self-assessment, evaluation of his or her role in the educational process, opportunities and options of own actions, taking into account the individual characteristics of students' perception. The main method of development of a pedagogical reflection, according to the author, is to increase the ability of the teacher to the introspection and self-cognition. In his works, the author also emphasizes the importance of a professional environment's influence on the formation of professional identity of future teachers.

Thus, we can conclude that in psychological and pedagogical literature, various aspects of the question of future teachers' professional awareness are represented. The content and structure of this phenomenon, conditions and means of expanding professional awareness, especially the formation of the professional identity at various stages of teachers' professional activity, have been studied. However, the problem of professional awareness as a process of purposeful continuous activity of a professional towards its growth, development, integration and implementation of the professionally significant personal qualities, professional knowledge and skills in educational work, an active transformation of their own inner world on the stage of training, is little developed, although this aspect has its specificity.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of various scientific perspectives, we concluded that the professional awareness of a person is associated with self-awareness as belonging to a professional community, understanding his or her purpose and role in a particular professional field, the discovery of the ability to develop further professional

path of self-improvement and its purposeful implementation in practice. Professional awareness includes not only professional knowledge and skills, but also a subjective personal expertise, the ability to implement their own capabilities, the formation of the meaning of life, a philosophy of a professional who will choose the way of constructive, professional development. Thus, the development of professional awareness has no independent path of development, separate from the personal development and the professional development.

Being involved in a new professional practice, the future teacher faces the issues and problems for which he or she needs a professional cooperation with university and school teachers. But such cooperation is impossible in the present forms of interaction, practised in training activities; the future teacher needs other than training forms of cooperation with other teachers and colleagues. To ensure the transition from the learning activities to the professional activities, the specific form of interaction should be designed, which takes the form of educational and professional community and cooperation.

University professors' knowledge and understanding of patterns and trends in the process of professionalization will stimulate students' willingness for productive and creative solutions of future professional tasks and the formation of future teachers' professional conscience and the level of competitiveness that will allow them to actively engage in the development of professional activity and creatively and productively solve their future professional tasks. The process of professionalization will be optimal if the goals and objectives are realized through earlier activation of individual styles of students, or by an early inclusion of practical mastery of moral and psychological methods and forms in a pedagogical activity as subjects of the educational process.

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STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł opisuje teoretyczne aspekty profesjonalizacji przyszłych nauczycieli jako podstawowy element rozwoju zawodowego wraz z ukierunkowaniem na tworzenie świadomości zawodowej. Autor dowodzi, że formowanie i rozwój tej ostatniej są traktowane jako jedność trzech części tworzących zintegrowany model profesjonalizmu, takich jak: aktywność, samoświadomość, społeczność.

Słowa kluczowe: edukacyjna i zawodowa aktywność; rozwój zawodowy jednostki; trening zawodu; profesjonalizacja; świadomość zawodowa