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PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT
FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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SUMMARY

Introduction. *Teaching and training are at the heart of the knowledge society where the continuing professional development of teachers and trainers provides the cornerstone for the development of a high quality education and training systems.*
The Aim of the Study. *To identify a design of professional environment for teacher professional development on the prevailing pedagogical discourse.*
Materials and Methods. *The search for a design of professional environment involves a process of analyzing the meaning of key concepts "teacher professional learning", "life-long learning", "conditions for teacher professional development", "professional environment". Moreover, the study demonstrates how the key concepts are related to the idea of teacher professional development.*
Results. *The study presents a potential model for development indicating how the steps of the process are related following a logical chain: professional learning as potential for professional development → conditions for teacher professional development → design of professional environment.*
Conclusions. *Professional environment offers many interesting possibilities for teacher professional development.*
Key words: *conditions for teacher professional development; professional environment*

INTRODUCTION

European Commission (2004) underlines that teaching and training are at the heart of the knowledge society where the continuing professional development of teachers and trainers provides the cornerstone for the development of a high quality education and training systems.

In accordance with the findings of I. Maslo (Maslo, 2006), for the development of humans, institutions, society and mankind, of the greatest importance are independent and responsible, original in terms of viewpoints and opinions, general view of life and action, the use of 3–5 languages, with at least 2–3 on the level of native/first language in order to form varied cooperative networks for the creation of new knowledge.

Hence, professional environment is important for enabling specialists to act in a multilingual environment (Druviete, 2007).

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

To identify a design of professional environment for teacher professional development on the prevailing pedagogical discourse.
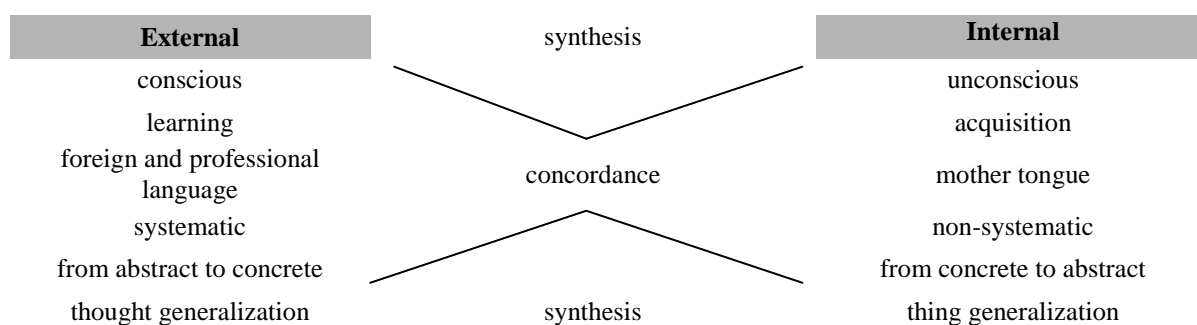
MATERIALS AND METHODS

The modern issues of global developmental trends emphasize "a prime importance in sustainable development that is to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Zimmermann, 2003). Hence, sustainable personality and, consequently, teacher, is a person who sees relationships and inter-relationships between nature, society and the economy (Kaivola and Rohweder, 2007). In other words, this is a person who is able to develop the system of external and internal perspectives, and in turn this

developing the system of external and internal perspectives becomes a main condition for the sustainable personality to develop. For instance, the concern of the European Union, namely, to become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" (European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2004) demonstrates the significance of developing the system of external and internal perspectives for the development of humans, institutions, society and mankind because the more diverse humans are, the wiser is mankind (Maslo, 2006) where everyone is responsible for the world and history, for his/her own unique fate and for the fate of nature and culture (Панов, 2007).

Thus, the life necessity to develop the system of two perspectives, namely, external and internal, determines the research methodology on identifying a professional environment for teacher professional development on the pedagogical discourse (See Table 1):

Table 1. Developing the system of external and internal perspectives as a life necessity

External	synthesis	Internal
conscious		unconscious
learning		acquisition
foreign and professional language	concordance	mother tongue
systematic		non-systematic
from abstract to concrete		from concrete to abstract
thought generalization	synthesis	thing generalization

However, in real life sustainable personality is often realized from one of the perspectives: from the internal perspective accentuating cognition, from the external perspective accentuating social interaction, finding a balance between the external and internal perspectives (Surikova, 2007b).

The methodological foundation of the present research to further the consideration of identifying a professional environment for teacher professional development on the pedagogical discourse is formed by the System-Constructivist Theory that is based on Parsons's system theory (1976) where any activity is considered as a system, Luhmann's theory (1988) which emphasizes communication as a system, theory of symbolic interactionalism and theory of subjectivism (Maslo, 2006).

The System-Constructivist Theory assumes that the world is constructed in modules (Maslo, 2006). New Constructivism supposes that any understanding is not separated from the observer and reality is socially constructed that is confirmed by people who are at close quarters (Maslo, 2006; Maslo, 2006). Constructing is a creative process that assumes a variety of meaning understanding to offer a variety of opportunities to construct mankind development (Maslo, 2006). Constructive process is always situational (Lamberigts and Dīpenbroks by Ose, Surikova, Fernāte, Daniela, Kalniņa, Maslo, 2008) Cognitive process is considered to be a component by the Pedagogical Theory of Social Constructivism: perception is not right or wrong but it is relevant to a place or conditions (Maslo, 2006; Maslo, 2006).

Hence, the System-Constructivist Theory emphasizes that human being's point of view depends on the subjective aspect: everyone has his/her own system of external and internal perspectives (See Table 1) that is a complex open system (Osberg, 2008; Rudzinska, 2008), experience plays the central role in a construction process (Maslo, 2007).

The mechanism of social constructivism (Žogla, 2007) is seen as follows: participants get word meaning not tasting it but acquire understanding, learning with understanding (interpretative cognition), to discuss and join word meaning working in groups, to improve word meaning one from another, to participate in the self-evaluation and mutual evaluation of newly constructed word meaning: work creatively and productively.

Thus, four approaches to realizing professional environment for teacher professional development on the pedagogical discourse are revealed: from the internal perspective accentuating cognition, from the external perspective accentuating social interaction, finding a balance between the external and internal perspectives and developing the system of the external and internal perspectives.

The fourth approach is considered to be applicable to the present research on identifying a professional environment for teacher professional development on the pedagogical discourse.

Moreover, the author's position on the topic of the present research, namely, developing the system of the external and internal perspectives, is reflected in the principles of mutual sustainability and mutual complementarity based on the methodology of the present contribution. The principle of mutual sustainability means to provide a complex of possibilities that allows for everyone to learn (Панов, 2007). And the reflected principle of complementarity points that opposite things (principles in the context of the present research) supplement each other for finding the truth (Grabovska, 2006).

Hence, the present research is a social product where the prerequisite is dialogue (Ольшанский, 2000).

The search for a design of professional environment involves a process of analyzing the meaning of key concepts *teacher professional learning, life-long learning, conditions for teacher professional development, professional environment.* Moreover, the study demonstrates how the key concepts are related to the idea of *teacher professional development*. The study would show a potential model for development indicating how the steps of the process are related following a logical chain: *professional learning as potential for professional development → conditions for teacher professional development → design of professional environment.*

RESULTS

1. Defining Teacher Professional Development

Emphasis is now based upon the development of the individual (Maslo, 2007; Robbins, 2007).

Professional development of the personality is seen as a part of the individual development.

The psychological essence of professional development means (Каминская, 2004) to increase person's social psychological potential, to develop person's self-determination, his/her ability to interpret norms of professional culture.

The psychological mechanism of professional development is determined as self-regulation of the value and essence of professional activity that provides its subject, comprehension and mutual comprehension in the process of continuous integration of pedagogical activity into the common teacher's and learner's activity through dialogue (Каминская, 2004).

Personality self-determination is treated as an integrative feature of personality, which manifests itself in behavioral strategies: awareness of the goal and sense of one's life based on the developed values, a conscious choice of profession, the choice of the forms and space for self-realization in accordance with objective self-evaluation and a desire to do good for other people (Čehlovs, 2008).

The principle proposed by S. Rubinstein for the self-determination within the context of determination assumes that external forces function by overcoming the obstacles of internal conditions (Čehlovs, 2008).

Aase (Aase, 2006) points that not all development is equally valuable: for example, a perspective that focuses solely on the individual learner may lose sight of the common (social and/or professional in the context of the present research) perspective that insists on a specific direction of development and problem solving.

Development in pedagogy means qualitative changes of knowledge, intellectual and practical skills in the student teacher development and socialization, i. e. the development of human potential and features in the human (Žogla, 2007).

Professional development in pedagogy is realized as a qualitative change taking place in the professional involving process, growth, expansion, and striving for perfection in his/her professional activity, with regard to the conditions, opportunities, and needs of society, and the situation of the profession (Kacapa, 1999).

Professional development of the personality is seen as a part of the individual development. However, the lack of the value-based notion of a future profession and clarity regarding meaningful criteria concerning the sense of the chosen way of life turn a profession out to be a means for achieving a certain lifestyle, rather than an integral part of it (Čehlovs, 2008, 44).

Thus, teacher professional development is an integral part of the individual development.

2. Defining Opportunities for Teacher Professional Development

The systems constructive approach reveals that promotion of student teacher professional development from the system perspective on the life activity includes its objective structural component determined as social and cultural aspects of development, namely, opportunities of gaining experience (Tiļļa, 2003).

Opportunities as the objective component are the unity of two processes (Tiļļa, 2003): experience constructing process as the subjective aspect and provision of open variable guaranteed choices of social culture learning organization.

Opportunity is defined as the development of culture of learning, education and interaction in a certain social-cultural environment gaining his/her individual's experience (Tiļļa, 2006).

Opportunities for teachers to construct knowledge about the world on their own means (Maslo, 2006; Žogla, 2007) availability of social environment: teacher, other students are joined in implementing of a common teaching/learning task and in acquiring new knowledge in pairs and/or groups, equal relationships, activity relevant to everyone's abilities, teacher competence in managing co-operation, the improvement of attitudes, co-operation supports and strengthens the willingness to learn, every individual belongs to a group and is acknowledged by a group, the development of communication abilities: listening to the opinion, making arguments, respecting other partners of communication and the evaluation of a joint result.

Thus, the emphasis is laid to the objective aspect of opportunities, namely, organizing an environment for teacher professional development, where the accent has shifted towards an individual's initiated actions as a background of his/her development (Žogla, 2008) that gives the possibility for social cultural learning to precede as life activity and in that way it realizes the subjective interests of each (Tiļļa, 2003).

However, opportunities are based on conditions.

3. Defining Conditions for Teacher Professional Development

Conditions are defined as intrapersonal, interpersonal and introspective processes (Maslo, 2006) thereby developing the system of the external and internal perspective.

Conditions as intrapersonal and interpersonal processes put the emphasis on the uniqueness of personality (Maslo, 2006) and reflection for becoming professional (Kepalaite, 2008).

Brain activity as an intrapersonal process reveals cyclic nature of development (Maslo, 2006) that emphasizes that theoretical findings focused on children are equally applicable to adult development: "L. Vygotsky's work focused on children, yet, his instructional insights (teaching in the frame of the present research) are equally applicable to adult learning" (Benson, 1995).

The psychology of professional activity treats reflection as one of the most important conditions of professional becoming: the ability of the subject to improve in the domains of personality, professionalism and creativeness continuously (Kepalaite, 2008).

Reflection is discussed in psychology as a process through which an individual cognizes his/her own mental actions and states and treated as one of the organizational principles of mental development and mental processes (Рубинштейн by Kepalaite, 2008).

Reflection is based on imagination (Ситаров, 2002). There are three types of reflection (Shon and Felix, by Kacapa, 1999): reflection before action, reflection in action and reflection on action.

Two forms of reflection are considered by Kepalaite (Kepalaite, 2008): content reflection that is directed to the investigation of perception, thinking, feelings and actions and process reflection that is thought to investigate how perception, thinking, feelings and actions take place and to evaluate the efficiency of these mental processes.

Content and process reflection enables to change a person's specific beliefs, which are referred to by J. Mezirow as meaning schemes where reflection on assumptions or critical reflection creates conditions to change the fundamental system of beliefs, value orientations, therefore, is an important factor for personal development (Kepalaite, 2008).

Conditions as integrative introspective processes lead to understanding that learning is already a process of learner's development (Žogla, 2008). In other words, professional development happens if only professional learning is available. Thus, professional learning is a possibility for continuing professional development.

According to E. Maslo (2007), all learning is part of a single process, an on-going process. This finding suggests that professional learning is a part of a single learning process within the professional development as part of human development. Moreover, continuing professional development is regarded as lifelong learning (European Commission, 2004) that includes formal learning, non-formal learning and informal learning.

Personality development is formed within social-cultural environment or, in other words, situation of interaction (social situation or social interaction (Surikova, 2007a) as the source of psychological development (by Vygotsky quoted by Ситаров, 2002). Interaction is determined as obvious or non-obvious influence on each other in the process of implementing a joint activity (Ņikiforovs, 1994) and social situation of development is realized as the unity of outside developmental circumstances and individual's psychological characteristics in his/her experience (Surikova, 2007).

Thus, conditions for teacher professional development are based on diverse interactions.

Vygotsky formulated General Genetic Law of Development or interiorization (quoted by Ситаров, 2002) that is defined as transformation of the external culture into the individual's internal (quoted by Wells, 1994, 3): any function in the individual's cultural development appears twice or on two planes: it appears first on the social level, and later, on the individual level, at the beginning between people (as interpsychical or intermental category), and then inside of an individual (as intrapsychical or intramental category) (quoted by Wells, 1994).

Vygotsky's Theory on the Zone of Proximal Development (Vigotskis, 2002) reveals the movement from the social form of knowledge to the individual one (See Table 2 adapted from Surikova, 2007):

Table 2. Theses of the L. Vygotsky's Theory on the Zones of Development

Zone of Proximal Development	Zone of Actual Development
The zone is a stage between the zone of actual development, where an individual is able to solve tasks at a certain level of difficulty, and the possible level of his/her potential development that is possible to determine while his/her implementing a task with the other's assistance or zone of training	The zone presents individual's knowledge, skills and attitudes at the present moment; an individual can implement a certain activity at a certain level without any other's assistance, independently or reproductive zone

Thus, two conditions for the process of interiorization or student teacher professional development in the frame of the present research are essential (Vigotskis, 2002): first, the level

of the student teacher's present development (zone of actual development) investigating what the student teacher's abilities are in problem solving without any assistance, secondly, to find out what the student teacher is able to do with the other's assistance (zone of proximal development) where the zone of proximal development varies with culture, society and experience (Benson, 1995).

Based on the researcher's understanding of the actual and proximal development zones varied influence on teacher's development the author of the present research has come to a conclusion that the prerequisite for the teacher's professional enhancement is the organization of such a process of teacher professional development that includes both zones of development, namely, the zone of actual development and the zone of proximal development.

4. Designing Professional Environment

The origin of individual's development determined by L. Vygotsky (quoted by Ситаров, 2002) is realized as social-cultural environment or, in other words, situation of interaction (social situation or social interaction (Surikova, 2007) where interaction is determined as obvious or non-obvious influence on each other in the process of implementing a joint activity (Ņikiforovs, 1994) and social situation of development is realized as the unity of outside developmental circumstances and individual's psychological characteristics in his/her experience (Surikova, 2007; Панов, 2007).

That makes social-cultural environment and its nature of great importance for pedagogy where environment is life, our real, subjective, everyday life (Maslo, 2007).

The professional environment as a part of social-cultural environment is aimed at upbringing of such a specialist who is able to realize life not from the viewpoint of the previous generation but to make the world better, more diverse and human (Maslo, 2006) where cultural dialogue is needed in order to implement oneself and one's potential during the activities of life (Maslo, 2006).

Meaningful dialogue requires difference in presuppositions between the participants where the discipline is the reference point and standard, standing above the dialogue (Mylett, Gluck, 2004).

Thus, professional development is a problem-situation, dialogue is a unity to find a strategy for solving a contradiction with an emphasis on perspectives' synthesis or developing the system of external and internal perspectives.

The theoretical analysis in the frame of the present research reveals that the emphasis in the professional environment is put on diverse open professional problem situations within object-regulation, other-regulation and self-regulation based on the principles of mutual sustainability, complementarity and reflexivity (See Table 3).

Table 3. Conditions for Teacher Professional Development in the Socio-Cultural Context

Professional Environment		
External Perspective	Internal Perspective	
Interpersonal dialogue	Study cultural dialogue	Individual's internal dialogue
Object-regulation	Other-regulation	Self-regulation
Establishing social purposes, social interaction planning and organizing	Establishing joint purposes, collaboration planning and organizing	Establishing personal purposes, individual planning and organizing
Social decision making	Joint decision making	Individual decision making
External evaluation	Mutual evaluation and self-evaluation	self-evaluation

The conditions, namely, developing the system of the external and internal perspectives, teacher interaction and reflection, forming opportunities allows teachers to become more mobile, to learn from the experiences of others and to work in a qualitative way (Maslo, 2006).

The study presents a potential model for development indicating how the steps of the process are related following a logical chain: *professional learning as potential for professional development* → *conditions for teacher professional development* → *design of professional environment.*

CONCLUSIONS

Professional environment offers many interesting possibilities for teacher professional development.

The issue here is that the emphasis of the System-Constructivist Theory on the subjective aspect of human being's point of view and experience that plays the central role in a construction process makes the search for a design of professional environment for teacher professional development in a multicultural environment difficult.

The solution here is the necessity in social interactions where the expert can model the appropriate solution, assist in finding a solution, and monitor the students' progress (Benson, 1995).

The recommendation here is the role of experts as mentors for teacher self-discovery and self-realization; to help motivate teachers, to stimulate their interests, to help them develop their own structure and style, as well as help them to evaluate their performance and be able to apply these findings to improve their futher professional development (Maslo, 2007, 40).

Further research on teacher professional development within a multicultural environment is considered to include environment organization for teacher professional development, activity modelling for teacher professional development, factor analysis, determination of a system of criteria and indicators, and levels of teacher professional development within a multicultural environment and empirical studies.

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