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**TRAINING FUTURE TEACHERS FROM THE STANDPOINT
OF IMPLEMENTATION OF MODULAR-ACTIVITY PROGRAMS:
INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

ABSTRACT

The new approach to the higher education modernization based on the realization of competency-building modular programs has been considered. This approach closely supports competency-building approach to professional training of modern specialists within the context of current theoretical and methodological principles. The European dimension of competency-building approach and its basic concepts as well as its implementations in educational process have been characterized. It has been stressed that competency-building approach shifts the focus from teaching to acquiring competencies within the educational process. It has been defined that labor market growing demands, rapid technological change, globalization, increased academic and labor mobility require the use of the competency-building approach to future teachers' aptitude to improve their professional level, which is a pre-requisite and priority in higher pedagogical education modernization. The connection of the competency-building approach with individually-oriented and active approach to learning has been considered, as it concerns student's individuality and can be implemented and tested only when an individual student carries out a certain set of actions. The approach requires the transformation of the educational content, its conversion from the objective model that exists for "all" the students, to subjective outcomes of each student, which can be measured.

Key words: competence, competence education, competency-building approach, professional standards, educational standards, competent work, the international standard classification, modular program.

INTRODUCTION

With the growth of the role of knowledge and technology in society and the intensification of economic and cultural globalization, education is increasingly promoted as an effective tool of identity formation that can live in conditions of dynamic change. Simultaneously, large-scale social change and modernization of education put forward new requirements for the quality of training and professionalism of future professionals. In this context, special attention is given to clarify the nature of scientific competence approach recently become a significant spread in the practice of foreign and domestic training in high school.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

To find out the main idea of paradigm competence approach in the European educational space for implementation and feasibility of using such an experience in the national system of higher pedagogical education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

The problems of competence approach in the system of higher education have been considered by home and foreign scientists (N. Avshenyuk, N. Bibik, I. Zyazyun, V. Kremen,



V. Luhovyi, N. Nychkalo, O. Ovcharuk, O. Pometun, L. Pukhovska, A. Sbruyeva). In foreign pedagogics the issues of competence approach are considered in the works of K. Anderk, H. Bergman, G. Boden, I. Zimnyaya, M. Later, G. McClelland, A. Mahew, O. Oleynikova, G. Raven, R. White, R. Higerty, A. Khutorskoy, V. Huston and others. These issues are central in normative documents in the branch of national higher education development.

RESULTS

At the present stage of education development almost all economically developed countries are in transition or have already shifted to the implementation of modular programs based on competences. This approach is important for Ukraine and its implementation is a matter of the nearest future, as only such an approach, in practice, is able to provide a high level of future teachers' training.

It is important to emphasize that the development and implementation of modular programs based on competences, requires constant feedback on the requirements of educational institutions and organizations to the skills and knowledge of employees, providing the quality of the latter.

The modular approach based on competence is in line with the concept of lifelong learning as it aims to form highly skilled professionals, able to adapt to changing situations in the workplace, on the one hand, and on the professional development and education – on the other. Lifelong learning is the philosophy of education and educational policy, which aims to create opportunities for citizens to provide both formal and informal education and training throughout life. In the broadest sense, the concept of lifelong learning considers learning as a strategy to help people cope with their own emergence, maturity and aging in the society where they live. In this sense, it relates to theories of human development. In a narrower sense it is any purposeful training, carried out on an ongoing basis in order to improve the knowledge, skills and competencies for the benefit of professional and personal development. This approach to learning allows you to create a sense of achievement in each student, which is created by the organization of the educational process, in which a student can and should manage his training that teaches him to take responsibility for carnal learning, and in the future – for their own professional growth and career. Thus, the consumer will be satisfied with the training, he can improve it for life, in response to changes in the labor market.

This approach also allows you to optimally combine theoretical and practical training component, integrating them. It provides a rethinking of the place and role of theoretical knowledge in the development of competencies, regulating and organizing them, which ultimately leads to increased motivation of students in their mastering.

It should be mentioned that modular programs based on competences can equally well be used in adult education, additional training, training of the unemployed.

The most important feature of a modular approach based on competence lies in flexibility training programs because:

- they provide individualized learning for each student based on his knowledge and skills and prior learning (or work experience) by combining appropriate modules;
- it is possible to use the same modules in several training programs (such as safety, effective communication, etc.).

Other advantages of modular programs based on competencies lie in the fact that:

- as requirements change the world of work the necessary changes can be promptly made in the module or individual modules in the program can be replaced;



– based on different combinations of modules a variety of courses can generate depending on the needs of students and their baseline (i.e. skills, knowledge and experience gained in the course of completing training or employment) (Дубасенюк, 2011).

Comparing the Public sector standards of higher education, which were created recently in Ukraine, with the standards enforced in developed countries, fundamentally different approaches to development should be noted. For example, American standards apply not only during the preparation of future teachers, but also for training and ongoing professional development, career. Features of such construction standards are related, firstly, to the fact that the College of Education, for example, in the United States, presupposes 4-year study, but the title of teacher and teacher education diploma graduates get only after the 2nd-year training at school and preparation of several examinations. Secondly, it provides continuous nature of education as it extends to the professional development of teachers (Коваль, 2005).

The content of training teachers for master's degree level in the USA is characterized as the existence of the traditional basic subjects and the introduction of new interdisciplinary courses. It allows introducing specialization within a master degree speciality according to the needs of the region.

This approach in the development of standards, we believe, is quite reasonable for Ukrainian high school, so work on modernizing the national state standards should take into account global trends.

In terms of modern standardized forms, particularly in the U.S., UK, Canada, significant changes have taken place in the forms and methods of the educational process. In total, in students' training a trend to a reduction in the lecture fund and increase in the time for independent work has been noticed. Lectures, built on the principle of advanced learning, consider only the key problems of the course, the latest achievements in a particular field of study. Practices and seminars on various disciplines are full of forms and methods of active learning. The greatest gain in popularity belongs to project method, problems of media technologies, micro-studying etc. (Коваль, 2005).

In the world educational space there are differences in opinion as to the professional work of the teacher, and, respectively, to vocational training. Particularly, in English-speaking countries (USA, UK, Canada) standardized nature of modern reforms requires the formation of teacher preparedness for their implementation. The attitude to the teacher in the context of reforming the educational environment is often different: he/she is considered either as a factor in the quality of education, or as a leading entity of solving this problem.

The leading idea of the first approach is considered to be the incentives to improve the quality of professional work only through market mechanisms, competition and accountability to the consumer. In this case, the standards are regarded as one of the pressures on teachers. The second approach is quite common in the 90s of the 20th century and especially in early 21st century.

It involves the formation of teacher activity, creative approach in the implementation of educational change, personal involvement not only in their implementation, but in creation, so that he/she becomes the subject rather than the object of reform. Representatives of this position in standards development consider teaching activities as a necessary condition for self-improvement, gaining valuable teaching profession autonomous status.

In the European Union the teaching profession also plays an important role, while the training depends on the traditional aspects of their professional activities, and the teacher is seen as an innovator, manager and organizer of the educational process, the researcher of



his/her own professional activity, technologically competent communicator and active participant in the educational cooperation and mutual assistance and support.

Recently, a kind of conceptual reorientation and a new image stereotypes of a new teacher of the 21st century in the “trinity” of his/her position as a “professional – intelligent – citizen of his country and the world” has appeared in the theory and practice of teacher education both in European and global educational space.

The experience of professional standardization in the developed countries of Europe is considered in the context of its some most important aspects, namely in features of management and organization of the process of elaborating the model of professional standards, implementing competence-based approach in determining the structure and content of professional standards, connection of professional standards and communication skills.

The central concept of this approach is the concept of competence, which is defined as the ability to apply knowledge, skills, attitude and experience in familiar and unfamiliar situations of labor (Зубков, 2006).

Thus, a key aspect of competence is the ability to perform any activity, habitual as well as new, based on the organic unity of knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes, etc.

Russian scientist A. A. Muravyova depicts three main types of competencies:

- 1) technical / professional competencies related to the professional field;
- 2) transverse / “mobile” competence relating to social, communicative, methodological and other competencies needed to work effectively within the various professions and fields of activity;
- 3) the new base (key) competencies / skills that complete the traditional core competencies required for:

- new knowledge and adaptation of existing knowledge to new requirements;
- adaptation to changing situations of one’s own professional and career growth and self-employment and economic mobility through lifelong learning (Муравьева, 2009).

New basic skills necessary for the effective participation of citizens in social and economic life begin to form in the early stages of life and gradually become more complex in content, begin to deepen or expand.

Basic skills / competencies cover a few basic categories:

- traditional basic skills, complemented fluent in foreign languages and skills in ICT (Information and Communication Technologies);
- intellectual (analytical, ability to innovate, ability to learn);
- social and interpersonal (required for communication, decision making, teamwork, adaptability, acceptance of responsibility);
- entrepreneurial (creativity, innovativeness, ability to go for a reasonable risk, the ability of self-employment).

Another basic concept is modular training based on competencies, understood as a study, based on the definition, development and demonstration of knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes required for specific work / profession (Glossary UNESCO, 2004).

Finally, the third basic concept is a concept of module. The module is meant as a complete set for the mastering of skills, knowledge and attitudes (i.e. competencies) described in the form of requirements to be met by the student at the end of the module.

According to educational institutions that have begun to implement module programs based on competences, the benefits of these programs for school are evident and represented in:

- opportunities and clearly defined goals and objectives of training programs;
- enhancing academic performance;



- simplifying the administration of the educational process;
- expanding the target group of students enrolled;
- improving personal activities and responsibilities of students and teachers;
- real individualization of the learning process;
- increasing the level of interaction between students and work;
- preparing students for the real work;
- enhancing the credibility of the social partners;
- enhancing the flexibility of training programs;
- formation of industrial culture at the school;
- formation of standard, objective and independent conditions of the quality assessment of assimilation training programs.

Effective implementation of training programs within the module, based on the competence, requires that teachers in their work:

- use active learning methods;
- create conditions for self-managed learning based on maximum practical new experience that necessitates an efficient learning environment and integrates theory and practice;
- rethink the role and function of the teacher, learn to teach in new ways.

Active learning (learning by experience, self-managed learning), in the center of which is a student, includes:

- carrying out specific work and determination of its consequences;
- distribution of specific expertise on a wide range of phenomena and processes that are based on the same principle;
- use of the same principles in the new environment.

The task of the teacher is to encourage active position of students and encourage them to self / self-managed learning. To do this, the teacher must answer the following questions: What do I want to achieve? What would I want to learn? What skills do I need for this? How do I know what I have learned?

Thus, active learning involves the formation of an active position of a teacher as well as a student. It means that the teacher, first of all, should target them for independent learning and engage in the planning and evaluation of their learning, mastering competencies. The students really are the subjects of the learning process and share responsibility for the outcome with teachers.

Thus, the successful assimilation of competence is provided when students:

- understand and share the goals and objectives of the study;
- share responsibility for the learning process;
- learn to work in teams;
- seek new knowledge;
- acquire skills in practice;
- have constant feedback with teachers;
- are continuously engaged in study (Луговий, 2011).

The process of active self-managed learning is cyclical in substance and contains four stages:

- the acquisition of a particular new experience;
- reflection, during which there is an initial understanding of new experiences;
- abstract conceptualization, in the process of which theoretical interpretation and substantiation of new experience take place, that is the formulation of abstract concepts and generalizations;



– active experimentation to validate the theory and to have new experiences, a return to the beginning of the cycle, but at a higher level.

New experience in the implementation of any action is the initial phase of training. This “action” can be a task in class, the purpose of which is to create a personal experience, discussion of the existing work experience (significant for learning), observation of demonstration employment actions etc.

Reflection allows to understand what has been done through observation and analysis. Teachers can and should help students at this stage of the cycle, giving, for example, videorecording of the assignment.

Conceptualization (synthesis) involves consideration of the learned material by the student, and is based on the interpretation of events / phenomena, establishing and understanding the relationships between them. At this stage, theoretical knowledge as the basis for organizing and explaining actions is introduced.

Active assimilation of new experience presupposes the use of knowledge / experience and acquired skills for new situations. The task of the teacher is to organize such situations (Муравьева, 2009).

Feedback plays an important role in the training, setting of which is required at all stages of the cycle. The purpose of feedback is to provide students with the opportunity to examine objectively what has been done and help to shape new knowledge on its base.

For successful training a suitable environment in which the assimilation of new knowledge, its interpretation and application should be provided with adequate resources is required. However, only the school environment is not sufficient for obtaining the necessary competence, it is important to transfer the part of the learning process into a real working environment.

Besides, the principal point is the complete assimilation of competence, which eliminates the traditional distinction of theoretical and practical training. In practice, the theoretical knowledge (subjects, objects) reflect, as a rule, the opinion of trainers, teachers and researchers as to what and how much students should know.

According to representatives of the education sector, the development of modern economic sectors is constantly in demand of educational programs with new knowledge, to reflect the changes that take place. As a result, the educational program is overloaded, which tears away knowledge from the realities of the labour world.

The problem of determining the amount of the required theoretical knowledge can be solved by the programs based on the competence. The solution is in the structure of module programs (basic module) and module specifications: in the specification of each module theoretical content is in accordance with the action, subject to mastering. Besides, the module structure of the program provides basic modules that accumulate theoretical sense, without which it is impossible to start mastering specific professional modules.

For mastering competence, which is important for employers and provides an effective job, you need to provide students with maximum opportunities for study at the workplace or in conditions that imitate the production environment. This training will enable them to adapt to the real work in all its diversity and integrity and to put into practice not only professional, but also a key competence in different productive environments and situations.

Implementation of module programs based on expertise makes serious demands for teaching methods that should transfer from “teaching students to do something” to “helping students learn how to work”.



Thus, the basis of the proposed technology is learning through activities. In this regard, teachers need to learn to trust those who study and help them to learn the most through their own practices and even errors.

Teachers in organizing training should create such conditions for students that will help them to come to an understanding of the ways in which they have to acquire specific competencies, ways of learning, practice and skills they need to use, methods that are the most effective.

CONCLUSIONS

As the result of this work the problem of introducing modern standards of professional education in the educational process of higher school on the basis of competence approach in foreign countries has been analyzed. Competence approach is interpreted as a qualified employee's ability to perform certain types of work within a particular profession.

Competence approach is considered to be a key innovative idea of modern education, which aims at comprehensive ways of learning and practice (through the acquisition of appropriate competencies) by which a person realizes himself/herself successfully in different areas of their professional activities, acquiring social independence, becoming mobile and skilled.

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