

Professional Identity as Psychological Mechanism of Development of Pedagogical Competence for Future Teachers

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Abstract: In this study, features of professional identity for future teachers are considered. Structural characteristics of professional identity for future teachers are analyzed. We have used the technique of self-descriptions 'Who am I?' by M. Kuhn and T. McPartland. The general and specific features in characteristics of professional identity for future teachers are revealed. Existence of professional orientation at future teachers on senior years is shown. In professional identity of future teachers is dominated by an image of himself herself as a competent teacher; many students manifested primarily a personal identity and then a social identity. This situation can be considered as favorable prerequisite for development and self-development of pedagogical competence for future teachers. It was established that professional identity for future teachers as the psychological mechanism for development of pedagogical competence has the individualized motivational determination.

Key words: Identity, professional identity, pedagogical competence, teacher, pedagogical activities

INTRODUCTION

Fundamental changes of the social system in all spheres of social life, socio-economic, political and spiritual changes in the Kazakh society and as a consequence, special requirements for pedagogical competence of teachers determine relevance of research of professional identity of future teachers. Nevertheless, questions are insufficiently researched which related with professional identity of future teachers of the Kazakh ethnic. In domestic psychological science are insufficiently studied the content and direction of development of professional identity of future Kazakhs teachers.

Professional identity can be viewed through research the relation of self-concept of future teachers. High degree of compliance self-concept of future teachers is considered as important indicator of professional identity. Also, we define professional identity of future teachers as a psychological mechanism for development of pedagogical competence.

Objective of the study: The aim of our research is to study psychological features, content and direction of development of professional identity of future teachers as mechanism for the development of pedagogical competence.

Literature review: Identity is understood as an experience of person of the identity and integrity in time and space which is symbolically expressed in the answer to a question 'Who am I?'. Person can call his/her characteristics and compare them with those of other people. Besides, a person chooses the purposes, values, needs that is sets the content of identity and society adjusts the norms and laws of its existence. 'I' is part of identity which reflects uniqueness and individuality of human reactions to a social situation and it is itself determination.

Identity problems are studied mainly under Foreign psychological approaches and directions. Studying of identity goes back to researches of James (1892) (Harvard

University) who developed the concept of understanding a person his/her self-identity, his/her borders and place in the world. James (1892) revealed that a person thinks of himself/herself in two planes, namely personal where a personal self-identity is created and social where variety of social 'I' for a individual is formed. The wide dissemination of the term 'identity' and its introduction to the scientific use is associated with the names of Freud (2005) and Erikson (1994). Erikson (1994) defines 'identity' as the most important characteristic of integrity a person as integration of human experiences his/her identity with certain social groups.

From positions of psychoanalytic approach identity as a complex personality structure involves both similarities with others and differences from others, Jung, 1969; Fromm, 1964; Marcia, 1975; Waterman, 1982, 1985). Structure of identity is formed in process of adoption of these or those life decisions (Marcia, 1980).

Studying of identity in traditions of symbolic interactionism is associated with works of the Chicago school representatives: Mead (1976), Cooley (1962), Baldwin (1913), etc. While establishing the idea of self, Mead (1976) introduces a distinction between the 'I' and the 'me', respectively, the active and socialized aspects of the person. The 'me' is a similar concept to Cooley's looking-glass self. The looking-glass self is a social psychological concept created by Cooley in 1902 stating that a person's self grows out of society's interpersonal interactions and the perceptions of others. Other people's views build, change and maintain our self-image; thus, there is an interaction between how we see ourselves and how others see us. Through these interactions human beings develop the idea of who they are. Looking glass-self is a never ending process since, we are always interacting with new people and are always evaluating ourselves due to the impressions of what others view us as. In designing his/her own identity, a person substantially is guided by himself/herself information which is perceived from other people (Cooley, 1962) and he/she is also dependent by social norms and rules of behavior (Mead, 1976). Manipulating of imposed identity a individual thereby seeks to manage of impression of himself/herself that allows to make an analogy between social relationships and theatrical representation (Goffman, 1963; Fogelson, 1982). For successful maintenance of identity an individual must have characteristics such as ability to role distancing, empathy, tolerance to contradictions and successful self-presentation (Krappman, 1969). During social interaction a person seeks not only to meet the expectations of a partner from the point of view of social

normative behavior but also gets an opportunity to express his or her individuality which is achieved through balance of identity (Habermas, 1979).

Studying of identity held under great influence of the cognitive approach from late 1950s to early 1960s. Representatives of cognitive-oriented approach realize identity as a specific cognitive system regulating human behavior and including two levels: personal and social. In Western psychology was widely disseminated the theory of social identity (Turner, 1954, 1970; Tajfel *et al.*, 1971; Tajfel, 1982). In cognitive psychology was spread the idea of Breakwell (1986) about close relationship between personal and social identity as various points in process of development rather than separate parts or aspects of a unified identity.

In cognition should be allocated narrative approach to studying of 'I' and identity, it was widely used in the 90s (Breakwell, 1993; Doise, 1998; Jarumovicz, 1998; Sinnirella, 1998; Preez, 1983). Narrative psychology makes an analogy between understanding of a person of a text and understanding of himself believing that sense of human behavior is expressed mainly in a narration, rather than in formulas and laws of logic. The narrative, according to Bruner (1987), is a form of thinking and judgment method of life events, structuring of personal perception of reality, receiving of new knowledge about the world and himself/herself. According to McAdams (1993), the most important function of identity is integration, it allows meaningfully to combine the various aspects of the 'I' with each other and over time in unified personal history of life.

Personal level of analysis between group interaction was minimized within behaviorism. The researcher of this area Sherif and Sherif (1969) used concept identity to define of group affiliation. He considered that intergroup behavior as a psychological phenomenon occurs when individuals belonging to the same group, interact with another group or its members. In the early 70s, the creator of structural anthropology Strauss (2011) confirmed the assumption of Erikson (1994) having noted that identity crisis will become a new disaster century and attract the attention of many scientists. In this area, cross-cultural researches of identity were conducted.

Humanistic psychology offers understanding of identity through a prism of the need-motivational sphere of personality. Integrity as a tendency of identity, unity, order, organization, integration and uniqueness were identified by Maslow (1971) as the most important person meta-needs. Identity is formed as a result of interaction with an environment and with others; identity is defined by Rogers (1995) essentially as selfhood, the structure of which is an organized form of self-perception, penetrating into the sphere of consciousness.

Studying identity in the context of social interactions is further developed in modern psychology. Widespread approach of Gergen (2003) received; he considered identity from the perspective of social constructionism as a product of our social relationships with others, attention on an actual social context in which interaction of individuals performed.

Notions of identity traditionally developed in activity theory of psychology within researches of self-awareness and self-relations also identity was seen as one of problem aspects 'I' (V.S. Ageev, B.G. Ananiev, L.I. Bozhovich, L.S. Vygotsky, I.S. Kon, A.N. Leontiev, M.I. Lisina, V.S. Merlin, V.S. Mukhina, L.D. Oleinik, S.L. Rubinstein, H.T. Sheryazdanova, etc.).

Thus, identity is studied as feeling and as the sum of knowledge of himself/herself and as behavioral unity. Therefore, we define identity as complex integrative psychological mechanism that affects the personal and professional development of a person.

Professional identity holds a special place in structure of social identity of an individual. Concerning professional identity as an independent social phenomenon should be noted variants for its definition are different (E.P. Yermolayeva, E.A. Petrash, A.V. Akopian, E.I. Zhukova, L.B. Schneider, etc). Development of professional identity assumes a constant focus on professional growth flexibility in target-setting and decision-making. Professional identity can be defined as steady coordination of individual features, conditions and contents of profession providing achievement at a particular stage of a certain level of professionalism, possibility of further professional growth as well as transfer of formed skills to changed environment. Analysis of researches devoted to studying of professional identity (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Super *et al.*, 1957), revealed that identity is reflected in the professional 'I-image'.

Teachers in Kazakhstan are as one of mass and socially significant professions, this profession is a subject of researches of the past and the present. Nevertheless, professional identity of future teachers is considered at limited psychological and pedagogical publications. Moreover, comprehension of professional identity is practically absent as psychological mechanism which provides development of pedagogical competence of domestic science.

Theoretical analysis of the literature allowed us to formulate the hypothesis of the study: the structure of self-concept of future teachers includes professional identity as a psychological mechanism of development of their pedagogical competence.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research model: The research was conducted in 2013-2014 on the basis of the Sarsen Amanzholov East Kazakhstan State University, the L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University and the Kazakh-Russian University. As examinees were 200 students of the 1st-4th of courses of pedagogical specialties with an average age of 19.9 year (Table 1).

Among them 29 young men and 171 young women. Note that the groups are uneven by quantity and gender of students. This gender distribution is characteristic for pedagogical specialties in our country. Therefore in the processing, we do not distinguish gender features of professional identity. Research of gender features we study specifically on a large sample in the future. The research was conducted in the form of group testing. Respondents were 6-12 students in the group.

We have used a technique of self-descriptions 'Who am I?' by Kuhn and McPartland (1954). Theoretical basis is the concept of M. Kuhn, according to main postulates of essence of an individual can be determined by answers to the question: "Who am I?", addressed to yourself. We used this technique for the purpose of determination of professional identity which affects development of pedagogical competence of future teachers.

It is important to note that at the moment, there is not any psycho-diagnostic tool for specifically measuring professional identity. Studying professional identity is possible only through its component parts:

- Cognitive (professional knowledge and professional convictions, awareness of professional 'I-image')
- Emotional (emotional and evaluative attitude to professional convictions and knowledge to himself/herself as a teacher)
- Behavioral (interaction style in professional environment)

Comparative analysis of the groups was held by the Fisher ϕ^* criterion angular transformation. For data processing was used the package of statistical software SPSS 17.0.

RESULTS

Data analysis: In total, on a question 'Who am I?' 3904 answers are received; on average each respondent

Table 1: General characteristics of respondents

Students of the courses	No. of future teachers
1st courses	38
2nd courses	62
3rd courses	54
4th courses	46
Total	200

Table 2: Percentages of statements by category identity

Parameters	Students of the course			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Gender	10.2	14.4	10.4	5.1
Social	12.8	14.8	15.3	16.0
Age	-	0.2	-	-
Assignment himself/ herself to a particular Ethnic group and nation	12.8	10.7	11.1	10.5
Personal	19.6	19.6	17.8	18.4
Family	33.4	27.9	25.6	26.8
Professional	10.0	14.5	16.1	19.6
Intellectual	5.1	-	3.7	3.3
Objective	24.0	33.0	30.0	26.0
Subjective	76.0	67.0	70.0	74.0

wrote 19-20 statements. Answers to this question of future teachers were classified on gender, social, age, assignment himself/herself to a particular ethnic group and nation, personal, family, professional, intellectual, objective and subjective categories (Table 2).

We noticed tendency of respondents, that they initially used objective categories (a student, a girl, the Kazakh, etc.) only then they described subjective characteristics (the good man, the responsible student, the proud girl, etc.). At the same time, subjective characteristics dominate in proportion (Table 2).

Pairwise comparisons (the 1st and 2nd years; the 1st and 3rd years; the 1st and 4th years, the 2nd and 3rd years etc.) of professional identity future teachers revealed that empirical values were always more than critical values when $p < 0.01$. It proves hypothesis that structure of self-concept of future teachers includes professional identity as psychological mechanism of development of their pedagogical competence.

DISCUSSION

The number of statements indirectly indicates high level of reflection of future teachers of Kazakh nationality. At the same time, analysis of the responses revealed that many respondents overestimated self-rating (54.5%) and low self-rating is not found in anybody from them. It testifies that, future teachers have high degree of self-confidence, their future.

Describing himself/herself, all respondents (100%) directly pointed to warm relationship, mutual aid and mutual support in kindred, family, friendly relations. Thus, there were in all the answers to the question "Who am I?" such as "the caring daughter", "the pride of father", "support for the younger brothers and sisters" and so on. Also, all respondents transferred their close relationships with parents, relatives to their future, pointing out that in the future, they will take care of their parents, brothers and sisters, support them, justify their

expectations and ensure their financially comfortable old age. Most likely, this reason is that among the respondents 85.5% are women. In Kazakhstan, since ancient times, a woman represents a keeper of hearth and home and her main function is raising children and taking care of the family (I am a mother, a daughter, a sister).

Besides, personal identity of many students is brightly expressed (I am a beloved daughter, value for the relatives, beautiful, etc.). Future teachers identify themselves as an individual; a student realizes, understands and accepts features of manifestation of himself/herself in thoughts, feelings, actions, activities. Social identity is less presented than personal identity in structure of future teachers.

Also, gender features are marked in every self-description of future teachers. We suggested, this is due to socializing in the Kazakh family where upbringing clearly is differentiated according to gender features. Among parameters that are reflected only in responses of students the 2nd course, we noted of age features (I am young, the eldest daughter, adult, etc.). Also, all respondents perceive themselves as citizens of Kazakhstan; many the ethnic Kazakhs (64.5%) indicate tribal affiliation.

It is important to note that many types of identity are significant in structure of identity of future teachers but we are particularly interested in representation of professional identity. The obtained data indicate that all students the 1st year (100%), identified themselves as teachers. Besides, the data of this research reveal general tendency of age dynamics content of professional identity of future teachers. The research indicates the expressed representation of professional identity of future teachers in senior courses. Also, professional identity of future teachers has a focus on the future and expresses the positive relation to pedagogical work (I am a good teacher of literature; I am a respected teacher in future, etc). In addition, students senior courses often represented themselves as successful teachers. Most of the answers have demonstrative character (I am talented, erudite, intelligent, etc.). It indicates that future teachers senior courses increase self-confidence in their future. The responses of future teachers are not static, they are dynamic. Therefore, we assume such representation in the future, dynamism is favorable prerequisites for development and self-development of pedagogical competence of future teachers. Found that professional identity undergoes the following changes due to changes in courses of study: professional identification of future teachers senior courses weakens himself/herself as an authoritative teacher; future teachers senior courses have of brightly expressed desires to increase professionally

important qualities; future teachers senior courses seek to identify with standards of professionally attractive images, capable to cooperation, generosity and altruism.

Quantity of choices responses by parameters such as personal, social, assignment himself/herself to a particular ethnic group and nation do not have statistically significant difference. Comparison of categories in structure of identity for courses revealed not only similarities but also some differences in the frequency of separate characteristics of identity (gender, professional identity).

CONCLUSION

- Contents of professional identity of future teachers are formed at the stage of studying at an university since the first course. Empirical research revealed age dynamics in the contents of professional identity of future teachers
- Future teachers are sure of opportunity to control their own life and to achieve planned objectives and meaningfulness of their future work
- Demonstrativeness of personal qualities is reflected in structure of professional identity of future teachers. Positive professional identification is revealed in the future Kazakhs teachers in all educational stages
- Professional identity senior courses is the most expressed by contents: professional identification of future teachers senior courses weakens himself/herself as an authoritative teacher; future teachers senior courses have of brightly expressed desires to increase professionally important qualities; future teachers senior courses seek to identify with standards of professionally attractive images, capable to cooperation, generosity and altruism
- Gender differences characterize more prominently of professional identity of future teachers, highlighting its personal orientation and socializing of students in the Kazakh society

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