

## **Interpretation of professional activity of technical universities teachers**



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### **Abstract**

In the paper, the interpretation phenomenon as general ability of personality is investigated. The main function of interpretation is implementation of personal position and opinion concerning any phenomenon. Through interpretation, the personality acquires certainty and confidence in the changing world. Interpretation is conductive to development of the person attitude to oneself. Special problem of adult person is development of attitude to personal professional activity, profession in general, thoughts of oneself as expert. Results of empirical research of interpretation of professional and pedagogical activity by technical universities teachers are presented. It is found out that teachers of technical and natural disciplines interpret a pedagogical profession as necessary element for development of society, youth, certain economic branches, scientific thoughts. It is revealed that according to teachers vision of teaching profession, first of all, it is intended for the expert. The main professional positions of teachers are determined: professional of certain technical field and then professional-teacher.

**Key words:** INTERPRETATION, OPINION, ATTITUDE, PROFESSIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS, UNDERSTANDING, PROFESSIONAL POSITION

In any society, reconsideration of the concept, purpose, content of education according to actual inquiries caused by development of social, economic and political system of the state takes place from time

to time. The higher education in Ukraine is still aimed at providing fundamental scientific, common cultural, practical training of specialists who must determine rates and level of scientific, technical, economic, so-

cial and cultural progress, formation of intellectual potential of nation for all-round development of personality as the supreme value of society.

Market approach to education and understanding of education as service urge educational institutions to accept realistic model of modern higher education where the student is product of educational system, and the employer is consumer. Educational service can be determined from the standpoint of position analysis where government institutions, social and economic system, exercising control and regulation are customers; the administration of institute is organizer; the teacher is performer; the recipient of service is student; employer and society are consumers; financing source is the student's parents.

Such "performing" position of teacher requires understanding what requirements he/she should meet, by what criteria of quality of education he/she should be guided in the professional activity. It is obvious that without understanding of this "system of coordinates", it is difficult (or impossible) for the expert to provide the high level of professional activity performance. Therefore, the teacher of the higher school is faced by urgent tasks, namely, to realize professional position of teacher in modern educational environment, to determine value of professional and pedagogical activity, its personal sense, and also to find out criteria of quality of providing educational service. Necessity of such analysis is caused by need for determination of the teacher attitude to the professional activity, necessity to have certain opinion on performance of professional activity, that demands interpretative efforts from person.

Interpretation concerning professional activity of the subject could be defined as professional interpretation.

Interpretative certainty is reached through understanding by the teacher of the purpose of modern education which can be understood from different standpoints. So, approach of goal setting "from consumer" is possible; that is caused by formulated social and economic order. Quality of professional education in that case is determined as high if results conform to demands advanced by practice. The purpose from position of "recipient" appears from personal interests. Education is considered as means not so much of transfer of knowledge, abilities, skills as development of personality. At the same time, personality is understood as the subject of free creative activity. Such approach assumes the attitude of the person to personal development as to value. And quality of professional education can be determined as a level of development of personality ability to self-fulfillment

in work.

Thus, for implementation of interpretation of personal professional and pedagogical activity, the teacher must realize approach and positions from which person implements the educational purpose.

Research of professional interpretation assumes determination of its separate components. In our opinion, professional interpretation can consist of certain components: interpretation of profession in social and economic context; interpretation of professional activity in the context of personal sense; interpretation of oneself as subject of professional and pedagogical activity; interpretation of personal prospect in professional environment. Studying of each of these aspects, establishment of level of their coherence must lead to revealing of source of originality of teacher professional interpretation.

Researchers of professional formation of the personality consider professional values, motives of work, satisfaction with professional activity in interrelation with social and objective reality. Certainty of the personality in professional activity is achieved through awareness of person importance for others and actually for oneself. Understanding, to be exact degree and adequacy of understanding, by the subject of objectively set social and technical reality, personal role as the expert and personality capable to development and self-control is a basis of the attitude to own professional activity and oneself as its subject.

Interpretation of professional and pedagogical activity of teachers of technical universities has some differences; that is connected with features of maintenance of educational subjects which are taught. Quite often teachers of natural, technical, engineering disciplines have position of physicist, mathematician, metallurgist, mechanic, specialist in electronics, information technologies, etc. The problem is that though teachers have steady certainty of their personal professional activity, but they interpret it not at the pedagogical plane, and in a narrowly focused framework of certain sphere. It is clear, that such professional interpretation deforms the idea of pedagogical profession, and must be transformed by reconsideration and reinterpretation.

Determination of features of interpretation by teachers of technical disciplines of personal value of profession, oneself as subject of professional and pedagogical activity, personal professional development and determination of general sense of profession, which is subject of our research.

Survey sample consisted of 57 teachers of different age, professional experience and different specialties of technical universities of Dnipropetrovsk.

Research was conducted in a format of increase of psychological and pedagogical qualification of teachers during 2013-2015. We have selected “Incomplete sentences” (author’s development) as a technique, which has been applied to studying of interpretation features of professional and pedagogical activity by teachers of higher education institutions. The sentences are directed on detection of interpretations features: general meaning of profession; personal sense of profession; professional consciousness; prospects of personal de-

velopment in a profession. High-quality data processing was carried out by means of the content analysis.

The studied teachers interpreted general meaning of profession from different standpoints, namely, profession for oneself, profession for the sake of other people, profession for the sake of a certain branch, and also uncertainty concerning the contents and value of profession. The obtained data are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Interpretation of teaching profession in social and economic context

Category of interpretation	Expression
Profession for me	To teach and learn how to analyze, model, predict, make decisions; to continue to improve personal knowledge; to learn new things and get experience; to study and discover new things; to improve oneself; to know and understand subject matter of physical processes and to impart the knowledge; in order to open something new for oneself; development of oneself and other people.
Profession for others	To teach students how to think correctly; to teach students of the bases to technological processes; to teach and bring up; to bring the knowledge to students, to teach new, interesting things, to impart desire to study, learn the new things; in order to make people educated; for complex teaching of students; in order to provide high-quality education; in order to provide a certain branch of economy with highly qualified specialists; to induce students to seek to gain knowledge; to provide with the necessary information; to bring up the worthy citizen, the decent person, the professional; to prepare students for the solution of mathematical tasks; to explain to students a subject matter of problems; to teach students how to develop professionally; development of society; to bring up the younger generation; to teach students in a quality manner; in order to teach how to study.
Profession for the sake of a certain industry	To find out new technologies of steel obtaining; scientific work; to develop the latest technologies, to impart experience; the chemistry is life.
Approximate, uncertain understanding of a profession	To change the world; to be useful for others; to order a view of life; to help young people to orient in space and time; to try to teach that I know; the practice requires professionals; to force students to want to get knowledge; to facilitate the self-fulfillment for students; to provide an impetus for getting of knowledge in the future; to create all-round people; to listen to other people and to be able to help them.

Data, which were obtained during research of pedagogical profession general meaning interpretation, point at teachers quite adequate interpretation of their profession. The vast majority of answers of the teachers under investigation provide the profession with meaning “education of others”, “development of others”, “teaching of others”. So, they interpret a pedagogical profession as necessary for development of society, youth, certain economic branches, scientific thought. From our point of view, such interpretation of a profession must determine a professional teacher standpoint, which would satisfy modern inquiries of education.

From our standpoint, interpretation of a pedagogical profession as first of all intended for the specialist does not correspond to reality. It should be pointed

out that in modern educational field, the teacher must hold a position of the performer of educational service for the main customer, which is the state and society, or a student. Quite unspecific, generalized interpretation of professional activity also is not conducive to interpretation of an adequate view of the teacher. Study of professional activity interpretation in the context of personal sense has revealed several variants of its formulation containing in Table 2.

There is an idea that exactly conceptual formations regulate the inner world of the personality and opens prospect of life journey. The sense is defined as the ratio binding the objective vital relations of the subject, the subject content of consciousness and obvious structure of its activity [10, p. 34]. Therefore, interpretation of personal professional activity via

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understanding of its sense and attitude to it must bring the personality to definiteness of a professional standpoint.

**Table 2.** Interpretation of professional activity in the context of personal sense

Category of interpretation	Expression
The professional sense consists in personal development	Qualification, every day something new; self-education, communication; opportunity to fulfil oneself as the teacher; to be settled in life, science and pedagogics; teaching and scientific activity; improvement; specialization in a certain area; a considerable part of the life, opportunity to approve oneself, be important; to improve the knowledge, to teach as much as possible students of my subject; sense, existence source; continuous teaching and studying; satisfactions of personal importance; opportunity to do favorite thing; development of oneself; mission, scientific activity; achievements of purpose, constant need to ideate; opportunity to be useful; communication; detailed knowledge of the subject; human growth for achievement of the purpose, to be the expert of a certain branch; implementation of capability, knowledge, abilities; self-fulfillment; introduction of the world of science and technology; new impressions, opportunity to learn the new things; self-affirmation, good orientation in narrow branch; way of self-expression and scientific activity; to be able to do something, to be useful, to learn something new; ability to communicate with people, to share experience, impetus of knowledge extension; knowledge and abilities by profession.
The professional sense consists in usefulness and status	To occupy a certain social niche; long-term sphere of activity; self-affirmation in society; income source; the worthy member of society, brings benefit; the day not for nothing.
Emotional evaluation of profession	Satisfactions; always brings pleasure; interesting activity; important part of life, one of key components; integral part of life; part of life; important element of productive life, is hard to imagine happy life without it; way of existence, satisfaction; daily work.
The professional sense consists in the help to others	To get understanding from students; to help youth during the difficult period, a basis of my life; to teach students to think, obtain new data, scientific activity, transfer of professional knowledge and experience; improvement of educational process.

The studied teachers of higher education institutions mainly recognize personal sense of professional activity in personal development. Teachers connect both professional and personal development with intellectual efforts, professional communication, deepness of special knowledge, perceptions of new scientific and practical information. Professional improvement, self-fulfillment, satisfaction of needs, possibility to be useful, establishment in society should be the result of such development.

Also the positive emotional coloring of professional activity by teachers is interesting fact; as the emotional reaction is the faultless indicator, which indicates the real attitude of the person to any phenomenon. It should be pointed out that the research

also provided the identification of teachers ideas of pedagogical activity difficulties including indifference, laziness of students, emotional pressure, necessity of emotional control, lack of time, necessity of individual approach etc. But in general, realistic ideas of difficulties of pedagogical work did not influence the positive emotional coloring of interpretation of teachers profession.

Research of self-interpretation of higher education institutions teachers as subjects of professional and pedagogical activity revealed some professional standpoints: the professional teacher, the professional of certain technical fields, and also uncertainty of standpoint; that is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** The teacher interpretation of oneself as a subject of professional and pedagogical activity

Category of interpretation	Expression
Professional teacher	Work with children; specialist in teaching; communication with people; teaching of mathematical information disciplines; teaching of chemistry; teaching of youth.

Professional of certain technical field	Information technologies; behavioral assessment; technical knowledge; treatment of metals; government control; information science; management of projects; finance; mathematics; continuous casting of steel; technical science; treatment of metals by pressure; economies; computer facilities and system programming; management; in the field of programming; electronics; accounting and audit, mathematics and numerical methods; treatment of metals by pressure and plastic deformation; information technologies.
Uncertainty	I did not ask myself; I am not a professional yet; I try to be professional.

One of assumptions of our research was due to specific idea of teachers of engineering, natural, mathematical disciplines of professional self-interpretation. The obtained data revealed that the vast majority of

technical universities teachers are more often identified as the specialist of certain scientific or production branch, than the pedagogical sphere.

**Table 4.** Interpretation of teachers of their prospect in professional field

Category of interpretation	Expression
Positive prospects for professional growth	Self-improvement; opportunity to communicate with different people; achievements of high scientific level; broad coverage of knowledge; intellectual growth; self-understanding; self-fulfillment; implementation of ideas; awareness of profession; scientific work, getting of new knowledge; intellectual development, good feeling; new experience and impetus for further development; achievements of scientific heights, improvement of ability to teach and bring up; opportunity to improve the knowledge; natural development, result of persistent work, purposeful work; extension of an outlook, professional growth; confirmation of professional knowledge; achievement of the purpose; professionalism recognition.
Professional development as self-affirmation	Increases opportunities, self-affirmation; is not the main, but prestigious; success; scientific degree; is not the main but desirable for the status; has no essential value; increase of authority and trust; the state of being relevant; earnings are higher; growth of the income; status in science; recognition of professional community; upward move in career; growth of responsibility; establishment in life, confidence in the future; the status in science; opportunity to prove something to oneself and others; to change an education system; receiving an academic degree, necessary component of profession; establishment in society; way of the establishment and self-assessment; professional communications, success.
Declaration of possibility of professional growth	Important and necessary; important element of professional development; on the second place after a family; does not matter; increase in amount of work; necessity of permanent employment.

The analysis of the obtained data testifies that teachers of higher education institutions carry out interpretation of further professional development, so to say, in two directions. On the one hand, personal professional progress is understood as accumulation of professional experience, intellectual development, high level of professionalism; this provides activity satisfaction. On the other hand, teachers do not forget about "secondary" derivative, which is peculiar to scientific achievements and receiving of academic degree, and provides recognition in professional society.

Thus, research of interpretation of personal pro-

fessional and pedagogical activity by teachers of higher education institutions has proved reasonability and necessity of studying of their understanding of the teaching work content, its value in society, attitude to it and determination of personal sense. It was proved that in the course of interpretation, the subject of professional activity has an opportunity to determine a professional standpoint and form personal opinion. The standpoint, which must be formed by the personality in professional field, is determined by its ability to interpret personal profession in the context of personal meanings and in wide social and eco-

nomic context.

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