State University «Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University», Ukraine e-mail: koknovatanya@gmail.com

Domains of "Competency" and "Competence" in Current Pedagogical Thesaurus

In current pedagogical science competence-based approach is regarded as one of the directions for modernization of vocational education both in Ukraine and abroad. This approach enables, on the one hand, to correspondingly integrate personal ambitions in the field of professional activity and, on the other hand, to use professional potential of each individual to direct the country to more rapid socio-economic progress. In the article the author investigates and specifies the main concepts of the current competence-based approach in education: "competency" and "competence", which have analogues in many languages of the world and are traditionally used in the pedagogical field; analyzes the difficulties in choosing appropriate Ukrainian lexical units for these concepts; considers the etymology of the term "competence"; studies the emergence and functioning of the idea of competence-based education in historical terms. The thoughts and approaches of Ukrainian and foreign researchers to the definition of the concepts of "competency" and "competence" are introduced. It has been determined that the development of competence-based education as a category of education has passed three stages of development. At the first stage, the use of the terms "competency" and "competence" in educational contexts started both in semantic and grammatical terms. The second stage is characterized by the use of the defined terms in management, administration, in teaching to communication, theory and practice of language learning. At the third stage an impact of globalization processes on education can be observed. It is concluded that understanding and application of the terms "competency" and "competence" in current Ukrainian scientific space are ambiguous, since, on the one hand, they are relatively new to the Ukrainian higher education, and on the other, the competence-based approach in higher education is still under development.

Keywords: competence-based approach, competency, competence, professional activity.

Introduction

Current requirements and demands of the society call for educated, creative, and initiative specialists in various fields, therefore education seeks to find an approach in which the integrity of the inner world of a person is ensured by its

interrelation with society. The orientation of education to student-centered approach is a way which requires such a toolkit that will enable to efficiently assess the quality of educational services. That is why the competence-based approach is now regarded as one of the directions for modernization of vocational education both in Ukraine and abroad. Modernization of higher education has led to the introduction of a competence-based model to the level of statutory implementation within the framework of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education", "The National Doctrine of the Development of Education in Ukraine in the 21st Century", the Regulation "On Education and Qualification (Graduate Education)", the Regulation "On organization of educational process in higher educational institutions". According to these documents to be competent means to be "able to mobilize in the most difficult situations of school life the knowledge and experience acquired" (Akimova, Haluziak, 2016, p. 8). A competent person is "the one who has sufficient knowledge in a particular field; well acquainted with something; intelligent; reliable; has a certain competency" (Tatur, 2004, p. 20); "the one who has the competency, or as the one who knows, therefore, is educated in a particular field" (Holovan', 2008, p. 24).

In the studies of N. Bibik, I. Zymnia, O. Lokshina, O. Pometun, I. Drach, V. Luhovy, O. Sliusarenko, Zh. Talanov, A. Khutorskyi, O. Savchenko the theoretical foundations of competence-based training of future specialists are laid, its essence, contents and structure are defined, the conditions and ways of efficient training of future specialists are revealed.

Consequently, in the process of our study, we shall proceed from the concept of "training" to the concept of "competence". The purpose of the article is to clarify and specify the main concepts of the current competence-based approach in education: "competency" and "competence".

The main concepts of the current competence-based approach in education: "competency" and "competence"

Competence-based approach arose in the twentieth century, and was originally associated with the possibility to revise the quality of training specialists to work in the professional field, and eventually began its path in the sphere of Arts. This approach enables, on the one hand, to correspondingly integrate personal ambitions in the field of professional activity and, on the other hand, to use professional potential of each individual to direct the country to more rapid socio-economic progress. In such conditions the competence-based model becomes more relevant in

education than knowledge-based as it facilitates the skills and abilities "to solve the problems" (Bolotov, 2003, p. 11), which specialists are faced with in their everyday professional activities. Consequently, the researchers increasingly focus their attention on improving the quality of prospective specialists training in the framework of a competence-based approach.

Thus, a competence-based approach enables to train such specialists who can easily operate both theoretical knowledge and practical skills to successfully perform their professional activity (Akimova, Haluziak, 2016, p. 8). According to K. Rudnytska (2016), "a competence-based approach involves not only the transfer of knowledge, skills and abilities from the teacher to the student, ... implementation of such an approach involves the use of appropriate educational technologies in education, students' reflection, the autonomy of application of their professional skills in practical work" (Rudnytska, 2016, p. 241).

In our opinion, these domains should be considered in unity, since they have one common root. For example, in European languages, "competence" and "competency" are a universal lexical unit. Thus, in French there is "compétence", in German "Kompetenz", in Italian "copmetenza", in Spanish "sompetencia", in Latvian "competence", in Finnish "pätevyys", in Dutch "competence", in Polish "kompetencje", in Hungarian "szaktudás", etc. This phenomenon may be explained by the fact that in English "competency" up to now is in fact equivalent to "competence" in European scientific literature. Since basically Ukrainian scientific space uses English-language sources, then unfortunately translations "are often accompanied by serious distortions of the original" (Luhovyi, Sliusarenko, Talanova, 2012, p. 30). Understanding and application of these terms in current Ukrainian scientific space are ambiguous, since, on the one hand, they are relatively new to the Ukrainian higher education, and on the other, the competence-based approach in higher education is still under development.

As it has been already mentioned, the categories of competence-based approach ("competency" and "competence") have analogues in many languages of the world, which follow strong intellectual tradition in the use of these terms in pedagogical field; therefore, their use makes it difficult to select appropriate lexical units. Very often they are subjectively selected by a translator among a great variety of terms which can be found in Ukrainian pedagogical conceptual course. And so the question arises as to what term should be used: "competency" or "competence"?

There are three versions of the etymology of the term "competence". Firstly, it is believed that it comes from the French word "competence" – present participle from "competere" – to be together, to be comfortable, to fit; and secondly, it probably comes

from the Latin word "competentia" which means consistency, symmetry, to gather. Thirdly, there is a point of view that the term is derived from another Latin word "competere" meaning to correspond, to fit (Delamare Le Deist, Winterton, 2009).

Etymology of the concept of "competence" investigated by I. Chebotariova (2015) has provided the following conclusions. English-language monolingual and explanatory dictionaries identify the concept of "competency" (originated in 1590 with meaning "sufficiently qualified") and "competence" (emerged in 1797 in the meaning "to be competent") as an opportunity to do something successfully or efficiently (Chebotariova, 2015, pp. 227-228). Additionally, according to the researcher, the concept of "competence" begins to differ in British and American contextual visions. Thus, "American scholars consider "competence" as an individual's characteristics for competent performance of a professional activity, while British researchers - as the properties of the activity itself" (Chebotariova, 2015, p. 228). Nevertheless it should be noted that the author of the study found out that "according to the experts of international organizations, competence is considered as the ability to apply knowledge, skills and abilities while performing a particular task" (Chebotariova, 2015, p. 228).

According to M. Mülder, T. Weigel, K. Collins (2006), the term "competence" has Greek and Latin roots (Mulder, Weigel, & Collins, 2006, p. 2). Thus, in the writings of Aristotle there is the term "atere", which is interpreted as the force which was developed and improved to such an extent that it became a characteristic feature of the individual" (Baydenko, 2003, p. 155). In the writings of Plato (Lysis, 320 B.C.) there was the term (ικανότης), which was interpreted as the quality of the individual trying to achieve something (Mulder, Weigel, & Collins, 2006, p. 2). Somewhat later it appeared in Latin sources (competens), which is interpreted as "ability", and in the XVI century is was distributed among contemporary European languages (Lokshina, 2014, p. 52).

A popular Internet resource Wiktionary Dictionary does not differentiate between "competency" and "competence". The term is interpreted as a person who is physically and intellectually trained. Cambridge and Oxford online dictionaries identify these two concepts in one lexical unit as "competency" – an important skill of a person capable of being competent. Merriam Webster dictionary identifies these concepts with the ability to perform something at a high level. The distinction between "competency" and "competence" is made only in Macmillan online dictionary, where the latter is understood as the ability to do something satisfactorily or efficiently.

The analysis of English-language sources caused the difficulties in representing the conceptual apparatus of a competence-based approach for understanding in Ukrainian language. The process has been complicated by the lack of translation, which required a more thorough study of the domain of these terms.

Consequently, let us regard the views of English-speaking researchers on the fundamental nature of the terms "competency" and "competence". In the foreign science the works of the following scholars are devoted to the definition of the terms and their classification: L. Spencer, M. Mülder, T. Weigel, K. Collins, R. Sultan, G. Raven, M. Smith, S. Perry, and others.

The very idea of competence-based education arose in the 1960's in the USA in the framework of the idea of the theory of language and was introduced into pedagogical context by N. Chomsky (Zimniaya, 2004, p. 14). The scientist reflected on the question of how the user of the language can be aware of such language constructions which had not been previously met in practice. He believed that this internal formation was not related solely to the development of the skills of performing individual tasks, but had a wider and more profound meaning (ibid.). R. White (1959) supplemented this category with a personal context and added motivation, having realized that the competence, but not a set of knowledge and skills, determines the ability of a person to interact with the environment, and with changes which may occur (White, 1959). E. Short (1984) interprets the term "competence" as handling the situation in different types of environment; the ability to respond to the influence of the environment and change it (Short, 1984, p. 22).

Later since the 70s of the twentieth century the basis of the constructivist approach was laid in Europe. It implied that "the individuals construct their own reality, which is based on the realities of the environment, interacting with others" (Lokshina, 2014, p. 53). In this context, the purpose of education is to "design one's own model of knowledge" (ibid.), which forms competence through the use of the appropriate "toolkit" (the development of critical thinking, the ability to learn, active interaction with the world around).

L. Spencer and S. Spencer (1993) understand the "competency" as an iceberg model, where the things which can be taught (such as knowledge and skills) are visible from the outside, and what is hidden under the water (personal features, motives, Me-concept) is very difficult to form and develop (Spencer, Spencer, 1993). Developing this point of view, S. Perry divided the concept of "competency" into two components: something which can be developed in the learning process – "rough" (vocational-specific components – knowledge and skills); and those components which can not be developed in the process of training – "light" (characterizing personality traits and values) (Perry, 1996). In their turn, I. Kozubtsov and L. Kozubtsova (2014) investigating the work of G. Raven came to the conclusion that "competency" includes "cognitive, motivational, emotional and volitional components, skills and

experience of behavior in the situations of the difficulties overcoming, which give further confidence, and a set of methods of an individual behavior in professional activity which can be flexibly adapted" (Kozubtsov, Kozubtsova, 2014, p. 4).

The stages the development of a competence-based approach (or "competence-based education") as a category of education

The research by O. Varetska (2014) outlined that the development of a competence-based approach (or "competence-based education") as a category of education witnessed three stages (Varetska, 2014, p. 28). Thus, the first stage (1960-1970's) is the beginning of the use of the terms "competency" and "competence" in the educational contexts both in semantic and grammatical meaning. At this stage "competence" is considered as a qualitative characteristic of the individual, including high level of professionalism, based on self-regulation, self-awareness, advanced social skills (White, 1959) and abilities (Varetska, 2014, p. 28-29). At this stage according to I. Zimniaya (2004) the use of the term gains its ground in various spheres of social activity in daily life and literature, and is understood as awareness in a particular field, or the authority to perform a particular activity (Zimniaya, 2004). Consequently, at this stage, this concept has a behavioristic interpretation, where competence is considered as a demonstration of a particular activity (Hager, 1998, p. 413).

The second stage (1970 - 1990) is characterized by the application of the mentioned terms in management, administration, in teaching to communication, theory and practice of language learning. The expanded concept of "competence" is considered with its structural diversity (Varetska, 2014, p. 29). According to P. Hager (1998), in this period competence is interpreted as general skills, which determine a certain style of response in a particular professional activity (Hager, 1998, p. 413). In the opinion of I. Zimniaya (2004), during this period the concepts under study are distinguished in their semantic meaning. Thus, "competence" is considered as the final result of learning, while "competency" - as special features of an individual acquired in the process of learning (Zimniaya, 2004, p. 12).

The third stage (1990) is characterized by the impact of globalization processes on education, involving the need for rapid response to the challenges of the information society, maintenance of a democratic open society, multilingualism, multiculturalism, as well as new demands to employees in labor market, global economic and socio-cultural changes (Delamare Le Deist, Winterton, 2009, p.11). For example,

P. Hager (1998) introduces the "competence" to the educational community as an element necessary for the specialists, which includes intellectual, moral and social components essential for the accomplishment of the tasks in a particular professional activity (Hager, 1998, p. 413). From this period the concept of professional competence becomes the subject of a general analysis, and the term of "pedagogical competence" appears. It includes "knowledge, abilities, skills, as well as methods and techniques of their implementation in activity, communication, development (self-development of an individual) (Mitina, 1998, p. 46).

The development and delineation of the terms of "competence" and "competency

Foreign researchers (B. Rey, M. Linard, Cl. Bilish, M. Georas) interpret the category of "competency" as the ability/readiness to mobilize all resources (knowledge, abilities, skills, talents, psychological features) to perform professionally demanded tasks at the highest possible level, according to the goals and conditions in the course of events occurring in professional activity (Ovcharuk, 2004, pp. 31-32). On the other hand, G. Raven (2002) argues that "competence" "is compulsory for the efficient implementation of a particular action in a particular subject area and includes highly-specialized knowledge, specific subject skills, means of thinking, as well as understanding of responsibility for the actions" (Raven, 2002, pp. 115). Consequently, we come to the conclusion that, on the whole, in European pedagogical thesaurus these concepts, on the one hand, are not distinguished, but, nevertheless, their diversity is obvious in different contexts.

In the process of translation and searching for terms matching Ukrainian researchers differentiated these notions for their more precise functional understanding. Thus, substantial contributions to the development and delineation of the terms of "competence" and "competency" have been made by the following Ukrainian scientists as: N. Bibik, O. Ovcharuk, O. Pometun, I. Drach, V. Luhovyi, O. Sliusarenko, Zh. Talanova, A. Khutorskyi, L. Khutorska, I. Zimniaya and others.

Thus, authoritative teachers of modern age characterize "competency" as a "general ability which can be manifested and developed in activity is based on knowledge, values, inclinations and allows a person to set up a connection between knowledge and the situation, to determine a procedure (the system of actions) for successful problem solving" (Ziaziun, 2005, pp. 54-54). In the national glossary of higher

education "competency" is interpreted as "conferred (for example, by a legal act to a person (or another subject of activity) powers, the scope of his (her) official and other rights and responsibilities" (Babyn, Boliubash, Harmash, 2011, p. 32).

According to I. Drach (2012), competency is "a fixed standard of the professional activity of the individual" (Drach, 2012). In addition, according to the scholar, consideration of this category "refers to the scope of the activity of a specialist, his/her rights, duties and areas of responsibility, which are defined in various official documents: laws, resolutions, decrees, orders, regulations, instructions, etc." (Drach, 2012).

Russian researcher A. Khutorskoy (2003) considers that "competency includes a set of interrelated personal qualities (knowledge, abilities, skills, means of activity), which is given in relation to definite amount of objects and processes, and necessary for high-quality productive activity; and competence means to be skillful in a particular competency, which includes personal attitude of the individual to competency itself as well as to the subject of activity" (Khutorskoy, 2003, p. 55).

From the point of view of O. Lokshina (2014), V. Luhovyi (2012), O. Ovcharuk (2004), O. Savchenko (2014), and others "competence" is not limited only to knowledge, skills and abilities, because competence requires additional accumulation of indispensable life experience, which is essential for successful implementation of quasi-professional tasks.

Consequently, analyzing the works of Council of Europe experts, O. Ovcharuk (2004) concluded that "competence" is a set of knowledge, skills, values, relationships; the ability of the individual to recognize and respond to individual and social needs (Ovcharuk, 2004, p. 6). Other Ukrainian scientists have analyzed "Definition and Selection of Competencies" program, and concluded that competence may be considered as "the ability to successfully meet individual and social needs, act and perform the tasks previously set" (Bibik, Vashchenko, Lokshina, 2004, p. 90). The vocational education dictionary interprets "competence" as a set of knowledge and skills necessary for successful professional activity: the ability to analyze, anticipate the effects of professional activity, and use information (Honcharenko, 2000, p. 156).

According to the Turning project (Turning Education Structure in Europe) methodology, "competence/competency" is a set of learning outcomes of a person (knowledge, skills, appreciation, views, values, competences, and actions) (Tatur, 2004). According to such definition, E. Zeier (2005) understands the competence as a set of knowledge, skills, experience reflected in theoretical and applied proficiency in their implementation in the activity at the level of functional literacy (Zeier, 2005, pp. 53-54).

However, it should be noted that a Ukrainian researcher I. Ziaziun (2005) reconsiders traditional understanding of the term, and regards "competence" as an existential feature of a human, which is the product of their own life-creative activity, initiated and inspired by the process of education" (Ziaziun, 2005, p. 11). Indeed, "competence, as an individual's feature, is presented in different forms – as a high level of skills, as a way of personal self-realization (habit, way of life, interest); as a certain outcome of self-development of an individual, a way of showing abilities in something, etc." (Ziaziun, 2005, p. 17).

Cumulative nature of competence is emphasized in the works of I. Drach (2012). It is considered "as an integral personal-and-professional system characteristic of human qualities which ensures a person's successful activity in the professional and social areas, promotes self-development and self-improvement under conditions of constant changes" (Drach, 2012).

Conclusion

Summarizing all above mentioned it should be noted that national educational dictionary in higher education defines "competence" as a dynamic combination of knowledge, appreciation, skills, values, and other personal qualities" (Babyn, Boliubash, Harmash, 2011, p. 32). There is also noted that, on the one hand, "competence is the basis for the qualification of a graduate", and on the second, "competence as the acquired ability of an individual to perform efficient activity should not be confused with competency (competencies) as delegated powers to a person" (Babyn, Boliubash, Harmash, 2011, p. 32).

Thus, having researched the difference between these concepts, we have come to the conclusion that "competency" should be understood as a certain area of activity, in which a person should be well-informed, and therefore have the necessary knowledge, abilities and skills and be empowered to implement them. "Competence" is understood as a quality of an individual, acquired in the process of learning and training, which is based on knowledge, abilities, skills and experience, and displays itself at the very time when due to the ability to find a connection between the situation and knowledge appropriate decisions on urgent quasiprofessional problems are automatically taken.

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