

## THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE MODERN EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

Kamo Chilingaryan<sup>1\*</sup>, Rimma Gorbatenko<sup>2</sup> and Olga Gorbatenko<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Associate Prof., Peoples' Friendship University, The Russian Federation, [chili1@yandex.ru](mailto:chili1@yandex.ru)

<sup>2</sup>Associate Prof., Peoples' Friendship University, The Russian Federation, [gorbatenko\\_rq@pfur.ru](mailto:gorbatenko_rq@pfur.ru)

<sup>3</sup>Associate Prof., Peoples' Friendship University, The Russian Federation, [vegera2009@yandex.ru](mailto:vegera2009@yandex.ru)

\*Corresponding Author

### Abstract

This article attempts to examine the transformation of the teacher's role in the humanities and sciences in higher education institutions, in terms of demands to the educational process, relevant to the Bologna agreement. A teacher serves as a "guide" in the huge array of information flows. Professional activities of the teacher, especially in the humanities, is aimed not at being the primary source of professional information, but he/she needs to help students find the necessary information, analyze it, assess it adequately, and to form their own opinions and ideas. This means that the teacher bears more responsibility; not only prepare a professional, but educate citizens, "a human in a human". The peculiarity of Humanitarian Sciences is that the same fact can be assessed in different ways. For example, the student can independently find and study information about any person or event; he can even independently explore different points of view on historical processes. The task of the teacher is, first, not to allow the student to "sink" in the vast array of information, second, help the student to look at the facts from a different perspectives, to form a comprehensive understanding of a phenomena, third, together with the students analyze the fact so that the student could develop his/her own views and opinions, and he could defend his point of view with arguments. In this case, the personal communication of the teacher and the student plays a huge role. The author comes to conclusions that the teacher shifts from the "source of knowledge" into a "conductor" of informational flow.

**Keywords:** Role of a teacher, Teaching practice, The Bologna process, Information flow, Humanity.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

At all times and in all cultural traditions there has been a thoroughly respectful attitude to the teacher. The teacher is not only the person who owns knowledge and disseminates it, but also he/she is a person who carries holistic and moral compass in human life. Thus, it is absolutely correct to call the teacher, be a school teacher or a university professor, the designer of human soul. That is why teaching profession is in demand in any society, as a teacher forms the social environment, prepares a talent foundry, and adapts the future generation to life circumstances.

The Russian pedagogical tradition has had its own specific features. The historical path of the country left an imprint on the development of pedagogical science. In the Soviet period, despite the fact that the teachers' status was very high in the society, however, the teacher had to adhere to a certain value paradigm, foster the students within the socialist ideology. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the teacher's position in the society has greatly been shaken. It was due to the fact that the teacher was a part and bearer of the socialist ideology that had failed, and therefore, a teacher who had to "impose" this ideology has lost his/her credibility. We should also mention the fact that the profession of the teacher became one of the most underpaid professions, and therefore teachers appeared to be below the poverty line. Under the conditions, when the main ideology was money and wealth became the main value, teachers were a second rate human beings. It was especially characteristic among the youth. This way, the authority of the teacher was plummeting.

In addition, a significant impact on the decline in the teacher's authority was made by implementation of the commodity-money relations in the educational process, i.e. the transition to a system of paid education. In the absence of a sufficient level of money handling culture and market relations culture, paid education services were perceived primarily by the youth, and as in any other service sector the principle "he who pays the piper calls the tune" was dominating.

Only in the beginning of the XXI century, the social status of the teacher started rising again. The very fact at what level will this status be in the Russian society depends on the policy of the Russian state, and above all, what will the teacher be as a professional, what professional and personal qualities will a teacher have, and how he/she will build his/her relationships with students.

## **2. THE BOLOGNA PROCESS**

### **2.1. Main purposes**

In the context of Russia's accession to the Bologna process, these questions become especially important as not only the structure of higher education is changing (shift to two-tier system of higher education - bachelor and master), but also the role of the teacher in the educational process is being transformed.

The Bologna process declares as its main purpose "the establishment of the European Higher Education Area by 2010 for strengthening the attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education and to promote student mobility by making academic degree standards and quality assurance standards comparable and compatible". [1]

To establish the European Area of Higher Education by 2010, the following objectives have to be reached.

- Adoption of a system of comparable and compatible degrees
- Adoption of a system based on two main cycles
- Establishment of credit system
- Promotion of mobility
- Promotion of European co-operation in quality
- Promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education
- Focus on lifelong learning
- Inclusion of higher education institutions and students
- Promotion of the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area
- Doctoral studies and the synergy between European Higher Education Area and European Research Area [2].

This means that the teachers have to correspond to specific demands. In the Soviet educational paradigm the teacher was if not the only, but the most important source of professional information, and educational process was built primarily on gaining knowledge directly from the teacher. Within the framework of the Bologna system the main focus in education is mastering a huge amount of professional knowledge by the students independently. In terms of free access to a vast array of diverse information (access to Internet resources, a large amount of all kinds of publications, and so on), it seems quite logical. However, it does not mean that the role of the teacher in the educational process is reduced; it does mean that it is being transformed.

### 2.1.1 Humanitarian paradigm

The humanitarian paradigm, being the paradigm of holistic cognition, serves the basis for the genetic affinity of knowledge, skills, competences, moral imperatives and social values, which contribute to the effective individual development and socialization. P. Saukh [3].

The Bologna process, coupled with the humanitarian paradigm, being the paradigm of holistic cognition has made significant adjustments to the process of education: approaches to learning have become individual-oriented and individual-pragmatic. There is a shift in the individual-oriented technology, meaning "personalization of pedagogical interaction that requires adequate inclusion of personal experience in this process (feelings, experiences, emotions, corresponding actions and deeds)" [4]. Describing the new type of technology, the researchers note firstly, that they consider transformation of superposition of the teachers and subordinate position of the student into individual equal positions." Explaining this conversion, it is necessary to put new emphasis on teacher's activity and thereby, reveal his/her new functions in the pedagogical interaction, namely ... "the teacher not only teaches and educates, but foregrounds, stimulates the student to overall professional development, and creates conditions for their independence"[4].

## 2.2 THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

A teacher acts as a "guide" in the huge array of information flows. Professional activities of the teacher, especially in the humanities, is aimed not at being the only source of professional information, but his/her task is to help students find the necessary information, analyse it, evaluate it adequately, forming their own opinions and ideas.

Higher education peculiarities are in that fact that any university enrolls students with a certain knowledge background. In addition, in their professional activity it is important for the teachers to remember that students, at the time of entering the university, already have a certain perception of the world and certain moral compass, which, if not fully formed, nevertheless are already in the stage of formation. That is why the modern educational process should be individual-oriented.

Of course, the educational process in higher education is characterized by active use of a variety of ICT tools, without which training of highly qualified personnel is inconceivable nowadays. Nonetheless, the material resources of the educational process, even the most advanced, have only an auxiliary function. The main, decisive link of motivated pedagogical process is for the teachers as the live contact, communication of the teachers and students cannot be replaced by any technical means ". [5] Humanitarian Sciences can be appraised differently. On the one hand, the student can independently find and explore a piece of information about anyone or anything; he can even independently explore different historical processes from different angles. The task of the teacher is, firstly, not to allow the student to "sink" in the vast array of information, secondly, help the student to look at the facts from a different perspectives, to form a comprehensive understanding of a phenomena, thirdly, together with the students analyse the fact so that the student could develop his/her own views and opinions, and he could defend his point of view with arguments. In this case, personal communication of the teacher and the student plays a huge role. Besides, this approach to the educational process considers not only professional quality of the teacher (knowledge of the facts, various points on this fact, classical and modern literature and their sources, etc.), but the teacher's Soft Competences. The teacher should possess certain humanitarian qualities to establish friendly and efficient relationship with a student, necessary for the educational process. A research, carried out at the foreign languages department of Law Institute of Peoples' Friendship University in March 2016 shows those features of the adults that the youth like: courtesy - 44%; courage - 32.3%; cultural behaviour – 26, 1%; honesty – 24, 1%. The list also includes neatness, ability to find common language with the youth, sincerity, intelligence, sobriety, etc. What the youth dislike is: rudeness - 40%, cowardice – 31, 8%, falsehood - 30%, platitude – 25, 5%. Then come: negligence, alcohol addiction, stupidity, hypocrisy, ineptitude to understand the youth, etc. This should be considered by the teacher in his/her professional activities. It is also important to remember that the relationship between the teacher and the students will be positive when the teacher is discreet so as not to humiliate the dignity of a person, which means that he/she must not lose control. The above thoughts can be seen in the Table 1 below, which was summed according to the students' survey. 83 students participated in the survey. All of them were first and second year students, namely: 48 first year students and 35 second year students. The survey includes young people aged 18 to 20, among them 43 people aged 18, 31 students aged 19 and 9 students aged 20. The survey also includes both genders: 33 boys and 50 girls. The answers are ranked according to the percentage they were given. Sometimes there was very little difference between the lines, so the authors did not include the percent in the table.

Table 1. Features of the teacher's behavior with the students.

<b>The teacher MUST</b>	<b>The teacher MUST NOT</b>
be tactful	lose control of himself
be friendly and polite	show nervousness
be demanding, but fair	"let out" the students
be careful, but adhering to principles	turn control of the petty tutelage and criticize the students over trifles
be able to listen to the interlocutor about any criticism	stick out their merits
trust, but verify	have their "pets" and "step-children"
appreciate your time and the students' time	be intolerant to criticism
admit their mistakes	argue over trifles
encourage students in the presence of others	be confused
criticize positively	swear, curse, be rude, be too verbose
fulfill their promises, be precise	look for "scapegoats" for all the mistakes
respect the students' opinions	be introvert (students called it "closed") and silent
take an interest show to the students' concerns and needs	become unceremonious
begin with praise when going to make a reprimand	speak in a caps lock voice
make the first reprimand in private	promise without thinking
treat all the people equally	reprimand the offender in the presence of colleagues
show tolerance to any human frailty	interfere with the initiative of the students
praise the student, even for a small achievement	speak out of his/her hopelessness and give in against the obstacles
criticize particular actions or inactions, but not the student as a person	put off till tomorrow what he/she can do today
take into account the mood of their students	rush to criticism, while the student might admit his mistake
have a sense of humor and appreciate it in others	criticize in a way that the student gives up in despair
be a reasonable, "guardian" of their students	look away when talking to the interlocutor
keep students aware of general affairs	prevent fraud and idle talk
help develop the capacity of students	resolve important issues alone
generate interest	reject others' tastes and affection
demonstrate sincere respect	encourage sycophancy, flattery, excessive praise
solve the problems	shift the blame to the shoulders of others, including to the shoulders of the students
act in a way that students understand, that in his actions the teacher is concerned about the students	encourage gossips

The ideas in the Table 1 are kindly taken from one of the greatest scholars Hans Selye from his book "From Dream to Discovery: On Being a Scientist" [6]. The teacher must also remember that "Education plays a predominant role in this modern world. In today's world education became the most important aspect. Education plays a key role in the development of the society. There is day by day advancement in the field of education. [7].

## **2.3 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The concept of modernization of the Russian educational system emphasizes the importance and value of education for the future generation which means that this modernization must be seen mandatory for the state educational institutions. It includes all participants, regardless of their social origin, religious affiliation or nationality". [5, p. 111]. This means that the teacher bears more responsibility; not only prepare a professional, but educate citizens, i.e., "a human in a human".

To summarize, we would like to emphasize that the role of the teacher in the society in general and in educational process in particular is being transformed. One thing must remain constant - the significant status of the teacher's profession in the society, professionalism and high moral compass of the teacher. Achieving this is possible only by joint efforts of the state as a whole and each individual teacher in particular. This is the key to the successful development of the society and prosperity of the state.

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