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## **Improving Pedagogical Talents in the System of Competence-based Pedagogy Training in the Framework of Motivational Factors**

### **Abstract**

The present study introduces – from a certain point of view - the Hungarian version of the competence-based pedagogy training that meets the current EU expectations. This competence-based training shows several results of projects that aim at developing pedagogy talents and focus on professionalism, emphasizing the importance of professional motivation. This training form, using the developing method of identifying oneself with the teaching profession, tries to discover what prior and what available and what kind of new motivational factors - during the active period of teacher training - assure successful preparation for effective and qualitative professional activity.

**Key words:** *pedagogical talent, motivational factors of the teaching profession, competence-based pedagogy training.*

Motto: “The outcome of the whole education process depends on the choice of the educator.”

*Montaigne*

Pedagogy training as an active process of preparation for the teaching profession aims at forming and developing those educational qualities that lay the foundation of professional and educational commitment. Many factors influence the teacher’s charisma, the attitude towards this profession. We regard micro-environment as a basic influential mechanism that is also decisive in the process of professional orientation and in professional identification. Several studies justify the role of the family background and the school micro-climate in the creation of attachment to

the profession, which facilitates the development of pedagogical talents by means of adapting behavioural patterns.

Mrs Majzik wrote that “a school’s educational quality is rooted in the culture of the pedagogical activity and depends upon the teachers’ professional competences.” This is a very brief statement that needs to be explained in respect of the professional attitude to the teaching profession. It can be grouped around three expectations: productivity, success and effectiveness. Productivity means rich and flexible behaviour patterns that serve the basic precondition of effectiveness. Effectiveness refers to such an influential process that helps to create autonomous personality in different forms and areas of education. It is based on professional, pedagogical, psychological and didactic knowledge and requires practical skills (lesson planning, etc.) with other pedagogical skills and personality features. Success is a final outcome of the pedagogue’s self-fulfilling activity that preconditions identification with the profession and unfolding of a pedagogical talent. It can be achieved only by a teacher who is capable of helping in the differentiation of chances and opportunities, according to the needs of students. For this purpose we need to establish school of equal opportunities that is shared by both teachers and students.

The activity of personality competences – made up of available elements – is created by the following factors: motives that serve decision making processes (drives, needs, interest, behaviour patterns, habits, attachments, beliefs, faiths, and related knowledge) the affective part with the system of knowledge and abilities that enable behaviour, activity. (Nagy 2000.) The inherited elements, eg. needs, affective factors, patterns, also with the learnt elements: habits, skills, learnt motives, knowledge – altogether help to form an individual pedagogical style. In this sense the pedagogue’s personal development is nothing else but ensuring perfect operation of functional components and qualitative and quantitative enrichment of the elements that enables perfect activity. (Nagy. 2000.)

Surveying all expectations towards a modern pedagogue, we can say that we passed the phase when teachers served as torches, instead we would rather see a showman or a wizard, or a mystic healer who is confident to say that s/he is not unnecessary so s/he keeps within the profession due to his/her commitment, who is emphatic, and his/her creative powers are endless.

Who is a talented teacher? School education is primarily based on someone, who is bearing all features of homo sapiens, and individual qualitative features, who is able to meet all old and new expectations with his/her divided attention who can be described as a reflective personality.

Hubert K. (1999, p.625) already spoke of a pedagogical talent; according to him, to be talented in the pedagogical area means to feel committed, to feel that one is chosen for this task, and to feel the ability to meet the challenge. Then he goes on

with enlisting the criteria of a talented pedagogue: love for pedagogy, faith in social and cultural values, responsibility for children, country, community.

The notion of a pedagogical talent reveals several questions:

- Do we need to be born to be a pedagogue?
- Can we learn how to become a good pedagogue?
- Can we uncover the developing educational elements of the professional socialization process?
- What are the key factors of a pedagogical talent?
- Is the pedagogical talent development process similar to the child's talent development process?
- Do the teachers' pattern play an active role in developing pedagogical talents?

Each question deserves a special study to be answered, however, now we focus on one area: the notion of a talented pedagogue, and the training of talented pedagogues.

We can enumerate the features of a talented teacher:

1. personality,
2. motivation,
3. value system;
4. professional competences;
5. human relationship with the pupils, parents, colleagues;
6. identifying with pedagogue's role;
7. attitude;
8. drive to renewal;
9. achieved results in education;
10. acceptance of remarks upon him-/her-self;
11. strength in setting an example;

A talented teacher creates such a pedagogical style by means of which s/he enables his/her students to fulfill their highest expectations up to their competences, their abilities, and socio-economic environment. A talented pedagogue can be described by a high level of professional competences, sophisticated, deep knowledge, as Mrs Eniko Bagdy said, through his/her personality we can see a miraculous and authentic personality whose career is to serve a profession.

As we referred to it at the beginning of the study, one of the most important characteristics of a talented teacher is to show a capability for renewal, for upgrading his/her capacities, and professional motivation.

The capability for renewal is a distinctive feature of a personality who deliberately reflects upon him-/her-self, and s/he consciously directs his/her personality development. Dealing with these personality features we end up with notions like

reflective personality, reflective attitude, which are constant elements of mature and conscious personality. Being reflective is a kind of self observation, self-study; it is a feature of emphatic personality.

How can we develop features like these, how can we form this kind of attitude, how can we improve acceptance of statements upon ourselves?

During the whole process of teacher training we have to pay special attention to improving communication skills, by means of which the pedagogue's authentic behaviour based upon empathy is rooted in honesty, clear situational analyses, objective evaluation of statements upon his/her own behaviour and value judgement forming at the level of awareness of renewal, of the motivational level if we introduce students into professional organizations, professional training possibilities, which are due later in their future professional career. Besides this very practical approach we have to see the importance of the formation of those capabilities and skills that later will drive for constant and regular self-evaluation and self-reflection of the mature personality. We have to create the capability of conscious and objective self-reflection and self-evaluation that preconditions a reflective attitude and a higher level of empathy.

This purposeful professional and human authenticity and congruency can be achieved only by such a complex effective learning process that we try to discuss in this study.

Since the beginning of the 1990s at the Juhasz Gyula Teacher Training College we have been conducting a longitudinal study that has dealt with the features of a talented teacher's personality focusing on the question of profession identification. As a result of the developing feature of the study we have dealt with the factors of professional motivation, and we have studied the effect of teacher training upon professional identification. In the study we have watched the development of talented pedagogues' personalities from the primary phase of professional identification, then through the process when they collected their first professional experience, then through their teaching practice, and during their first years in school as pedagogue. We have focused on the question of professional identification and on moral values due to attitudinal and personality features.

We connected the research with a development programme that we launched in 1993–1994. The programme aimed at showing and enhancing those characteristics and pedagogue styles in the future teachers that would strengthen their pedagogical commitment, and create competent pedagogue personality so that they could serve the development of talented pedagogues.

The project aimed at implementing an effective influence upon the attitude of pedagogues, creating self-fulfilling behaviour, forming a responsible attitude, establishing helping relationships based on real values, effective problem solving

strategy, authentic honest behaviour based on empathy, and effective interpersonal communication.

The programme is made up of several modules.

The first project aims at developing conflict resolution skills and wants to form and develop those skills that would enable the future teacher to be capable of analyzing complex problems, managing reasons for conflicts and making decisions on consensus.

The aim of the communication skill development course is to create free effective teachers –students – parents pedagogical communication.

The module based on drama and role plays aims at developing students' self knowledge, empathy, and communication skills, and building pedagogue patterns into their individual style. During the training we deal with encounter games, socio-dramatic plays that help to form assertive skills and gesture therapy. We never wanted to give ready-made recipes, we rather wanted to show several possible approaches to pedagogical situations with listing the possible factors and making them live those through, to give them emotional experience for their future career.

The module on enhancing creativity deals with encouraging students to follow learnt patterns and to merge those with their individual ideas. We want to make students aware that they should not copy what they see with no consideration but rather they should strive to find their individual approaches to situations. This would help them to form their individual pedagogical style. The major method we use is games based on cooperation and individual style analyses.

The module on values aims at giving overview of a pedagogue's behaviour patterns, their effect. Our task is to help students to learn, to acquire, to make students aware of values that are rooted in pedagogical patterns.

The basic strategy of our competence development course serves to attract students' attention to the endless variability of pedagogical situations that they need to solve efficiently.

We would like to list our most important methods: pedagogical situation analyses, simulation, micro-teaching, observation of teaching. Through those we can say that role-playing the identification with status in certain pedagogical situation serves forming complete identification with the pedagogical role.

By means of development programmes and by analyzing real situations, we can form such an action readiness attitude in our students by means of which they are capable of mobilizing those personality dispositions that are needed.

We followed the career of those students who took part in our programme during their first three years in school. We were primarily interested in how they could cope with problems in different teaching situations, and how much our

programme helped them to form their own individual style. During the training we measured the efficiency with several methods: with special observation, description, interview, questionnaire, analyses of activity. 70% of all the students involved in the programme started to work as teachers.

In the following we would like to show several examples from the years of the programme and training and their first years in the profession. The continuous analysis of the process ensures comprehensive evaluation. We mainly observed those features that were focused during our modules that gave feedback upon the efficiency of our programme.

1. Student A was very reserved, quiet and shy at the meetings. He was very nervous to act and stand on stage in front of others. He was anxious to be accepted. Among children his behaviour changed, all his inhibitions disappeared. He solved difficult situations with excellent pedagogical sense. His stress and conflict resolution skill is excellent. He gradually became more popular and accepted in the group. His teaching practice was so successful that the school master offered him a job there.
2. Student B had very good interpersonal skills. Her problem analysis was good she actively took part in group activities. She usually acted as a facilitator in groups. She could make use of her excellent pedagogical sensitivity mainly in situations that required better self-knowledge and learning other people's personality and also in simulation exercises. She was an influential figure in the group. As a beginner she could easily and quickly adapt to the staff, she had many good ideas that she could make her colleagues accept. She could manage different pedagogical situations, and students and parents could easily relate to her.
3. Student C was an extraordinary personality. She could create a very interesting atmosphere around herself. Her previous experience with pedagogues had a deep impact on her personality, she often referred to them, and often wanted to follow them, without giving up her own personality. She was a born pedagogue, she could utilize her creativity well during her classes. She was an overwhelming personality. As an active teacher she had some conflicts with some older colleagues of hers but others reconciled her with them.
4. Student D was an open-minded personality in pedagogical role play activities. She did not initiate new ideas but she undertook all roles and made use of all opportunities. Nothing could upset her. Only during her training teaching she proved to have acquired those methods and skills that we wanted to pass at the development programme. She referred back to the modules as opportunities to discover herself. She creatively used all roles at the training school, as a result of her empathy she became popular among students. As an active

teacher she proved to have excellent situation and conflict resolution skills, tolerance, target-oriented pedagogical activity and being focused.

5. Studente often expressed his negative feelings toward situation analysis and case studies, so for a long time he was an external observer. He questioned his groupmates' honest opinions and behaviour. On other occasions he expressed his opinion by questioning his own competence then he withdrew from the conversation as long as he was given a key role in the game. He acted in the game perfectly so after first experiencing that he could play successfully he learnt how to behave as an authentic personality. Later he confessed that this experience helped him to understand how to act as an authentic personality. This was cathartic experience for him. He did not start working as a pedagogue.

We can summarize what facilitating factors helped to develop pedagogical talents:

- socio-cultural background that transmitted values
- positive pedagogue patterns
- primary school experiences
- development programme
- emotional and cognitive element of the self-developing activity
- motivation
- pedagogues and parents
- creative pedagogue community.

## **Conclusion**

- Even the talent of the teacher who develops talented students has to improve;
- Each talented pedagogue has his/her individual features;
- Talent is manifested in pedagogical style;
- Pedagogical style is a mixture of professional skills, teachers' patterns, and personality;
- Professional socialization forms the framework of the development of talent. This is such a development programme that aims at increasing pedagogical competences;
- A degree means having basic competence. The process of becoming a teacher involves tuning into the profession and not earning a degree.
- During the teacher training process we can see signs of talent but developing these competences happens during practising the teaching profession.

We would like to finish our study with the recollection of a student about his feelings about the profession: “I had an overwhelming positive feeling when after my final class during my teaching practice students said thanks for my work with bunches of flowers. I think this is one of the most moving moments in my life. Then and there I became certain that I had made the best choice to become a teacher.”

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