

PHILOSOPHIC METHODOLOGICAL BASES FOR EVALUATION OF EDUCATOR'S COMPETITIVENESS

Irena Katane

Latvia University of Agriculture

irena.katane@inbox.lv

Abstract

Since the change of the paradigms of competitiveness is taking place now, the concept 'competitiveness' also changes its semantic meaning. In the article, the concept 'educator's competitiveness' is analyzed and scientifically substantiated according to different views. The aim of the article is to present the results of theoretical research, performed by author for several years in the field of concurrentology, actualizing the new meaning of the concept 'educator's competitiveness' in the pedagogy science and education, and proposing an insight into the substantiation of the philosophic methodological basis for the evaluation of educator's competitiveness. In the article, the author applies the concept 'educator' according to its broader meaning. The research shows that there exists: 1) diversity in relation to the definitions and explanations of the competitiveness of an educator as a specialist; 2) three methodological approaches in the research of competitiveness: a biometric, a functional and a structural approach. According to the author's opinion, the structural approach would be the most appropriate for the development of the evaluation methodology, including the system of evaluation indicators, in relation to the components of an educator's competitiveness structure.

Key words: change of paradigms, an educator's competitiveness, methodological approach, a personality's competitiveness, a specialist's competitiveness, a structure of educator's competitiveness.

Introduction

In 1990s changes took place in all types of activities, including education. If at the end of 1990s the scientists tried to forecast, when these changes would, then now it is already possible to draw a conclusion that they would never have an end, because mankind has entered a new stage of its development. The changes that are taking place now actualize the significance of the competitiveness, including the viability, of a personality, a community's individual, a specialist in the changing environment.

As a result of changes that are taking place, the concepts 'a personality's competitiveness' and 'a specialist's competitiveness' become more and more important in pedagogy science. The concept 'competitiveness' becomes a scientific category in pedagogy. It is proved by the fact that at the end of the 20th century a new subtrend of research – concurrentology – started to develop in Russia.

Research, performed by the author at the Institute of Education and Home Economics at the Latvia University of Agriculture, proves that within the last decade, as a result of the change of scientific and educational paradigms, the paradigm of competitiveness has also changed.

Using metaphors, we might say that, within the context of the old paradigm of competitiveness, a competitive personality could be compared to an image of a shark, which, in the process of achieving its goal, is able 'to swallow' anybody standing in its way and bothering it. Nowadays is the time, when a new paradigm of competitiveness is born that makes us radically changing our views concerning a competitive personality, which could be symbolically compared with a dolphin (Apressyan, 1997).

The processes that take place in the development of mankind's thinking enable to forecast that the time would come, when the old paradigm of competitiveness would be studied

and analyzed only by philosophers, anthropologists, historians and representatives of other sciences in order to explain the development of humankind from the historical view.

Research, performed by the author and Dr.paed. Ilze Kalnina (Katane, 2010; Katane and Kalniņa, 2010), enables to draw a conclusion that a new type competitive individual is able to co-operate, to help others, to maintain the balance between I-ego and I-eco in his thinking and actions. He perceives his competitors as his potential partners for co-operation. A dolphin-type competitive personality can be a leader and at the same time also a member of a team, working together with others and co-operating with them. In the context of the new paradigm, a competitive personality in the process of its development, instead of competing with others, competes with itself — it combats its bad habits, shortcomings, disability or unwillingness to perform something important or necessary to do. It is a determined personality, possessing clear goals for future. The competitive personality of the new type is creative and flexible in its thinking and actions; therefore it is able to deal with the problems in the unusual, nonstandard situations. It is able to take decisions and to be responsible, and it is a personality one can rely on and to whom one can trust. Such a person is respected by others and he respects himself. Such a person is welcomed among friends and acquaintances, and he is demanded in the professional field.

Changes in all fields of human activities, different crises become the precondition for the fact that the representatives of different professions should learn to live and develop and to self-actualize as specialists under the changing labor market conditions. Nowadays particularly topical is the necessity to develop the methodology for the development and evaluation of an educator's competitiveness.

The aim of this article is to present the results of theoretical research, related to the development of philosophical methodological basis for the evaluation of an educator's competitiveness. In the article, the author uses the concept 'an educator' in its broader meaning (a preschool teacher, a teacher at a comprehensive school, at a music school, at an art school, at a sports school, at an establishment of vocational education, a university lecturer, a private teacher and a tutor, etc.).

Materials and Methods

Methods of research include studies of scientific literature and reflection of personal pedagogic/academic experience. The authors have a great deal of substantial experience in school pedagogy and higher education pedagogy.

Results and Discussion

In modern pedagogy science many authors have developed the scientific substantiation for the competitiveness of both a personality and a specialist, offering their point of view concerning this problem under research. The article covers the examples that, according to the author's point of view, should be directly related to the description and evaluation of the competitiveness of an educator as a personality and a specialist.

J. Bogdanova (Богданова, 1992) defines competitiveness as a stage of an individual's general and professional development that could be characterized by the personality's qualities.

According to A. Kurakov (Кураков, 2004) and V. Shapovalov (Шаповалов, 2003), competitiveness has its levels and their indicators: 1) in an educational establishments the competitiveness is characterized by identifying and describing the totality of an individual's features, qualities, including general competences; 2) in vocational education the competitiveness is characterized by describing the totality of a specialist's features, different qualities, including professional competences, within the context of the advantages of professionalism and competitiveness in the labor market. Both scientists point out that competitiveness is a socially oriented system, comprising abilities, features, qualities that 1) characterize the potential possibility for the individual to achieve success in studies, professional or non-professional sphere of life; 2) determine the adequate behavior of an individual under the dynamically changing conditions, and 3) ensure inner harmony, self-confidence and trust in others. The systematization of the features of competitiveness is not only a theoretical objective, but also the practical one in conformity with the criteria of socio-cultural development and each individual's self-development, which could serve as the self-assessment and self-development of the competitiveness of an individual as a personality and a professional.

Substantiation of the competitiveness of an educator as a personality

In the twenty-first century the scientists faced an important problem: what are the individual's personality features, abilities, knowledge and skills, and other indications, ensuring his competitiveness in the private life and in the sphere of professional activities, and serving as the indicators characterizing competitiveness.

The founder of concurrentology in Russia, academician V. Andreyev (Андреев, 2006) presents his view on the personality's competitiveness, identifying the indicators that characterize a competitive personality. The scientist emphasizes that only the synthesis of several different features can ensure the individual's competitiveness. A competitive personality should be: determined; heuristic; decisive; flexible; self-rigorous and demanding towards others; independent; energetic; respected as an authority; optimistic; with practical experience; principled; communicative; with a leader's abilities; innovative; intelligent; revolutionary; a reformer.

V. Zemskova (Земскова, 2007) points out that nowadays the real life demands for the specialists who can think creatively and generate new ideas. According to V. Zemskova, in order the graduates of higher educational establishments would be competitive as specialists it is necessary to develop the following personality's qualities: readiness and skills to study independently; self-confidence; self-control; independent thinking, originality; critical thinking; readiness to apply new ideas and innovations to achieve the goal; communications skills; decision-making skills; co-operation skills to achieve the goal; the skill to listen to other people and to take into account what they are saying; the skill to apply independently and creatively already familiar algorithms and to find one's own ways of problem solution, as well as to perform their analysis and evaluation. These conclusions are significant also for the teacher education.

Several researchers to great extent relate a phenomenon of competitiveness to the qualities/features of a charismatic personality as a leader.

For example, V. Romyanceva (Румянцева, 1996) writes that a leader is a person, who is ready to act in different situations, and it is not characteristic to every individual. Very often his actions are extraordinary, special and original. It is through behavior/actions manifests the leader's individuality, his uniqueness. Research, performed by V. Romyanceva under the laboratory conditions, proves that a leader has an explicit motivation for achievements and success; the leaders' self-evaluation and the level of requirements set by them are significantly higher than those of others; the leaders differ from other participants of the experiment with a lower level of neurotism, anxiety, vice versa – they have considerably higher indications of emotional endurance.

Researchers from western countries (Charron et al., 1976) write that a leader possesses the following features: communicability; creativity; organizational qualities: skills and abilities; activity; intellect; moderate emotional expansiveness; emotional attractiveness, responsiveness,

authority; socio-psychological attractiveness and competency.

A. Kirsanov (Кирсанов, 2000) has presented his description of competitiveness: the competitiveness is a socially oriented system of a personality, comprising abilities, features, and qualities that describe the personality's potential possibilities to achieve success in studies, professional or non-professional sphere of life; determine an individual's adequate behavior under the dynamically changing conditions; ensure inner harmony, self-confidence and trust in others.

On the basis of humanistic and ecological approaches, the author of the article (Katane and Kalniņa, 2010), in co-operation with Dr. paed. I. Kalnina, has developed the definition of a competitive personality, which could be related also to an educator's personality. Competitiveness is an integrative totality of a personality's qualities that ensures its viability, including the development and self-actualization, under the conditions of changing environment. The basis for the personality's competitiveness is experience. The competitive personality is characterized by the following qualities/features: 1) the characterizing indicators of personality orientation and self-conception, including the purposefulness and an action oriented towards success; the readiness to overcome difficulties and to take a risk; persistence, adequate self-assessment and daring to take a risk; 2) well-developed self-regulation, including volition, stress endurance, self-reflection, including analytical-evaluating and systemic thinking; personality's flexibility (flexibility in thinking, emotional sphere, behavior), the ability to make a decision; the responsibility for the made decisions and their consequences; 3) different competences, including also creativity as an ability, oneself- and environment-friendly thinking, attitude and behavior: observation of moral and ethical principles, the principles of environmental, including social environment (community), balance and sustainability, readiness for the co-operation with other people; 4) readiness to change oneself in order to maintain the balance with the changing environment, readiness to start changes in the environment on the basis of environment-friendly attitude and action.

Community, including pupils/students, their parents, colleagues, evaluates an educator both as a personality with its individual features and as a professional. A good and demanded teacher/university lecturer not only knows the content of a school subject/study course, but is also competent methodologically; he is able and can guide his pupils/students within the cognitive process, eliminating any obstacles, assisting in the solution of problems. Thus the indicators for the evaluation of an educator's competitiveness should comprise both the characterizing indicators of an educator's personality and the characterizing indicators of an educator as a specialist, a professional – it would enable to study and evaluate the educators' competitiveness in the modern changing environment, including the changing environment of labor market.

Substantiation of the competitiveness of an educator as a specialist

It is possible to observe two tendencies in the substantiation of a specialist's competitiveness; the tendencies are related to the liberal-rational and humanistic paradigms in education: 1) specialists, scientists of economics and other disciplines, on the basis of regularities, categories, conceptions, theories of economics, try to use transfers for the development of the definitions of a specialist's competitiveness; 2) the representatives of pedagogy and psychology sciences develop the substantiation of *a personality's competitiveness* and/or *a specialist's competitiveness* on the basis of humanistic and ecological approach in education.

The competitiveness of a specialist, also that of an educator, is related to his marketability in the labor market. L. Mitina (Митина, 2003), who has studied the problem of a teacher's competitiveness already since the beginning of 1990s, finds that there are at least three spheres of the development of a specialist's competitiveness: 1) activity sphere; 2) the sphere of interaction with the environment, including the interaction with other people; 3) the sphere of a personality's self-development, including the self-awareness and self-determination. L. Mitina points out within the context of educational aims concerning the education of modern teachers as specialists that a teacher is competitive if he is a marketable specialist in the labor market, able to self-actualize under the changing social environment, including the environment of professional activities/work environment. L. Mitina emphasizes an idea that a competitive teacher is able to align his career aims with the aims of his colleagues, a school as an organization; he respects a teacher's ethics, therefore is respected and welcomed, and thus 'marketable' among both pupils, their parents and teachers. S. Shirobokov (Широбокков, 2000), having studied the competitiveness of pedagogy students as the prospective teachers, emphasizes an idea that a teacher's competitiveness, first of all, is related to the concepts 'a teacher's marketability' in the labor market, 'a teacher's authority' and 'marketability in community'. The scientist, having compared the quality of the education of teachers as specialists in Russia and USA, defines competitiveness as relying only on one's own abilities and initiative that enables an individual to overcome the psychological barrier, depression, pessimism; the competitiveness enables an individual to find a way out of problems.

The author of the article finds that an educator's competitiveness is also related to the local, regional, national and/or international acknowledgment in the field of professional activities, an educator's professional thinking, values scale, as well as his attitude towards his pupils/students. It is important to point out – if, within the context of humanistic paradigm, the human-oriented approach is defined in pedagogy science and education as an imperative for an educator's activities, then within the context of liberal-rational paradigm it is the client-oriented approach, which should be respected by an educator as a competitive

specialist. According to this view, pupils and their parents are clients. Within the context of this approach, an educator, who would like to develop his competitiveness, should not forget his mission. It is important to know the historical origin of the word 'pedagogue', which we can find in Ancient Greek. An educator should keep in mind to whom he serves, namely, an individual who learns. From the aspect of liberal-rational paradigm, the quality of education depends on the educators' professionalism. Education has its value. Education is both the sphere of services, supplied by educational establishments, and a product with its costs, quality and with or without its demand. The observations prove that, unfortunately, as a result of present economic crisis and unfavorable demographic situation, there had been schools closed down, the groups of students cannot be formed in different study programs at higher educational establishments, thus exposing to danger also the sustainability of higher educational establishments. Under such circumstances the unemployment of teachers and university teaching staff becomes a reality; the educators' competitiveness actualizes according to its new meaning. Therefore in modern education, particularly in the environment of private formal education and non-formal education (interest related education), 'work is already oriented towards the client', otherwise there might be lost the demand for a particular educational/study program, a study course at a higher educational establishment or elective class, group in the environment of non-formal education, and thus also for 'the services' of a particular educator or even several educators.

A competitive educator (a teacher, a university lecturer), according to the new meaning of the concept, is a person, who is aware of his resources, the potential and possibilities for the development of his career; he is able to evaluate the present situation, in due time (beforehand) he is aware and can anticipate in the nearest future both the developmental opportunities, offered by the educational environment and the environment of professional activities, and the threats; he is ready for changes, self-education, improvement of professional skills, acquisition of a new qualification and changing of work environment, if necessary; he is not afraid to dare, to show an initiative and creative ideas in order he could change something in the educational or professional environment, where he is working, to make this environment more sustainable; he is able to perceive his competitors as partners for co-operation and to work in a team; he is able to align his career aims with the aims of community, organization, where he is working, as well as with his colleagues' aims; he takes care of the quality of his work and is responsible for the results, he asks not only of his pupils/students, but is also self-rigorous; he is not afraid to take upon himself the responsibility, additional duties, if it is demanded by a situation, he can become a leader in a social group at his workplace or become a competent leader to fulfill a particular task; he can adequately evaluate his professional skills and also 'offer his services' in order there would be a demand for his professional activities.

Client-centered approach has also its disadvantages, because very often teachers and university teaching staff face the tactless and unacceptable attitude and behavior of pupils and students due to the governing principle 'a client is always right'. The democratic and humanistic educational environment is developed, when there is mutual respect, understanding and the skill to accept the other person, to acknowledge him as a personality and a partner for co-operation in order the pupil-centered or the student-centered approach would not turn into the facilitator of the egocentric youth's permissiveness, because it is important to respect also an educator as a personality and a specialist.

In order to facilitate and study the development of the competitiveness of the representatives of different professions as specialists, including educators, the necessity to define the essence of a specialist's competitiveness actualizes in pedagogy science.

I. Sarateva (Саратева, 2005) describes a modern competitive specialist as follows: a competitive specialist is a moral, healthy, independent, determined, professionally competent personality, able to evaluate the situation objectively and to make the optimal decisions; this personality is oriented towards the self-development of its human essence, being aware of the meaning of life; this personality strives for one's cognition and self-actualization.

J. Bogdanova (Богданова, 1992) writes that a specialist's competitiveness is determined by the individual's general developmental level; a specialist's competitiveness depends on his qualitative indications in professional activities and obtained qualification.

The USA scientist K. Hansen (Hansen, 2008), specialist of the career support system, has developed a conception of a quintessential career, where she substantiates several functional indications of a competitive personality within the context of a career development: communicative skills (verbal and written communication); teamwork/interpersonal skills and abilities; leadership skills; observation of professional ethics; good capacity for work, including endurance, effort, self-motivation, diligence, healthy ambitions, initiative, venture, positive attitude towards work; driver's skills; logic, intelligence, competence in education and/or professional activities; organizational skills; business skills, which are applied by people to start their own business, including the ability of self-determination, project administration skills and abilities, the talent for self-management and marketing oneself as a specialist; self-confidence; critical thinking and the skill to deal with problems; flexibility; analytical skills; the skill to use new technologies, programming (computer languages) and/or foreign language skills; persuasion skills, the skill to offer/sell one's ideas; creativity in dealing with problems.

In Japan a competitive specialist means a specialist, who is able to achieve the set goals in different and rapidly changing environment, managing to deal with a large number of professional tasks, and who possesses certain

individual qualities. The studies of Japanese experience provide an opportunity to discover something unique, but the most important is that it is an approach, which is successfully approbated in the practice of Japanese vocational education and career education for the preparation of new specialists and the facilitation of the development of their competitiveness. When evaluating the specialist's competitiveness, a particular attention is paid to the specialist's ability to make decisions, plan, maintain the dialogue, organize people, and implement the control over the activities of junior employees (Katane and Kalniņa, 2010).

S. Rachina (Рачина, 1998) emphasizes that the competitive specialists: should be able to act under the new socio-economic conditions; should possess professional activity; should be able to make competent decisions independently, choosing alternative variants and to act strategically; should be able to take a risk; should have flexible thinking and behavior; should rely on themselves; should be independent; should be responsible; should show initiative; should be mobile; should have quick reaction under the changing conditions.

Methodological basis for the evaluation of the competitiveness of an educator as a personality and also a specialist

The research, performed in pedagogy science at the level of tendencies, enabled to identify three methodological approaches in the studies of the competitiveness of a personality and a specialist. They are as follows: 1) the scientists study and describe the manifestation of the competitiveness of a personality/a specialist in action; 2) the competitiveness is substantiated as a totality of the qualities of a personality/a specialist; 3) the competitiveness is substantiated, studied and evaluated as a complex multicomponent structure (Katane, 2010; Katane, Kalniņa, 2010). Having applied the method of transfers in pedagogy and educational ecology, the author of the article has theoretically named these three approaches as follows: functional approach, biometric approach and structural approach in the studies of competitiveness (Katane, 2010).

Several scientists, on the basis of structural approach in the studies of competitiveness, have developed and substantiated the multicomponent structural models of a specialist's competitiveness.

For example, the USA scientist G. Floren (Floren, 1998) in her book 'Disclosure of Information: Actualize Yourself' identifies the following components in the structure of competitiveness: the component of communication skills; the component of social openness and flexibility; the component of inner resources and integrity; the component of self-organization and self-regulation; the component of self-development and learning competences (the context of lifelong learning).

V. Parygin (Парыгин, 1994) identifies the following components in the structure of competitiveness: psychologically physical component; the component

of personality orientation; the component of individual qualities; professional component; the component of the psychological readiness to take part in the competition; the component of social experience.

V. Shapovalov (Шаповалов, 2003) identifies the following components of a personality's competitiveness: paradigmally forecasting component; informative content component; operational or activity component; motivation and values orientation component; the component of emotions and strong volition. Theoretically each of the components is an independent substructure that is subordinated to the general laws of a personality's development and at the same time comprises the unity of self-assurance, action and social relations. Paradigmally forecasting component envisages the determination of the personal perspectives of competitive behavior (CP behavior), the self-development according to the ideal model of competitive behavior. Informative content component forms the totality of knowledge, related to 'I-conception', determining the strategy and tactics of competitive behavior, decision-making, self-assessment, communicative and regulative activities. Operational or activity component develops the cognitive, communicative, regulative and other types of skills and abilities, determining the correspondence of competitive behavior. The component of motivation and values orientation reflects the personality's values orientation, striving for moral self-development, positive orientation towards different socially important activities, the need for self-actualization, self-approval, self-expression, self-development. The component of emotions and strong volition comprises responsibility, independence, initiative, and self-confidence, compassion, self-control.

When substantiating the structure of competitiveness, some authors combine structural approach with functional and biometric approaches, i.e., when identifying several components in the structure of competitiveness, they point out also the describing indicators or the evaluation indicators of these components. For example, very important for the studies of an educator's competitiveness is also the structural model of competitiveness, developed by L. Mitina (Митина, 2003), where she identifies and substantiates the following components: 1) the component of personality orientation (psychological content and developmental conditions), where the author identifies three sub-components: personality's orientation towards itself, towards other people, orientation towards objects or orientation towards the achievement of a particular goal, including also the professional self-determination, self-development, etc.; 2) the component of personality's competency, where the author identifies several types of competency and substantiates the structure of competencies, as well as the manifestations of competencies and the spheres of proving competencies in the individual's actions; 3) personality's flexibility; in the substantiation of this component, the author pays particular attention to the self-regulation of emotions, warns about the emotional burnout,

emphasizes the significance of stress endurance under the conditions of haste and changes nowadays; the author substantiates the significance of taking situational decisions and acting, writes about the factors of behavioral influence, as well as the mechanisms of human self-regulation; the author pays particular attention to the substantiation of the concept intellect, writes about the intellectual qualities, including mobility, dynamic, flexibility.

The author of the article grounds her development of the methodology for the evaluation of an educator's competitiveness on the structural approach, because it integrates also the biometric and functional approaches. The author of the article has developed the structural model of an educator's competitiveness, identifying five components of competitiveness: 1) component of personality orientation, including professional orientation; 2) component of self-conception, including the self-evaluation of professional identity and oneself as a professional; 3) component of self-regulation, including volition, emotions and personality's flexibility; 4) component of competences, including professional competences; 5) component of individual qualities (for example, intelligence, charisma, sense of humor, creativity, different characteristic features, health, etc.), and indicating that the basis for the development of an educator's competitiveness is experience.

The significance of experience within the process of a competitive specialist's development has been emphasized in works of several scientists, defining the type of experience: 1) organization of individual experience (Шаповалов, 2003); 2) experience: general, professional (Борисова, 1996); 3) social experience (Парыгин, 1994); 4) diverse life experience, including experience of formal and non-formal education, socialization and culturalization, professional activities (Katane and Kalniņa, 2010). There is a difference only concerning the scientists' point of view – some scientists include experience in the structure of competitiveness as a component, whereas others believe that experience is the basis or foundation for the development of competitiveness.

The structural model of an educator's competitiveness, developed by the author of the article, may serve as a basis for the development of a more detailed methodology of evaluation.

Conclusions

1. During the last years the change of the paradigms of competitiveness takes place; as a result, competitiveness becomes a scientific category in pedagogy science.
2. There should be two aspects included in the substantiation of the concept of competitiveness of a specialist, including an educator: 1) the substantiation of the competitiveness of an educator as a personality; 2) the substantiation of the competitiveness of a professional as a specialist of a particular field.
3. It is possible to observe two tendencies in the substantiation of the competitiveness of a specialist,

also that of an educator: 1) specialists, scientists of economics, on the basis of regularities, categories, conceptions, theories of economics, try to use transfers for the development of the definitions of a specialist's competitiveness; 2) the representatives of pedagogy and psychology sciences develop the substantiation of a personality's competitiveness and/or a specialist's competitiveness on the basis of humanistic and ecological approach in education.

4. There are three methodological approaches to the substantiation of a personality's competitiveness and also to the substantiation of a specialist's competitiveness: functional approach, biometric approach and structural approach.
5. It is possible to identify five components in the structure of an educator's competitiveness: component of personality orientation, including professional orientation; component of self-conception; component of self-regulation; component of competences, including professional competences; component of individual qualities. The basis for the development of an educator's competitiveness is experience. The structural model of an educator's competitiveness, developed by the author of the article, may serve as a basis for the development of a more detailed system of evaluation indicators.

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