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Teacher's professionalism as a quality in the formation of the future personality

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Our paper discusses the professional qualities a teacher needs to educate on humanist lines a critically thinking, tolerant future person able to accept the different. The research was conducted with 105 respondents in Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy (RTTEMA), Latvia, beginning in 2001. Education is important to the development of both the individual and society, and therefore the teaching profession is one of the most important in society. People's futures can be largely determined by their teachers' professional competence and personal qualities, so teacher education is a social priority.

At RTTEME we share the main Latvian principles of education - humanity, democracy, individualisation, creative activity, national identity, morality, professionalism, systematisation and continuous learning. Adequately trained future teachers are necessary so that the educational system can perform its tasks according to these principles.

In its report *Education for the 21st Century*, the UNESCO International Commission highlights four pillars of education: learning in order to know, learning in order to do, learning in order to live together and learning in order to be. We suggest that teacher education should pay greater attention to the preparation of teachers in guiding and forming their future pupils' personalities and acquisition of social experience. It follows that the process of the development and formation of the teachers' own personalities, attitudes and value systems, as well as the improvement of their social and co-operative skills, should be given prior importance in the course of studies (UNESCO, 2001, p. 79-89).

Teacher education will need to ensure the compliance of its students' education with internationally recognised requirements in the future, and therefore studies must be conducted in both European and global contexts. However, they must also be based on the educational traditions of Latvia and foster cultural succession. Study must be a creative process, in which the student/future teacher carries out research on topical educational issues in Latvia and abroad in co-operation with the academic staff. Today the quality of teacher's professionalism on the path to the formation of the future personality is the priority of education, which is based on the ideas of humanistic pedagogy and psychology (Maslo, 1995).

Although the main principles of teacher education are similar in all institutions of higher education in Latvia, each institution has its own traditions and specialisms. The main humanistic features of the model of teacher education at RTTEMA are the following:

- emphasis on the formation of teacher's intelligence;
- the awareness of the integrity of pedagogy and psychology;
- international co-operation as a means of the development of the international awareness.

The goal of RTTEMA is to provide opportunities and promote the development and formation of a competent, creative, humane and democratic teacher, as well as to encourage their pedagogical thinking, psychological preparedness, motivation and professional readiness for educational work.

Requirements for teacher's professional qualification

To organise and conduct the study process purposefully, the expected outcome must be clearly defined - a high-quality teacher, pedagogically, psychologically and professionally ready to take up his/her duties in our schools. The humanistic approach highlights the emotional aspects of educational interaction: the emphasis is shifted from the teaching process to the learning process. Rogers set out the idea of 'freedom of learning' as the most important - each student has the right to choose the most efficient form of study freely. Maslow divides the study process into the inner and the outer processes: the inner that which affects the individual's personality on the whole and is directed towards revelation of the inner potential of the personality. RTTEMA is making every effort to ensure a study process which is orientated towards the student's self-actualisation and which stimulates inner growth.

To guide the process of the development of pupils' personalities, the teaching profession has to meet a large body of requirements. It includes both the competencies needed for educational work at school - knowledge and skills to be demonstrated in action - and certain personal qualities, attitudes and value systems. The teacher is a perfect example for his/her pupils in joint everyday work, an example of a particular model of life activity, which serves as a visual confirmation and concrete expression of the ideas, qualities, behavioural standards that we teach or want to inculcate in pupils (Spona, 2001, p. 137).

Teacher's professional competencies can be divided into two main groups:

- competencies to teach the subject;
- competencies to promote of the development of the pupil's personality.

These competencies overlap, but personal qualities are closely connected with attitudes and should be studied together (Stabins, 2001).

A qualified teacher is characterised by the fact that he/she

- has a good knowledge of the basic principles of education in Latvia and in the world, and is familiar with the principal documents and the requirements of education in Latvia;
- has acquired detailed knowledge of the her/his subject(s), keeps track of recent achievements by using modern information technology and knows how to use them in the study process;
- is familiar with the requirements of the standards of his/her subjects in Latvia and abroad;
- has acquired adequate methods of teaching the subject, including modern information and communication technologies, and knows how to provide the pupils with knowledge and skills to the appropriate standards;

- has a good knowledge of the psychological foundations of teaching and learning, knows how to organise and guide pupils' independent learning, promote motivation and interest;
- knows how to provide a link between subjects;
- knows how to plan the study process, organise and conduct the work of the class, taking into consideration pupils' individual peculiarities, analyse the results and provide a reciprocal link;
- critically evaluates and analyses the quality of his/her work, is ready for continuous improvement.
- has been developing his/her personality systematically to form the qualities necessary for teacher's work - determination, optimism, courage, resoluteness, honesty, flexibility, independence, a sense of responsibility, enterprise, self-control (self-possession), tolerance, sound self-confidence, sense of humour and kindness.
- has purposefully formed his/her cultural personality by developing both intellect and creative abilities, acquiring the cultural values of his/her own country and of other nations, mastering his/her native language and learning foreign languages;
- on the basis of psychological studies has developed and improved his/her social competence/culture of interaction, has a good command of verbal and non-verbal means of communication, sociability based on respect, a love of mankind, empathy, the ability to hear out and support others, tolerance, the ability to work in a team; knows how to co-operate with parents and local community successfully;
- has developed an active and creative attitude and initiative, responsibility, patriotism and love of his/her native country, morality and understanding of humanistic values, is familiar with the Code of Teachers' Ethics and lives according to it;
- has a good knowledge of personal and developmental psychology, is able to facilitate each pupil's intellectual, spiritual, moral, social, physical and cultural development purposefully in accordance with his/her individual peculiarities ;
- is motivated to discover and improve each pupil's gifts and talent;
- stimulates the development of the pupils' critical and creative thinking and problem resolution and activity skills;
- knows how to foster the formation of pupils' social and self-competence.

Latvian undergraduates must present themselves to the Qualification Commission and demonstrate that their professional skills correspond with the this characterisation of a teacher's qualification (RTTEMA Document, 1996). The chief conditions of the quality of the humanistic pedagogy and psychology-based ideas, criteria and indicators demonstrate the teacher's role in the educational process. The criteria and indicators of the development of a humane personality are the following:

The interconnection between accepting oneself and others:

- the realisation of opportunities for self-actualisation;
- empathy;

- a sense of togetherness;
- self-respect.

Free, creative activity:

- the opportunity to choose in the educational process;
- the acquisition of dialogic forms of study;
- the evaluation of the process of work and product by others;
- self-evaluation of the process of work and product.

Recognition and acquisition of basic values in the context of the corresponding life activity:

- mutual respect;
- friendship;
- love;
- consideration;
- mercy;
- tolerance. (Rone, 2000, p. 103)

Qualitative and quantitative methods and methodologies of index testing were used to test every criterion. Humanism focuses on the understanding of human behaviour and meaning and accentuates the idea of the holiness of the human spirit and the significance of people's needs. Humanistic pedagogy focuses on hermeneutics, which also accentuates a different approach to the student - the wish to understand the formation and reasons of behaviour, attitudes and needs - as well as inciting students to reflection. Reflection is connected with introspection - looking into oneself - during which an individual links outer influences with his/her inner systems of significance.

105 second and third year students from the Faculty of Pre-school and Basic Education at RTTEMA were offered a value ranking game, 'Hot air balloon', where all the students chose *life* as the principal value (Figure 1). We suggest that this choice determined all the others. The most important values were those that help to sustain life - love and friendship, mutual respect, consideration and tolerance. One of the indicators of the criteria of humanism is love and friendship, which was ranked overall second by the students of the Pre-school specialty, whereas second-year Primary students ranked them second and third-year Primary students third.

Figure 1 Ranking of values in 'Hot-air balloon' by year (a more important value has a higher score)

Values offered in the game	Primary school 2nd year	Pre-school 2nd year	Primary school 3rd ^d year	Pre-school 3rd year
A The right to one's own space	4	4	2	4
B Clean, healthy environment	10	11	4	5
C Legal equality	5	4	6	8
D Love and friendship	13	14	13	14
E Paid holiday	1	1	1	1
F The right to be different	6	3	8	7
G The right to rest	2	2	2	7
H The opportunity to be heard and understood	8	7	9	11
I The right to take part in democratic processes	7	5	3	2
J Mutual respect	10	7	11	11
K Friends	12	13	14	14
L Consideration, tolerance	11	9	9	9
M The right to freedom	9	9	14	8
N Life	15	15	15	15

To substantiate their choice of values, students and lecturers searched for answers to the question 'What is friendship and tolerance in my and other people's lives?' in discussions and essays. The expressions 'in my life', 'significant for me', 'personally significant' were repeated several times; it seemed that 'personally significant' was a particularly essential acquisition, as it promoted students' better self-understanding. Students associated friendship with something good, dear, trustworthy:

Friendship is like flowers: if you pick them carefully, with love, they will stay longer in a vase, but if you pick them violently, they will soon die. Let us be like a calm river in our friendship. It flows and bends down a stem of grass, but does not break it. We also live, change ourselves and change people who surround us, but we don't break them. We are humans for the very reason that we can bend without breaking!

Everyone associates friendship with something good, dear and trustworthy. A friend is the person who understands you. Without friends there is no feeling of happiness, we can rely on friends, we can trust them. A person without a friend is like a storm cloud- he/she pours his/her dark heavy shower on everyone, as in the heart of hearts he/she lacks a real friend.

Friendship is a power that unites people; a priceless value, it is the most important thing in the world; it allows to think about your friend as your second self.

Positive emotional experience permeates students' heartfelt revelations about love:

It is like blood circulating in my veins, juice without which we dry out.

Love will save the World.

I associate love with tenderness and kindness, as it is difficult to picture someone who loves and is evil and at the same time. Love is closely related to friendship. I associate love and friendship with a kind, pleasant person, who uses his/her knowledge with a good intent.

Love is the strongest and the most comprehensive of all the principles of the human life.

These positive conclusions are closely related to the value ranking game. Students defined the notion of tolerance to be significant to themselves by linking and comparing their emotional experiences with others, acknowledging themselves in the culture of interaction and the ability to forgive:

Tolerance is like a small, withered woman who tolerates everything and accepts people the way they are. She accepts people's drawbacks. With the word tolerance we admit that other people have shortcomings, that they are incomplete and, be that as it may, we will give them some more time to become better.

Tolerance is

- *like a frame that holds people's bad emotions and evil words*
- *like a lightning-conductor that tries to sustain people's understanding and desperately attempts to pull us together*
- *it does not allow to raise the hand against someone who is weaker, neither does it allow the young abuse the old, a friend insult a friend and the husband offend the wife.*

Tolerance- in a way it is understanding. When my friend had bad times she wrote me a letter: I feel so cold. Not from the inside, but from the outside. Everything has frozen inside, frozen into a huge block of ice. I want you to understand me.

My tolerance is an unuttered or sustained word.

Tolerance is the art to live in harmony with others the art to be a friend.

To be tolerant means to be clever.

The essays demonstrate that students/ future teachers crave consideration and compassion in others, as '*the time when we will need help and support ourselves can come*', but they are not sure that there will be somebody who will be willing to help them.

I did not know elevated language and beautiful words. I just lived with clear conscience and soul- as God had bid. Three new flowers blossomed in the garden:

The Flower of Love, the Flower of Friendship and the Flower of Tolerance. And the World gained happiness.

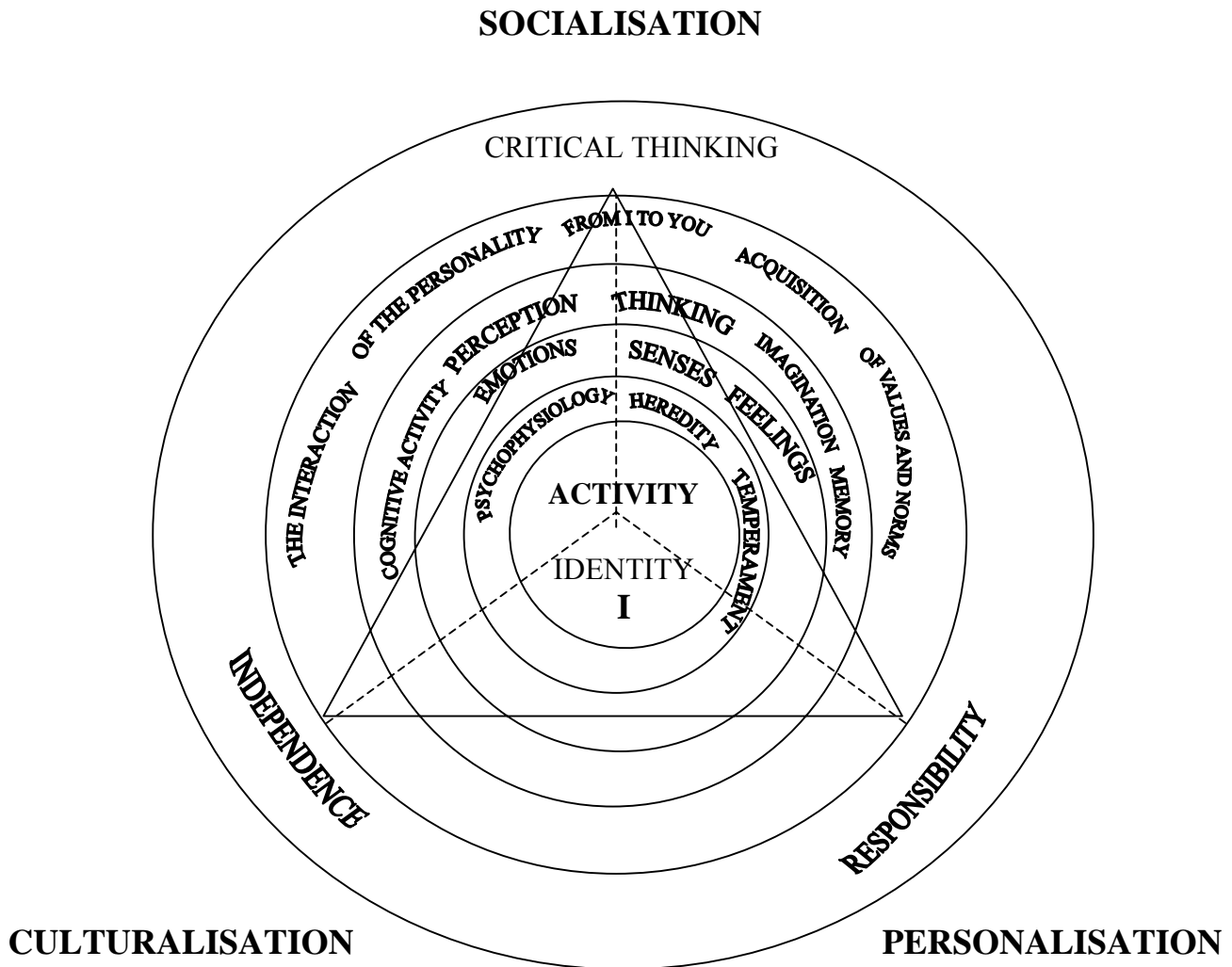
The central element of the structure of a humane personality is the activity of the personality - this develops only in interaction with the cultural environment, human environment, educational and learning environment. The basis of a humane personality is its development from self-awareness to the socialisation process:

- to realised and accepted values,
- to acceptance of other personalities,
- to development of the skill to take responsibility,
- to the skill to make a decision independently and express it in action ,
- to a critical self-perception and perception of the world,
- to the acquisition and acceptance of human values as an inner norm.

Thus, in the development of a humane personality, the development of self-awareness is promoted by accepting the values of socialisation and culturalisation. Humanism embraces the features of culturalisation, which are expressed as:

- acceptance of basic values in oneself and others in the context of corresponding life activity;
- tolerance for different cultures and their representatives;
- culture of language, where every personality has an opportunity to express his/her point of view, without discussing the representative of another culture.

Figure 2 The psychological structure of the personality of a professional teacher



Only such a teacher will be able to ensure the development and perfection of the future personality, basing his/her ideas on humanistic pedagogy and psychology; where the centre of the educational process is the inner person, who is able to self-fulfil purposefully and who is taught by educating. (Dăle, 1994.)

Conclusions

The goal of the activity of the contemporary school is to create opportunities for the development of a free and self-responsible personality, capable of co-operation in the educational process. Only an educational system which cultivates and enhances all the positive components of the personality's mental structure and contents proportionately and evenly, is truly strong and humanistic.

- the principle of humanity - acknowledgement of the human as a basic value;
- the principle of democracy – purposeful co-operation between students and teachers during the educational process, based on mutual respect.

These principles can be ensured by a future teacher who bases his/her professional activity on the conclusions of humanistic pedagogy and psychology, where the main criteria are the interconnection between the recognition of self and others, a free and

creative activity, and the acceptance and acquisition of basic values in the context of corresponding life activity.

Every opportunity must be seized to avoid religious conflicts, war situations, clashes of the economic interests of different layers; the process in the society must be managed in a civilised and democratic way so that the acceptance and acquisition of humanism-based ideas will be the highest value. Only under peaceful conditions, in an environment which enables the individual to release his/her potencies, can we talk about tolerance, indulgence, consideration and friendship.

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