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BUILDING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF FUTURE HUMANITIES SPECIALISTS AT UNIVERSITY

Margarita Evgenevna Belomestnova (a)*, Irina Yuryevna Ivanova (b)

*Corresponding author

(a) Russian State University of Physical Education, Sport, Youth and Tourism, 4, Sireneviy boulevard, Moscow,
Russia, salita80@mail.ru,

(b) South Ural State Humanitarian-Pedagogical University, 69, Lenin Ave., Chelyabinsk, Russia,
ivanovaiyu@cspu.ru

Abstract

The aim of the study is to analyze the effectiveness of implementing the ideas of the competency-based approach in education and to describe the problems and contradictions observed in the building process of the professional competence of humanities specialists. The authors developed and described pedagogical technology. The idea of implementing the technology is to combine theoretical knowledge, practical skills, as well as pragmatism of the required qualifications with creating the value of future specialists. The leading idea of the technology for the professional training of humanities specialists is orientation towards the creation of spiritual and moral values, including the values of future professional activity. To check the effectiveness of the technology, authors have developed pedagogical methods, techniques, forms of education and training of students, as well as methods of experimental work and analysis of the data obtained. The received data were used in practical pedagogical activities as part of the educational process of the university. The experiment involved the use of empirical methods, which provided a significant amount of information. To assess the changes received, researchers surveyed students at the stages of establishing, forming and generalizing the experiment. The use of the proposed technology demonstrated positive changes in the general cultural level of students, the level of development of their professional culture, professional competence, expansion of professional interests. The effectiveness of the implementation of pedagogical technology was experimentally confirmed.

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1. Introduction

The competence model of education serves as a mechanism for implementing the ideas of educational modernization, which aims to prepare students for professional activity, their professional self-determination within an educational institution, as well as general and professional preparation of students for the full range of life functions. In our opinion, the training of humanitarian specialists is a significant area of higher education. The effective solution of tasks in this area ensures successful development of the country's economy. In today's world, the level of specialist training in higher education institutions is gradually increasing (Bochkareva et al., 2020). In this regard, modern trends in the development of the education system in Russia bring forward the task of improving the training of humanitarian specialists and shaping their professional qualities. The authors believe that in modern conditions the methodology of assessing the quality of training of humanities specialists should be based not only on economic, material, technical criteria but also include the possible development of human personality in social, spiritual and moral terms.

2. Problem Statement

The relevance of the investigated problem is connected with the need of potential employers in highly qualified specialists of humanitarian profile and increased requirements of participants of educational relations to practical knowledge and skills, to the level of formation of universal, general professional and professional competencies. It is necessary to model the process of learning and the formation of its content by developing curricula and syllabi of courses that are part of the modular structure of humanities education, considering the current problems, needs and peculiarities of the modern world. The question of the competitiveness of humanities specialists on the labour market is relevant, but it has not received a direct and unambiguous answer due to a number of contradictions:

- at the level of public policy, between the need recognized by the state and society to train specialists in the humanities who can adequately respond to the constant change of social priorities, and the existing system of vocational education failing to properly ensure the mobility and competitiveness of young specialists in the labor market;
- at the level of professionalism, between the goals of professional education in training humanities bachelors aimed at ensuring the economic growth of the country, and the goals of higher professional education fixed in the current Federal State Educational Standards for Higher Education;
- at the level of professionalism of a specialist's personality, between the competitive environment in the education area and the lack of an effective pedagogical technology determining the social mobility of a graduate to start an independent professional activity.

This defined the research problem: What should be the pedagogical technology of forming professional competence of humanitarian students at the university?

3. Research Questions

3.1. Professional competence as a pedagogical problem

The concepts of "competence" and "competencies" have become widely used in the scientific literature relatively recently. This concept entered the scientific turnover in the late 1960s - early 1970s due to the theory of speech communication (Kurdakova, 2006).

The concepts of "competence" and "competency" are sometimes equated. However, in the authors' opinion, "competence" is a generic concept in relation to "competency".

Zimnaya (2013) distinguishes three interpretations of the concept of competency: pedagogical (it is the position of A. Khutorskiy, one of the founders of the competence approach); psychological (it originates from researches of the motivation of achievement, the motivation of success (H. Heckhausen, R. White, D.C. McClelland); lingvo-psychological (by developing N. Chomsky's position).

Belkin (2004) refers to competencies as "the totality of what a person has" and competence as "the totality of what a person possesses" (p. 29). A person gains competencies through education, life and professional experience, and competence is achieved by the person as a result of professional and personal self-improvement.

In pedagogy, some scientists interpret professional competence as a derivative component of the general cultural one. Some researchers note that it shows the educational level of a specialist. In the opinion of others, professional competence includes knowledge, skills, and professionally significant qualities of a specialist's personality that ensure the fulfillment of his own professional duties.

For instance, professional competence could be considered as a characteristic quality of specialist training, potential for work efficiency. The author defines professional competence as "technical" readiness of an employee to perform professional functions related to specialization".

Many pedagogical scientists turn to the concept of professional competence: E. Zeer, A. Markova, A. Belkin, V. Slastenin et al.).

Professional competence describes the degree of preparation of a specialist for professional activity. In this study, we share opinion A. Belkin, and considered professional competence as a set of professional and personal qualities that ensure the effective implementation of competencies, including personal attitude to the activity performed, its process and result (Belkin, 2004).

Pursuant to the mentioned above, the authors presented the professional competence of a humanitarian specialist as a qualitative characteristic of a specialist's personality, including a system of scientific and theoretical knowledge, as well as special knowledge in the professional field, professional skills and experience, the existence of a sustainable need to become a competitive specialist in the labor market. We cannot consider the characteristics of a specialist's professional competence in isolation: they are integral in nature as a product of professional training in general.

The competence approach in education implies that the professional development of a humanitarian specialist includes professional competence, self-realization, self-actualization. A specialist in the system of the social and economic sphere is a self-developing person, improving professional and personal qualities, aimed at learning to be a better man through the achievement of existential and professional values.

3.2. Building the professional competence of a humanitarian specialist at a university.

The competence approach in education sets certain requirements for the professional training of a humanities specialist. To ensure the conditions of specialist training according to the requirements of professional standards, the authors have chosen, on the basis of expert assessment, interviews, the most significant qualities of a humanities specialist, necessary in professional training. Implementation of the structural and functional model of specialist training focused on the formation of selected qualities: organization (business potential), creative and self-critical potential, communication potential, professional competence, the value potential of morality and spirituality. Information literacy or the use of information and computer technologies also plays an important role (Batenova et al., 2019).

Within the framework of realization of the structural-functional model, we have developed a pedagogical technology designed with account of three aspects (scientific, procedural-descriptive, procedural-active), built up as a system of scientifically grounded forms, techniques and methods aimed at training a qualified specialist of humanitarian profile. The article identified significant personal qualities of a specialist and, through the technological map, identified the main integration-module blocks reflecting the procedural aspect of training a humanitarian profile specialist. It is a motivational-target block, substantial (general training disciplines, disciplines of professional training and specialization, industrial practice), activity-procedural (active forms and methods, etc.), result-evaluation.

It is noteworthy that career motivation enables students to achieve their goals and objectives more quickly (Saiphet, 2018).

The authors have developed such active forms of training as the role and business games, dialogue sessions offering solutions to professional problems, group discussions, exercises for groups with a small number of participants, exercises to develop self-regulation skills, joint work on the project, trainings, brainstorming, quests, etc. Active learning technologies promote interest in the profession, improve knowledge and skills and increase competitiveness in the labor market (Billsberry & Brown, 2017).

The authors have created special programs that contribute to a better understanding of the learning material. The research has shown that these and other forms of active learning need to be applied in the further practice of developing training sessions for humanities specialists as the most effective and modern methods of ensuring the educational process. When comparing active forms of learning with traditional ones, active forms significantly increase motivation (Bishara, 2018).

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to develop and experimentally test the pedagogical technology of building professional competence of humanities specialists. The authors suggested that the developed technology is likely to meet modern requirements of the labor market under conditions:

- pedagogical technology is designed considering three aspects (scientific, procedural-descriptive, procedural-active) and is built as a system of scientifically grounded forms, techniques and methods aimed at training a qualified humanities specialist;
- core of the structural and functional model of specialist training is the pedagogical technology of training a humanities specialist, reflecting the real level of professional development of a specialist competitive in the labor market;

- optimization of criteria for the competitiveness of a humanities specialist is proposed for key competencies.

5. Research Methods

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study includes the psychological theory of personality development in the activity process (L. Vygotsky, S. Rubinshtein, etc.); competence, personal-oriented approaches in learning (I. Zimnya, A. Khutorskoy, V. Serikov, I. Yakimanskaya et al.); methodology for building educational technologies and systems (V. Bespalko, G. Selevko et al.); research on the problem of abilities and their development (V. Shadrikov et al.).

The research involved the following research methods: general theoretical; empirical (observation, conversation, study of organizational and pedagogical conditions of the student's personality development, generalization of pedagogical and professional experience; sociological (questionnaires, interviews, surveys); socio-psychological (testing); prognostic (modeling, designing); experimental (stating and forming experiments); mathematical and statistical processing of experimental data.

6. Findings

The pedagogical experiment allowed to assess the efficiency of the developed pedagogical technology. The experiment was conducted in the natural conditions of the educational process on the basis of higher educational institutions of Moscow and Chelyabinsk, and involved 230 students of 2–4 years.

There was little difference between the control group and the experimental group at the beginning of the experiment, which made it possible to proceed with its implementation.

To solve the problems of formation of professional competence of humanities specialists we have allocated seven indicators: choice of a profession in the humanitarian area; motives of studying at the university; level of moral qualities; degree of pedagogical influence; presence of creative and communicative qualities providing professional competence of students.

Based on the revealed importance of moral qualities for building the professional competence of a specialist in the humanities, we will consider the changes in indicators of the main socially important moral qualities of students (Table 01, 02).

Table 1. Indicators of the level of building moral qualities of students at the ascertaining stage of the experiment

Qualities	Control group $\bar{X} \pm m$	Experimental group $\bar{X} \pm m$	$X_1 - X_2$	t
1. Diligence	3.21±0.12	3.23±0.13	0.02	0.11
2. Discipline	3.38±0.12	3.21±0.13	0.17	0.98
3. Purposefulness	3.26±0.12	3.42±0.13	0.16	0.92
4. Organization	3.38±0.12	3.17±0.13	0.21	1.21
5. Kindness	3.22±0.12	3.37±0.13	0.15	0.86
6. Endurance and self-control	3.27±0.12	3.19±0.13	0.08	0.46
7. Politeness and empathy	3.24±0.12	3.45±0.13	0.21	1.21
$\bar{X} \pm m$	3.28±0.12	3.29±0.13	0.01	0.05

Note: Differences: at 5% significance level, if $t \geq 2.0$; at 1% significance level, if $t \geq 2.7$

During the two-year period on the development and formation of moral qualities of students, the content of the experimental impact was based on the program, consisting of curriculum-graphics, evaluation criteria, calendar and thematic plan, abstracts of mini-lectures, practical classes and activities.

Before experiment the experts assessed the level of students' moral development. It required two years of pedagogical work to obtain significant differences. The results of the implemented program on education of basic moral and volitional qualities of students allow to note the following trends. The general evaluation of the moral and volitional qualities of the students in the control group has changed from 3.29 ± 0.13 to 3.59 ± 0.12 during the experiment. In the experimental group it has changed from 3.28 ± 0.12 to 4.38 ± 0.13 (Table 02).

Table 2. Indicators of the level of building moral qualities of students at the control stage of the experiment

Qualities	Control group \bar{X}	Experimental group $\bar{X} \pm$	$X_1 - X_2$	t
	$\pm m$	m		
1. Diligence	3.37 ± 0.12	4.26 ± 0.13	0.89	5.23
2. Discipline	3.44 ± 0.12	4.36 ± 0.13	0.92	5.31
3. Purposefulness	3.82 ± 0.12	4.53 ± 0.13	0.71	4.10
4. Organization	3.4 ± 0.12	4.32 ± 0.13	0.92	5.31
5. Kindness	3.88 ± 0.12	4.5 ± 0.13	0.62	3.56
6. Endurance and self-control	3.41 ± 0.12	4.22 ± 0.13	0.81	4.68
7. Politeness and empathy	3.82 ± 0.12	4.46 ± 0.13	0.64	3.69
$\bar{X} \pm m$	3.59 ± 0.12	4.38 ± 0.13	0.79	4.56

Notes: Differences: at 5% significance level, if $t \geq 2.0$; at 1% significance level, if $t \geq 2.7$

Analysis of the data showed that the students of the experimental group had a significant dynamics of the levels of forming moral qualities, and such moral aspects as diligence, kindness, politeness and discipline prevailed.

To test the developed pedagogical technology of building professional competence of a humanities specialist, we chose the most significant professional qualities, included into the characteristics of the key competencies of professional training: organization (business potential), creativity (creative and self-critical potential), communication potential, professional competence in the professional field, for which we developed observation maps (Table 03).

Table 3. Monitoring results of qualitative indicators of professional competence development of control and experimental groups participants

Feature of potential	Frequency of feature manifestation (%)					
	Control group			Experimental group		
	often	on average	rarely	often	on average	rarely
1. Interest in professional activities	12.8	2.4	44.1	42.8	32.4	14.1
2. Demonstration of professional skills at work	12.4	8.8	51.5	42.4	28.8	21.5
3. Introduction of innovations in professional activity	8.4	22.2	42.4	38.4	32.2	22.4
4. Love of the profession	12.4	13.6	47.3	52.0	28.6	18.2
5. Dedication to achieving professional excellence	16.2	19.1	40.3	36.2	29.1	30.3
6. Concentration of efforts in necessary situations	12.4	13.9	45.8	32.4	33.9	25.8
7. Ability to self-improve	8.2	26.6	45.2	28.2	36.6	25.2
Final score	18.1	21.9	43.1	38.1	31.9	32.1

The analysis of the statistical data of the experiment shows that the students of the experimental group are ready for professional activity, they have at a sufficient level of professional competence demonstrated a high level of expression – 38.1 %, average – 31.9 %. Only 18.1 % of students in the control group had a high level of professional competence, and 21.9 % had an average level.

7. Conclusion

We experimentally proved that the process of forming professional competence depends on the moral foundation of an individual. It is impossible to manage the professional motivating sphere of students and building their professional competence without a developed moral basis. The experiment has shown that within two years of work it is possible to form the high moral potential of students and successfully manage the professional-motivating sphere of students and the whole system of professional training on its basis.

Authors believe that this approach to the solution of the problem under study will give a more objective assessment of the results of pedagogical work with students of the humanitarian profile, allow to regulate the process of building the professional competence of students. The results of the experiment testify to the effectiveness of the technology developed by the authors to build the professional competence of humanities specialists.

The research and experimental work showed that students in the experimental group have higher scores on the proposed potential. This proves that, on the one hand, the proposed potentials of the key competencies for professional training of a humanities specialist are real and vital, and on the other hand, at the current stage of development of the higher education system there are reserves for building professional competence of specialists. The study found that students in the experimental group had a significant increase in quality achievement and attendance. We attribute this to the increased interest in

the content of the classes and the need for practice-oriented systematic knowledge. The growth of attendance and achievement has also increased slightly in the control group, but this indicates the effectiveness of the proposed technology and the use of active forms of teaching students in the educational process.

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