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THE MAIN ISSUES OF THE THEORY OF COMPETENCE

Tsylvak O.M., Rostomova L.M. The main issues of the theory of competence

Abstract. Modern Ukrainian multi-stage education gradually obtains competency-oriented approach, that is the development and formation of certain students' professionally important kinds of competences will enable them to be highly qualified and competitive specialists.

The authors outlined the main problematic issues of the theory of competence, primarily: a) clarification of the categorical-conceptual apparatus; b) making amendments to normative-legal acts related to competence; c) the need for the development and implementation of "The map of the competence of a specialist", which proposes to clarify the types and subtypes of the competence of the representative of a particular profession; to reveal the essence of each type through the system of professionally important knowledge, abilities, skills, habits, proficiency, qualities, motivation and attitude; to indicate the required level of the development degree of a particular type of competence for the representative of a certain profession (i.e. to specify "competence profile").

There was given the definition of the notion "competence"; there were highlighted components that determine the competence of an individual (knowledge, skills, habits, professional qualities, professional skills, motivation and attitude). The contents of general and special knowledge, skills and professionally important

abilities; substantive nature of skills, habits, motivation and attitude were disclosed in the article. There were classified groups of professionally important qualities and abilities and complemented by classification of the varieties of skills in the article.

It was also emphasized that the proposed specific contents of competence components will provide substantial assistance to higher education establishments in which it will contribute; firstly, determining the list of disciplines of a certain training; secondly, selecting the most effective forms of training to ensure a process of development and formation of professionally important knowledge, abilities, skills, habits, qualities, proficiency, motivation and attitude.

Key words: competence, representative, components, knowledge, proficiency, skills, habits, professionally important qualities, abilities, motivation and attitude.

Modern Ukrainian multi-stage education gradually obtains competency-oriented approach, that is the development and formation of certain students' professionally important kinds of competences will enable them to be highly qualified and competitive specialists.

Quite a lot of scientists have devoted their thesis to the issue of competence (V.V. Barkasi, O.M. Bilyk, N.F. Bosak, N.M. Wenig, I.A. Vorobyova, L.P. Golovanchuk, Y.V. Golovach, N.B. Zavinichenko, L. G. Karpov, S.V. Kazakov, A.A. Kolominova, A.B. Mamchich, A.I. Marmaza, G.M. Marchenko, A.D. Onkovich, A.A. Paliy, A.P. Petraschuk, O.I. Selivanova, S.I. Seliverstov, V.M. Topalova, L.I. Shevchuk, I.P. Yaschuk and others). A great number of the police officers competences (now members of the National police of Ukraine), O.M. Pasko, O.M. Skryabin and O.M. Tsylmak examined in their scientific research works.

However, analyzing normative- legal acts and research works of scientists, we have paid attention to a number of problematic issues in the theory of competence. So, among them it should be determined firstly, the necessity to develop and implement "The map of competence of a specialist". In which should be: a) to provide clearly the types and subtypes of competence of the representatives of a particular profession; b) to reveal the essence of each type through the system of

professionally important knowledge, abilities, skills, habits, qualities, proficiency, motivation and attitude; c) to indicate the required level of the development degree of a particular type of competence for the representative of a certain profession (i.e., to provide "competence profile").

In our opinion, there is a necessity for systematic generalization and classification of competences; key competence should be classified by types (from Greek – *typos* – imprint, shape, sample), which will include certain types and subtypes of competences [1].

It should be also stressed that competence could be revealed on the following levels [1]:

- a) *elementary* - when a person is considered ready to perform a certain activity at primary level;
- b) *medium* – is characterized by the beginning of practical application, development and improvement of the acquired knowledge, abilities and skills. A person is considered ready to perform a certain activity;
- c) *sufficient* - is when a person is able to perform certain activities skilfully and he/she has a certain professional background. Some types and subtypes of competences are integrated in human behavior;
- g) *high* – is when skills and abilities are integrated, "built-in" in the behavior of an individual, his/her activity can be considered as highly qualified;
- d) *very high* – is when skills and abilities are integrated, "built-in" in the behavior of an individual, he/she can be considered as an expert at his/her job, he/she has reached "achmeprofessionalism".

Another problem is the fact that in scientific research works and normative-legal acts, there is illogicality of the contents of the categorical-conceptual apparatus. For example, paragraph 13 of article 1 of the law of Ukraine "On higher education" [2] states that "...competence is a dynamic combination of knowledge, abilities and practical skills, ways of thinking, professional, philosophical and civic qualities, moral and ethical values that determines a person's ability to a successfully implementation of the professional and further training activities and is a result of

study on a particular higher educational level...". Analyzing the contents of this definition it is still not clear what actually the competence represents itself.

In our opinion, under the **competence** should be considered – a person's ability to an intelligently, rationally, efficiently and effectively planning and performing of the particular activity. Components that determine the competence of an individual are interrelated and interdependent with each other: knowledge, skills, habits, professional qualities, professional skills, motivation and attitude.

Also the main problem in the theory of competence is the existence of an illogical mess and confusion in the description of essence of the contents of the professionally important knowledge, abilities, skills, habits, qualities, proficiency, motivation and attitude. So, let's consider the essence of these components.

The leading place among these components belongs to the **knowledge** itself, as thanks to them, other aspects that determine the competence of the person are developing. While describing in "The map of competence of a specialist" the contents of knowledge of a particular type of competence it is necessary to divide them into *common* (that is the knowledge which is important not only for the representative of a particular profession) and *specific* (narrowly-focused specific knowledge which is related to a particular activity). In their scientific research works when describing the necessary knowledge, scientists use the terms "to know", "to be able", "to be ready", etc. In our opinion, it is not permissible for science and therefore requires improvement and clarification.

Skills take very important place in the system of components and allow to a person to perform his/her professional functions successfully. They provide a sense of meaning, rationality, productivity and efficiency of professional activity. Among them it should be also identified and described in "The map of the competence of a specialist" some general and special skills of a particular type of competence. Although some scientists describing the list of skills, define their contents using such definitions as: "to know", "to possess skills", etc. The same occurs while describing "abilities".

It should be emphasized that skills are formed as instinctively-automated actions which are implemented at the level of unconscious control. Skills are important components of abilities. They are formed by learning (repetition) of certain movements which are necessary to perform appropriate actions [3].

There are the following types of skills:

1. *Perceptual* - an automated sensitive representation of properties and characteristics of the repeatedly- familiar perceived object [4].
2. *Intellectual* - automated solutions to the previous tasks [4].
3. *Motor* – usual automated impacts on the external object using movements to transform it [4].
4. *Mixed* [4] – based on a combination of the aforementioned varieties. They, in their turn, are divided into [5]:
 - 4.1. *Technological* – they provide the process of the computer technique mastering, technical facilities, etc.
 - 4.2. *Vital*- simple, automatic ways of a particular activity performing (household, hygiene, sports, educational, professional, etc.).
 - 4.3. *Behavioral* – automatic-familiar forms, styles and strategies of behavior.
 - 4.4. *Communicative* – grammar-lexical, phonetic, melodic-intonation, tempo-rhythmic, expressive reading, writing, etc.

It should be noted that the competence of an individual is provided and determined by all the above varieties of skills.

In the process of the repeated performing of the same action, when there are no any difficulties of the volitional or cognitive nature, when the automatic action has turned into a necessity – this creates a **habit**, which also determines the competence of a particular profession representative. It should be also stressed that habit can play as a positive significance (provides the most efficient usual ways of the activities performing) and negative (could interfere with creativity and flexibility while the activities are performing).

Abilities are individually-unique properties and characteristics of psyche, which allow for a minimum power, energy and time costs to provide the speed,

effectiveness and quality of specific activities performing. Among them should be distinguished - *general* (which provide the relative easiness and productivity in assimilation of general knowledge and skills while performing different activities) and *specific* (which ensure the easiness and productivity in mastering of special knowledge and skills necessary for professional activities).

The following components of competence are **professionally important qualities**. In our opinion, the description in "The map of competence of a specialist" professionally important qualities are necessary to specify clearly exactly those qualities which determine particular type or subtype of competence. At the present stage, the scientists in the description of professionally important qualities very often define them as "skills", "knowledge", "properties", "features", "characteristics", etc. And it is very illogical and unscientific. Therefore, it is important to group professionally important qualities of an representative of certain profession clearly indicating at quality, not at "ability", "knowledge", "properties", "features", "characteristics" and the like. For example, in "The map of competence of a specialist," the description of groups of professionally important qualities might be looked like this:

intellectual qualities – flexibility, insight, predictability, curiosity, reflectivity, wisdom, etc.;

emotionally-strong-willed qualities – self-control, composure, equanimity, tolerance, assertiveness, organization, etc.;

leadership qualities – credibility, independence, etc.;

moral qualities – discipline, responsibility, honesty, punctuality, fairness, reliability, sense of justice;

communicative qualities - contact, tact, kindness, etc.;

socially-oriented qualities – diplomacy, tolerance, empathy, humanism, justice, etc.

One of the leading places in the system of interrelated and interdependent components of the competence of a particular profession representative plays **motivation**. It encourages people to the intelligent, rational, efficient and effective

building and performing of a particular activity. It should be described in "The map of competence of a specialist" using the needs, motives and desires.

Value-sensual component of the competence of the person determines the **attitude** itself, that is its perception, emotional experience and insight of the world, profession and the like.

There exists also a problem in the theory of competence with the term "competence", "competences". In our opinion, it should be clearly distinguished the concept of "competence", "competent authority", "competences". So:

-*competence* is the terms of reference of any organization, institution or a person which has some specific knowledge and can effectively use them in practice; the ability of a person to perform his/her professional functions.

-*competent authority* is one who is able to act highly professionally on the basis of acquired knowledge, skills, professional and life experience;

-*competences* are defined as certain constructs that define a particular kind of a competent person.

Thus, the main issues of the theory of competence require a decision and elimination of the emergence of this negative phenomenon. First of all it is necessary to develop and implement "The map of competence of a specialist," the specification to the theory of competence of contents of the categorical-conceptual apparatus and amendments to the normative-legal acts related to competence.

We have proposed the specific contents of the components of competence which will provide substantial assistance to higher educational establishments and it will help; firstly, to determine the list of disciplines of a certain training; secondly, to select the most effective forms of training to ensure a process of development and formation of professionally important knowledge, abilities, skills, habits, qualities, proficiency, motivation and attitude.

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