

Evaluation of Faculty Pedagogical Skills by Students at the Institutions of Higher Learning in Ukraine and USA

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Abstract: This article is devoted to the problem of evaluation teachers' pedagogical competence at the Institutions of Higher Learning not only in the USA, but also in Ukraine. The quality of education as the component of national development has taken one of the important policy part in different countries. Increasing the quality of education is the main task of strategy in forming the national system of education. Thus the Evaluation of faculty pedagogical skills by students at the Institutions of Higher Learning in Ukraine and the USA is being discussed. The experience of the USA teachers' pedagogical competence assessment in higher establishments has taken part, it has been analyzed and recommended for using it in Ukrainian higher establishments; the ways and requirements of introduction the USA teachers' pedagogical competence standards of assessment has been observed; and the lines and goals of using the teachers' pedagogical competence standards of assessment in higher school are highlighted, the meaning of teachers' portfolio term is clarified. The determinations of standards for Ukrainian lecturers' evaluating the quality of pedagogical performance, characterized the scientific and pedagogical staff, have been suggested. They are: standards for teaching the subject, study-tutorial work, scientific research, public service and work discipline.

Key words: Standards • Requirements • Evaluation • Quality • Higher educational establishment • Pedagogical activity • Pedagogical competence • Teaching the educational discipline • Feedback • professionalism • Assessment • Teachers • Rating • Higher establishment • Reliable • Norm • Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Currently, educational systems need to be open to new ideas, approaches and technological innovations that will best help the faculty (professors and lecturers) in increasing their professional level and better serving the country's present and future. It is important not only for the lecturers, who have just started their pedagogical careers, but also for the qualified professors, who feel the need to improve or even change their approaches to the methods of teaching, the target being improvement of the level of students' knowledge. In doing so, the faculty shall not only upgrade their qualifications but also enrich their lives through additional and on-going self-education. The notion of the life-long learning is an important concept in USA, as well as in many other Western countries and, therefore, one can obtain invaluable experience from their existing practices. However, the foreign experience alone can not be a replacement to ours.

Our research is based on the profound study of the main problems of assessment of faculty pedagogical skills in the Higher Educational Establishments of Ukraine and the USA. Education is the first key towards opening the doors into the future of any country. Social and economic development is based and relies upon educational system. Thus, the assessment of pedagogical activities of professors and lecturers, as feedback on quality of teaching, is an essential element in improving the process of teaching, as well as students' knowledge and the entire educational system as such.

The main task of our research is to compare the different approaches of assessment the pedagogical skills at Higher Institutions in Ukraine and the USA and select the main and progressive approaches which have withstood the test of time and proved to be effective. We have analyzed a substantial amount of pedagogical literature, articles, field studies, research papers published by the Ukrainian and American scholars. Although certain practices can definitely be borrowed, we also wish to

emphasize that there is a common failing principle in all of them, i.e. they disregard the possibility and need of interchange of opinion in the course discussing the results of such feedback with the students. As is known it is impossible to obtain deep knowledge of any subject without deliberations, discussions or exchange of opinion. Many lecturers in Ukraine consider it to be impolite to ask for the students' opinion on their professional skills. Their reasoning "against" being that the students is not objective and not qualified to pass on their judgment. It is claimed that the students' assessment is motivated by emotional attitudes rather than by professional standards of the faculty or the level of their knowledge. Despite the sable points, we still maintain that the anonymous student evaluation, with all the relevant amendments to the process, needs to be practiced as a reliable means to establish the actual quality of teaching and mastering of the program material. It is also a good method of obtaining an unbiased opinion on the quality, feasibility and efficiency of teaching methods, instructors' integrity, consistency and wholeness of the studying process, as well as a means to measure the teacher's level of reimbursement.

The Main Part: Educational programs that provide for creating decent conditions for studying and acquiring necessary competence in professional activities are rather popular in the USA. These programs aim for the development of education throughout life, promote competitiveness on labor market and participation in democratic principles of society. It has to be mentioned that the higher education system in the USA widely covers population's independent action in professional training. The main reason is a high level of higher education in the country and a diversity of research.

In didactic and methodical literature the term "competence" started being widely used in the second half of the XX century, in particular a pedagogic approach - "competence approach" - in late 1960s and in early 1970s in foreign sources and in 1980s - in the native ones. The USA scientists were among the first to start researching teachers' competence in a process of their experience in pedagogic activity. In Great Britain, Germany and France the term "competence" came to education from a scientific piece of study dedicated to an evaluation of a qualitative level of students' knowledge and pedagogic activity of educators.

According to experts from European Council, competence is an educator's ability to apprehend and reflect to individual and social demands, as well as a

presence of certain values experience, knowledge and skills, which are relevant for the process of studying at the Institutions of Higher Learning [1].

At an international conference sponsored (Rychen and Tiana, 2004 y.) by UNESCO and the Ministry of Education of Norway scientists determined the definition of a term "competence". In their opinion, competence is a capability to apply effectively and creatively the knowledge and the skills in interpersonal relationships and situations that involve interaction with other people in a social context, as well as in professional situations. Competence is a concept that is logically derived from attitude to values and from knowledge to comprehension [2, 6].

According to the claims of the IBSTPI (International Board of Standards for Training, Performance and Instruction), competence is defined as an ability to conduct one's occupation skillfully and to effectively perform the activities of a given occupation, having certain knowledge, talents and attitudes that enable educators to conduct pedagogic work professionally in order to reach proper standards in an educational process. This IBSTPI celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2012. It grew out of the Joint Certification Task Force, which was celebrated in 1977 [3].

The problem of teachers' competence evaluation is an urgent one nowadays and that's why it is being broadly discussed and explored by famous international organizations, such as: UNESCO, UNICEF, European Council, the Organization for European Cooperation and Development, the International Board of Standards and by foreign and native scientists.

A.K. Markova correlates professionalism with different kinds of specialists' activities and defines four kinds of competence: *special*, *social*, *personal* and *individual*. To a *special competence* she attributes one's own professional performance of a high level and the capacities of projecting one's further professional development; a *social competence* is a common mastery of a professional activity (of a group or an association), cooperation and also the appropriate means of a professional communication that conform to certain occupations; a *personal competence* is a mastery of ways of self-realization and self-development, of means of resistance to a professional deformation of a personality; an *individual competence* is related to the mastery of self-realization and personal development within the framework of an occupation, a willingness to grow professionally, a capacity for an individual self-preservation, a disinclination to a professional ageing,

an ability to organize one's professional activity without overwhelming and tiring oneself, without the overstraining and even with the effect of cheerfulness [4, 98].

Therefore, taking Markova's competence approach as a base, let's examine these four kinds of professional competence in the teachers' performance. If competence is referred to a pedagogic occupation, then it is quite adequate to call it pedagogical competence. We will try to analyze pedagogical competence by the correspondent aspects mentioned: special, social, personal and individual. To a special lecturer competence, we'll relate the teachers' pedagogical ability to teach subjects on a high professional level and to evaluate a qualitative the students' knowledge level, a presence of substantial knowledge of a subject, a grasp of modern technologies and scientific achievements, a wide worldview regarding the current transformations and news in the world, a capability to combine instruction and upbringing in a higher educational institution and an ability to apply the acquired knowledge, skills and experience in his or her practical activity.

However, let's explicate the meaning of a word "special" after the new explanatory dictionary of Ukrainian language, which points out that the adjective "special" is used in a particular case, when somebody or someone is distinguished by a larger extent of its display; it has to do with a particular field of science, technology, art and holds a special mission for the representatives of this realm.

Hence, we can emphasize that the teachers' professional knowledge is only related to a particular subject, while professional performance is a combination of knowledge, skills and aptitudes related to a subject, mastering of which give educators a possibility to work in production and in the educational institutions with different levels of accreditation. Still, an educator can have substantial and perfect knowledge of a subject, yet be incapable of finding contact with students. Such lecturer has a high special competence and is considered to be a good specialist of a narrow type because he lacks proper knowledge, skills and aptitudes to teach a subject. So, his social and personal competencies are completely low.

In order to determine what social competence is let's find out the meaning of this word. The adjective "social" is derived from the Latin word "socialis" which means friendly/sociable, public and connected with people's lives and relationships in society [5, 779]. In a big

explanatory dictionary of a modern Ukrainian language its meaning is broadened and the adjective social is defined as public, communal; produced by the circumstances of a social life, a particular environment or order; existing in a certain society, caused by society's division onto classes [5, 1360]. In such a way, to a social competence we'll ascribe teachers' ability to conduct an educational process, a mastery of ways and methods of teaching a subject, an ability to conduct scientific research and educational work, all of which is based on high moral principles of educating and learning, on benevolent communication among students and colleagues.

To a personal teachers' competence we'll attribute one's own approach to self-development of knowledge, skills, aptitudes and experience in a subject, grounds for new progressive ideas and methods of improving the educational process, skills of planning one's professional activity and reaching decisions independently. To an educator's individual competence we'll attribute the modes of self-control and the mastery of them, the readiness for professional growth and the presence of a steady professional motivation.

The mentioned teacher competencies characterize in some way his/her professionalism in conducting an educational process and qualification of performing organizational-methodical and scientific research work at the Institutions of Higher Learning.

Therefore, *teachers' pedagogical competence is a harmonious combination of all professional characteristics of a lecturer, his experience, knowledge, skills and aptitudes that are fully used in educational, organizational, methodical, scientific and cultural activities of an educational process and which are based on high moral and democratic principles of educating and raising students, a benignant culture of communication, a creative scientific pursuit, grounds for new progressive ideas and implementation of new technologies of education, a personal responsibility for the quality of an educational process and the realizations of power for defining a qualitative level of students' knowledge and teaching professors staff at the Institutions of Higher Learning.*

Of course, *the teachers' pedagogical performance is a combination of all characteristics of a lecturer, which are manifested in educational, organizational, methodical, scientific and cultural activities of an educational occupation and are based on high moral and democratic principles of educating and raising students.*

According to the USA standards INTASC, NCATE and NBPTS of pedagogical activity the USA teachers, the demands of redesigning Master's Degree for the teachers of higher educational establishments, the directed guides of improvement the teachers' pedagogical competence, the essences of five essential Master's Degree proposals, given the right of teaching the subject at the Institutions of Higher Learning, we could try to suggest some requirements of improving the evaluation teachers' competence. The main proposals are worked out by National Council and highlighted in NBPTS standards. They point out the facts which teachers have to know and how to act in the process of pedagogical activities. The suggested proposals are directed for improvement the pedagogical competence: the lecturers have obligations to teach students well; to have deep subject knowledge and know how to teach it; systematically analyze the pedagogical activity and study the colleagues leading experience; constantly improve ones knowledge and competence; have responsibility for organizing and assessment the students' qualitative level knowledge.

The National Board's mission is executed through its Five Core propositions that define accomplished practice, which are supported by theory and research on teaching and learning (NBPTS, 1998). Five Core Propositions describe that teachers should know and be able to do:

- Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
- Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
- Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
- Teachers are members of learning communities.

All these propositions express and demand the effectiveness, knowledge, skills and disposition, of course, commitments of the accomplished teacher in every field and provide the basis for standards for accomplished teaching. As a result of the work of the National Board, teacher, like professionals in other fields, can achieve distinction by demonstrating through demanding performance assessments that they meet the highest standards of practice set for their profession [6].

These propositions highlight that teachers should have the brilliant knowledge of the subject to be taught; deep knowledge of general and subject-specific methods for teaching those subjects and for evaluating students

learning. But the process of evaluating the teachers' competence should include the "portfolio". In our research "portfolio" is connected with the process of teaching and teachers' materials for studying the subject, especially with the process of evaluating, that's why we mean the "*teachers' portfolio*". According to the definition in New Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus of the English language "*portfolio*" pl. "*portfolios*" means a case for keeping loose papers, drawings, prints; such a case for caring state documents; the office and functions of a government minister; the securities etc. held by a bank, investment trust etc. [7, 782]. The definition of "*teachers' portfolio*" is out.

Studying the meaning of "*portfolio*" we suggest the definition connecting with teachers' work. "*Teachers' portfolio*" – it's a combination of teachers' studying and video materials that are using in the process of teaching, learning the subject and diagnose the quality of students' level which is necessary for evaluating the teacher' pedagogical competence and receiving the Master's Degree certificate according to the standards and requirements of National Council. "*Teachers' portfolio*" consists of different kind of materials that are necessary for teaching the subject and assessment the students' knowledge level. It directs the teacher readiness to pedagogical activity. If "*teachers' portfolio*" has been perfectly formed, it means that a lecturer has some experiences for teaching the subject at Institutions of Higher Learning and he/she is ready to be evaluated by students in different spheres of pedagogic performance. That's why the materials of "*teachers' portfolio*" should be added to the requirements of evaluating the teachers' competence.

By analyzing methodical and didactic literature regarding the evaluation of teachers' quality of work at the Institutions of Higher Learning in the USA, we suggest defining the standards for evaluating their pedagogic performance and we'll emphasize the ones that characterize the pedagogic work of teaching staff, which are: *standards of teaching the subject, standards of a study-tutorial work, standards of a scientific research work, standards of public service, standards of a work discipline*. Let's assume that the mentioned standards for evaluating pedagogic performance of educators at higher educational institutions completely represent their work.

The standards of evaluating the teachers' quality of pedagogic performance are the fixed demands for checking the results of implementing the curriculum of a subject at the Institutions of Higher Learning and they adequately define the level of all the components of his

pedagogic activity: teaching, methodical, scientific, public, work and are respectively related to the ethics of relationships with colleagues, lecturers, students and are subject to control in order for them to be followed and to provide the promotion of educational services.

The standards of teaching the subject are the fixed demands to theoretical and practical levels of realization of programmed and didactic material on a subject by an educator, the thesis of an existing syllabus, a mastery of higher school pedagogic, which is displayed in students' level of skills and aptitudes, personal qualities etc.

The standards of a study-tutorial work are the fixed demands for providing the quality of educational activity by an educator, accompanied by the familiarization with the latest technologies, a constant improvement of skills and abilities, the design of new courses, the content of seminar and practical classes with the future implementation of topical ideas into the subjects' curriculums, texts of manuals and study guides with the stamp of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

The standards of a scientific research are the fixed demands to conducting scientific researches in a particular domain of scientific knowledge and the publication of their results in monographs, in volumes of scientific works, professional editions recommended by Ministry of Education, foreign and local editions, at international and regional conferences, textbooks and study guides.

The standards of public service are the demands concerning the quality and the necessity of serving public orders at the Institutions of Higher Learning. Public orders are not a part of an educator's official duties. The following are often considered to be public orders: participation in the Academic Board at Institutions of Higher Learning and faculty, in the Expert Board of the Institutions of Higher Learning as an expert, in work commissions, seminars, committees, funds, competitions, Olympiads, the supervision of a student group, of a section etc.

The standards of work discipline are the demands to maintaining the codes of conduct and performing official duties by the representatives of an educational body.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the scientific material stated above, let's *make the conclusions*. The standards of diagnosing the teachers' pedagogical performance are the demands for teaching the subject, scientific-methodical and scientific

research work, public service and work discipline that are defined by the Ministry of Education and are improved by and implemented in the corresponding at Institutions of Higher Learning. Such standards may be the base for reforming the higher education, reorganization of Higher Education Institutions, training of highly qualified educators and the betterment of their professionalism in teaching a subject. The standards of evaluating the teachers' quality competence and pedagogic performance are the requirements for teaching the subject, study-tutorial work and scientific research, public service and work discipline are determined by Department of Education and are being improved by the Institutions of Higher Learning. The standards of teaching the subject, study-tutorial work, scientific research, public service and work discipline characterized the scientific and pedagogical staff the Ukrainian lecturers' at the Institutions of Higher Learning.

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