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CONCEPTUAL IDEAS OF MASTERS' PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN

ABSTRACT

The conceptual positions of professional training of Masters in International Relations in Great Britain have been studied. On the basis of literary and documentary sources the basic concepts laid into contemporary theories of constructivism and cognitivism, theory of development and self-realisation of creative personality on the basis of learner-centered learning, theories of intellectual, human and cultural capital, the idea of education, science and industry integration have been revealed.

The importance of structural and functional organization of Master's professional training in the system of higher education on the principles of consistency, science, multiculturalism, interdisciplinarity and continuity has been highlighted. It has been emphasized that the concept of the rational choice theory and the study of career orientations that are parts of Master's professional image are very important for the professional training of Masters in International Relations.

The new ideas of solving educational problems such as the openness of higher education, participation, continuous education, the advanced development of higher education have been analyzed. The basic directions of the system development of Masters in International Relations' professional training, including education focus on the problems of post-industrial civilization, the development of man's creative abilities; taking into account the status and prognosis of the economy, labour market, information technology development, the objective needs of updating professional education and learning have been defined.

Key words: *professional training, Master's degree, international relations, conceptions, theories, ideas, principles, constructivism, career orientation.*

INTRODUCTION

The attention of British politicians, economists, sociologists and teachers to the problem of Masters in International Relations' professional training in higher education shows special concern of British society for the development of intellectual potential in Great Britain. Intellectual potential is a combination of intellectual resources that realize scientific achievements of the society, labour force, with its intellectual, educational and qualification characteristics, the rational use of which ensures the achievement of a new quality of society development based on knowledge economy.

One of the key tasks of British state policy was to meet staffing needs of modern economy, politics, social and forming new thinking in society by combining the intellectual and material resources of science and higher education. All innovations in the field of higher education are directed at postgraduate education reform, that assumed the implementation of major changes in the development of standards for Master's training, content forming on the principles of science and continuity, organization of scientific and research and practical component of training, development and successful use of new Master's



teaching methodology, improving cooperation between research and scientific and academic institutions, providing professional mobility and professional development of students.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the article is to determine the conceptual ideas of professional training of Masters in International Relations in Great Britain.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

Theoretical analysis of scientific, analytical and information sources has showed that nowadays the scientific aspects of problem of Masters in International Relations' professional training in universities of Great Britain are being actively studied by domestic and foreign scholars. The research on the problems of constructivism and cognitivism theory (L. Darling-Hammond, B. Fennimore, R. Zwaan, K. Gergen, E. Glasersfeld, K. Swan), the rational choice theory (C. Bicchieri, L. Gottfredson), openness, participation, continuity and advanced development of higher education (N. Bidyuk, H. Brügelmann, A. Wagner, I. Wylie) are of great scientific value. The views of the scientists are aimed at the developing a new concept of professional training of Masters in International Relations in Great Britain.

For the realization of the aim of the study a set of interrelated research methods has been used, including: system-paradigmatic, structural and functional, interpretative and analytical, prognostic methods. Leading principles of epistemology, general scientific approaches and principles have served as the methodological basis of the research.

RESULTS

Objective need for innovative development of British society in the conditions of globalization and integration processes, internationalization and globalization of the economy; forming new supranational economic and political structures; forming international legal acts of global character; forming unique world infosphere with the use of new information and communication technologies; increasing the role of personality and awareness of the potential threat of ignoring its unique character and purpose – these and other factors have led to the development of a new concept of professional training of Masters in International Relations in Great Britain. It is based on modern theories, such as theory of constructivism and cognitivism, theory of development and self-realisation of creative personality on the basis of learner-centered learning, theory of intellectual, human and cultural capital, theory of career orientations, rational choice theory, the idea of education, science and production integration, the idea of open and continuous education, idea of advanced education, idea of participation etc.

Professional training of Masters in International Relations in Great Britain is based on the use of the concept of constructivism (L. Darling-Hammond, 2007; K. Swan), according to which it is an active process of constructing knowledge based on personal experience. In constructivism knowledge is seen as a temporal, social and culturally relevant category (J. Brooks, M. Brooks, B. Fennimore) (B. Fennimore, 1995), a person is regarded as an independent subject of forming his knowledge through a combination of already known and accorded with new experience, personal experience, person's ideas, culture and worldview have a direct impact on the understanding and interpretation of new ideas and events, new knowledge arises not by imposing it from the outside, but due to the constructing through the interaction with the environment.

Reorganisation of the educational process on the basis of constructivism requires significant changes in the public understanding the purposes of Master's degree and reforming methods of Masters in International Relations' professional training. Procedural aspect of professional training should be based on such concepts as reflection, competence, self-recognition and self-realization. Scholars indicate that constructivism, in the broadest



sense, is epistemology or the theory that explains how a person knows what he knows (Джерджен, 2003). According to this theory, Masters generate new ideas based on active cognition by establishing cooperation through the prism of their own experience. The emphasis is put on the conscious knowledge gaining. Under these conditions, the role of the teacher is to provide necessary assistance and encourage Masters to find new knowledge. The main principles of learning process organization based on the idea of constructivism are Masters' activity as subjects of teaching and learning activities; reflection and comprehending the goals and ways of learning; organization of training in social and cultural and social context; organization of learning in the form of communication within small groups; forming psychologically favourable social relationships within the group aimed at the common goal of teaching and learning and research activities; Masters' involvement into intellectual processes in order to find their own understanding; involvement of the learning process' motivational component into the understanding. As we can see, Master in International Relations is seen as an active participant of social, political, economic and international processes, who is able to apply skills and abilities, evaluation, observation and critical analysis to practice.

British scientists believe that in the process of learning, according to the theory of constructivism, Master relies on knowledge, skills and misconcepts (wrong views) he has obtained before. Analyzing life situations, he comprehends, reviews and enriches his experience, realizes the goals of educational and research activities. Thus, the actualization of Master's own experience while doing any type of tasks, modeling real situations during the learning process, profound analysis of problems (life, practical, professional, etc.) enhance the process of Master's professional training (Glaserfeld, 1996; Swan, 2005).

One of the important directions of Masters in International Relations' professional training is their preparation for future professional career. An important aspect of solving this problem is the study of the career orientations that are part of Master's professional image and largely determine their future professional way. Modern reconsideration of education content provides orientation on the opening of subject's personal potential. This approach aims at studying career orientations as a structural element of subject's personal orientation, that determines his career strategy.

Our study has showed that the substantiation of conceptual principles of Masters in International Relations' professional training in Great Britain were carried out on the basis of five well-known career theories of American scientists: theory of work-adjustment, Holland's theory of vocational personalities in work environment; the self-concept theory of career development formulated by Super and more recently by Savickas, Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise social cognitive career theory. Their use both in theory and practice of Masters in International Relations' training served as a guide of development of their career specialization, as well as certain references for teachers as for formulating content, technology choice, methods of counseling and training; substantiation of Master programs' typology and diversification of Master's degrees.

The concept of rational choice theory is very significant for the professional training of Masters in International Relations. In international relations the non-determination, randomness of many processes have become rather obvious, as well as the influence of human behaviour factors is increasing. The need to create such a conception that would not neglect, but allow in some way to include parameters of "individual" behaviour in scientific research, has lead to the formulation of the concept of the rational behaviour, thoroughly developed in the context of behaviorism, and later it has become clear (and has been proven) that the postulates of rationality served as a basis for a number of international



relations theories, beginning from the political idealism and Marxism. In other words, these theories have taken as an axiom the position of human behaviour rationality, which was “transferred” into the rationality of the actions of states and other institutions.

The principles of the rationality of an individual’s actions are not trivial regarding the study of international relations. The perception of rational behaviour as something comprehensible and obvious has been changed under the pressure of methodological approaches of necessity to operationalize this principle and the use of rational behaviour as the basis of processes of social interaction. Thus, the main principles of rationalism are the following: people in their activities have certain goals they are trying to achieve, and moral value of these goals is not discussed, and the consequences of the actions taken to achieve the goals may be unknown; people in their activities have freedom of choice, although the structure of any situation restricts great number of choices; people choose those actions that will help them to achieve their goals. The defining feature of this concept is trying to maximize simplification of reality and the construction of abstract models aimed at solving problems of the interaction between motivation and the actions of participants in the international process (Bicciari, 2003).

The rational choice theory is certainly not the achievement of international relations and political sciences. This conception is used to solve many challenges of people interaction and with other circumstances (“nature”), and it also has a large scope of actions. A positive aspect of this conception is the simplicity of its formulation of assumptions, which allows to prove them with the help of many ways within different sciences (Gottfredson, 2005).

Professional training of Masters in International Relations is based on the principles of cognitivism. One of the modern scientific paradigms as a system of beliefs is considered to be a cognitive paradigm, associated with cognitivism perception by relevant structures and processes. This paradigm is implemented by cognitive science or cognitology, the object of which is human knowledge, with its structure and functions, forming, storage and transmission. Cognitology integrates the experience of many branches, such as linguistics, psychology, anthropology, neuroscience, artificial intelligence, philosophy etc. The formation of modern cognitivism as an integral unity of philosophy, cognitive sciences and cognitive studies is related to the problem of learning and knowledge, which combines the research of psychological processes, subjective reality, the basis of formal ontologies, cognitive approaches in social, psychological and pedagogical studies etc.

The modern ideas of search for new type subjects have cognitive dimension, which emphasizes the importance of the subjective dimension in the development of the system, in the formulation of its mission, strategies, based on the development of the cognitive dimension of knowledge processes and caused by innovation, projectivity and predictability of knowledge. Cognitive toolset of modern international relations is formed on the knowledge processes of modern sciences, politics, history, economics, sociology, which create a variety of products with an increasing range of functionality. In this context, the ontological aspect of cognitive theory is filled with new content. For example, communication and speech comprehension are extremely important for Masters in International Relations. Reference to the speech comprehension as an expression of cognitive problems widen the range of empirical manifestations of cognitive, creating the ground for new high-quality approaches to its consideration (G. Becker, G. Gibbs, D. Pecher, V. Richardson, R. Zwaan) (Zwaan, 2005).

In the aspect of the cognitive approach learning process of Masters in International relations is aimed at solving such issues as perception, cognition and understanding of



reality; study and explanation of cognitive processes and mechanisms by which adequate adaptation to the contemporary reality of international relations is ensured.

In the second half of the twentieth century with the rapid development of all spheres of society the emergence of new ideas is observed, due to which historical legacy of reform pedagogy acquires a new meaning and can be used to solve contemporary educational issues. Among them, an important place belongs to *the idea of openness of higher education* (the ability to self-education), *the idea of participation* (democratization of all spheres of society), *the idea of continuous education* (life-long learning), *the idea of advanced development of higher education*.

The idea of openness formed the basis for reforming higher education in Great Britain in the second half of the 70s of the twentieth century. Theoretical analysis of the literature has revealed the fact that the phenomenon of open learning first appeared exactly in Great Britain.

It should be noted that the position of scientists in the terminological discussion as for the interpretation of the term “open” is clearly divided into two directions: the representatives of the first direction (D. Lenzen) state that the notion of “openness” has features of meaningless slogan; representatives of the second direction (J. Ramseger) recognize the overly wide interpretation of openness and try to determine the limits of using the terms “open” and “openness” in their works. Quite successful one can name the understanding of openness in works of H. Brügelmann, who defines the concept of “open” on the basis of comparison between the models “open” and “closed” curriculum. He singles out key features of open educational process, namely: openness of the development process, instrumental openness, normative openness, didactic variability, openness of content, openness of educational success (Brügelmann, 1972). All these characteristics are inherent in British system of higher education.

In his works a well-known researcher A. Wagner also attempts to systematize parameters of openness, including the openness of organizational forms and content of learning, openness in cognitive and social and emotional spheres, openness of the world (Wagner, 1979). Meanwhile, the scientific achievements of I. Wylie appear to summarize different views on the understanding of openness and its characteristic features, namely: openness of pedagogical action, openness of planning, openness of educational organization (Wylie, 2008). Thus, openness is a specific characteristic of the Master’s education, which reflects its ability to perceive and consider the change of an individual and the environment for further self-development.

Along with the idea of openness the idea of participation is becoming more and more of current importance, the development of which is accompanied by democratic processes of Western society after World War II. The term “participation” can be considered according to the level of (institution, group, educational system), in what context (legal, personal, educational, etc.) and in respect of whom (Masters, teachers, employers, the public) it is used. In this study, we consider “participation” as a part of a state, teachers, employers, students and the public in the decision-making that concerns all the aspects of professional training of Masters in International Relations, thorough analysis and implementation of the educational process. It is the part of Masters in solving not only personal and professional issues, but also didactic aspects of educational process, that has become a new trend in implementing the idea of participation in British pedagogy.

The idea of participation on the system level of Master’s training has been intensively developed as an alternative to the technocratic approach, according to which the



expert has certain knowledge, information, may choose one of the possible solutions and thus predict the future of the system. Experience has shown the failure of such an approach as its implementation was carried out without the participation of people who are influenced by taken decisions. It should be emphasized that the implementation of the idea of participation in the educational process leads to the increase of innovation in higher education, as new subjects generate new ideas and their implementation depends on the capacity of subjects to influence the process of taking certain decisions, and community involvement, respectively, provides support in solving problems.

Information challenge, science development, the problem of ensuring quality in education has led to the emergence and development of the idea of continuous education as a means of overcoming social and educational problems. In contemporary pedagogy the essence of the concept “continuous education” is revealed in many terms such as “lifelong education”, “permanent education”, “further education”, “continuing education” etc. It is regarded as a *philosophical and pedagogical conception* according to which education is treated as a process that encompasses all aspects of life; *important aspect of educational practice* on different levels of the education system, that represents it as a permanent purposeful mastering of social and cultural experiences of different generations by an individual; *principle of education organization* on the state and regional levels; *principle of realization of state policy* in the field of education; contemporary global trend in education; *paradigm of scientific and pedagogical thinking*.

Life-long learning is defined as a comprehensive learning activity undertaken on permanent basis to improve knowledge, skills and professional competence. This means that continuous education is no longer just an aspect of professional training and retraining. It has become a basic principle of all educational system. The development strategy of continuous education is based on the following principles: new basic knowledge and skills; increase of investment in human resources; implementation of innovative teaching methods; new system development for evaluating the quality of education; ensuring free access to and awareness of educational services, consulting and provision of recommendations; bringing education to life.

Strategic directions for developing the system of professional training of Masters in International Relations should take into account long-term goals and direct to the model of sustainable and safe development. The perspective system of professional training of Masters in International Relations must possess new qualities, including advanced nature of higher education (education focus on the problems of post-industrial civilization, the development of person’s creative abilities, taking into account the status and prognosis of the economy development, labour market, information technologies, objective needs for renewal of professional education and training, the results of new researches, foreign experience). Thus, a new conceptual idea is born that is the idea of advanced development of the educational process. This idea involves not only obtaining fundamental knowledge in new and perspective branches of science and technology, ensuring high professional mobility and competitiveness of Masters, but, primarily, the development of individual, his ability to adapt to new technologies and rapidly changing social processes (Бідюк, 2014).

CONCLUSIONS

Summary of results of scientific research has led to the development of a new conception of professional training of Masters in International Relations in Great Britain. It is based on the contemporary theories and ideas, such as the theory of constructivism and cognitivism, development and self-realization of creative personality on the basis of



learner-centered teaching, intellectual, human and cultural capital, career orientation, rational choice theory; the idea of education, science and industry integration, open continuous education, advanced education, participation etc. Conceptual ideas of professional training of Masters in International Relations are independent, interconnected, continuously developing and able to change the educational process.

Prospects for further research of the outlined problem is the study of the concept of professional training of Masters in International Relations in native universities and comparison with the experience of Great Britain.

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