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Novice Teachers' Professional Adaptation
According to O.G. Moroz (1940 – 2007)

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Abstract. This paper will review and analyze the scientific pedagogical views of O.G. Moroz, a member of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine concerning the process of professional adaptation of novice teachers. The paper will examine adaptation of novice teachers as a main stage in a system of professional training of teaching staff. Essence, functions and structure of professional adaptation of the novice teachers will be analyzed.

Keywords: *adaptation, professional adaptation of novice teachers; periods, functions, structural components of professional adaptation, didactic adaptation, adaptation to educational activity, socio - psychological adaptation*

Introduction. Society today increasingly requires higher standards in education. The educational experience must reflect innovations in materials and technical quality as well as the ongoing development of staff as they seek to pursue professional development and higher levels of educational excellence.

But teacher training institutions will only be able to complete the task and meet professional expectations when they can prepare teachers whose general and professional education will enable them to forge a leading path for the younger generation.

Overall, in the current system of professional teacher training in universities, the focus is on a theoretical knowledge base as opposed to a practical educational application by students.

The outcome for schools is that their teachers are not prepared to solve professional tasks successfully, but are willing to learn and seek to understand the nature of the teaching profession.

A pivotal role played by the novice teacher is his/her adaptation in the school team. This placement puts the novice teacher in the center of current scientific issues which are of practical significance.

The most important new skill characteristic of the novice teacher is his/her adaptation into the school team, which involves him/her in a set of topical scientific issues yet with a practical application in a didactic environment.

Our goal is to form a teacher who can quickly adapt to dynamic conditions of school reforms and the reforms of vocational schools.

The most important features that such teacher should have must be moral purity, kindness, generosity and a love for children.

In psychological and pedagogical literature the problem of adaptation has been studied at different levels – from the formation of the concepts (Yu. Alexandrovsky, F. Berezin, V. Kaznachayev), to the identification of the characteristics of its manifestation in various other areas (V. Merlin, V. Rozhdestvensky, J. Strelau) as well as the factors that determine the process under different conditions (O. Moroz, M. Rutter).

The aim of the study is current understanding of novice teachers' professional adaptation according to O. Moroz.

Materials and methods. Content, in which the concept of adaptation is used in modern scientific literature, originates from the Latin "adaptare" – to adapt, to adjust, and to arrange. The concept of "adaptation" is multivalent, reflecting the diversity and multilayered nature of the phenome-

non. In the most common meaning of the word "adaptation", we consider the process of an organism's adaption to its new environment. This is a holistic, system device that integrates the biological, psychological and social levels.

O. Moroz mentioned that in the comparison of the two concepts of "development" and "adaptation", "development" we understand to mean life strategy, and "adaptation" we see as a tactic that allows living within an evolutionary framework which thus provides an opportunity for progress [1, p. 43].

Professional adaptation, as a main component of professional activity, is a complex process of human mastery of professional roles. O. Moroz considered professional adaptation as an intricate interaction between personality and the concrete environment of professional activity, which results in the development of a complete set of skills that forms an essential professional foundation and results in positive adaptation to the professional environment [1, p.85].

The Professional adaptation of the novice teacher, according to definition of O. Moroz, is a complex dynamic process of full mastery of the profession whereby the teacher improves and masters competencies based on previously acquired knowledge and skills which are being constantly updated. This results in mutually active modification in the individual teacher and the teaching staff for effective professional functioning [1, p. 85].

Professional adaptation of novice teachers, which is one of the means of optimizing educational activities, acts as a complex specific socio-pedagogical phenomenon that has its own structure, and mechanisms as well as a system which can be managed, planned, organized, corrected and controlled.

O. Moroz studied in detail the professional adaptation of the novice teacher as the most important phase of his/her training. He studied all the professional adaptation stages, the interaction of a novice teacher within the school community, the functions of a novice teacher professional adaptation, and the mechanisms and aspects of professional adaptation. Furthermore, scientists studied the process of development of professional adaptation and its stages, and also those factors which affect the novice teacher and his/her professional development.

O. Moroz considered structural components of professional adaptation of novice teachers. Therefore, this article examines the views of O. Moroz on the professional adaptation of novice teachers comprehensively.

O. Moroz singled out the main stages of teacher professional adaptation.

The first stage is a youthful professional self-determination. In the first stage the young future teacher becomes acquainted with the essence of the teaching profession, its importance in society and its requirements.

The second stage is the adaptation of first-year students to the requirements applicable to the teaching profession. In this stage, first-year students in a deep and creative way master the requirements of the teaching profession, and adapt themselves to the forms and methods of educational work in higher school.

O. Moroz distinguished three forms of adaptation of first-year students: 1) formal adaptation, concerning cognitive and informative students' adaptation to a new environment, to the structure of higher school, to learning content, to new requirements and responsibilities; 2) social adaptation, the process of internal integration of first-year students' groups and the general integration of those groups with student environment; 3) didactic adaptation, relating to students' adjustment to new forms of educational work in higher school [4, p.104].

The third stage – in the dynamics of professional training of students in higher educational institutions – they receive necessary theoretical knowledge and practical skills to fulfil a particular activity in the chosen specialty. Students clearly and confidently develop their future plans with teacher profession. Such an approach creates a target set that has beneficial effects on the process of training of future teachers in universities.

The fourth stage is the novice teacher's professional adaptation which results in his/her pedagogical mastery. According to the scientist, this stage is the most important, because it is at this point when the final formation of the teacher's individuality has been accomplished. The stage of professional adaptation of the novice teacher is the main area of O. Moroz's study and research.

The process of professional adaptation of the novice teacher has two distinctly expressed sides: the activity of the teacher and the activity of the school community. The effectiveness of adaptation depends on the full cooperation of both sides. There is the formation of a novice teacher from the initial individual's establishment in the team of teachers to self-perception finally as a professional, when all relations and all communication within the surrounding area are transformed from human into professional [3, p.21].

Scientists have identified the main functions of the professional adaptation of the novice teacher, namely:

1) The improvement of the professional and pedagogical maturity of novice teacher.

The process of forming the professional and pedagogical maturity of the novice teacher largely depends on the level of professional readiness of the graduates of educational institutions of higher education, which in its turn includes a) psychological readiness, b) theoretical training in teaching activities, c) practical preparedness in teacher activities d) social and civic education, e) the required level of development of general pedagogical skills, f) the general professional and pedagogical orientation of the individual [4, p.116].

2) The development of professional autonomy and creative activity.

During the adaptation, the graduate realizes the need to eliminate the gap between the requirements of teaching activities and his/her own possibilities by forming professional autonomy.

3) The strengthening of the cohesion and unity of the teaching staff, which increases its sustainability and stability.

A young graduate of a teaching university usually arrives at school as initiative taking person and feels prepared for academic work, although he/she lacks experience and it is necessary for him/her to adapt to professional activity. Professional adaptation influences team development and improves it with a fresh outlook and an innovative approach. At the same time the teaching team has a positive impact on the development of pedagogical skills and the professional growth of the young novice teacher. So without professional adaptation of teachers there may not be any teaching team, and without it no professional development is possible.

4) The improvement and development of public relations.

O. Moroz mentioned that the revised functions are closely related and can serve to empirically measure adaptation (objective – as the length of work in a single teaching staff, subjective – as a general satisfaction with own activity).

Considering the mechanisms of adaptation, the scientist completely joined the position of N. Svirodov that differs particularly because of the in-depth study of the internal mechanisms of adaptive processes. He noted that it is insufficient to examine mechanisms of adaptation from the point of view of managing the process.

Mechanisms of adaptation should rely on internal aspects of the process and adequately reflect them. O. Moroz defines such aspects of the professional adaptation of a novice teacher:

1) The internal properties of the process, its contradictory sides, the interaction of which determines the content and the general trend of development.

2) The specific features of the disclosure of the process at different stages of development, and the dynamic of novice teachers' professional adaptation.

3) Objective and subjective factors influencing the process of adaptation.

4) The conditions and facilities of management for the professional adaptation of graduates of higher teaching institutions.

Regarding the process of professional adaptation development, identified by O. Moroz, it has the following periods:

1) Pre-adaptation period.

2) Direct adaptation period.

a) The first stage is the initial adaptation period that covers the first year.

b) The second stage is the average length of adaptability, covering the period up to 3 years working experience at a school.

c) The third stage is high adaptability, covering 3 years or more of participation in same teacher team [1, p. 113].

“The Motivational core” of the professional adaptation of novice teachers includes:

– The availability of the teaching vocation and professional suitability;

- The level of preparedness for educational activities including teaching orientation and professional training;
- The personal qualities of a young teacher;
- The living conditions of a novice teacher and the conditions of employment.

As a multifaceted entity, professional adaptation has its own structure. O. Moroz identifies the following main structural components of professional adaptation of a novice teacher:

1) Didactic adaptation

The primary mover of didactic adaptation is identifying and resolving discrepancies between the motivating expectations of young teacher, his/her didactic training and the real demands of the school educational process, as well as the disproportion between the knowledge acquired in university and the skills in operating them [5, p.86]. O. Moroz emphasized that the weakest point of didactic aids and various techniques is their lack of sufficient specific information about the dynamics of the educational process, the changing organizational methods and the formulations maturation and the transformation of their students' needs and motivations. The novice teacher's lack of such knowledge "creates" the monotony of the training process, which naturally causes a negative reaction and contributes to student resistance. Hence, many of the stressful situations that arise from a teacher's inexperience are huge and significant neuro-psychological efforts negatively affect the whole process of adaptation in general [1, p. 188].

2) Adaptation of the educational work with students of the school.

One special feature of the novice teacher is that he focuses his/her attention mostly on teaching the subject, and only later does he then try to understand the broader horizons of their profession. But the responsibility of a teacher is not just teaching, but also other educational activities. In the educational activities of novice teacher, according to O. Moroz, the most crucial role is played by his/her ideological characteristics, values and his/her complete personal position.

The highest degree of social and professional views of the individual novice teacher is the thought process as a top goal, willingness to work in the field, and finally the ability to work professionally. O. Moroz singled out the criteria for professional adaptation of teachers to the educational occupation, namely: The results of the activities of a novice teacher and his/her productivity, the level of satisfaction with the profession and the nature of the relationships within the team; his/her style of educational activities that reflects on character building and the means to solve common educational goals, professional competence and stability, confidence in his/her actions, and the formation of certain social and professional positions. The highest levels of adaptation to these educational activities meets the style which is characterized by the desire to design activities, a creative problem solving approach to educational issues, and a wide area of informal communication within the team of students [6, p. 66]. O. Moroz identified the following stages of adaptation of a novice teacher to the educational field: entering a new activity which is characterized by high emotional stress; rethinking the notions of professional functions; integrative – there is activation of some professionally-relevant values, the development and increase of the dominant motives;

the third stage of consolidation that is marked with resistance towards professional behaviour [1, p. 204].

3) Socio-psychological and physiological adaptation.

The process of entering recent student graduates into interactive professional work environments is an interface of specific sets of social norms, attitudes, requirements and conditions which characterize the sphere of this activity with a set of characteristics that define the professional, social and psychological options of the subject of adaptation. A feature of this process is that it includes both the adoption of roles and functions of a personal nature, and entry into the structure of interpersonal relations. Adaptation takes place when a professional environment facilitates the realization of the needs and aspirations of the individual novice teacher and serves to disclose his/her identity. Social and psychological adaptation takes place in the team and by the team and is a process of interaction with personality. O. Moroz defined the social and psychological adaptation of a novice teacher as an entry into a system of internal school interpersonal relationships and their adaptation, the development of behavioural patterns which correspond to the value orientation of the team, acquisition, consolidation and development of the skills of professional pedagogical communication [7, p. 22].

Professional adaptation of a novice teacher is closely related to his/her psychosomatic adaptation to educational work. The study of the psychosomatic adaptation of a young teacher helps to improve the working conditions and the regime of work activity of the novice teachers, and the optimization of a process of professional adaptation which reduces its negative effects including teaching staff turnover, the numbers of neuropsychics and cardiovascular disease.

The professional adaptation of novice teachers is a complex process in which the pure professional development of novice teachers is closely intertwined with the development of new behaviours, appropriate social and psychological characteristics, and changes in his/her social position. O. Moroz said that the process of professional adaptation of a novice teacher should start not from moment when he comes to school after graduating from a teacher education institution, but from his first classes at the university. Therefore, the problem of pedagogical higher educational institutions is in arming students with the necessary professional knowledge and forming a readiness in them to develop educational activities. O. Moroz focuses his attention on the following aspects of the educational process: the necessity to exclude concurrency in teaching methodology, pedagogy and psychology; the assurance of a unitary interpretation of a number of general pedagogical and psychological concepts and statements used in the course of teaching certain techniques, the teaching of courses and special seminars. Pedagogic and Psychology courses in the faculties should be built into courses taking into account the specificity of training teachers in a certain speciality; some methods courses, teaching courses and special seminars should be based on the achievements and innovations of modern didactics and educational theory [1, p. 274].

Results and conclusions. Thus, the object of study of O. Moroz were young teachers of physics and mathematics and general technical profiles, but the implementation and improvement of the above aspects of educational work is relevant to all subject teachers because unfortu-

nately young teachers who teach some school subjects are generally confident and professional in the subject matter itself rather than in the methods for teaching it.

O. Moroz developed a system of organizational and pedagogical measures aimed at providing operational support to novice teachers from the side of the higher educational institution. This system includes: a) delayed observation of adaptation of novice teachers by a Pedagogical University; b) the establishment of feedback by graduates with universities; a) the linking of activities of universities and education authorities in the management of professional adaptation of novice teachers.

O. Moroz paid particularly close attention to the professional development of future teachers and took into consideration a multifaceted and comprehensive adapta-

tion approach in the educational process which directly affects the theoretical and practical training of teachers, their vocational readiness and their possible future successful adaptation to the educational control models of the professional adaptation process after leaving higher education institutions.

So, it is not only in the school, where the direct process of professional adaptation of novice teachers lies, but also in the pedagogical higher education institutions which must do all they can to make the period after university graduation become a period of the novice teacher's expertise development – not one of difficulty and frustration in the profession. This approach will make the adaptation process manageable, and therefore effective.

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