



DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL SKILLS IN THE CONTEXT OF INNOVATIVE PROCESS

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Abstract. *The aim of the article is to analyze the development of professional qualities of teachers in the context of innovative changes. The article provides statistical information on the functioning of the general secondary education system in Ukraine. The authors emphasize that the educational process has not stopped despite the objective difficulties in society like 2 years of Covid-19 and 9 years of Russian aggression. Education and upbringing of children remains an important priority of state policy. Teachers have been and remain an important driving force. Teachers are consistently and persistently improving the forms and methods of training and raising the children. The authors support innovative approaches in the work of teachers and outline important areas for further development of their professional competencies in modern conditions.*

Keywords: *teacher, soft skills, professional competencies, innovative approaches.*

Introduction.

For 10 years in a row, the following questions dominated the minds of students and young teachers: "How do I become a successful teacher?", "How do I prepare myself for the numerous tasks that a teacher faces?", "What are the leading professional and personal qualities that a teacher must have?", "How do I carry the high title of teacher through my life?".

Today, the situation has changed dramatically. Innovative processes in society over the past 10 years (the Internet, global social media platforms Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber, microblogs Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tik-Tok, Telegram Chanel, etc.) have significantly expanded the communication capabilities of people around the globe, which makes us think about a number of educational issues. Among them are: "What should a modern teacher be like to meet the needs of students who would be willing to attend school?", "Is a teacher even needed in the education system?". After all, in a matter of seconds, a child of about 6 years old can find any information using Google's very broad capabilities without having to ask a teacher for help. On the other hand, according to statistics, in almost all countries of the world, this is one of the professions that remains low-paid.

In addition, it is well known that not only talented school graduates choose the profession of a teacher. As a motivational factor, material satisfaction from work continues to dominate in most societies. The vast majority of school graduates dream of becoming lawyers, economists, and businessmen. No one wants to talk about the teaching profession. Places in pedagogical universities are taken by young people because of the desperation and the situation on the labor market in their lives. There are also capable young men and women who enjoy this type of activity - teaching and raising children - but unfortunately, there are very few of them today.



Presentation of the main material.

Thus, it is clear that it is not difficult to become a teacher; you just need to get a pedagogical education. In modern conditions, this is not difficult to do. It is not easy to become a teacher with a capital T. One has to undergo serious tests of practical teaching. It takes a lot of effort to get there. Some people become teachers when they are young, others are with time, some of them do not become teachers at all. Colleagues in the educational environment say about the latter: "this craft did not suit him...". The issue of teachers' professional and personal qualities has become especially relevant in times of emergency and ambiguity, fluid changes, and diverse innovations that characterize modern conditions.

But this has been with people for generations, so it is worth returning to the lessons of the history of the formation and development of education. Many scholarly works have been written about the qualities of a teacher, the requirements for his or her work, and the place in society since the Enlightenment. Let's turn to the ideas of one of the founders of pedagogy as a science, J.A. Comenius (1657), who became famous for his works, especially "The Great Didactics".

J. Comenius was one of the first to call this profession "the most honorable under the sun". In his opinion, the population should treat teachers with respect. But on the other hand, teachers themselves should contribute to this, and he sets extremely high standards for them. Comenius formulated a new view of the teacher: "Let the best of men be teachers..."

In many of his works, Comenius formulated a number of requirements for a teacher. A teacher should be honest, persistent, hardworking, religious, and a model of virtue. The teacher's greatest concern is to inspire children by example. They should love their students and treat them like a parent. He should be not only a leader for them, but also a friend and guardian in all that is good.

Comenius sets high standards for a teacher's education. He should be a living library for students. "An ignorant teacher is a cloud without rain, a lamp without light, a spring without water, a body without a soul" [3].

Comenius sets a threefold task for the teacher: that he/she should be able, able and willing to teach, i.e. 1) that he/she should know what he/she should teach; 2) that he/she should be able to teach others what he/she knows (i.e. be a didactic and able to be patient); 3) that he/she should want to teach others what he/she knows and can do, and dream of raising others to the light.

Comenius wrote: "Human nature is free and loves good will. Grouchy teachers, those who are overbearing and use beatings, are enemies of human nature; they seem to be designed to stifle and destroy abilities, not to elevate and ennoble. This also includes dull and barren dogmatists who teach only dry precepts, without entertaining their students for the sake of engaging them in the work; they make them either grumbling boredom or inert people like themselves." [3]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the work of the Polish educator-innovator Janusz Korczak "How to Love a Child" (1920) was published [4]. Every word of this work radiates love for children. The main idea of Korczak's pedagogy is respect for the child, for his or her thoughts and desires, and the realization that all children are different and have the right to choose. The thoughtful psychologist reveals



the motives of children's experiences and actions, explains the complex processes of personality formation. The book does not contain dogmatic orders and strict recommendations but it does answer the questions that all parents ask themselves: what it means to love a child and how to do it.

The pedagogical ideas of the Italian psychologist Maria Montessori (1929) are recognized worldwide [5]. Her method of working with elementary school students requires constant extreme effort on the part of the school teacher, his or her understanding of the child's psychology and the ability to find an individual approach. A Montessori teacher does not do anything for the child but helps them achieve everything on their own. This is how a child learns independence and the ability to take responsibility for his or her actions. The teacher observes a lot, he behaves like a researcher.

In the second half of the twentieth century the ideas of the Ukrainian educator Vasyl Sukhomlynsky (1969) became popular. In his life's work "I Give My Heart to Children", he expressed ideas that remain relevant today: "The programs in all schools are the same, the textbooks are the same but the schools are different because the teachers are different." "A school is first and foremost a teacher. The teacher's personality is the cornerstone of education." "A teacher prepares for a good lesson all his or her life." There should be no unhappy children in our schools, whose souls are depressed by the thought that they are not capable of anything. Success in learning is the only source of a child's inner strength, which generates energy to overcome difficulties and the desire to learn. The great educational power of a school is born where a person who is just opening up to life has a favorite teacher. The word is the most delicate touch to the heart; it can become a delicate fragrant flower, living water that restores faith in goodness, a sharp knife, hot iron, and dirt... A wise and kind word gives joy, a foolish and evil word, a thoughtless and tactless word, brings trouble. The word can kill and revive, wound and heal, sow anxiety and hopelessness and spiritualize, dispel doubt and upset, cause smiles and tears, give rise to faith in a person and sow disbelief, inspire to work and shackle the strength of the soul" [9].

The ideas of the classics of world pedagogy do not lose their power, energy and relevance. While reading them again we are wondering why teachers in modern schools forget about these basic truths and sometimes simply ignore them under the guise of globalization changes, including modern views on education.

Thirty years of experience in training and professional development of teachers, including lectures, workshops, trainings, and systematic research observations of students and graduates of pedagogical universities, leads to reflections on the question of what qualities and in what life situations should dominate a teacher so that pedagogical influence is highly effective, on the one hand, and makes them successful and happy, on the other.

Of course, there are students and young teachers who are extremely capable and also talented. As a rule, they impress with their literacy and communication skills, mannerisms and external attractiveness, diplomatic tolerance and conflict-free attitude, ability to attract both colleagues and children, etc. But today, unfortunately, there are very, very few such examples. Educational practice shows that most often such teachers are attracted to private educational institutions, including those abroad, where



the level of salary is much higher. Such institutions also require a high level of personal and professional performance but teachers are fully aware of this and are able to successfully realize their abilities. Suffice it to give an example of the winner of the national competition "Teacher of the Year 2016" Violetta Makedon, who received the honorary title of Honored Teacher of Ukraine and left the country to work in the UK.

Research results and discussion

Today, in the system of public educational institutions, management is forced to work with all those who come to receive pedagogical education or with those who already have it and are striving to improve their level of professionalism.

It should be noted that teaching teams have honorably withstood the difficulties in providing educational services during the global pandemic of 2020 and 2021. In a short time, the subjects of the educational process (teachers and students) have successfully mastered the innovative form of distance learning. Nowadays, almost all participants in the educational process are confident in their communication skills using communication platforms such as Zoom, Teams, Google Meet, Skype, etc.

An analysis of recent statistics shows that at the beginning of the 2021/22 school year, there were 13,991 general secondary education institutions in Ukraine with 4,230,358 students and 434,755 teachers. Compared to the 2020/21 school year, the number of teachers decreased by 3,226 employees. In 2020, there were 437,981 of them [2].

The quantitative indicators of teachers were significantly affected by Russian aggression. However, after 9 months, Ukrainian society became convinced that teachers reliably hold the educational front and, despite objective difficulties, continue to teach and educate children in all available forms and methods. As of October 25, 2022, 3 million 929 thousand 885 students are enrolled in general secondary education institutions:

- 790 thousand 646 full-time students;
- 2 million 237 thousand 986 students studying remotely;
- mixed - 901 thousand 253.

In addition, 25,380 inclusive classes have been opened in general education institutions, where 35,039 students with special educational needs receive education.

At present, 164,412 students from among internally displaced persons and 98,197 students from the temporarily occupied territories receive educational services in functioning schools.

Education takes place in 12,916 schools:

- 3,083 in the traditional format;
- 6,330 in online mode;
- 3,503 are mixed [6].

The Minister of Education and Science Serhiy Shkarlet said on the air of the telethon "United News" that unfortunately 22 thousand Ukrainian teachers remain abroad, while four months ago the number reached 30 thousand. This is a comforting situation. If a community decides that schools are offline, teachers should return. If the region is unsafe and the work of the institutions is in online mode, the teacher can continue to teach from abroad" [11], said Serhiy Shkarlet.

The minister said that the regime of the educational process will depend on the



security situation in each territorial community, the availability of shelters in educational institutions and the possibility of accommodating participants in the educational process, which will be reflected in the relevant act based on the results of special inspections.

"According to the latest data, the number of students enrolled in full-time and mixed classes is increasing. In particular, more than 167.5 thousand students have joined the traditional format, and more than 278 thousand - the mixed format" [11], - said the Minister of Education and Science Serhiy Shkarlet.

The process of professional development of teachers also continues to work. The central and regional postgraduate education institutions are trying to expand the range of educational services for all categories of teachers in the context of war. In order to ensure the quality implementation of the New Ukrainian School educational reform, the certification of teachers continues. This year, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine is expanding certification to other categories of teachers by piloting procedures for teachers of basic secondary education - language, literature and mathematics.

Thus, in accordance with the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science, in 2023, not only primary school teachers (no more than 1500) will be able to participate in the certification, but also 500 teachers of mathematics and Ukrainian language and literature, who ensure the implementation of the new State Standard in the first cycle of basic general secondary education [8]. It should be noted that according to the Regulation on the Certification of Teachers, teachers participate in the certification exclusively on a voluntary basis.

The war has not stopped the activity of university teaching staff either. Teachers are constantly thinking: who is a teacher in 2023? What is his task and what should he be like in order to educate intelligent, self-sufficient patriotic students who will find their place in society?

To answer this question, we need to recall the well-known truths on which the success of a teacher is based. First of all, it is necessary to master the deep theoretical foundations that form the basis of professional competencies (knowledge of the world and national history of pedagogy, general pedagogy, the basics of child, age, and educational psychology). Secondly, it is necessary to adhere to the methodological principles of providing educational services and professionally master the didactic applied foundations of pedagogy (knowledge of advanced foreign and domestic methods of teaching and upbringing). Thirdly, it is necessary to systematically form and improve one's personal traits: perseverance, curiosity, sociability, internal discipline, tolerance, pedagogical culture, love for children, patience, empathy, etc. These three components make a person a teacher who achieves success in life.

At the same time, in order to keep up with innovations, educators today need to address the main goal that a teacher needs to achieve in the future of working with children.

It is advisable, in our opinion, to focus on the rather predictive recommendations of world scientists, which were announced at the World Economic Forum in Davos (2020). Once again, attention is focused on the list of the top 10 skills of the future that people will need to work in the coming years. This means that children need to develop



them now to become successful students and employees in the future. These are nothing more than social skills or soft skills. They are essentially universal non-professional qualities that help us interact with each other in a team, regardless of the field of activity.

TOP-10 skills for a child that a modern teacher should teach him or her

- active learning;
- analytical thinking;
- solving complex problems;
- critical thinking and analysis;
- creativity, originality, initiative;
- leadership and social impact;
- utilization and monitoring;
- technology creation and monitoring;
- use of technology and programming;
- logical argumentation, problem solving and idea formation [10].

To develop these skills in students, teachers need to radically revise their approaches to the educational process. For example, in order to develop critical thinking, a teacher should help a child not only memorize the material but also be able to form their own independent point of view on the problem at hand. To do this, initiate a dialog and discussion with the student, ask the child to argue his or her position without judging the student but encouraging him or her to have his or her own opinion. The key thesis here is that there are no wrong opinions or answers. Only silence and passivity in the classroom are wrong.

But in order for a teacher to succeed in teaching children and compete with the Internet, he or she must work hard, master new educational technologies, and have soft skills. In our opinion, it will be useful to study the English experience of the Road Map. In pedagogical language, it is translated as a map of teacher competencies. It is a way to visually represent the strategy of where you are moving from and where you want to go.

It is nothing more than your educational route in the form of a road with point "A", where you are now, and point "B", the end point of the road, the result, the kind of teacher you want to become tomorrow. There should be key stops on the road that will lead you to the desired result. That is, with each stop you will improve your qualifications. First of all, improvement is personal.

In our opinion, the non-standard opinion of S. Okhremenko [7] is correct, as he suggests that the main stopping points on your roadmap of your professional competence can be stories and materials about:

- mentoring (a relationship between a teacher and a student, when a more experienced person helps a less experienced person to gain a certain competence. This approach has proven to be quite effective. In the case of schooling, a mentor teacher should make every effort to unlock the child's potential and help him or her grow personally;)

- emotional intelligence (the ability to cope with one's own and other people's emotions: to accurately understand, evaluate and express them. A lot of information remains beyond words: in actions, gestures, facial expressions, emotions);



- ability to organize teamwork (Successful work is not about taking the game to yourself but about working in synergy with the team. The strength of the team lies in the right combination of skills, perspectives...)

- the ability to organize interaction with children (the process of communication itself and its potential for educational impact on students deserves special attention); project work skills (students apply knowledge to solve real-world problems; the level of student responsibility for the work performed increases; teachers act as coaches and facilitators of research, conduct reflections; students often work in pairs or groups);

- and other necessary materials at your discretion.

Summary and conclusions.

Today, the new realities and challenges of life require teachers to take a completely new approach to the child. To do this, teachers have to move to a new paradigm of organizing the educational process but without forgetting the practical experience that has been formed and developed over the long history of social relations. The newest conditions of education and upbringing are very specific. They are characterized by globalism, high information content, physical and psychological overload, emotional stress, and uncertainty in the future. But in these conditions, we cannot continue to "stamp out" children who are incapable of independent activity as well as those children who do not fit into the framework of the educational system will be independent. It is the teachers who have withstood all the difficulties on their way who will be able to change it objectively and in a timely manner, starting to change themselves, develop and improve their professional competencies. This is a great responsibility but it will also have great rewards: children are the future of our society, and the way we raise them will determine what our tomorrow will be like.

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